

Sport

# All Whites hear from All Blacks

CLAY WILSON FOOTBALL

All Whites coach Anthony Hudson has turned to a pair of Kiwi rugby legends to help bring his football team together.

Former All Blacks wing John Kirwan and All Blacks defence coach Wayne Smith were both in attendance on day two of a five-day training camp for Hudson's wider squad at North Harbour Stadium on Tuesday.

Kirwan, a former coach of the Blues, Italy and Japan, and former All Blacks first five-eighth Smith were speaking to the group ahead of Thursday's naming of the New Zealand team for the crucial Oceania Nations Cup in Papua New Guinea.

An Englishman who took charge of the All Whites in August, 2014, Hudson said inviting the respected rugby duo, both Rugby World Cup winners, was all about further developing team culture.

"We want to make playing for New Zealand and the All Whites something that is deep and special, we want the players to come back and really understand what it means.

"The dynamics of our team are very different. We don't see each other for a while and we are coming from different environments and different countries.

"We need a way, from the moment they step into our environment, they know why they are here and what it is all about, what it means to be a Kiwi, who we are playing for.

"If I can get some advice from the type of people that are the best at achieving this kind of thing and



All Whites coach Anthony Hudson, right, talks with Wayne Smith at training yesterday. PHOTO: PHOTOSPORT

three games against top-quality opposition, Hudson has stressed how important success in PNG is if they are to reach the 2018 World Cup.

Bringing in Kirwan and Smith was not about creating something new, but simply building on qualities the players already had.

"The common traits of what I understand to be a Kiwi, that never say die attitude, work ethic, pride and that underdog mentality of never giving up," Hudson said.

"Those qualities we want and they have to be the heart of our team, we don't want to go away from that.

"We have a group of players that absolutely love playing for their country and you can see it in their eyes that they want to go to a World Cup and make history.

"They want to make the country proud, they just haven't had the opportunity to quite show it yet."

The Nations Cup is a chance for the team to change that.

But with captain Winston Reid and fellow defender Tommy Smith both expected to be unavailable and goalkeeper Glen Moss out with injury, they may have to do it without three of their most experienced figures.

Hudson, though, who has been criticised for using 38 players in his six matches as All Whites coach, was satisfied with the players he had to select from.

"We've rattled the group up and brought some young players in," he said.

"This squad I've picked from now I'm really pleased with, it is a strong group and I'm happy with whoever plays and whoever is out and whoever steps in."

it can help us get everyone into the right mentality then that is important to me."

Forming a strong team culture has not been an easy task for Hudson, who struck up a friendship with Kirwan soon after arriving in New Zealand and spent time observing how things were done at the Blues last year.

The All Whites have played just six games since he took charge almost two years ago and the Nations Cup, which runs from May 28 to June 11, will be the team's first tournament under his watch.

With the winner qualifying for next year's Confederations Cup, guaranteeing a significant financial windfall and at least

# Footy Ferns to face Aussies before Rio

CLAY WILSON

The New Zealand women's football team will face their Australian counterparts twice in the leadup to the Rio Olympics.

Ranked 16th in the world, the Football Ferns will do battle with the fifth-ranked Matildas on June 4 in Ballarat, west of Melbourne, before the two sides play the curtain-raiser to the Soccerros clash with Greece at Etihad

Stadium in Melbourne on June 7.

The matches will act as ideal Games preparation for the Kiwi women, who qualified with a commanding 7-1 win away to Papua New Guinea and finished a creditable fourth at the invite-only Algarve Cup tournament in Portugal in March.

New Zealand have drawn reigning world champions the United States, third-ranked France and 24th-ranked Colombia in their pool for the Olympic Games,

which start on August 5.

Australia have reached the quarterfinals at the last three Fifa Women's World Cups and hold a dominant head-to-head record against New Zealand.

The Matildas have won 30 of the 47 game, including 25 of the last 27, with the Ferns' last victory coming more than two decades ago.

Australia prevailed 3-2 when the teams most recently met - in Auckland during February last year.



Stephen Curry shoots for one of his 17 points in overtime during the Golden State Warriors' win over the Portland Trail Blazers yesterday. PHOTO: USA TODAY SPORTS

# Curry works overtime to lift Warriors

BASKETBALL

Stephen Curry scored 17 of his 40 points in overtime as the Golden State Warriors rallied for a 132-125 victory over the Portland Trail Blazers yesterday.

