

# SPORTS TALK

With Jacob Page



## Trophies and one-off games in the spotlight

Good to see people are slowly calming down about the Crusaders damaging the Super Rugby Aotearoa Trophy.

Was it a silly thing to let happen? Absolutely but it's not a matter of cultural insensitivity even for those who thirst for such controversies.

The trophy has zero sporting history and while I'm sure it was lovingly carved, a level of perspective must be maintained.

Sports trophies have always had questionable roles in celebrations, the Ranfurly Shield has been left in taxis and spooned by grown men in

their beds for many years.

Safe to say it's seen its share of amber liquid poured on it over time as well.

In one province I worked in, their senior rugby trophy was rumoured to have been urinated in during a post-match celebration.

How one celebrates like that I do not know.

In European football, trophies have been run over by buses as over-enthusiastic players, likely still suffering the effects of the previous nights' antics, made poor choices during victory parades.

The trophy will be repaired, cultural advice sort and life will go on.

The Crusaders have won 11 trophies, an accident is bound to happen at some point.

Of course with the sold out game against The Blues cancelled, there was no Scott Robertson breakdance to enjoy either.

Though, I often wonder if the rest of the country enjoys seeing that as much as the one-eyed Cantabs do?

Hopefully, the North versus South game can go ahead, if not in Auckland, then somewhere.

Not only is it a potentially good

money spinner for the New Zealand Rugby Union but it may provide the public with the best level of players on the field at one time.

Test rugby seems a long way off at this point with the Coronavirus so an enticing game amongst ourselves might be the next best thing.

If the game cannot be hosted in Auckland, then I'm sure Wellington becomes an early favourite to host it because their Cake Tin is the next biggest stadium.

The contest is largely meaningless if played in front of no fans with the prospect of test rugby

unlikely for this year.

It will be a money loser and will not be considered an All Blacks trial.

In that case, there's little point playing the match.

All it will do is raise the risk of potential Covid-19 and pose the hazard of a player picking up a serious injury which takes months to recover from.

So the match is in a tough spot and short of the wait-and-see approach that we are all getting used to, there is not much more that can be done.

## Fighters bring home gold and silver

By Celeste Alexander

A relatively new boxing team fighting under the umbrella of Picton's Arapawa Boxing Club, has come away from a championship at the weekend with silver and gold medals.

Blenheim's Wolfpack boxing team took six of its fighters to Christchurch for the two-day South Island Novice Championship event. It was their first time competing at this championship but each fought well and came away with top placings.

Winning gold were Cody Murrell and Eia Phoio. Winning silver were Niko Frost, Mel King, Jarden Taukiri Waaka and Luke Radich.

For Luke who initially missed out on a fight, in order to secure one he had to move up 10kg to fight in a heavier weight division. With one loss and one win he achieved silver.

Overall it was an "amazing

experience" for this relatively new team of fighters, trainer conditioner, Terry Agent says.

"On behalf of Eddie O'Brien and I it was great to see them do so well.

"To know where these boys came from and to see them achieve what they did was humbling. I'd like to thank Eddie for the contribution of all his knowledge and the way he gives endlessly; it's much appreciated by me and the boys," he says.

The Wolfpack team formed seven months ago under the guidance of trainer, Eddie O'Brien who runs the Arapawa club, and Terry.

The team currently has 19 members.

They first came together as friends looking for an outlet and found support in one another. With no official training facility as yet the Wolfpack trains outdoors at Athletic Park.

"The focus is friendship," Terry says. "When you're down

you always have a mate there... it's not just boxing we teach."

According to member, Mel King, the team is more of a "brotherhood".

"We are a group of friends that came from nothing, training at the park, trying to deal with the problems in our lives, and come together to help each other become better people all round," he says.

"Without Terry none of this could have happened... and also Eddie who helped us when no one else would, and came into our brotherhood not just as our coach but as a good friend.

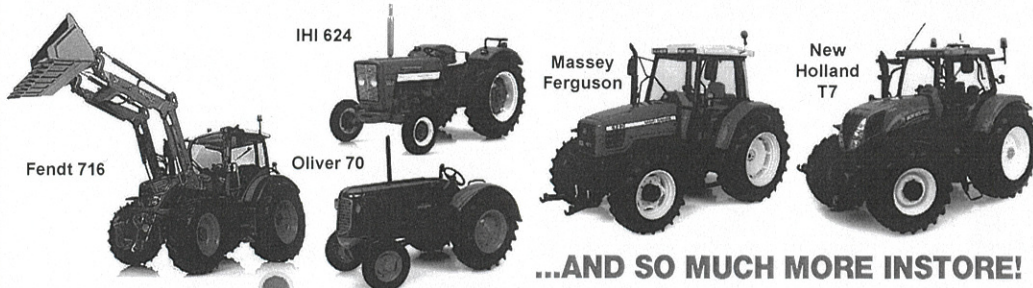
"Thank you to everyone who followed us and showed us love through everything; we appreciate you all."

The next challenge for the team is to find sponsorship and a permanent training facility in Blenheim, as well as training for the up and coming South Island Golden Gloves being held in October in Nelson.



