

COLLEGE SPORT



with **Tim Barton**
 email: tim.barton@dompost.co.nz
 (04) 474 0123

Determined Donaldson returns for traditional

RUGBY

ZAC DONALDSON has not allowed a broken leg to end his rugby season.

The St Pat's Town halfback will come off the bench in the traditional against Silverstream today, just three months after his serious injury.

Donaldson's swift recovery is evidence of his determination to write something out of his last school rugby season.

He broke a fibula and suffered ligament damage to an ankle in a pre-season match, against St Bede's College, on April 18.

It seemed likely that he would be out for the season but Donaldson always had the Silverstream game ringed on his calendar. "This was the game I wanted to be back for."

He knew that if he could be back for today's match, he should then be ready to help Town's bid for a place in the semifinals and final.

"It was devastating when it [the injury] happened," Donaldson said.

"But I always thought positively. My mind was fixed on coming back and I didn't want to think any bad thoughts, though I don't know whether that makes any difference.

"I'm ecstatic about playing again and can't wait. It's been frustrating watching the team play and not being able to help."

Donaldson has had only a handful of full contact training sessions but played half a game against a Marist St Pat's colts side last week.

"It [the leg] was a little bit tender afterwards but it's all good now and it will be strapped up."

He left a decision on whether he would play this week to his coach, Glenn Donaldson, who is also his

MATCH DETAILS

Teams: St Pat's Silverstream v St Pat's Town
When: 1.40pm today
Where: Silverstream
Viewing: Live on Sky Rugby Channel

father, and knew a bit about his recovery efforts.

Zac had surgery to repair the damage to the leg and ligaments and was in plaster for about six weeks and on crutches for a period after that.

He has had extensive physio, along with swimming, gym work and exercises at home, and also had a couple of sessions in an oxygen tent. But it has been only this month that he has been able to walk freely again.

"He's done a lot of work and done really well," Glenn Donaldson said. "I'm quite proud of him, to be honest."

Zac has never had a serious injury previously but is accustomed to problems with his ankles. "I've rolled them multiple times and they are permanently swollen."

Donaldson has excelled at cricket and rugby, an increasingly rare situation at college level.

He has been Town's No 1 halfback from year 11 and is in his fourth year in the cricket first XI.

He has been an age-group rep in both sports, scored his first premier one century as a year 11 and this year was the second-highest run scorer in the premier cricket grade in the first term.

There is plenty at stake in today's rugby traditional, the 83rd between the two schools, which will be screened live on the Sky Rugby Channel.

In addition to bragging rights,



Talented sportsman Zac Donaldson is back in action with the St Pat's Town first XV, three months after suffering a broken leg in a pre-season game.
 Photo: MONIQUE FORD/FAIRFAX NZ

the winner will finish second in the premierships, avoiding a home semifinal, and avoiding a quarterfinal match against Wairarapa College on Saturday.

A win would also be a significant psychological boost, as the two sides are likely to meet again in the semifinals on August 1.

"We don't want to be playing another game on Saturday," Glenn Donaldson said. "We haven't won out there [at Silverstream] since 1997 but I don't think there will be much in it."

"These [traditional] matches really mean a lot to the boys and are the games that they remember

for years, rather than the normal competition games.

"They are usually pretty close as well and both sides will be giving it 150 per cent."

"Some of our players might want to prove a point, too. We had only three players - centre Billy Proctor, loose forward Kevin

'I'm ecstatic about playing again and can't wait. It's been frustrating watching the team play and not being able to help.'

Zac Donaldson

Fauatea and prop Sefo Numia - selected for the Hurricanes under-18 camp and none of them made the team."

The Town backline will be near full strength, with Proctor, who will play in the centres with Willie Schutz, back at peak fitness, as is Siosaia Paese, who will play on the wing, with Grayson Whitman at fullback. Luke Georgeson will start at halfback with Paul Bickle at first-five.

Town have lost two premier-ship games this winter, going down 37-32 to Scots in the opening round, before a surprise loss against Rongotai, who won 22-19, after Town had led 19-0 at halftime.

However, Silverstream, who have been finalists in each of the past five years, will present a formidable challenge.

Their sole premierships loss this year came when beaten 16-12 by Scots and the team is at full strength again, after injury setbacks late last term.

First five-eighth Keaton Te Amo is back after being sidelined since early May, and skipper Losi Filipo and inspirational hooker Asafo Aumua were out of action for much of last month.

