

RLWC 2008 - Game 18: Australia v New Zealand

-Match Notes-

- Australia has won the last eight Test matches against New Zealand by an average of 22.6 points.
 - In the last four games against Australia, New Zealand has failed to score in a point in the first half.
 - New Zealand has not scored more than six points in the first half against Australia in their last eight Tests. The previous occasion when they've improved on this was the 2005 Tri Nations final when they led 16-nil at half-time.
- The last time New Zealand beat Australia was in the 2005 Tri Nations final at Elland Road (24-0). New Zealand assistant coach Wayne Bennett was the Australian head coach.
- These sides have met 26 times in Brisbane, New Zealand have won only five times, their last win coming in 1987 (Lost their last eight in a row)
- Australia has won 13 from 13 World Cup games against New Zealand.
 - The Kiwis narrowest loss was 5-9 in 1972.
- This will be the third time Australia have met New Zealand in a World Cup Final

- **1985-1988 World Cup Final - Eden Park, Auckland. October 9 1988**

NEW ZEALAND: Gary Mercer; Tony Iro, Kevin Iro, Dean Bell (c), Mark Elia; Gary Freeman, Clayton Friend; Peter Brown, Wayne Wallace, Adrian Sheldford, Mark Graham, Kurt Sorensen, Mark Horo. Interchange: Shane Cooper, Sam Stewart. **Coach:** Tony Gordon.

AUSTRALIA: Garry Jack; Dale Shearer, Andrew Farrar, Mark McGaw, Michael O'Connor; Wally Lewis (c), Allan Langer; Paul Dunn, Ben Elias, Steve Roach, Paul Sironen, Gavin Miller, Wayne Pearce. Interchange: Terry Lamb, David Gillespie. **Coach:** Don Furner.

Australia 25 (A.Langer 2, G.Miller, D.Shearer tries; M.O'Connor 4 goals; B.Elias field goal) defeated **New Zealand 12** (K.Iro, T.Iro tries; Pe.Brown (NZ) 2 goals).

Crowd: 47,363. **Halftime:** Australia 21-0. **Referee:** G.Ainui (PNG).

- **2000 World Cup Final - Old Trafford, Manchester (England). November 25 2000**

AUSTRALIA: Darren Lockyer; Wendell Sailor, Matthew Gidley, Adam MacDougall, Mat Rogers; Brad Fittler (c), Brett Kimmorley; Shane Webcke, Andrew Johns, Robbie Kearns, Gordon Tallis, Bryan Fletcher, Scott Hill. Interchange: Trent Barrett, Nathan Hindmarsh, Darren Britt, Jason Stevens. **Coach:** Chris Anderson.

NEW ZEALAND: Richard Barnett (c); Nigel Vagana, Tonie Carroll, Willie Talau, Lesley Vainikolo; Henry Paul, Stacey Jones; Craig Smith, Richard Swain, Quentin Pongia, Matt Rua, Stephen Kearney, Ruben Wiki. Interchange: Robbie Paul, Joe Vagana, Nathan Cayless, Logan Swann. **Coach:** Frank Endacott.

Australia 40 (W.Sailor 2, T.Barrett, B.Fittler, M.Gidley, N.Hindmarsh, D.Lockyer tries; M.Rogers 6 goals) defeated **New Zealand 12** (T.Carroll, L.Vainikolo tries; H.Paul 2 goals).

Crowd: 44,329. **Halftime:** Australia 6-0. **Referee:** S.Cummings (ENG).

