



# STATE OF THE GAME 2010



## KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- Record attendance of 3,151,019, and second highest average of 16,412 in Game's history
- There were NINE sell-out games in the 2010 Telstra Premiership with crowds up 5.8% in Sydney (all Sydney clubs) and up 7.4% in Western Sydney .
- Channel Nine Live Friday night matches are up 5.2% in Sydney and Delayed Friday night matches are up 3% in Sydney.
- The 2010 Harvey Norman State of Origin series was the most viewed ever across the five capital cities.
- 39 of the Top 50 Foxtel programs are NRL matches including four of the Top five.
- NRL.com has seen a 45% increase in unique browsers in 2010 compared to 2009 and the number of fans connecting each month with NRL.com during the season exceeded 2 million for the first time.
- Total Memberships across NRL Clubs have increased 28%, with Ticketed Memberships up 25%.
- Rugby League is on track to reach a record 470,000 plus junior participants.



## KEY HIGHLIGHTS

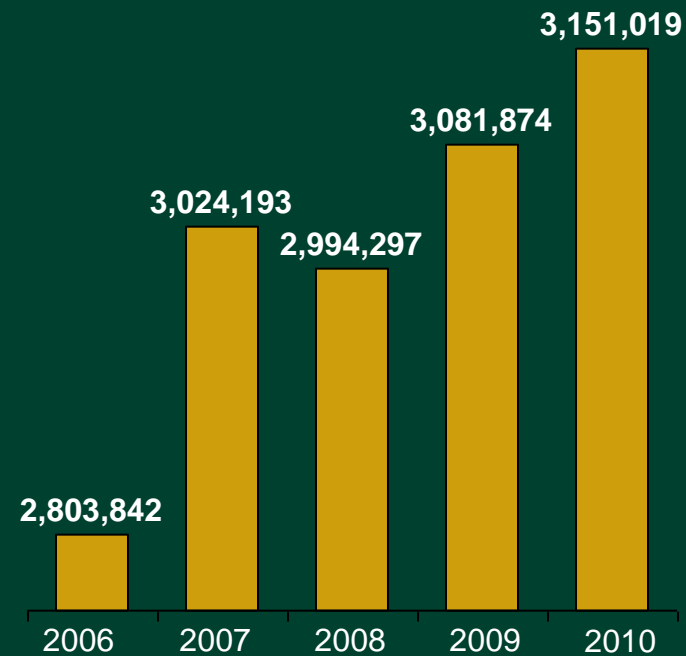
- One Community initiatives expanded significantly with over 45,000 school children participating in Rugby League reading programs as players exceeded last year's figure of 22,000 hours of community service while helping raise over \$2million for associated charities.
- The NRL generated an additional \$3million-plus in sponsorship revenue.
- The NRL and NSW Government entered into a long-term partnership ensuring the Telstra Premiership Grand Final will be staged at ANZ Stadium for the next 10 years, in a deal worth more than \$45million.
- QLD Government secured a three-year deal to host the annual clash between the Indigenous All Stars and the NRL All Stars through to 2013.
- Launched the game's second Reconciliation Action Plan.
- Research has shown increased levels of satisfaction with the game among fans.
- 88% of NRL players have post-secondary school qualifications, which is more than double the number since the introduction of education grants in 2004.



## CROWDS

The 2010 Telstra Premiership recorded the highest total attendance in the game's history, with **3,151,019 fans** enjoying the speed and excitement of the competition each week.

