

David Smith: Leading Contender for Air NZ Cup Rookie of the Year

Steve's Sideline Study

Thoughts from our General Manager, Steve McHardy

The ability of players to perform the many and varied skills of the game accurately, at pace and under pressure is a necessity in rugby.

The All Blacks have taken the game to another level. So what makes them a team that can consistently produce performances that are better than their opposition? There is currently one area of the game where they have the edge over their opponents.

Over time, the number that a player wears on their back has become increasingly less significant. Players like Tony Woodcock and Chris Jack in the prop and lock roles perform skills that have traditionally been applied by their team mates in the 10-15 jerseys. Their lateral movement and speed (both on attack and defence) evasive skills, lines and angles of running and ability to put themselves, as well as team mates, into space using a variety of skills has been a joy to watch. Similarly, players like Dan Carter, Mils Muliaina and the other All Black backs have learnt to perfect skills at the ruck and maul that were usually performed by the forwards.

With players 1-15 spread across the field of play, the ability of players to be multi-skilled in all areas of the game is a huge advantage to any team as they search for an opportunity and method to break and defend the gain line. Mismatches are what the game is all about. If you have a tight five in your team who can perform attacking and defensive skills accurately, under pressure, and at pace then it is likely that you will have a significant advantage over your opposition. This of course does not mean that coaches neglect the necessity of players fulfilling their role at set piece. Securing ball at scrum, lineout and restart is still a vital and fundamental part of the game that all coaches (including the All Black coaches) recognise as a "must have".

Continued on back page

In this issue

- Profiles of IRANZ Graduates2,5
- Skills Tips from Dave Ellis2
- Diary of an IRANZ Student3
- IRANZ Feedback4, 6
- Rookies of the Year4
- Customised Training:
Samsung Korea5
- IRANZ Resources6

**Rugby is life,
the rest is just details**

IRANZ acknowledges the ongoing support of:



2007 NZ Course Calendar

We are pleased to confirm our dates for our 2007 New Zealand based courses:

Practical Coaches Courses:

2 February – 4 February
23 February – 25 February

High Performance Players Courses:

28 January – 16 February
24 June – 13 July

High Performance Coaches Courses:

4 February – 16 February
2 July – 13 July

Advanced Players and Coaches Courses:

5 April – 11 April
11 August – 17 August

Contact admin@iranz.co.nz for all course enquiries.

IRANZ PLAYER PROFILES

HIGH PERFORMANCE GRADUATES JULY 2006

Francois Steyn (Natal, South African)

- Came to IRANZ on a TANALISED scholarship from Natal Rugby Academy
- Identified early on in the course by IRANZ staff as a "1st 5/8 to watch for the future"
- Immediately after returning from IRANZ he earned his debut for Natal Sharks



Francois says *"We've been working hard for seven hours a day - and I honestly couldn't think how they could improve the course. It must just stay the same. It's really remarkable for young guys to have access to these top players and coaches of world rugby."*

Inaki Basauri (Mexico – playing in France)

- Attended IRANZ in June 2002 as a young lock in the from Mexico
- Returned to IRANZ this year to develop himself further as a player
- Now playing professional rugby for the Massey Rugby Club in France!



Inaki says *"I took a huge amount from that first course being coached by such stars as Andy Haden. But now, having played a few more seasons, I realised I'm in a position to make even better use of what IRANZ has to offer. I returned home from that first visit to IRANZ to be selected for the US under 19's and now I'm playing professionally for a second division club in France. That opened my eyes to the fact that I am now equipped to make even better use of the expertise and professionalism on offer at IRANZ."*

TANALISED HIGH PERFORMANCE SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS



IRANZ acknowledges the support of key partner TANALISED in assisting players and coaches from South Africa, Australia and New Zealand to attain their goals in rugby. The TANALISED scholarship recipients on our June/July 2006 High Performance Course were:

Players

- Francois Steyn (Natal, SA)
- Davon Raubeheimer (SWD Eagles, SA)
- Brady Engert (Randwick, Aus)
- Lachlan Rosengreen (Sydney Uni, Aus)
- Marcus Donovan (Hawkes' Bay, NZ)
- Sylvanus Iro (Wairarapa Bush, NZ)
- David Wakeling (King Country, NZ)

Coaches :