The Wolfpack boxing team from Blenheim went to Christchurch at the weekend to compete at the Novice South Island Championship and all walked away with medal placings. Pictured are Niko Frost (silver), Mel King (silver), Terry Agent (trainer conditioner), Jarden Taukiri Waaka (silver), Cody Murrell (gold), Luke Radich (silver) and in front, Eia Pohio (gold) and Eddie O'Brien (trainer). Photo provided.

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## Sun WHAT'S ON IN MARLBOROUGH

### Wednesday 4 November

**Picton Mahjong Group:**  
Every Wednesday 1.15pm Endeavour Park. All Welcome. Contact Gyllian 03 573 5383

### Marlborough Museum, Brayshaw Park:

15 October to 10 November: Polynesian Dog Lookalike Photo Competition. Entries to be in by 10 November for Awards presentation on 14 November. Request an entry form by emailing info@marlboroughmuseum.org.nz

### Thursday 5 November

**Ulysses Retreads Group:**  
Meet Brayshaw Park Thursdays 11.00am. Ride to various destinations for lunch. Come by bike, tin top or magic carpet. Bring your laughing gear, a thermal to wear and a story to share.

### Salvation Army Toy Library:

Today 3.30 to 4.30pm  
**HANDWORKS 2020 Marlborough Creative Fibre Exhibition 5 - 15 November:**

Marlborough Art Society Galleries 204 High St, Blenheim. Guest Exhibitor Frank Graham, Potter, 10.30am - 4.30pm daily. FREE ENTRY

### Friday 6 November

### Marlborough Quilters' Exhibition:

At Clubs of Marlborough, Alfred Street, Blenheim. 6 - 8 November. Friday 1 - 7 pm. Saturday 10 - 7pm. Sunday 10 - 4pm. Entry \$5.00. Exhibition includes over 100 quilts made by members, the National Hoffman Challenge, two guest exhibitors, Merchants' Mall and Raffles.

### Kidzone:

Fridays 3.30 to 5.30pm, Riversdale Community House, 131 Budge Street. Avon 579 2440

### Salvation Army Toy Library:

Today 10am to 12pm  
**Vintage Farm Machinery:**

Open daily, 10am to 3pm, Brayshaw Vintage Farm. John 5777 442

### Marlborough Museum, Brayshaw Park:

6.30pm The Marlborough Antique Bottle Roadshow. Bring your bottles and related artefacts to be identified and to learn more about their value and context with our resident Archaeologist Logan Coote.

### Saturday 7 November

**Blenheim Chess Club:**  
Meets at Delicia Café, Scott Street, every Saturday 10am - 1pm. All welcome.

### Sunday 8 November

### Marlborough Museum at Riverlands Cob Cottage:

1pm - 4pm Join us to experience a great little guided tour of the cottage, its history and related artefacts.

If you have an event for the next issue of 'What's On' email [The Sun](mailto:office@blenheimsun.co.nz)

[office@blenheimsun.co.nz](mailto:office@blenheimsun.co.nz)

# Boxers pack a punch at Golden Gloves

By Celeste Alexander

Despite initial plans to host the 2020 Golden Gloves South Island Championship being disrupted by COVID-19, Marlborough fighters still packed a punch at the tournament held in Nelson over Labour Weekend.

The premier amateur boxing tournament was scheduled for earlier this year in May and was to be hosted by Raymond Madsen's Marlborough Boxing Club.

Instead, fighters from Marlborough Boxing Club, Art of Boxing (AOB) Academy, and Arapawa Boxing Club travelled to Dixon's Boxing Club to compete.

Each of the eight fighters came away with a gold, silver or bronze as they went up against the South Island's top amateur fighters.

#### Results:

**Marlborough Boxing Club**  
Elevisi Kaloni - Gold (91kg open)  
Christian Kaloni - Silver (75kg open)  
Tomasi Langi - Bronze (60kg open)

#### Arapawa Boxing Club

Eia Pohio - Gold (75kg elite novice)  
Jarden Taukiri Waaka - Gold (81kg elite novice)

Niko Frost - Silver (60kg elite novice)

Cody Murrell - Silver (70kg junior novice)

#### AOB Academy

Karlos Gemmell - Silver (66kg junior novice)

According to Raymond he was "very happy" with how well Marlborough boxers fought, including his own fighters.

"I'm very happy with how Christian and Tomasi went having their fights against tough opponents as the boys they fought were having their sixth fights.

"Elevisi is growing stronger every fight with a record six fights and five wins, and two of those fights were on the same day.

"He's had every fight in the open class against more experienced fighters and will be representing the South Island later this year against the North Island Golden Gloves

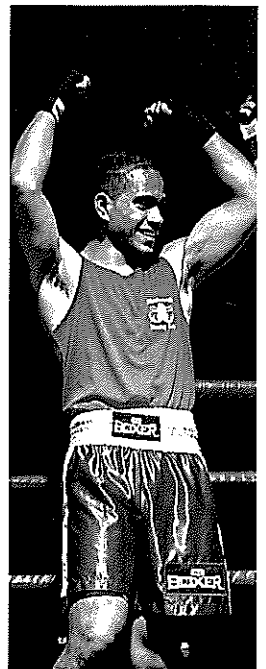
champion. Then in January he will be representing Marlborough Boxing Club at the NZ Boxing Championships.

