



Waikato win Air New Zealand Cup October 21, 2006

Waikato won the inaugural Air New Zealand Cup final, winning their first championship since the 1992 National Provincial Championship season. Waikato defeated Wellington 37 to 31 at Waikato Stadium in Hamilton.

Waikato scored two tries through Byron Kelleher, as well as one from both Richard Kahui and Brendon Leonard. David Hill kicked four conversions and three penalties. For Wellington, Ma'a Nonu scored two tries, along with a late try to Tana Umaga. Jimmy Goperth kicked two conversions and four penalties for Wellington.

Waikato had finished at the top of Pool B in the 2006 competition, whilst Wellington finished in third place in Pool A. Waikato got to the final defeating Southland 24 to 12 in the quarter-finals, and then a 44 to 15 win over Otago saw them into the championship match. Wellington defeated Canterbury 36 to 23 in the quarter-finals, and then Auckland 30 to 15 in their semi-final.

New Zealand broadcasters to pay back National party's GST October 23, 2006

Today New Zealand newspaper, The Press, reported that New Zealand broadcasters are having to pay back the GST (Goods and Services Tax)

owed to Inland Revenue by the New Zealand National Party for its election advertising. The amount owed is at least NZ\$112,000.

Talks between broadcasters and the National Party were said to have failed.

Crown owned broadcaster, Television New Zealand (TVNZ) is having to pay back about \$60,000. TVNZ told The Press that they have paid back \$57,369 on behalf of the tax payer. "We did consider taking (legal) proceedings, but we actually decided against that," a spokesman for TVNZ said. "The likelihood would be that judgment could not be entered against the party as the debt was actually illegal. That is not to say that at some point we will not be looking to recover our money."

The owner of TV3, Canwest MediaWorks, said that it has paid back \$16,011. Roger Beaumont, spokesman, said: "We are still in discussions with the National Party in pursuit of that outstanding money."

Tony O'Brien, spokesman for Sky Network Television, said that Sky is in talks with National over the unpaid GST and hopes to get to a resolution soon.

National said the money owed has been put into a trust fund and wont be available until the law has been changed. But with Michael Cullen, finance minister, saying that he will block the legislation the law is unlikely to get passed.

This follows Labour Party agreeing to give back \$800,000 taxpayer money which they spent on illegal advertising. That illegal spending was last week made legal by Labour.

National is now trying to introduce it's own bill to allow it to pay back the GST, without the bill it will be illegal for them to break the \$900,000 advertising cap. If National was to break the cap they would receive a big fine. National report that they do have enough money to pay back the GST.

New Zealand Labour party drops in latest poll October 24, 2006

A poll conducted by Colmar Brunton on behalf of TV One released yesterday, showed that the New Zealand Labour Party had slipped two percent to 36%. The New Zealand National Party is leading with 49%, a gap of 13%. But acting Prime Minister, Michael Cullen, is brushing this poll off saying that the Colmar Brunton polls are always siding for National and there are two years until the next election.

The gap is the biggest it has been since the leader, Don Brash, of National made a speech about race relations in 2004 at Orewa which was hugely popular.

Cullen said: "Clearly the poll reflected the government legislation last week validating the unlawful spend by political parties in the lead up to last

year's election. The poll was taken right at the time the legislation was being passed under urgency through parliament so a hit was expected."

However Prime Minister (PM) Helen Clark, is still leading as the preferred PM on 33% and Don Brash on 17%. Finance spokesman for National has been rumoured to take over Brash's job, John Key, has risen to 11%, the biggest support it has ever been.

Support for National has not changed on 49%, and the Greens is remaining on six percent. The Greens, National and Labour are the only parties to have broken the five percent threshold required in Mixed Member Proportional (MMP).

New Zealand First is up two percent on three percent. Maori Party went down one percent and is now on two percent. Both ACT and United Future are on one percent.

Millions of old New Zealand coins still to be handed in October 25, 2006

On November 1, 2006 the old five, ten, twenty and fifty cent coins will be illegal tender, but the Reserve Bank of New Zealand says there are still at least 100 million still to be returned.

According to the Reserve Bank, most of the old coins have been lost in drains or buried in rubbish. "We think there is still another 100 million sitting around in people's homes," Brian Lang, currency manger for the Reserve Bank, said.

Lang said: "So far, just over 280 million coins have been returned, but there are more out there. Since 1967 the Reserve Bank has issued more than a billion of the old 'silver' coins. So if you don't want to be stuck with loads of old coin - there's never been a better time to empty your coin jars,

sweep the car glove box and rummage behind the couch cushions."

The coins still awaiting to be handed in, by either spending them, taking them to a bank or donating them to charity, are estimated to be worth between NZ\$5 million and \$50 million.

"A last-minute burst of publicity may convince people to bring the coins in. It's a bit of a hassle though. Human nature being what it is, people just don't care," Lang said. The Karori Wildlife Sanctuary located in Wellington say that they have collected over \$9,000 in old coins. Sanctuary spokesman, Alan Dicks said: "The campaign was particularly fitting because the old coins depicted tuataras and kiwis, both of which can be found living at the sanctuary. The money will go towards supporting general ecological restoration of the sanctuary. We want to get over ten grand, but the more the better."