- Stanley Raubeheimer (Western Province, SA)
- Gerard Scott (South Canterbury, NZ)



From left Davon Raubenheimer, Lachlan Rosengreen, Stanley Raubenheimer, Brady Engert, Frans Steyn, Sylvanus Iro

Skills Tips – Dave Ellis

In the last year we have had some wonderfully talented players at IRANZ with a high level of natural ability. As Skills Coach I believe it is my job to help them build on this natural ability, without over analysing every aspect of the skill. As long as a player can produce a consistent and accurate result then I'm happy e.g. if a passer has an unusual release as long as he hits his target each time then why change things. It is important however to test these skills under pressure as this is where poor technique can be highlighted. With the recent touring Samsung team from Korea they showed excellent skills until pressure was applied. In this situation I believe the skill needs to be broken right down again and rebuilt with an element of pressure applied to each stage of the rebuild. This pressure is often applied through simple games that can be done in small groups. We often use a passing and counting game that is very effective. The more proficient the player becomes the more pressure is applied. However it is important to note that if the extra pressure is applied too early, before the player has conquered the first stage, then you run the risk of affecting that player's progress. Ultimately a player must be put under match pressure and simulation as much as possible. If a player has been prepared well he will go into the match with the ability to let his natural talent shine through.

Since all players are different there is a need for this one-on-one approach, however individual skill development can be more difficult in a non-professional environment and a club coach may have to use a more standard group approach to his/her skill work. By gaining a sound knowledge of what is required the ability to identify and correct errors will produce some improvement. However it is also in this environment that the natural player can often miss the opportunity to develop.

"In skill development it is the minor details that have the maximum effect."

DE



Diary of an American Rugby Player

In August 2006, the US Rugby Foundation sponsored two young American players to attend the 7 day IRANZ Students course for promising young players. Taylor Mokate and Scott La-Valla, both members of the USA U19 rugby team, embarked on their adventure of a lifetime to "rugby-mad" NZ.

They kept a diary of their day to day experiences at IRANZ and we have re-printed excerpts from Scott's diary opposite. He says:

"Although many of the exercises left me stiff and sore and tired, this was still one the most enlightening experiences of my athletic life. I look forward to sharing my new knowledge with my fellow teammates back in the States both at the local and national level. I will always remember this as one of the greatest experiences of my life."



No you are not seeing double. Despite not being related at all the physical resemblance between Scott (left) and Taylor (right) was quite striking, causing much amusement for other course participants and IRANZ coaching staff.

Murray says:

"Scott and Taylor contributed a tremendous amount to the course. They brought an enthusiastic, energetic and positive attitude to the sessions, both on the training field and in the classroom. It was a very special course having players from 8 different countries and these two boys from the USA were an integral part of creating an awesome team culture."

Extracts from Scott's Diary

Friday, August 11, 2006

I have officially arrived in the land of mystical hobbits and rings without incident. Now all I have to do is wait for the Academy to begin tomorrow. The twenty-four hour a day rugby channel is more than I've ever seen in the States, and I've probably spent the last four hours watching rugby, something I can't do back home. The facilities are amazing, and I can't wait to get out on the fields. They have three pitches, a 360 square meter indoor training room with full uprights and artificial grass turf, a fully stocked weight room with free weights and machines and a cardio zone, a scrum room, a pool with hot and cold recovery whirlpools, dormitories, a dining area, conference rooms, shower rooms, laundry rooms, a recreational room replete with a half size billiard table and table tennis, full internet access, full accommodation lounges, their own maid service, cable television, professional courtesies, and even schedules for when movies are playing at the local cinemas. So as I wait I have plenty to keep myself occupied, and a lot of time on my hands. All is well, and I can't wait to get started.

Saturday, August 12, 2006

This morning kicked off at 10:00 am, and this will be the last time for the rest of the week that we get to sleep in this late. Every morning from here on is to begin at 6:30, so I savored every moment of last night's rest. After a team meeting and course introduction, we began our fitness testing, which consisted of two 100-meter sprints, a 400-meter run, and finally, a 1500-meter run. After my muscles strained from the 400 meters, the final distance run was gruelling.