### Crowd Total



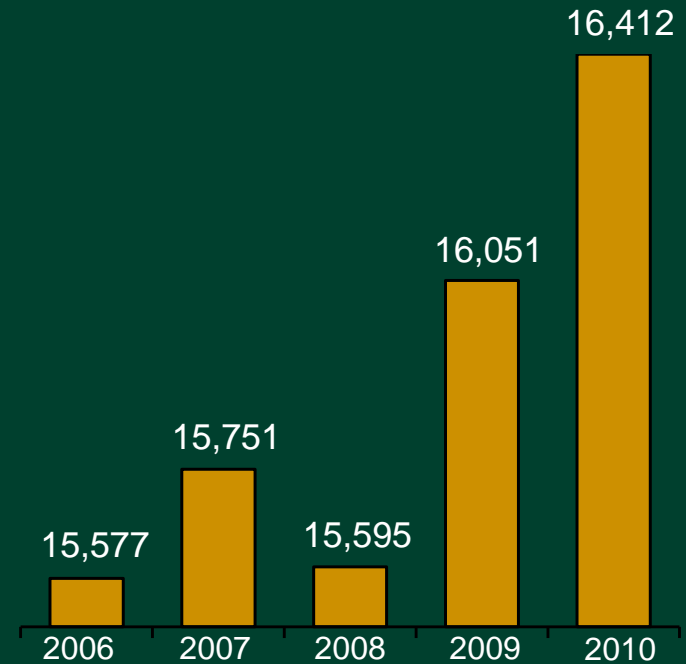


## CROWDS

The 2010 average attendance of **16,412** per game is the second highest\* in the game's history and the highest recorded in a 16-team competition.

The 2010 crowd average represented **2.2%** growth on 2009.

### Crowd Average



\* highest ever average was 16,466 in 2005



## CROWDS

- Average crowds for Sydney (including Western Sydney) are 5.8% higher than 2009.
- Western Sydney was the strongest area, recording a 7.4% growth, again reflecting the passion for Rugby League in the community.
- Average crowds in Queensland are 4.6% lower than 2009.
- Average crowds across Canberra, Melbourne, Newcastle and New Zealand are up 2%.

### Average Crowds



AVERAGE CROWDS INCREASED BY 7.4% IN WESTERN SYDNEY



## CROWDS

### Telstra Premiership Highlights:

- The 2010 Telstra Premiership saw NINE sell-out games:
  - Panthers v Eels at CUA Stadium (Rd 19 - 22,582)
  - Wests Tigers v Storm at Leichhardt Oval (Rd 25 - 20,168)
  - Eels home games against the Dragons (Rd 1 - 18,293), Roosters (Rd 21 - 19,824) and Wests Tigers (Rd 24 - 19,854)
  - Sea Eagles v Wests Tigers at Bluetongue Stadium (Rd 20 - 20,059)
  - Dragons home games at WIN Stadium, Wollongong against the Bulldogs (Rd 2 - 16,177) and at WIN Jubilee Oval, Kogarah against the Rabbitohs (Rd 26 – 18,274)
  - Knights v Dragons at EnergyAustralia Stadium (Rd 25 - 23,148)
- The Round 1 Broncos v Cowboys game at Suncorp Stadium celebrated the highest NRL crowd of 2010 - 48,516.





## CROWDS

### Representative Games:

- 184,464 fans attended the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary Harvey Norman State of Origin Series (0.3% higher than 2009).
- Brisbane attracted a sell-out crowd of 52,252 (Game 2) while Sydney drew the second highest crowd ever (68,753 – Game 1) and highest ever for a dead-rubber (61,259).
- Melbourne again showed its connection with international Rugby League when a sell-out crowd of 29,422 attended the VB Test Match for the official opening of AAMI Park.
- The AAMI City-Country clash at Regional Sports Stadium in Port Macquarie drew a sell-out crowd of 7,688.







## FTA RATINGS

- Regular season NRL matches have attracted more than 12.2 million\* unique viewers on FTA nationally.
- The Round 23 Broncos v Eels clash is the highest rating Telstra Premiership match on Channel Nine this year, attracting an average audience of over 1.2 million nationally.
- Round 1 Eels v Dragons has the highest Sydney rating so far, with 523,849 unique viewers tuning into Channel 9 for the game.
- Round 1 Broncos v Titans has the highest Brisbane rating so far, with 361,633 unique viewers tuning into Channel 9 for the game.



Source: OzTAM and Nielsen Research (\* minimum 1 minute unique viewing)



## FTA RATINGS

### Representative Highlights:

- Game 1 of the 2010 Harvey Norman State of Origin Series was the world's first sporting event broadcast live in 3D on FTA TV and was the highest rating game since the introduction of the OzTAM Survey Ratings, both nationally (3.6 million-plus viewers) and in Sydney (1.18 million viewers).
- The Series was also the most viewed ever across the five capital cities with 6.4 million-plus fans tuning in, and a further 3.3 million watching in regional Australia.
- Over 1.8 million viewers nationally watched the VB Test Match at AAMI Park.
- Over 1.2 million viewers nationally watched the historic Indigenous All Stars v NRL All Stars game.