The Warriors grabbed a 3-1 lead in the best-of-seven Western Conference semifinal series.

Curry, coming back after missing the previous four games with a sprained right knee, came off the bench to score 27 of his points in the fourth quarter and extra session. Curry also had nine rebounds and eight assists.

The Warriors trailed 16-2 before the reigning league MVP came off the bench midway through the first quarter.

Klay Thompson scored 23 points and Draymond Green collected 21 points, nine rebounds, seven blocked shots and five assists for the Warriors.

Damian Lillard scored 36 points and handed out 10 assists, CJ McCollum added 24 points, and Al-Farouq Aminu chipped in 18 points and 13 rebounds for the Blazers.

Curry scored the Warriors' first

# Kiwi star earns rave reviews

Steven Adams is winning rave reviews for his pivotal game-four performance against the San Antonio Spurs, with one notable NBA analyst rating the giant Kiwi now the Oklahoma City Thunder's third best player.

Adams had the best playoff game of his three-year NBA career when he posted a double-double of 16 points and 11 rebounds in the Thunder's vital 111-97 victory over the Spurs in Oklahoma on Monday. The Western Conference semifinal series is now tied 2-2, with game five in San Antonio today. The 22-year-old New Zealander played 36 minutes, including the entire fourth quarter (when the Thunder

outscored the Spurs 34-16).

More importantly, his play was credited with helping change the balance of the game, especially a key drive to the rim in the second quarter as he faked a pin-down screen for Kevin Durant that resulted in an alley-oop dunk for the Kiwi.

"We saw they were over-extending on that pin-down and we slipped to the basket," Adams said of the play. "From there they had to change it, it kept them honest."

That, say several leading analysts stateside, forced the Spurs into switching subsequent pin-down screens on Durant and allowed him to have his way with bigger

defenders in the final quarter when he was perfect from the floor en route to 17 points, and a career-best equalling 41 in total.

Respected ESPN NBA analyst Zach Lowe wrote an entire piece on how Adams had now become a key Thunder player, breaking down the influence he exerted on game four, especially with that finish off the Durant pin-down action.

"In that moment, Adams saw an opportunity to make himself dangerous," Lowe wrote on Espn.com.

"Adams' discovery of a reliable path to points via one simple-looking cut changed the game, and maybe the series."

12 points of overtime for a 123-118 lead with 1:51 to go. Harrison Barnes' fastbreak layup extended the lead to 125-118 with 1:23 to play.

Lillard made a pair at the line to cut the difference to 125-120 with 1:18 to go, but Curry buried another 3-pointer, and it was

128-120 with 1:05 remaining. The Blazers got no closer than seven points the rest of the way.

Through four games of the Eastern Conference semifinal series between the Miami Heat and the Toronto Raptors, three went to overtime. That includes yester-

day's game in which Dwyane Wade scored 30 points as the Heat earned a 94-87 win to tie the series at two games apiece.

"This is one heck of a series," Heat coach Erik Spoelstra said. "Was there any doubt this was going to overtime?"

# College Sport

# St Pat's fire an early warning shot

JACOB BELESKI BASKETBALL

St Pat's Town have fired an early warning shot to the other teams looking to contest this year's premier boys' college basketball league.

They beat defending champions Onslow College in the first game of the season with a physical 74-60 win on Friday night.

In 2015 Onslow won the premier competition for the first time since 1999.

St Pat's coach Frank Mulvihill said it was a great start to their campaign.

"We have had a solid pre-season with the main aim of creating a good team culture. I am satisfied with where we are at this stage. The season is long and we are building."

Mulvihill said winning games was only one of a number of goals he had set for his side.

"Our goal is to succeed on and off the court, making better basketball players into better people."

Onslow College coach Craig Freear said they had expected St Pat's to be a tough opponent.

"They're always tough, we expected that. They've got a few New Zealand reps in their side."

The match was evenly contested throughout, with St Pat's



Onslow College's Luke Kelman shoots a free throw against St Pat's Town in his side's loss on Friday. PHOTO: JACOB BELESKI

finally distancing themselves on the scoreboard in the final quarter.

St Pat's used their size advantage to disrupt the equally physical Onslow side, gaining a number of offensive rebounds and capitalising on second-chance points.

Freear said his side was rebuilding after last year's success, allowing younger players to step into the spotlight.

"We lost seven players from last year's squad. This year we've got

six year 11s. We're rebuilding but we've got guys stepping up that played last year and learned from the experiences."