We had a sports psychologist give lectures on the power of the human mind to impact your level of play. After lunch we went into technical passing, a skill that I always feel that I can improve on, and always enjoy working on. The ability of these kids down here to handle the ball is quite impressive, and they all seem to be accomplished ruggers. After team building exercises, in which we played a name game, it was dinnertime, and then we had another session with the psychologist. All told, our first day lasted from 10:00 am to 8:00 pm, a ten-hour day! And tomorrow will be longer! Well, it's off to bed now, I need some sleep.

Sunday, August 13, 2006

I woke up at 6:30 this morning to record my weight and for more fitness testing, this time for strength. I weigh 103.3 kgs, and can bench press 120 kgs six times, and do 10 chin-ups. I can bench more than anyone else here, but that means absolutely nothing on the pitch. After seeing these guys hit up today, I realize that there is much more to rugby than how you get it done in the weight room, it all depends how you get it done on the paddock.

Thursday, August 17, 2006

Today was game day. This morning we had some final positional work with the specialist coaches. I'm going to play number 8, so I worked with Murray Mexted. I didn't know who he was before coming here, that shows how rugby naïve I am, but it is an honor to have a guy like Murray personally coach me. Murray is to New Zealand rugby, what John Madden is to American football, and it was great the way he helped me cover things such as, trapping the ball at the back of the scrum, finding the ball in the tackle, and proper rucking technique when faced with clever opposition. The latter included wrenching the defender from the side, but still through the gate, when he has particularly low body position. I was incredibly excited for the game, the squad was strong, and everyone knew their role, in and out, and backwards.

The match was divided into four, twenty minute quarters, myself playing in the first two, then also in the final ten minutes of the last quarter. Never do I remember a game passing me by that quickly and I cannot pinpoint why either. Maybe excitement I suppose. Not even in my first cap against Canada, or at the world championships, or in the NAWIRA qualifier, did I have the feeling as I did today. It must have been my eagerness to impress upon my New Zealand team-mates and coaches, the abilities of American rugby. As if that doesn't sound like complete bullshit, but I very much feel its verity. I enjoyed that match, as much as I can ever remember enjoying a match. The more I think about it, the more I realize that today, the game was only a game to me. There was nothing riding on our team winning or losing, there was no need to qualify, no cup to win, just a game to be played: unadulterated enjoyment, nothing but stress-free rugby. And I could get used to that. We won the game by a score of 19-5 and the rest of the guys are still basking in our victory, savoring our cohesion and teamwork. These fourteen-hour days have had a purpose. They have been worthwhile after all.

All that stands is our departure tomorrow morning. All that is left is a suitcase to pack and farewells to make. All that stands are 29 contented and victorious athletes. All that is left are uniforms to wash and their friendships to keep. All that stands for me is a final thank you to those that sent me on this trip, an adventure that I will never forget, and that I may always remember as one of the greatest experiences of my life. Thank you.

You can read Scott's full diary on our web site:

www.internationalrugbyacademy.com

NEW ZEALAND ROOKIES OF THE YEAR 2006

There is nothing more satisfying than seeing players and coaches who have been exposed to the IRANZ environment performing with great distinction on the field. There are many great success stories out there but three player graduates from IRANZ 2006 player programmes have been stand outs in their first year of first class rugby. The Air New Zealand Cup is a new competition (so theoretically every player in the competition is a Rookie) so perhaps we should call these guys first class rookies for the year.

David Smith attended our January/February 2006 High Performance course at the Sport and Rugby Institute at Massey University. David was sent to IRANZ by the Auckland Rugby Union Academy and has been making the most of the All Black wings being rested for the first part of the competition. His blistering pace as well as his ability to beat a man one-on-one must surely be catching the eye of the All Black selectors.



Jeff Wilson works with David Smith on his evasion skills



James Rodley and Dave Loveridge discuss the finer points of half-back play

Israel Dagg has been a stand-out performer for the Hawke's Bay top side and is a member of their academy. He is still a student at Lindisfarne College but it was not surprising to see him promoted to higher honours. The IRANZ coaching staff saw his full array of skills on display at the April Students Course. Israel has a big future in the game.



Israel Dagg receives tips from fullback specialist Allan Hewson

ADIDAS HIGH PERFORMANCE SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT

Congratulations to the recipient of the adidas scholarship to the June/July High Performance Players Course:

- **Watene Waenga** from Waikato

Thanks adidas for your ongoing support of IRANZ



You have to expect things of yourself before you can do them.