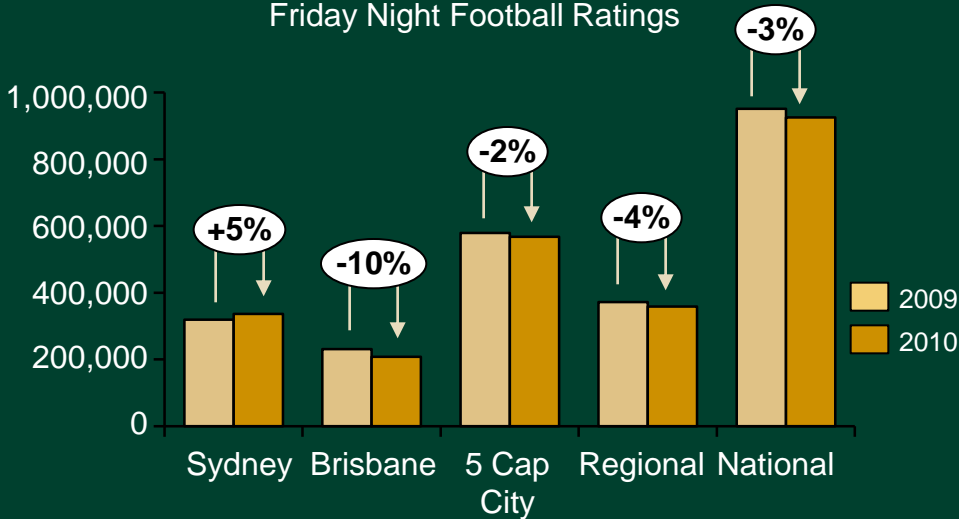
Source: OzTAM and Nielsen Research



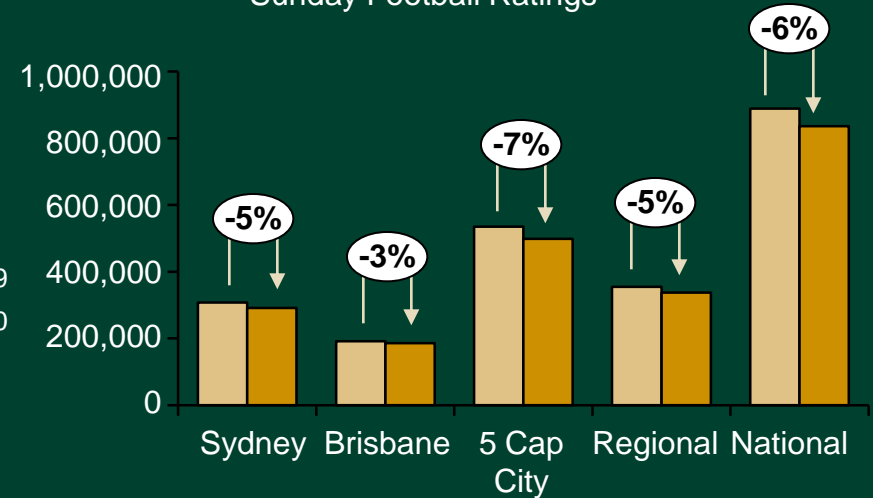
## FTA RATINGS

While the introduction of multi-channels has reduced market share for all traditional primary stations, Rugby League outperformed all other sports year-on-year across FTA TV. Despite this industry wide drop, Friday night ratings for Sydney rose 5% against 2009.