Freear said preparation for the season had been good, and he expected the younger players to take more responsibility as the season goes on.

"We're sort of underdogs compared to a couple of other teams. We've had a buildup tournament and summer league competition. Basically with six new guys it's a

learning process. Even tonight we didn't run the bench that much but that will change."

Captain Joe Ahie (15) agreed they were going through a rebuilding phase, but said they still had goals to strive for.

"We'd like to get to nationals, that's always the goal. It's always our goal to win the season as well."

Onslow, St Pat's, Hutt Valley High School and Wellington College are currently playing a round-robin, with all four guaranteed to be part of the premier division based on last year's placings.

The other 16 teams vying for the top division have been split into four pools, with each pool winner gaining entry.

After grading rounds have been completed the eight teams making up the division will start with a clean slate and contest a full round-robin, starting May 27.

On Friday, Onslow will play Wellington College and St Pat's travel to Hutt Valley High School.

Wellington College beat Hutt Valley 61-40 in their first-round match.

In the girls' competition, two-time defending champions Wellington Girls' College were handed a 92-66 first-up loss by Hutt Valley High last week. St Mary's College started their campaign with a 94-52 win over Naenae College.

# Nine earn national selection

CHELSEA McLAUGHLIN UNDERWATER HOCKEY

Nine Wellington players are in the national under-18 underwater hockey teams, and confidence of retaining their titles at the age-group trans-Tasman championships is high.

Both men's and women's grades will take two teams of 10 to Hobart in July.

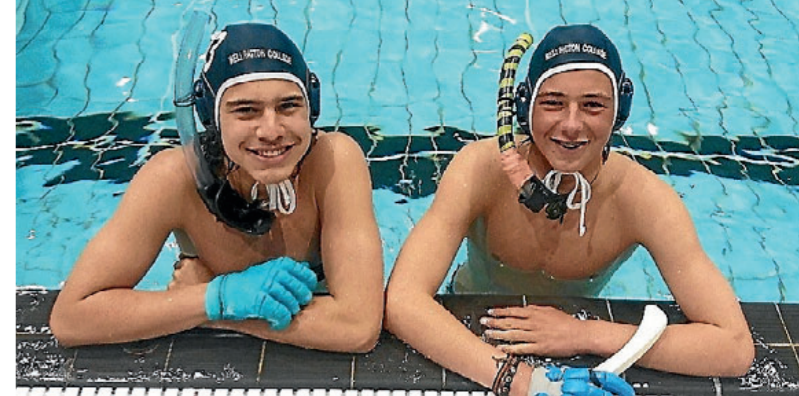
Callum Booth, Awa Randall (Hutt International Boys' School), Moss Grenfall (Hutt Valley High School), Gabe Laing-Aiken (Wellington High School), Cameron Manuel-Arnold, Henry Griffiths (Wellington College), Cameron Sisson (Scots College) were named in the men's team.

Sophie Lawler (Queen Margaret College) and Anastasia Burn (Wellington Girls' College) have made the women's.

Manuel-Arnold, 16, is positive about the teams' chances. "I'm feeling very confident, just for the fact that we've all been training really hard."

"We've shown at other tournaments that New Zealand is the most dominant team. Unlike Australia, New Zealand has a school system that we go through which gives us an advantage."

Sisson, 16, said the two teams in each grade were likely to be even,



Cameron Manuel-Arnold and Henry Griffiths of Wellington College are two of nine Wellington players named in under-18 national underwater hockey teams.

rather than an A and B team.

Lawler, 17, said she was confident the teams could continue the success of past New Zealand teams.

"I know that we have a really good chance because in previous years New Zealand has done really well," she said.

New Zealand holds the age group world title in the under-18 men's, and the under-18 women are second.

Boys' team manager, Sarah Arnold, said the trans-Tasman event is considered to be the lead-up to the 2017 world championships, which will also be in Hobart.

Players involved in this tournament will get invaluable inter-

national experience.

Sisson said he would continue to work hard in order to make the team. "This is sort of a stepping stone towards worlds next year," he said.

"That's the big goal. Cam [Manuel-Arnold] and I have been training hard for that."

Burn, 17, said she wanted to go as far with the sport as she could. "I guess the top goal is to play elite standard. To go into the elite world comp would be really cool. The sport is a passion of mine and I love every time I play, so it would be great to get to that level."

Both teams have set up Give-a-little pages to help with the cost of the trip to Hobart.

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