

College Sport

HVHS win girls' football title

JACOB BELESKI

A first-half goal from striker Maya Hahn was enough for Hutt Valley High School to beat St Mary's College in the girls' premier football final.

This time last year HVHS were devastated after surrendering a seemingly unassailable 2-0 lead to the same opposition in the final.

HVHS had led 2-0 with six minutes to play before conceding two late goals to send the match to penalties, which they eventually lost.

Coach Mark Oates likened it to the capitulation of the Black Sticks men in their Olympic hockey quarterfinal against Germany.

"They scored one and then we panicked a bit. You tend to revert back to type when you panic and that's what happened to us. We wanted to make sure we were prepared to handle that situation if it came up again this year."

This year HVHS made no mistake as they triumphed 1-0 last Wednesday in a tense clash.

It was satisfying to get one back over St Mary's, Oates said.

"It was good to get the result. It's funny though, the joy of winning doesn't match the disappointment of losing last year's final on penalties."

This time around it was the goal from year 11 Hahn that proved the difference between the two sides.

HVHS came through the round robin unbeaten, with three wins and four draws. However, it had not been as comfortable as the results may have shown, Oates said.

"I've never known a season like it. Through illness, injury and school activities, we hardly ever had our full squad available. There was plenty of chopping and changing, and the girls showed a lot of character to get the results."

They only had three matches with a full squad of 14 available, but took heart from the way they came together as a team, Oates said.

They had already beaten St



Hutt Valley High School's girls' first XV celebrate winning the Wellington premier title last week.

PHOTO: MASANORI UDAGAWA

Mary's once this year - a commanding 5-1 win in the round-robin.

St Mary's bounced back from that result to finish fourth and then claimed a shock 2-0 win over the top qualifier and previously unbeaten Wellington Girls' College in the semifinal.

That upset ensured HVHS would not be relying on their previous performance to get them over the line in the final, Oates

said. "That round-robin match against St Mary's was probably the last time before the final that we had all our players available. In that match nearly everything we hit went in, but we still viewed them as the form team and reigning champs. We knew we had to go out and earn it."

Holding a one-goal lead for more than half of the final had made for nervous viewing, Oates said.

"It was tough. We wanted to make sure we continued to play. We didn't want to revert to hoofing the ball or one-player football."

"They were desperate and they pressed us hard. They had one real chance near the end to tie the game up, and then who knows what might have happened."

But HVHS held firm to claim the title and vanquish any lingering bad memories from 2015. In the boys' competition there

will also be a grand final rematch from last year as Hutt International Boys' School take on Wellington College on Wednesday night.

Defending champions HIBS needed a 2-2 draw in Saturday's last round robin match against Scots College to qualify for the final.

Wellington eased past Tawa College 3-0 to qualify top of the table.

WC prepared for Hastings battle

JACOB BELESKI

Two tries to wing Connor Fuli powered Wellington College's first XV past a determined Napier Boys' High School and into this weekend's Hurricanes regional final.

Both sides utilised Saturday's perfect conditions to run in five tries each, in what was a thrilling advertisement for college rugby.

The final score of 39-31 was testament to the tenacious Napier side, after they fought back from a 25-7 deficit midway through the first half.

Wellington's early points came courtesy of two Reece Plumtree penalties, but Napier crossed for the first try after a kick into the in-goal was not tidied up by Wellington.

Wellington responded with tries to halfback Adrian Seumanufagai, prop Qualen Asi and a brilliant team-try that was finished off by wing Ish Perkins. Napier struggled to contain Wellington's attacking threats, but two tries against the run of play reduced the lead to 25-19 at halftime.

Wellington coach Greg Sharland said they were still in a comfortable position at the break.

"The feeling was still good at halftime, even after conceding those tries. It's always a challenge to back up after playing a big final the week before when you've put everything into it mentally, but we dug in and fought back when we needed to."

Playing with an attacking mind-set was always part of their plan, Sharland said.

"It's definitely a big part of our game, to move the ball wide. When we are scoring tries out wide we know our attack is working. Unfortunately we didn't really get things going in the final against St Pat's [in the Wellington final] - there were a few nerves around and both teams were conservative."