"It was awesome to see all the boys from Arapawa Boxing Club do extremely well... they are all good guys. We train together for sparring as much as we can - getting our guys ready to do our province proud," Raymond says.

In an online post following the Golden Gloves event, James Skipper of AOB Academy congratulated his fighter Karlos Gemmell for the way he fought and represented the academy.

"After winning his semi-final by unanimous decision Karlos came up short losing his final. Everyone at AOB Academy is super proud of you not only because of your performance but also because of the way you represented our academy.

"Now tomorrow we are back into training as we prepare 10 of our young boxers to compete at the up-coming South Island novice boxing championship in March 2021."



Elevisi Kaloni of the Marlborough Boxing Club won gold in the 91kg open class at the 2020 Golden Gloves South Island Championship. Photo provided

# Wolfpack continues winning streak

By Celeste Alexander

It's been a fast paced and intense journey for local boxing group 'Wolfpack' which competed at the 2020 Golden Gloves South Island Championship over Labour Weekend, under the umbrella of Arapawa Boxing Club.

Four of the group's members made the trip to Nelson with trainer Eddie O'Brien, manager Terry Agent, and supporters to compete at the tournament - their successful second amateur boxing event since forming earlier this year.

Eia Pohio has continued his winning streak which began with the South Island Novice Championship held back in August where he won gold.

Eia now adds another gold medal to his tally after winning both bouts at Nelson's Golden Gloves in the 75kg elite novice, taking the title for his division.

"It's buzzy what your body can do when you push it hard," Eia says. "I have learnt a lot about myself through boxing and it has made me feel I want to strive upwards, especially when you have a good team.

"I smashed a goal for 2020 and got the South Island Golden Gloves! It wasn't for Terry, Eddie and the brothers from the Wolfpack, and also my partner. I wouldn't have reached my goal.

"I'm grateful to them and I will keep boxing and see how far I can go," he says.

Niko Frost, Jarden Taukiri Waaka and Cody Murrell have also added to their successes since the Novice Champs where Niko and Jarden won silver, and Cody gold.

At the Golden Gloves Niko fought in two bouts and came away with one win and one loss, taking out the silver in the 60kg elite novice.

"I felt like the fights went well... I was smiling the whole time," Niko

says. "It was an amazing experience after months of hard training and preparation.

"I'm feeling really good about it and now looking ahead to next year's novice champs. Cheers to Terry, Eddie and the team for the support and the push to get to this point."

Jarden fought one bout in the 81kg elite novice and took the gold, and Cody fought one bout in the 70kg junior novice and came away with silver.

For these three men it was a proud moment to see the culmination of months of training result in success.

"The preparation was perfect," Jarden says. "Having the support to focus on things I needed to work on like strength and coordination was great, so I was able to go in feeling good.

"This fight was a little bit of make it or break it. My opponent was tough; the toughest I've come across and was from the Woolston Club which is what I wanted.

"I'm happy to say after all my losses I've won at the Golden Gloves - that's an amazing feeling.

"A big thanks to Terry, Eddie, Gase, Luke, all the boys and my wife. It just shows us that if you train really hard it pays off," he says.

Cody faced off against the same opponent he won gold against at the Novice Champs, and this time took the silver.

"He was a skilled boxer," Cody says. "I've come out of it knowing I need to train harder so I can come back stronger.

"You learn more about yourself through boxing, and I think I've come a long way since first starting in February.

"I never thought I'd be fighting but now I've won a gold and silver so I'm keen to keep pushing myself," he says.

Trainer Eddie O'Brien, who is registered with Arapawa Boxing Club



Wolfpack Boxing members Jarden Taukiri Waaka, Cody Murrell, Niko Frost, Eia Pohio and trainer Eddie O'Brien (front) pictured after receiving their medals at the 2020 Golden Gloves South Island Championship. Photo provided.

and earlier this year began training the Wolfpack group, says it was a "massive achievement" for the four fighters.

"Looking at how far these boys, and the entire group, have come is huge," he says.

"When you look at what each of these fighters put up - I'm really proud of them all," Eddie says.

Arapawa Boxing Club is the parent club of the Wolfpack which first came together as friends looking for an outlet for their own problems, and found support in one another.

While they don't have an official training facility or receive any funding, Eddie says they receive a lot of support from the Arapawa Club.

"The club's support has been really good. They've provided a nice venue to train three nights a week with me.

"Sunday mornings we train with [mixed martial arts fighter] Gase Sanita and she takes us for fight conditioning; that's been a massive help. We also have the support of trainer conditioner Terry Agent and more recently Glen Cotton who is an ex-fighter and successful boxer.

"Everyone has come together to help these boys and while we don't receive funding like other clubs and haven't had a lot of outside support, I'm really proud that we've done this all on our own," he says.

With the experience and success at two championships now under their belts Eddie says the next event on the cards is the South Island Novice Championships in March 2021.

"We will have a few of our fighters making their debut next year," he says.