Australia

- Australia has won nine World Cups from 12 attempts:
 - (1957, 1968, 1970, 1975, 1977, 1988, 1992, 1995, 2000).
 - Australia conceded a total of just 14 points in their pool matches of the last World Cup (2000), while scoring 198.
- Australia has won their last 14 World Cup matches. Their last defeat was against England in the 1995 tournament opener.
- Australia has never lost a World Cup Final, appearing eight times for seven wins and a 10-All Draw after 20 minutes extra time with Great Britain in 1972 (Great Britain were awarded the title for a superior record in the preliminary matches.)
- Australia has won 12 of its last 13 matches, including the last nine in succession. The last time the Kangaroos won 10 consecutive games was from 1999 - 2001.
- Australia has scored an average of 42.3 points in its last 7 games, while conceding only 4.9.
 - Only once in those seven games has the opposition scored more than 6 points (New Zealand scored 12 in the Centenary Test at the SCG).
- Australia has led at half-time in its last 9 matches.
 - The last time Australia did not lead at half-time was against Great Britain in the 2006 Tri Nations at the Sydney Football Stadium, it was 6-all at the break. It was also the last time Australia lost a match, Great Britain winning 23-12.
- Australia has not trailed at half-time in its last 13 matches.
- The Australians have only conceded 5 line breaks in their first four 2008 World Cup matches.
- Melbourne Storm trio Israel Folau, Greg Inglis and Billy Slater all have impressive try scoring records when wearing a Kangaroo's jersey
 - Folau has scored 5 tries in 6 games for Australia.
 - Inglis has scored 12 tries in 10 games for Australia, including two hat-tricks and a double.
 - Australia's all time leading try scorer Ken Irvine had only scored six tries after playing 10 matches. Irvine finished with 33 tries in 33 games.
 - Billy Slater has scored seven tries in four tests, all seven coming in his three 2008 World Cup appearances, making him the leading try scorer for the tournament.
- This match will be Darren Lockyer's 45th for the Kangaroos, equal second all time with Graeme Langlands. Mal Meninga is the all time most capped Australian player with 46 games. Lockyer has played 48 Internationals in total, he played four games in the Australian Super League team in 1997.
- Joel Monaghan is the only Australian player to have played every minute of the 2008 World Cup
- Johnathan Thurston needs just four points to become only the 10th player in World Cup history to score 50 points in a single tournament.

Australian Coach - Ricky Stuart

- As a player Ricky Stuart won three premierships with Canberra (1989, 1990 and 1994) and was a dual international, playing for both the Kangaroos and Wallabies (however he never played a Test match for the Wallabies, only four games). Stuart's playing career included:
 - 243 first grade games for Canberra (1988-98) and the Bulldogs (1999-2000).
 - He won the Rothmans Medal and Dally M Award for player of the year in 1993.
 - 14 State of Origin games for New South Wales (1990-1994). Stuart won four of the five series he was involved in.
 - He played nine Tests for the Kangaroos between 1990 and 1994.
- Coached the Sydney Roosters for five years, winning a premiership in his first year defeating the Warriors 30-8 in the Grand Final. The Roosters made three Grand Finals in a row 2002-04, losing 18-6 to Penrith in 2003 and the Bulldogs 16-13 in 2004.
- Stuart made his representative coaching debut in 2005 taking over NSW and leading them to a series victory 2-1.
- In 2006 he replaced Wayne Bennett as the Australian coach. Going into the 2008 World Cup he has a near perfect winning record as the coach of Australia, winning 10 and losing once to only Great Britain in 2006 (23-12 in Sydney).
- In 2007 Stuart took over as coach of Cronulla. In his first year they finished 11th however this season they finished 3rd and were eventually eliminated in the Preliminary Finals.
- Stuart has a 58.9% winning percentage as coach in the NRL (106 wins from 180 games).

Australian Captain - Darren Lockyer

- Lockyer is considered one of the modern greats of the game in Australia.
 - Played 27 games for Queensland in State of Origin, second all time behind Mal Meninga.
 - Lockyer has played more premiership games and scored more than points than any other Broncos player (292 games, 1143 points).
 - Played in four Premiership winning teams for the Broncos (1997, 1998, 2000 & 2006).
 - Played in 30 finals matches for the Broncos (1995-2006 & 2008).
- Since making his debut for the Kangaroos in 1998 Lockyer has played at least one Test every year for 11 years.
 - Including the 2000 World Cup, 2001 and 2003 Kangaroo Tours, 2004-05 Tri Nations tours.
 - Moves in to equal second place all time with Graeme Langlands in the 2008 Final.
- Golden Boot winner in 2003 and 2006.
- In 2006 Lockyer captained Brisbane to the NRL premiership, Queensland to a State of Origin series win and Australia to a Tri Nations series win.
 - Lockyer scored the match winning tries for both Queensland and Australia in the deciding matches.