An early second-half try to Napier closed the gap to 25-24, but

"We played them earlier in the season, so we know we can foot it with them."

Wellington College coach Greg Sharland

Wellington wing Connor Fuli crossed twice in the last 15 minutes to settle the Wellington supporters' nerves.

Wellington's reward is a final against a rampant Hastings Boys' High School side, which dispatched St Pat's Town 57-3 in Saturday's other semifinal.

They were under no illusions as to how tough the challenge would be, Sharland said.

"Hastings is a good side, but it's about consistency for us. When we get it right we're pretty hard to stop. We just need to focus throughout game for 70 minutes rather than coming and going in patches."

They had a reasonable idea of what to expect from Hastings, Sharland said.

"We've had a bit of a look at them. We played them earlier in the season, so we know we can foot it with them. They put points on us in the first half but second half was fairly even."

Sharland acknowledged beating Hastings and reaching the national top four would be a great achievement for the school.

"The school gets right behind the team when you're successful. We had a couple of lean and difficult years in terms of rugby so it would be great to get through."

The final kicks off at 2.45pm this Saturday at Arena Manawatu in Palmerston North.

On the same day, St Mary's College's girls' rugby team will be taking on Feilding High School for a place in the national top four.

They beat Aotea College 27-10 on Saturday to claim the Wellington title.

Sport

We need an Austerity Games. How about Taupo?

MARK REASON COMMENT

It's Taupo time. We need an Austerity Games. And so I am advocating Taupo to host the 2024 Olympics.

Now I know many of you will think I am being entirely facetious, but I am not. The Thomas Bachs of this world have conned you into thinking it's an absurd idea. They will tell you that Taupo hasn't got the infrastructure or resources to host an Olympics. But that rather depends on your definition of the Olympics.

If you define the Olympics as a sporting competition open to the best of the world's athletes, if you define the Olympics as to the young people, for the young people and by the young people, then anything is possible. Even Taupo.

The modern Olympics has become a junket of inept officials wasting obscene amounts of money in order to bankrupt a city, parts of which will turn into a wasteland as soon as the blazers pack up their costly charabanc.

Let's get rid of the idea of building an Olympic village specially for the athletes. It is a ridiculous waste of money, the legacy of which is dereliction like the athletes' swimming pool in Athens which is now full of stagnant water and rotting garbage.

Why not put up everyone up on giant camp-grounds. Us kids all love it at music festivals, so I can't see much of a problem at the Olympics. It might be a bit hard on Mark Todd's back, but he'll muck in.

At the moment the candidates



The modern Olympics has become a junket of inept officials wasting obscene amounts of money.

PHOTO: REUTERS

for the Games in 2024 are Paris, Rome, Los Angeles and Budapest and you can rule all of them out by one criterion or another. In fact Hamburg has already ruled itself out, before we even get to the vote, to be taken in Lima next September.

And so I come back to Taupo. Now some will say that Owen Delany Park only has a grass running track. Well, what's wrong with that. Retro is cool. OK, so there wouldn't be many world records, but can't these Games just be about enjoyment.

The London Olympics of 1948, the original Austerity Games, chucked down some cinders at Wembley stadium to create a

track. Jack Braughton, the Mo Farah of his day only not so fast, worked a half day on the building site in the morning, hopped on a bus and a tube to the stadium, and then ran the 5000 metres.

War was not long over and the world had a bit of perspective. The athletes brought their own towels, the French brought their own wine and the Canadians donated a couple of lengths of springy pine for the diving boards. £750,000 were allocated for the Games and they made a small profit despite the hand-out of free horlicks tablets.

Since then the Olympics has got fatter and fatter and is now in danger of eating itself. The mayor

of Rio was booed. They couldn't sell tickets for the closing ceremony, despite slashing prices at the last minute. They have sold 12 per cent of tickets for next month's Paralympics. And still Bach blathers on about friendship, harmony, peace and the power of sport to unite the world.

