

NOVEMBER 2021

# BAABAA NEWS



The Newsletter of the New Zealand Barbarian Rugby Club Inc.  
Level 6, ASB Stand, Eden Park, Auckland, New Zealand.  
[www.barbarianrugby.co.nz](http://www.barbarianrugby.co.nz)



The NZ Barbarians Area Schools after their five-day camp in Palmerston North in September; at far right are Manawatu Barbarians Clive Akers and Mike Brewer.

## PRESIDENT'S TEAM TALK



Tena koutou katoa, greetings all.

These are not normal times and our hope surely is that pandemic visitations do not become so. In the midst of Delta's ongoing challenges, it remains to get vaccinated, stay positive and embrace life and our great game of rugby as best we can in the circumstances. Living life with fullness surely was a mark of our recently departed members and rugby greats, Waka Nathan and Bob Graham. Sadly, we have experienced Covid-induced disappointment in the cancellation of a number of fixtures or events the club sponsors and/or manages: the NZ Barbarians Under 18 team's involvement in the annual quadrangular tourney; the National First XV Barbarians Cup; the Northern Region Under 18 programme; northern teams' involvement in the U85 National Club Cup; Toro Mai Reach Out awards night and games on Eden Park including the All Blacks v South Africa. Given that the Springboks games provided a reminder of 'real' test rugby, all were, however, very happy to see it on TV. Games such as those versus the USA remain problematic.

Amidst that gloom there have been some real highlights, including the NZ Barbarians Area Schools camp and games held with our involvement, led again by past President Ron Williams. This is one of the few we have been able to get over the line in the past three months and was a huge success as you will see from the report over the page. So too with the 150th jubilee celebrations of rugby in the Thames region also featured over the page and led by Nick Sheppard. From attendance at the Friday night function along with our Patron Sir Bryan Williams, past President AJ Whetton and Monalisa Urquhart, it was clear that the 'Swamp Foxes' were doing their best to keep 1960s club rugby 'culture' alive. It was a wild and noisy night and not a craft beer in sight! Hanging on by a thread is the revamped NZ Barbarians vs Heartland XV game, which Peter White has put so much effort into. With travel restrictions likely continuing, our down country members may be called upon to be involved again for the December 5 game in Taupo, just as they were for the Area Schools event. The active involvement of such members underlines the advantage we have as a club with a national spread of membership.

A warm rugby note to finish on after an unusual enquiry I received in late

October from the Overseas RUFC. The name gives away nothing until you discover it is in Malta. Club President Tony Garrett asked if we would be one of a number of clubs worldwide to send a video tribute on its 75th anniversary on November 11. I duly obliged, leading into messages from 'Beegee' and AJ, the latter already volunteering to take a tour group or team there to explore Mediterranean delights and sample the local sangria. The video messages were viewed with deep appreciation and quite some emotion by their club members. Yes, there is still heart and soul in amateur rugby the world over. As one day of Level 3 blends into the next, I do wish all well physically, mentally and spiritually. As a doctor once said to my late father: "It will get better."

**Bernie Allen**  
**President**  
**NZ Barbarian Rugby Club**



# Deaths Of Members

**Waka Nathan (1940-2021)**

**Waka Nathan** was a great figure in New Zealand, Maori and Auckland rugby and not just for his impressive first-class playing career from 1959-67.

The French dubbed him 'The Black Panther' for his feline-like displays as a loose forward, but he had already made his mark by scoring one of the most famous tries in Ranfurly Shield history, in 1960 versus Canterbury at Eden Park.

In all, Nathan played 88 games for Auckland out of the Otahuhu club during a great era for the province, and thrived under his old provincial coach Fred Allen in the All Blacks. He played 37 games, including 14 undefeated tests, from 1962-67 for the men in black.

In all, he scored 55 tries in 172 first-class games, including five in 17 games for the Maori All Blacks. He was the Tom French Cup winner for Maori player of the year in 1962 and 1966.

A breweries rep and butcher, Nathan should always be given credit for driving a resurgence in Maori rugby during the 1970s. He was coach and later manager of this side, which he held close to his heart.