New Zealand

- New Zealand has played in all 12 Rugby League World Cups. Their best result is twice finishing runner-up:
 - 1988 - Australia def. New Zealand 25-12 at Eden Park (HT: Aus 21-0).
 - 2000 - Australia def. New Zealand 40-12 at Old Trafford (HT: Aus 6-0).
- New Zealand has won five of its last seven Tests, both losses coming against the Kangaroos
- New Zealand has not won four consecutive Test matches since the 2000 RLWC.
 - Last weekends win over England was the first time in 43 Tests they had won three consecutive matches.
- The Kiwis win over England was their first victory in Brisbane since 1987.
- Seven Warriors players made the New Zealand squad - Manu Vatuvei, Evarn Tuimavave, Simon Mannering, Jerome Ropati, Lance Hohaia, Nathan Fien and Sam Rapira.
 - Lance Hohaia is the most experienced Warrior in the squad, playing 120 games for the Warriors. This season he made 17 line breaks (2nd most for the Warriors) and averaged 117 metres a game.
- Only one player is represented by the English Super League competition in the New Zealand team: Thomas Leuluai (Wigan Warriors).
- Bronson Harrison from the Wests Tigers was brought into the New Zealand side as a replacement for the injured Iosia Soliola.
 - Harrison scored his first try for the Kiwis against England last week.
- Benji Marshall played 18 games for Wests Tigers in 2008 and had the most line break assists for the team with 16. He also made 5 line breaks himself.
 - Marshall has now played 8 Tests and World Cup matches (out of a possible 26) for New Zealand.
 - Marshall his debut as New Zealand captain in this tournament against England, making him the fourth Kiwi captain this calendar year (Roy Asotasi, Nathan Cayless and Jeremy Smith are the other three players).
- Winger Manu Vatuvei scored 16 tries from 17 games for the Warriors this season. He was credited with 105 tackle busts (tenth highest in NRL) and also made 19 linebreaks in his 17 matches (7th highest in NRL).
 - Vatuvei's four tries against England in Newcastle was only the fourth time in World Cup history a player has scored four tries in a match.
 - He also became only the third Kiwi all-time to score more than three tries in a Test match behind Hugh McGahan (6t v PNG in 1983) and Brian Jellick (4t v Tonga in 1999).
- Sam Perrett made the most runs in the NRL in 2008 (428 runs) and he also gained the most metres running (3679m).
 - Perrett scored the Kiwis opening try against England last week and now has three tries in his last two tests.
 - Perrett is the leading dummy half runner of the tournament in 33
- Jerome Ropati has scored nine tries in nine Test appearances for New Zealand, including six in his last five games.
 - Ropati scored two tries on debut against Australia at Suncorp Stadium in 2005.
 - His two tries against England last week give him four tries in two Tests at the venue.

New Zealand Coach - Stephen Kearney

- As a player Stephen Kearney played for four clubs:
 - 46 games for Western Suburbs (1992-1994).
 - 79 games for Warriors (1995-1998).
 - 139 games for Melbourne (1999-2004).
 - Won a premiership with Melbourne in 1999.
 - 22 games for Hull FC (2005).
 - Won the Challenge Cup Final against Leeds in 2005.
- He played 45 Tests for New Zealand scoring 9 tries between 1993 and 2004.
 - Captained the Kiwis twice, in 1993 and again in 1997.
 - Became the youngest player to have captained the Kiwis in 1993 at 21 years and 148 days.
 - Kearney's 45 Tests places him 4th in all-time Test appearances for New Zealand behind Ruben Wiki, Gary Freeman and Stacey Jones.
- Kearney played nine World Cup matches scoring 2 tries.
 - He won seven matches and lost two
 - Both losses came against Australia in the 1995 semi-final and the 2000 Final.
- He is currently the assistant coach at the Melbourne Storm.

New Zealand Captain - Nathan Cayless

- Cayless is the most experienced member of the New Zealand squad with 37 Test and World Cup matches
 - Made his debut for New Zealand as a 20 year old in 1998 and has played in at least one Test in every year since (except 2002)
 - Was a member of the New Zealand World Cup squad in 2000 playing in all six matches including the semi-final against England and the Final against Australia.
 - This match (his 38th Test) will take Cayless to equal fifth overall with Nigel Vagana in Tests played for New Zealand behind Ruben Wiki (55), Gary Freeman (46), Stacey Jones (46), Stephen Kearney (45)
- Played 209 games for Parramatta (1997-2008) - the seventh most games all time for the Eels.
 - Captained Parramatta in its 2001 Grand Final loss to Newcastle.
 - Made 17 overall finals appearances.