-Michael Jordan

It's a little like wrestling a gorilla. You don't quit when you're tired you quit when the gorilla is tired.

-Robert Strauss

IRANZ FEEDBACK 2006

Rudi Urback (Coach, July HP Coaches Course, Glenwood High School, South Africa)

To say that I was mentally stimulated to the point of cerebral overload is an understatement ... the knowledge and experience gained through your course has changed the way we play the game here at Glenwood. Our players have responded brilliantly. They are playing a brand of rugby that is both exciting and quick and have developed the confidence in themselves and their coach to experiment with the game themselves. Thanks to my IRANZ education, training has become a dream and is a platform for learning, consolidating and experimentation. Whether it is related or not I'm not sure, but each player in the squad has improved on their personal Academic Grade averages by 5% or more - perhaps mental target training and stimulus on the field of play transfers to the class room as well?

Bishop Stortford College, UK

Several of the boys who enjoyed an unbeaten season after our last visit to the Academy have now gone onto 'better things': Several played in the local club's Under 19 XV that won the National U19 Championship; they were also undefeated at Sevens last year and the captain, Rupert Cooper, was not only selected as one of 'Rugby World' magazine's player of the season, but has since gone on to sign professional forms with Northampton R.F.C.



Students Course Forwards Coach Arran Pene works on line-outs in the Green Room

NZRU 2006 SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS



Congratulations to the recipients of the recent NZRU scholarships:

June/July High Performance Players Course:

- **Nolan Grace** (Poverty Bay)

July High Performance Coaches Course:

- **Bob Moorehead** (BOP)

Advanced Coaches Course:

- **Karl Hoskin** (Wanganui)

Thanks NZRU for your ongoing support of IRANZ

RUGBY NEWS SCHOLARSHIPS



August Students Course:

- **Ashton Tuck** (Taradale High School, Hawkes Bay)

August Advanced Coaches Course:

- **Andrew Flexman** (Auckland)

OTHER SCHOLARSHIPS

August Students' Course:

- The Carillon Club, Wellington provided a scholarship for **Semisi Taleni** from Wainuiomata High School, Wellington
- The Harvey Symes Trust provided a scholarship for **Alo Mauinatu** from Border Club in Taranaki

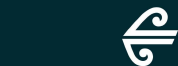
Congratulations to all our scholarship recipients.

2006 AIR NEW ZEALAND SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

Air New Zealand is an important partner of IRANZ and we appreciate their continued support of our programmes. When booking flights to IRANZ courses, please visit their website www.airnewzealand.com.

Students Course August 2006 - Air New Zealand Scholarship Players:

- Brendan Green (Kerikeri High School, Northland)
- Mike Harris (Westlake Boys High School, North Harbour)
- Ashton Hyde (Mercury Bay Area School, Thames Valley)
- Liaki Moli (St Paul's College, Auckland)
- Josh Thompson (Putaruru College, Waikato)



AIR NEW ZEALAND

IRANZ CUSTOMISED TRAINING CAMP

SAMSUNG KOREA

IRANZ recently hosted the Samsung Rugby team from Korea. The team completed an eight day coaching camp with John Boe, Arran Pene and Dave Ellis from 13-22 September at the Sport & Rugby Institute (SRI) in Palmerston North.

The SAMSUNG rugby team was established in 1995 and has been the dominant force in Korean rugby over the past decade. They are currently between competitions and head back to Korea determined to use the techniques and skills they have learnt at IRANZ against their opposition.

During the course they played two fixtures at the SRI against local opposition. The first game was a narrow loss to a Bush Selection XV from the Manawatu and the second game was a much improved performance against the Wairarapa Bush B team which resulted in a 31-26 loss.

Samsung's focus during the course was on defence, the breakdown, creating space on attack and team patterns of play. The team worked hard on the quality (rather than quantity) of their training sessions during the course and they recognised the need to practice in opposed and pressure situations.

The Samsung coaches were extremely pleased with the benefits of the course for their team.

"We were given a lot of new patterns for the coming game and the field zoning and patterns in each zone were a big benefit to us."

"It taught our coaches the various coaching activities that could be used when we get back to Korea"

"The emphasis on attitude and the basics was just what we needed – thank you for covering what we asked for"

"The coaches and players all loved the emphasis on the mental strength."