Lang said: "Though the coins will no longer be legal tender, banks will continue to exchange them until at least the end of the year," and the Reserve Bank will always exchange them. "We are still getting people coming in with two-dollar notes," Lang added.



An old New Zealand five cent coin.

New Zealand Xtra broadband "unleashed" October 26, 2006

New Zealand Internet service provider (ISP) Xtra, owned by telecommunication giant Telecom New Zealand, has today "unleashed" the downstream lines as fast as the line will allow. The speed could reach up to seven megabits per second. All new plans will feature maximum downstream speeds, upstream speeds will still be constrained however.

Before the new speeds, three and a half megabits per second used to be the maximum downstream speed.

Both Xtra and ihug didn't respond to questions sent via e-mail.

And with these new speeds also comes two new plans. These new plans include the Go Large which has no data cap and the Go Express which offers "fast upstream connection."

On September 26, 2006 Telecom announced the speed changes and Kevin Bowler, Telecom's general manager of Consumer Marketing, said: "With maximum speeds customers may find it easier to do things online that are bandwidth-intensive. Some customers will notice a difference in the time it takes to do things like download music... watch video or send and receive large email attachments."

Xtra says existing customers will be transferred onto the new plans progressively from October 26, 2006.

Malformed chicken dies in New Zealand October 26, 2006

A malformed Barnevelder chick born with four legs and two anuses died last Friday.

It being born with four legs meant it

learned to walk on all fours, like a dog.

Marlene Dickey said she believed that the chick, called Forzie, died because it had two anuses, "...he developed two bottoms, and I think he got plugged up". The chick weighed about as much as a "good pound of butter", and grew feathers very slowly; she also said that "...he was a bit of a laugh."

When Forzie was born and found by Ryan Dickey, Marlene Dickey said: "He looks really robust and strong, he's good, he's just cruising along."

Deformed chicks are often stillborn and it is unusual that Forzie was born alive and was able to survive as long it did.

Mike Brooks, executive director of Poultry Industry Association, said: "They [four-legged chickens] were as rare as hens' teeth and were something he had heard of but never seen." Romania and Saudi Arabia had both reported cases of having chicks born with four legs.

The reason Forzie was born with extra legs was because, according to Hamilton vet Keith Houston, the stem cells located in the egg split into four, instead of the normal two.

Dickey has said that Forzie is stored in a freezer awaiting a taxidermist to stuff it. Once stuffed Dickey will donate the chick to the Auckland Museum to be put on display.

At the time the family had considered calling it Jack-peg-a-leg but instead called it Forzie.

New Zealand school children put fight videos on YouTube October 27, 2006

Approximately seven videos showing school children beating their peers

have been put on the Google-owned video service, YouTube.

The videos are recorded using cellphone cameras from students at Auckland Grammar School, Tauranga Boys' College and Saint Kentigern College and other unidentified schools, according to New Zealand newspaper, The Press.

Auckland Grammar has three videos of bullying and Tauranga Boys College and St Kentigern College both have one video each.

According to The Press one video filmed in Auckland Grammar shows two students, surrounded by a large circle of boys, knock another boy unconscious. The boy appears to have convulsions. The clip was put on YouTube by I0pex a month ago and was titled "Some guy getting KNOcked the fuck out." It had a rating of four and a half stars out of a possible five.

The video was not accessible on YouTube by 27 October, 2006 at 7.36 a.m. UTC, a notice displayed said, "This video has been removed due to terms of use violation." The Press said an unidentified clip shows two girls fighting, which was also removed for the same reason.

YouTube guidelines state: "Real violence is not allowed. If your video shows someone getting hurt, attacked or humiliated, don't post it."

According to NewsRoom the video showing the bullying from Tauranga Boys' College shows three students, one student holding another while being punched on the ground in the face. When a teacher breaks up the fight, the comments for the video criticise the teacher for doing so.

One other video shows one Asian student bullying another Asian, according to The Press.

Annabel Taylor, Family Help Trust chairwoman, said: "The clips represented the worst aspects of bullying. It is premeditated, organised, intentional, choreographed even, and that's what distinguishes it from common schoolyard bullying."

Tauranga Boys' College deputy principal, Robert Naumann, said: "While appropriate disciplinary action was taken against the boys involved in the incident, and none of those filmed had given their permission for the footage to be posted on the web, the film has remained within the public domain despite attempts by college staff to have it removed," he said, "Youtube has continued to support its placement". The video was not accessible on 27 October, 2006 at 7.36 a.m. UTC. Graham Young, principal of Tauranga Boys' College, said: "A video posted on the Internet showing two of his students fighting is inappropriate and bizarre, but not unusual. Unfortunately technology allows teenagers to put all sorts of material about each other on websites."

Martin Crocker, Netsafe director, said that while posting the videos did not break any law, the actions filmed in the videos did. "The terrible thing is that the aim of online notoriety is driving people to do quite extreme things," Crocker said.

Dave Turnbull, principal of Cashmere High School, said that he is unaware of anything like that has happened in Christchurch. "The reality is it could have been any school."

According to Paul Shamy from Stopping Violence Services Christchurch, "[I am] not surprised that the violence was in well-to-do schools such as Auckland Grammar as violence is spread throughout society."

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