So here's the outline plan for Taupo. It is a perfect location for so many of the big outdoor sports like triathlon and mountain biking and the new one of "sport climbing". It's got a fine golf course in place.

But these are an inclusive Games, so we're going to share the party with Tokoroa's YMCA and Memorial Sports Ground and Rotorua, which has an outdoor

Sponsors dump Lochte

US swimmer Ryan Lochte lost the last of his four major sponsors, Japanese mattress maker Airweave, days after he admitted to exaggerating his story about being robbed at gunpoint in Rio during the Olympic Games.

The incident embarrassed the host city, angered the local police and government and dominated news coverage of the Olympics, leading the US Olympic Committee to issue an apology.

Lochte, a 12-time Olympic medalist, apologised in an interview to Brazil's largest broadcaster, Globo TV. "I wasn't lying to a certain extent," he said. "I over-exaggerated what was happening to me."

Within hours of the Games coming to a close, Speedo USA issued a statement saying it would drop Lochte as one of its endorsers, while Ralph Lauren Corp said it

would not be renewing its contract with the swimmer.

His sponsors' decisions are likely to be only the first sanction Lochte faces over a night of partying that ended up tarnishing the reputation of the American team and dominating news away from the stadiums and arenas in the final days of the Rio Games.

Both the US Olympic Committee and USA Swimming have indicated that Lochte will be punished, perhaps endangering the 32-year-old's hopes of competing in a fifth Olympics at Tokyo in 2020.

The trouble began when media reports emerged on August 14 that Lochte and three other US swimmers were robbed at gunpoint when their cab was pulled over by men posing as police. The incident caused a furor in Rio, where street crime was a major issue heading into the games.

50-metre pool. And how about a partnership with Kathmandu over selling camping gear to the athletes' village

It's a New Zealand company. They could pay a share of the profits back to government. We would audition for local teenagers to officiate, because kids are often a lot more fair-minded than adults and they are bound to do a better job than the mob in Rio who incited protests across the sports.

Why not bring in Al Brown to organise some of the outdoor catering. He knows how to barbecue and he would be stoked to get involved. Ask countries to supply some specialty food. Argentina could import steaks.

New Zealand's scotch fillet is great, but these Games are about sharing, including roving TV cameras.

The team that wins the most gold medals could be required to supply a band for the closing ceremony. So thanks, USA, could you line someone up just in case you finish top of the medal table. And if it really has to be Springsteen, then I know how to lose gracefully.

And then Eliza McCartney will pole vault over Lake Taupo and into the future.

And yes, that last bit's a metaphor, but the rest is for real if only we still knew how to think that way.

Rain has final say in damp test

CLAY WILSON

A patchy outfield and a night of heavy rain in Durban have conspired to have the Black Caps one win from test cricket history against South Africa.

The first test ended in a draw last night after any cricket on the fifth and final day was ruled out before the scheduled start of play at 10am (8pm NZ time).

A wet Kingsmead outfield had resulted in no play on days three and four and when it was clear the situation had hardly improved overnight on Monday the decision was soon made to bring an end to the match.

Play had not been possible since early afternoon on day two, with New Zealand under pressure at 15-2 in reply to the Proteas first innings 263 as rain forced the players from the field.

Almost 70mm of rain fell that night and with the outfield not fully recovered after being re-laid in June, not even a sunny Sunday and windy Monday were able to dry several areas enough to restart the test during the next three days. While the Black Caps will be wary heading into the second match at Centurion near Pretoria, starting on Saturday, they will also know that a draw in Durban has presented them with a big opportunity.

No New Zealand team has won a test series against South Africa, meaning victory to complete their African tour would break that duck. The two teams have played 14 test series since 1953, the Proteas winning 11 and the three others drawn.

College Sport Wellington logo with tagline "Where sports stars unfold"

Major Sponsors: THE DOMINION POST and WelTec

Major Sponsors: FUJI XEROX, APEX print+design, NZCT, Wellington Community Trust

Major Sponsors: SPORT NEW ZEALAND, SPORTS DISTRIBUTORS, Keep Up With Newstalk ZB, THE LION FOUNDATION, Infinity Foundation Limited