Friday Night Football Ratings



Sunday Football Ratings



Source: OzTAM and Nielsen Research



## FTA RATINGS

- Rugby League leads all other sports in the Top 20 FTA Sports programs with 7 programs. (As at 6 September 2010)

### Top 20 FTA Sports Programs

1	<b>STATE OF ORIGIN NSW V QLD 1ST - MATCH</b>	11	<b>STATE OF ORIGIN NSW V QLD 2ND - PRE MATCH</b>
2	2010 AUST OPEN - MEN'S FINAL	12	2010 AUST OPEN - MEN'S FINAL PRESENTATION
3	<b>STATE OF ORIGIN NSW V QLD 2ND - MATCH</b>	13	2010 AUST OPEN - WOMEN'S FINAL INTRODUCTION
4	<b>STATE OF ORIGIN NSW V QLD 3RD - MATCH</b>	14	TWENTY/20 - AUSTRALIA V PAKISTAN
5	2010 AUST OPEN - WOMEN'S FINAL	15	2010 AUST OPEN - DAY 10 NIGHT SESSION
6	SUCH IS LIFE: THE TROUBLED TIMES OF BEN COUSINS - WED	16	2010 AUST OPEN - WOMEN'S FINAL PRESENTATION
7	<b>STATE OF ORIGIN NSW V QLD 1ST - PRE MATCH</b>	17	<b>STATE OF ORIGIN NSW V QLD 3RD - PRE MATCH</b>
8	2010 AUST OPEN - MEN'S FINAL INTRODUCTION	18	ONE DAY CRICKET - AUSTRALIA V WI G1 S2
9	SUCH IS LIFE: THE TROUBLED TIMES OF BEN COUSINS - THU	19	2010 AUST OPEN - DAY 11 NIGHT SESSION
10	2010 AUST OPEN - DAY 8 NIGHT SESSION	20	<b>STATE OF ORIGIN NSW V QLD 2ND - POST MATCH</b>

Source: OzTAM and Nielsen Research



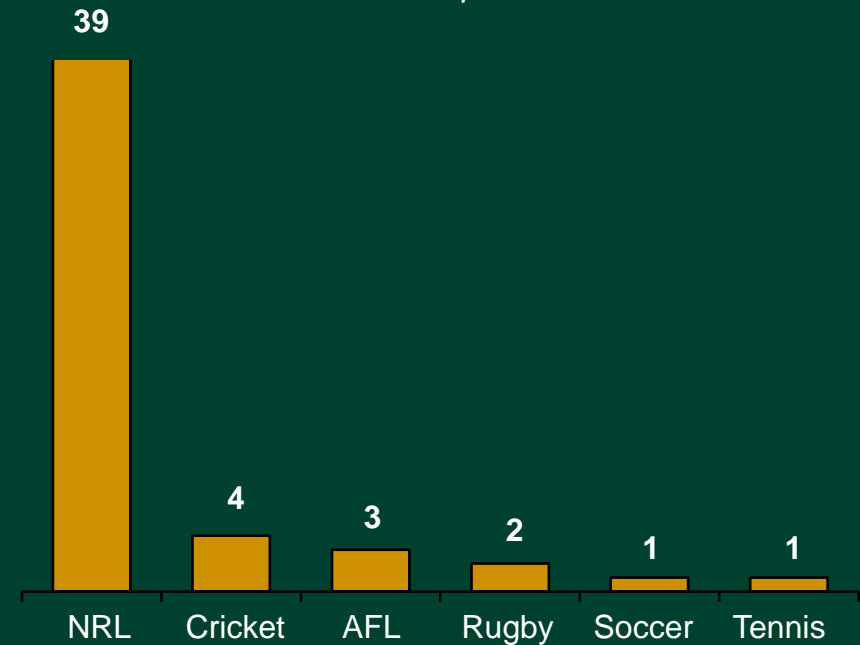
## SUBSCRIPTION TV RATINGS

### Highlights:

- The Telstra Premiership demonstrated its power on Subscription TV, claiming 39 of the Top 50 programs so far in 2010.
- The NRL has 4 of the Top 5 Foxtel programs with the French Open Women's Final claiming the only non-Rugby League place, finishing third.
- The Round 21 Eels v Roosters game (5:30pm Super Saturday) set the record for the highest rating Fox Sports game in NRL Premiership history, enthralling 360,633 viewers.