"The likes of Losi and Asafo are strike players and match winners," Silverstream coach Rob Ackerman said. "Tarquinn [Alatipi] and Josh [Brown] have been outstanding this year, too."

"But it will be a tough game. Town have a big pack and will be very physical. They are not a bad side."

The other key premierships match this week will be the quarterfinal clash between Rongotai and Wellington College, at Rongotai, on Saturday.

Wellington College have had a rough year but are another side that will welcome back some talented players from injury.

BRIEFS

ULTIMATE Under-20 team

Eleven Wellington school students were among a squad of 21 named in the New Zealand ultimate under-20 men's team. They are: Isaac Anderson (Wellington College), Nick Bielby (Hutt Valley), Tom Curtis (Hutt Valley), Daniel Davis (Onslow), Seb Hamilton (Wellington College), Vincent McQueen (Hutt Valley), Theo Moore (Wellington College), Tane Rolfe (Hutt Valley), Ryan Sheridan (Hutt Valley), Tyler Titov-Smith (Hutt Valley) and Callum Treweek-Stephen (Wellington College). Six Wellington students - Sophia Clarke-Edwards (Raphael House), Emma Doile (Hutt Valley), Farren Halliday (St Catherine's), India Hansen (Hutt Valley), Abby Liddell (Wellington Girls) and Hannah Taylor (Hutt Valley) - were selected for the women's under-20 team, named earlier in the year. Both teams will play Australia next month, with the long-term target being the 2016 world junior championships.

ATHLETICS World youth

Phoebe Edwards (Wellington East) set personal bests in the shot put, long jump and 800m when finishing 23rd, in a field of 38, in the heptathlon at the world youth championships in Colombia. Kelsey Forman (East) finished 12th in her heat of the 2000m steeplechase.

CROSS-COUNTRY Local champs

Stefan Przychodzko (Paraparumu) won the men's under-18 division at the Wellington club cross-country championships last Saturday.

Przychodzko had finished fourth at the North Island championships a fortnight earlier. Seamus Kane (Onslow) was the runner-up to Przychodzko at the weekend, with Joel Carman (Wainuiomata) third and Tom Caughley (Scots) fourth. Michael Walker (Kapiti) beat five rivals in the women's under-18. Liam Chesney (Town) won the boys under-15 and Phoebe McKnight (Hutt Valley) the girls under-15.



Stefan Przychodzko

Star players live up to billing

NETBALL

THE cream rose to the top at the national under-17 netball championships.

Wellington's two New Zealand secondary schools representatives - Mila Reuelu-Buchanan (Wellington East) and Colleen Faleafaga (St Mary's) - emphasised their quality by being selected for the tournament team.

The pair also helped the Wellington centre team reach the final, before going down 28-20 to defending champions Auckland 1.

"Mila and Colleen really stood out for us," Wellington coach Pelesa Semu said.

Reuelu-Buchanan, who played at wing attack, has been troubled by shin splints and her workload had to be managed over the week.

"We had to manage her through the whole competition but she worked really hard," Semu said.

"She produced a very mature game and had a good support crew [in mid-court] in Milan [Lefaoseu] and Fran [Wotton]."

Goal defence Faleafaga, who also made the tournament team last year, maintained her impressive form. "She seems to be getting better and better," Semu said. "She was very focused and good all week. She led the defensive end well and combined very well with Danielle [goal keep Danielle Tafili]."

Semu was also happy with the team's work in the shooting circle.



Wellington's Mila Reuelu-Buchanan has possession, with Aliyah De La Mare in support, in the final of the national under-17 netball championships, at Mt Maunganui. Photo: MICHAEL BRADLEY

"We took four shooters who we thought could do the job and the team shooting percentage was around 85 per cent and that's pretty good at that level."

Eden Anderson usually started at goal shoot, with Aliyah De La Mare at goal attack, with Ruby Stirling and Charlie Vailini completing the quartet.

Wellington reached the final without losing a game and beat North Harbour 1, Southland, and Waitakere 1 in post section play.

However, a slow start in the final proved expensive. "We didn't have the greatest start and were playing catch-up from there," Semu said. "A slow start is a prob-

lem when the games have only 10-minute quarters and Auckland were strong."

The starting shooters for the Auckland team - Amorangi Malesala and Sydney Fraser - both made the national secondary schools side and attend St Kentigern College, as does wing attack Mererangi Paul, who is a member of the national pathway to podium squad.