President of Auckland Rugby in 2003-04, he was a life member of the union and the Maori board. In later years, though his health was declining, he was still a welcome visitor to the Barbarians lounge with his ready and famous smile.

**Bob Graham (1936-2021)**

Several men were unlucky to miss All Blacks selection down the years.

Bob Graham was one of those, a fine loose forward for the great Auckland team of the late 1950s and '60s. He racked up over 100 games for the union and captained the team during most of its great Shield era of 1959-63. Along with myriad All Blacks trials, he represented NZ Universities and the North Island. His club rugby was for Auckland University, which he later coached to the 1974 Gallaher Shield.

Retiring early to focus on his accountancy career, Graham was selector-coach of Auckland from 1967-69, starting at the uncommonly early age of 30.

A life member of Auckland Rugby, after serving as President from 1993-95, he also was the Barbarians club President in 1982-83, but he was fully involved in many other spheres of life, as life member of the Halberg Trust, a board member of Diocesan School for Girls, and as senior partner at Brown Woolley Graham.

In later years he enjoyed watching his grandson play Under 85kg rugby at Merton Road. His granddaughter Hannah is married to Beauden Barrett, also a Barbarians member.

Graham was the brother of the two late rugby knights, Sir Jim and Sir John. He held strong views on rugby and many areas of life, but always stuck to his guns.



## BAABAAB BLACK FERNS

No doubt many of you will be keeping tabs on the Black Ferns on their northern tour.

Six of them played for the NZ Barbarians in that competitive two-match series against the Black Ferns in 2020, the first ever games of first-class status for our ladies.

Alana Bremner, who was captain of the Baabaa, Patricia Maliepo, Krystal Murray, Grace Houpapa-Barrett, Amy Rule and Maia Roos have all made the step up to the big time. So the club can say we played a small part in their development.

All will be involved in the historic Super Rugby Aupiki competition in March and will be pushing for places in the Black Ferns' Rugby World Cup squad, to be held on our shores next spring.

Keep an eye on this rugby, as several of the Black Ferns could well be club members of the future.

## NZ BARBARIANS v THAMES REVIEW



Back on August 14, just before the country was plunged into lockdown, the Barbarians fulfilled a very important and satisfying obligation to celebrate 150 years of rugby in the Thames region.

It was a poignant match against the Thames Invitational XV, made up mostly of the Thames Rugby Club premiers who had just been pipped for the McClinchy Cup silverware weeks earlier.

In 1870, an Auckland side had travelled to Thames for the first recorded game of rugby in the area, whilst in 1937 Hugh McLean and Ron Bush organised a team to



Sir Bryan Williams, AJ Whetton and Monalisa Urquhart, along with Vaughan de Groot, assist in the celebrations in Thames.

play in the town to raise funds for the cash-strapped sub-union. The Barbarians name was born out of that weekend.

The final scoreline in August was 31-25 to the Thames side, which was not bad when some of the Baabaas only met for the first time on the bus down! But it was gratifying to see Thames Valley Barbarian Ross Cooper giving us plenty of air-time with interviews and history, screened five days later on SKY Grassroots Rugby. Vaughan de Groen was one of the key drivers from the Thames side, while Nick Sheppard, as manager, did yeoman work in pulling together the Baabaas team from the Auckland region, a useful mix of past and present club and rep players. Among them were a handful of current Barbarians, including captain and fullback Gavin Williams, Rocky Khan, Peter Leuluso'o and Tino Poluleuligaga.



*The scrum is up but Baabaas halfback Luke Hamilton can see the ball versus Thames.*



*The two teams look tired but happy after a competitive match in Thames.*

The full team was (15-1): Williams, Iggy Costa, Nikolai Foliaki, Leuluso'o, Will Gibbons, Khan, Luke Hamilton, Luke Mealamu, Leo Ngatai, Pat Segi, James Coughlan, Bruce Kaino, Matt Talaese, Blake Hill, Duke Nginingini. Reserves (16-23): Willy Uili, Vunga Halaufia, Sione Mataafa, Paul Mataafa, Poluleuligaga, Nash Jack, Fangupo Lavaka, Tuaaga Paleso'o

## NZ BARBARIANS AREA SCHOOLS REVIEW



When the nation moved swiftly to level 4 lockdown on August 18, it appeared the NZ Barbarians Area Schools camp would be canned for the second straight year.