## 2010 Top 50 Programs on Foxtel

As at 6<sup>th</sup> September 2010



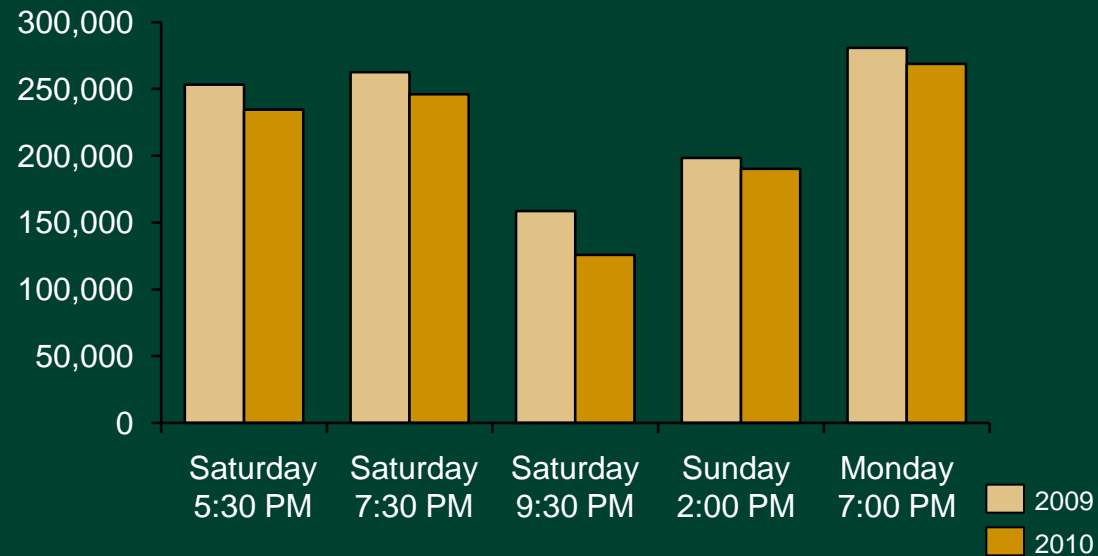
Source: OzTAM and Nielsen Research



## SUBSCRIPTION TV RATINGS

- NRL remains the most dominant sport on Fox Sports across all time slots.
- Changes to the OzTAM Ratings panel have affected year-on-year comparisons between 2009 and 2010 across all sports.

### Fox Sports Average Ratings



Source: OzTAM and Nielsen Research





## RADIO

- Radio 2GB continued its domination in the Sydney market with more than 234,000 unique listeners tuning in to Rugby League every weekend to date in 2010.
- Friday Night Football on 2GB claimed 12.9% of the total radio audience in 2010 to date.
- Through 2GB, ABC and the streaming of ABC and Triple M match broadcasts on NRL.com, Rugby League matches are now available across Australia and internationally.

*Source: News and Radio Ratings S1-5 2010, all people 10+*



## NEW MEDIA

- NRL.com has attracted a 45% increase in unique browsers in 2010 compared to 2009. NRL.com is now the second-most visited sports site in Australia according to 2010 Nielsen Market Intelligence.
- The number of fans connecting each month with NRL.com during the season broke the 2 million barrier for the first time, in April 2010, and remained there through the season.
- The NRL Club Network expanded in 2010 to produce 2,000-plus video streams along with player interviews and player blogs across 14 official club sites, 2 unofficial club sites, a new One Community site and the NSWRL and QRL sites.
- Record numbers of fans are visiting their club sites, with a monthly average of 690,000 unique browsers to the network in 2010 – a 70% increase on 2009.
- The number of times fans viewed videos across the NRL Club Network doubled on last year's record, with 2.4 million viewers in 2010.



## NEW MEDIA

- The Toyota NRL Dream Team competition has seen a 120% increase in participants from 2009 to 2010.
- As well as providing the latest news, previews, official team and injury lists, NRL.com now features regular editorial pieces from Peter Sterling with his audience rising above 50,000 people each week.
- The Harvey Norman Rugby League All Stars broke new ground in the summer months, with the first ever public voting of representative teams in Australian sport. More than 50,000 votes were cast online as fans took pride in selecting their team.
- In February, NRL.com attracted over 500,000 unique browsers, a 123% increase on unique browsers against February 2009, with similar growth recorded for both December 2009 and January 2010.
- NRL.com gave fans direct access to coaches Wayne Bennett and Neil Henry and simultaneously streamed the match live online and to mobile devices.