"They already had those combinations in place through their school team," Semu said.

"But it was a good final. I enjoyed it and was extremely proud of our team."

"It was a very competitive tour-

nament and we took it one day at a time, with making the top four being our first big target. We wanted to play a structured and focused game and the girls stuck to task and responded really well."

The Wellington region made a mark in the 39-team tournament, with Kapi Mana finishing 10th, Hutt Valley 12th and Kapiti 33rd.

Kapi Mana's hopes of making the top eight were dashed when they met Auckland in the first crossover game but they subsequently beat Whangarei and Hutt Valley (27-20), before losing to North Harbour 1 in the playoff for 9th and 10th.

Hutt Valley lost their first crossover game against Dunedin, who finished fourth.

The Wellington centre team also shone at a younger level over the school holidays, with Wellington winning the North Island under-15 title in New Plymouth.

Wellington, who had national secondary schools rep Tiana Metuarau (East) in the shooting circle, beat Hamilton City 32-14 in their semifinal before crushing Auckland 2 41-19 in the final.

Metuarau and Renee Savai'inaea and Ainsleyanna Puliatea (both from St Mary's) and Salote-Alison Taufua (Newlands) made the A grade tournament team.

The next big event on the college netball calendar will be the lower North Island regional tournament, in Palmerston North, at the end of August.

Wellington College faces challenges in week ahead

FOOTBALL

THE Wellington College first XI will have their mettle tested in the next week.

Wellington play a home traditional against Palmerston North Boys' today, meet Scots College in a key premier youth clash on Saturday and have an away match against New Plymouth Boys' on Monday.

The tough schedule will give the team some idea of their place in the lower North Island pecking order.

Palmerston North are invariably tough rivals and New Plymouth won the Super 8 football tournament this month, for the first time since 2000, beating Tauranga Boys' in the final.

A win against Scots would cement Wellington in second place on the premier youth table, with three rounds remaining.

There are no quarterfinal or semifinal matches in the football competition, with the two at the top of the table at the end of the second round contesting the final.

Hutt International have established a handy buffer, after winning all of their six games, while Wellington College are five points behind, after drawing one and losing another in the first round.

Wellington were beaten 1-0 by HIBS, after their goalkeeper was sent off early in the game, and

'It's an evenly balanced competition but I think we are building nicely and we are really pleased with the way the team has come together.'

Dave Keat
 Wellington College manager

drew 1-1 with Scots.

Both those games were away but their next three games, against Scots, Kapiti and HIBS, will be at home, on Wellington's artificial turf.

"It is an advantage to play at home, though the other teams are playing and practicing more on similar surfaces now," Wellington College manager Dave Keat said.

"It's an evenly balanced competition but I think we are building nicely and we are really pleased with the way the team has come together for [coaches] James Webb and Rodger Gray."

Scots are in third place on the table, three points [one win] behind Wellington, with Hutt Valley another three points back in fourth place.

Wellington College beat Rongo-

tai 8-1 in their final game before the holiday break and ended the first round with a 3-1 win over defending champions Hutt Valley last Saturday.

HIBS beat Rongotai 3-1 at the weekend while Scots almost doubled their tally of goals for the season with a 5-0 win over Kapiti.

Wellington College strikers Ollie Chiaroni and Luc Saker top the goalscorers table, in what has been a low scoring competition, with five apiece.

"Ollie has had a lot of injuries and we had never seen the best of him previously," Keat said. "He's a very talented player."

Saker, who scored a double last weekend, is demonstrating the skills that have already earned him selection at senior level for the Futsal Whites and he made his international futsal debut this month against Australia.

Skipper Tom Schuyt and Tom Withnall are key defensive players for Wellington College and Hayato Takada, who has been involved in the Japanese development system, has made an impact in midfield in his first season in the first XI.

Wellington have contested every premier youth final from 2005 and lost only twice over that period.

The school has a huge football resource in terms of playing numbers, with 550 players, spread over 32 teams.

College Sport Wellington
 Where sports stars unfold

Major Sponsors:
THE DOMINION POST
WelTec

FUJI XEROX

APEX print+design

SPORT NEW ZEALAND

SPORTS DISTRIBUTORS

Keep Up With **Newstalk ZB**
 WELLINGTON • 89.3FM

NZCT

Wellington Community Trust

Infinity foundation Limited

THE LION FOUNDATION