But some tremendous work behind the scenes by Marie Relph, and aided by team manager Steve Beck, who has been involved with this team for several years, and Baabaas point man Ron Williams, saw the camp postponed until late September at the same venue in Palmie.

The Area Schools opened with an encouraging 26-24 win over a Palmerston North BHS XV on the Wednesday night and closing with a tight 26-all draw with the Hato Paora College First XV on the Saturday morning.

On hand for the matches and Friday night dinner were Manawatu Barbarians Clive Akers, Mike Banks and Mike Brewer, who all spoke highly of the team, the management and the boys and their work ethic. Also stopping in for a chat and some kai were former All Blacks wing Nehe Milner-Skudder and the world's best No 9, Aaron Smith. The full squad was listed in our August newsletter.

We look forward to seeing this important team in action again in 2022.



*Nehe Milner-Skudder with the NZBAS management, from left: Ratu Mataira, Steve Beck, Kingi Matenga, Hone Manuel, and head coach Justin Marsh.*



*The NZ Barbarian Area Schools edged the Palmerston North BHS XV in September.*



\*The Barbarians club is now on social media, via Facebook [www.facebook.com/NZBarbarianRugby](http://www.facebook.com/NZBarbarianRugby) and Instagram [www.instagram.com/nzbarbarianrugby](https://www.instagram.com/nzbarbarianrugby) so you can more swiftly keep up with all the club news. The website is also in the process of being upgraded and this should be live in a few weeks. We'll keep you all posted.

\*The newsletter editor is also the editor of iconic monthly magazine *Rugby News*.

There's plenty of provincial, sevens, grassroots and women's coverage in there to sink your teeth into, as well as All Blacks content. The November issue is out now. *Rugby News* is available at all good magazine retailers and supermarkets or you can subscribe by calling 0800-77-77-10 or visit [www.rugbynews.co.nz](http://www.rugbynews.co.nz)

\*The 2021 subs notices were sent out months ago. Please pay your subs, if applicable, at your earliest convenience, as this is a requirement of membership.

## EMAIL ADDRESSES



The club uses email and the website for most of its communication and dissemination of information these days.

Some of you may not have an email address, but can you please let us know a possible email address for a family member or friend that could expedite our communications to you. This would also help reduce the cost of postage. Please contact secretary Ken Baguley if you wish to take this route. You will then be able to keep up with the club activities on a far more regular basis.

## VISITORS TO THE CLUB



Eden Park security will only allow members and/or visitors into the ASB Stand and our clubrooms by showing your membership/visitor cards. If you need more than one visitor card to bring friends or family to the club, especially on 'game days', please contact Ken Baguley to obtain additional 'visitor' cards. Please ensure any additional 'visitor' cards are returned before leaving the club at the end of the function/event..

## CLUB CONTACT



Your first port of call is our club secretary Ken Baguley, who is at times based at Eden Park in the clubrooms' office.

**Ken Baguley's details are:**

**Club office number: 09-846-7241**

**Cellphone number: 027-246-0615**

**Email addresses: sec@brfc.co.nz or khb@ryh.co.nz**



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**BARFOOT &  
THOMPSON**

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**Wednesday November 24**

**Club AGM, 6pm**

*Due to Covid-19 restraints, this may be held via Zoom or deferred; we will advise further asap (but put day/time in your diary)*



**Sunday December 5**

**NZ Barbarians v NZ Heartland XV,  
Taupo**



\* Keep an eye on the website and your email for confirmation of further 2021-22 functions/events, including the Blues home games at Eden Park.



*Jerry Hirst joined the Baabaas earlier this year.*



*We await a full window in 2022 to play the entire NZ Barbarians U85kg National Club Cup.*