## MEMBERSHIP

- Total Memberships across NRL clubs have increased by 28% in 2010, with Ticketed Memberships up 25% and Non-Ticketed Memberships up 41%.
- Blatchy's Blues and Maroon Crusade supporter numbers have more than doubled, with the groups reaching 7,775 and 1,972 supporters respectively for Game One of the Harvey Norman State of Origin Series and 6,335 and 2,796 for Game Three.
- 71,424 Junior Rugby League players activated a junior pass to access NRL club games, with 47,776 junior pass holders going on to become part of the NSW 'Born to be Blue' supporter group.





## Total Membership

Club	2010	2009	% change
Wests Tigers	6583	3259	102%
Eels	11133	5572	100%
Bulldogs	12009	6659	80%
Dragons	15711	10869	45%
Panthers	4761	3320	43%
Raiders	6191	4765	30%
Sea Eagles	5468	4242	29%
Knights	8485	6746	26%
Rabbitohs	18716	15000	25%
Sharks	4873	4047	20%
Broncos	14179	12285	15%
Storm	10360	9108	14%
Roosters	6038	5623	7%
Titans	5441	5188	5%
Cowboys	9410	9042	4%
Warriors	4832	6759	-29%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>144,190</b>	<b>112,484</b>	<b>28%</b>



## Total Ticketed Membership

Club	2010	2009	% change
Bulldogs	10,011	5,415	85%
Wests Tigers	5,740	3,259	76%
Eels	6,982	4,611	51%
Panthers	3,911	2,620	49%
Knights	6,985	4,974	40%
Dragons	12,115	8,725	39%
Raiders	5,004	3,658	37%
Rabbitohs	11,649	8,614	35%
Roosters	4,072	3,258	25%
Sharks	3,528	2,875	23%
Storm	9,698	7,939	22%
Sea Eagles	3,399	2,941	16%
Broncos	13,239	11,900	11%
Cowboys	8,005	8,364	-4%
Titans	4,669	5,058	-8%
Warriors	4,832	6,759	-29%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>113,839</b>	<b>90,970</b>	<b>25%</b>





## MARKET RESEARCH

The NRL continued its extensive research\* in 2010 with the following endorsements from Rugby League supporters:

- The number of people claiming to have Interest in Rugby League has increased.
- Satisfaction with off the field is now up to 5.7 (from 5.2 in 2009) while on the field is steady at 7.3 (*Scale: 1 being least satisfied to 10 being most satisfied*)
- Supporters' likelihood of attending games in the future is 8.0 which is up from last year's 7.8. (*Scale: 1 being least likely to attend to 10 being most likely*)
- 55% of supporters say the game-day experience is improving (up from 51% last season).
- Support for two referees among Rugby League fans has increased from 51% to 58%.

Independent research conducted by Repucom International identified Rugby League fans as being more passionate towards their game than those that identify themselves as fans of other sports.

\* Source: Enhance Research (Figures accurate as at 3/09/10)



## SPONSORSHIP

The NRL has this year secured both new sponsorship contracts and renewed a number of key long-term partnerships which have generated an additional \$3million-plus in revenue.

### New Sponsorships

- Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations – Indigenous All Stars
- Home Timber and Hardware – Home Timber & Hardware Sunday Football
- OPSM – NRL Referees
- Jetstar – Indigenous All Stars and NRL All Stars
- Bailey Ladders – Official naming rights to the Telstra Premiership Bailey Ladder and City Origin team





## SPONSORSHIP

### Renewals and Extensions

- Coca-Cola – match ball for Telstra Premiership, Toyota Cup, State of Origin, Test Match and Rugby League All Stars and sports drinks sponsor of the NSW Blues, XXXX Maroons and VB Kangaroos.
- AAMI – NRL Referees, City-Country, CRL Country Championships and referees for Rugby League All Stars
- Tabcorp – NRL, Kangaroos and State of Origin
- Harvey Norman – Rugby League All Stars, Women in League, Backyard League and One Community's 'Eat Well, Play Well, Stay Well' program
- KENO – Super Saturday
- Bundaberg Rum – Friday Night Football