We wish the team every success with their upcoming fixtures in Korea, and hope that they are able to implement what they have learnt at IRANZ into their team performances.

IRANZ PLAYER PROFILES

STUDENTS' COURSE GRADUATE AUGUST 2006

Ruggero Trevisan (Veneto, Italy)

- Attended our 7 day IRANZ course for young players 15-18 years
- Member of the Italian age grade selection programme
- Part of his New Zealand experience included playing part of the season for Dunedin Pirates Club



The June/July 2006 IRANZ High Performance Players Team

IRANZ RESOURCES

Coloured Ball Kits

As skills' coach for the International Rugby Academy, Dave Ellis covers all aspects of player skill development. With a special interest in vision and decision making, Dave developed the colour coded coaching aids after observing numerous sports over a period of five years or so.

The coloured balls are used as a visual cue for an athlete to perform a task previously determined by the coach. The use of colours opens up a new level of communication with the players involved. Often a difficult skill to teach, communication comes naturally to players as they identify a ball and it's related activity by its colour.

The introduction of the coloured cards promotes scanning skills, broadening the vision of the players and allowing them to make decisions more realistic to their sporting environment. The coloured bibs are introduced to once again build on the previous stages. They bring more intensity and realism to ensure that all decisions are made in a match like situation, however still under the masterful control of the coach.

Coloured cones are used to heighten the options of the earlier stages and also allow the coach to adapt their own scenarios covering other aspects of their sport.

A simple animated CD demonstrating the basic use of this system in a rugby environment is available as a coaching resource. The use of the coloured coaching system has been demonstrated at the International Rugby Academy Player and Coaching courses and also the NZRU Coaching Roadshows.

For information and prices see our web site.



Steve's Sideline Study

Continued from front page

As well as ensuring that your players are skilled in the specific roles and responsibilities of their current position, ensure that all your players are multi-skilled in all areas of the game. From front row props to outside backs, there are countless skills that are common to all playing positions. Training the same techniques and drills with all players will assist with their desire to develop the complete skills set and make a difference to your team performance. This involves players being aware of their functional role on the field at any given time, dependent on a player's situation in the game on attack or defence.

Expose players at training to the variety of scenarios that they will be faced with on game day. This may involve completing the final pass under pressure to put their team mate into space to score the winning try, or performing a one-on-one tackle 5 metres from their own line to shut down an opposition attack. This will not be determined by the number that the player wears on their back but the circumstances they find themselves faced with.

The extra time that players spend on individual skills training has increased substantially. Forwards practicing their grubber kicks and clearing kicks as part of their organized training was historically unusual, but is now common practice. Likewise, backs spending as much time focusing on their role at the breakdown as they do working through their back line moves from set play is a regular occurrence.

Although big in stature, the All Black tight five has not made the difference to their team because of their size but more their skill. Mealamu, Hayman, Woodcock, Jack, Eaton, Williams and others, possess a skills set that is superior to their opponents and it is this advantage that is providing their team with the edge.

IRANZ COACH FEEDBACK

Stanley Raubenheimer, South Africa
(Tanalised Scholarship) at the July High Performance Coaches' Course



This wasn't Stanley's first trip to New Zealand. He toured here as a player with the Western Province side in 1993 and as a member of the Bulls Super 12 lineup in 1999 and 2000. He is now into his fourth year of coaching with the Western Province Union in South Africa.

He says "the IRANZ course has been an eye-opener and I'm on cloud nine. The quality of people I've been exposed to has been unbelievable!"

"John Kirwan was one of the outstanding lecturers in terms of the information he gave us, his enthusiasm and attitude. He talked of the mistakes he made as a coach and the information he shared with us in general was unbelievable."

"I'll be changing my coaching approach dramatically; in fact I'll have to change everything (laughter)."

"This was a total eye-opener in terms of the information coaches should give players. We were taught to look at the total game but now I've learnt to take it down to the simple basics. For example you have to coach the guys how to do basic things like going into contact, what position their legs, arms, neck, shoulders should be in. In other words, look for those specifics."



International Rugby Academy
NEW ZEALAND LIMITED

Head Office: Po Box 12420, Wellington, New Zealand
Tel + 64 4 3829119 Fax +64 4 382 9118 e: admin@iranz.co.nz
www.internationalrugbyacademy.com