

Wigmen, Tigers setting standards in Rugby League

There is more to rugby than what's on face value, Wigmen CEO



MELANESIAN CUP CURTAIN RAISER MATCH
Kroton Hela Wigmen prop Valentine Cullinghan breaking through Silktails defence at Lautoka, Fiji. Wigmen won 18 -12.

John Chow, son of Ian Chow and Director of Lae Biscuits Company listening to Prime Minister Hon James Marape responding to his kind gesture.

An aggressive training attitude, the atmosphere tenes in the dressing room, a sense of rivalry and competitive energy between clubs and players are mere displays of intensive preparation for a week's game.

That is what competitive sport is about and it is the name and nature of competition.

At the final hooter, only one team claims victory should it be a one-off tournament or a full competition for a prized trophy.

And it all depends on how each team, player, coach and technical staff and franchise owner or sponsor plays their very best.

Australians regard PNG as a nation that is devoted to Rugby League as a second the religion, especially those who have encountered the PNG side of rugby league.

However, for two very competitive clubs in the Digicel Cup, it is the other way around.

For an encounter between the Kumul Petroleum Holdings Limited sponsored Kroton Hela Wigmen and Lae Biscuit Company franchise Lae Snax Tigers, it was a mere 80 minutes 'no love lost' affair on the field.

What matters most and a very important aspect of competitive rugby league for individual players is the sportsmanship, and real value of competitiveness displayed by clubs.

Every team knows there would be only one prize winner. Despite the on field hostility, the friendship though, remains a lifetime.

To that effect and in true display of sportsmanship, the two 2019 Digicel Cup grand finalists have joined forces to step up during the Covid-19 pandemic induced state-of-emergency lockdown period by responding to calls for assistance by the Prime Minister's Supportim Wantok Foundation Inc.

"Coming together as rival clubs to join force in times of need is a true demonstration of real sportsmanship," Kroton Hela Wigmen chief executive Patrick Talu said.

He said it is an agreed fact that there is no love lost between the two rivals. Nonetheless, the rivalry only lasted 80 minutes on the field and the hours leading up to game day.

What makes more interesting for these two clubs are that: Lae Snax Tigers are the 2019 Digicel Cup premiers beating Kroton Hela Wigmen by 8 points last year in the Grand Final at the National Football Stadium.

Coincidentally, the two crossed path again four months later in Fiji in February 2020; this time playing alongside representing their country under respective arrangements with Fiji Rugby League.

"However, to us, it is the name of the game. One has to be a winner and that was it. It was Snax Tigers moment and we all accepted the outcome," he added.

Mr Talu pointed out that the concept is forging friendship to set a standard in modern the Rugby League world that there is more to Rugby League than what we can see on face value.

By such an act of concerted support in times of need, we want to send a message that there are other ways that Rugby League players can get involved and make a difference in the communities and this is what we actually trying to do.

It was Kroton Hela Wigmen's desire to land a hand to their club Patron's call for assistants. However, the club lacked the capacity to do so.

"Instead, of sitting back and wishing for things, we humbly sought assistance from our friends at Lae Biscuit Company," the CEO added.

Without any hesitation, the Chow family, spearheaded by John Chow, who is a director of the company, re-

sponded in no time, offering K300,000 worth of Snax Noddles loaded in three containers.

In a word of thanks to the Chow family, Kroton Hela Wigmen chairman Andy Hetra said: "We are grateful for the act of kindness shown by Lae Biscuits and Lae Snax Tigers for donating three containers of Snax Noodles to the Club and the SupportimWantok Foundation Inc."

"The Patron of the Foundation, Prime Minister Honourable James Marape received the items and handed them to the NCD distribution team at the Sir John Guise Stadium.

The Commission will distribute to the churches in NCD to feed the most vulnerable at this difficult time.

"Prime Minister James Marape was quite impressed upon learning that Snax Noodles is made from local cassava putting money directly into our local farmers," Mr Hetra added.

Mr Talu added: "For the Rugby League clubs, this is a milestone achievement where organisers have gone the extra mile in pulling in franchise owners (Lae Biscuit) and directors of franchise sponsors (Kumul Petroleum) to be part of the teams to deliver the goods to the Prime Minister of the country at

the courtesy of Lae Biscuit.

Young John Chow, an up and coming face of Lae Biscuit was very thrilled to meet the Prime Minister of the country.

"I am very grateful for Kroton Hela Wigmen management and players and Kumul Petroleum through director Ben Yaru to creating the avenue to finally meet the Prime Minister and deliver the food items personally.

"Lae Biscuit has assisted with over millions of kina worth of food items such as noodles, biscuits and other forms of support to the communities around the country and we are more than happy to respond to request by Hela Wigmen through Dr Ben Yaru and CEO Patrick Talu to support a good cause initiated by our Prime Minister," Chow said.

Not only with the Rugby League clubs; the goodhearted Chow family reached out by responding positively to assist people somewhere in the Morata settlement in Port Moresby.

No one ever thought anything good would happen to them nor considered being counted. They always previewed themselves, destitute settlers, striving to make ends meet and resorting to vending mostly betelnuts and Port Moresby's favourite green vegetable called kango leaves.

This group of people occupy the famous Waigani Swamp, the far most end of the once notorious the Morata 2 Swamps, a few kilometres near Port Moresby's sewerage plant and adjacent to the Moitaka Power plant.

John Chow further donated over 400 cartons of noodles to the communities and an additional 100 cartons of noodles to Wigmen players.

Mr Talu recalled that this gesture would not have been possible without the relationship forged through Rugby League by the two clubs.

He attributed this generous collaborative assistance from an initial introduction of him to Lae Biscuit Chairman and Snax Tiger franchise owners Ian Chow, his wife, son John and Joe Krammer.

"I used to meet Mr Chow many times during season launching, match day at NFS, but that little time we chatted due to a flight delay at the boarding lounge provided the opportunity to get to know him a bit more than just as Lae Snax Tigers chairman.

"Thanks to Joe Krammer for introducing such a man with a heart that is far bigger than his literal physical frame," Talu said.

Kroton Hela Wigmen and Lae Snax Tigers players and official with the Prime Minister and his foundation executives during the presentation at Sir John Guise Stadium indoor complex