## LICENSING

- Mid-year figures show a mix of NSW and Queensland clubs as the top merchandise clubs for the first half of the season, with the Eels leading the way, followed closely by the Rabbitohs, Broncos, Dragons and Titans.
- Figures also show a growth of 8% against the same period in 2009 (with 2010 mid-year figures up 11% on 2009).
- This result follows a strong 2009 End of Year result, where Licensing overcame the global financial downturn to finish 15% up on the previous year (2008).





## LICENSING

- Highlights so far this year include:
  - Player Collector Cards, for which demand is stronger than ever. The 2010 program expanded into Queensland through the Courier Mail and included special cards featuring 12 greats from both NSW and QLD to celebrate 30 Years of Origin.
  - AMF Bowling launched a 26-week competition of NRL Bowling, in line with the Telstra Premiership, inviting fans to play as their favourite team and collect an NRL club branded bowling ball at the end of the competition.
  - The newest craze to hit the market is the NRL Piggy Banks, with the first shipment pre-sold before the Piggy Banks reached the warehouse.





## TELSTRA PREMIERSHIP GRAND FINAL WEEK

The NRL and NSW Government entered into a long-term partnership ensuring the Telstra Premiership Grand Final will be staged at ANZ Stadium for the next 10 years, in a deal worth more than \$45million.

As part of the historic agreement, Rugby League fans will enjoy a week-long Telstra Premiership Grand Final Festival in Sydney with events including:

- *One Community Awards*, recognising the game's unsung heroes and, for the first time held in Telstra Premiership Grand Final Week
- *The Men of League Ball*, honouring past and present players
- *Inaugural Members Grand Final Party*
- *Sydney Harbour Bridge Pylons projection*
- *Telstra Premiership Grand Final Breakfast*
- *Carbine Club Telstra Premiership Grand Final Lunch*
- *Telstra Premiership Grand Final Fan Party*, a fan day including interactive activities and entertainment
- Telstra Premiership Grand Final street BBQs to be held in the heartlands of the Grand Final teams
- *Telstra Premiership Grand Final*





## ONE COMMUNITY

One Community's mission of using the profile of Rugby League to make a positive difference to peoples' lives has seen it break new ground in 2010.

Highlights include:

- **Community Carnival**, a week-long annual celebration in which 500 players and staff from all 16 clubs took important health and well-being messages to 100,000 children in 400 schools and 78 communities across Australia and New Zealand.
- NRL players and One Community ambassadors have so far this year spent in excess of 22,000 hours in the community – which is on par with the 2009 end-of-year figure – through activities including school reading sessions, hospital visits, coaching clinics, junior carnivals and One Community and club community events.



- Launch of Rugby League Reads, an innovative new program combining children's interest in Rugby League with classroom magazines, teaching resources and home readers which feature the 16 NRL clubs.
- The magazines have already been used by 45,000 Year 3-6 students at 150-plus schools nationwide, with 400 homes and schools using the home readers. Feedback includes:

*"Teachers love practical and helpful resources and Rugby League Reads is certainly both of these and more!"*

*"The teaching activities are enjoyed by the children as they provide an extensive variety of activities that suit different learning styles and ranges of ability."*

*"Not only is it a wonderful resource the students in my class are asking me every day if they can read the magazine in their silent reading time."*

- 11 schools are also involved in research to assess the benefits of the resources.



- The most comprehensive **Harvey Norman Women in League** program since the initiative began in 2007.
- 1,000 female players, employees, officials and administrators joined NRL players at events in Rockhampton, Dubbo, Sydney and, for the first time, Auckland.
- The Sydney event incorporated a leadership workshop for female volunteers.
- The events culminated in the Harvey Norman Women in League Round (Round 16) which saw NRL and grass-roots clubs transform themselves in pink and support the program's charity partner, the McGrath Foundation.
- Parramatta's Nathan Hindmarsh was named the **Harvey Norman Women in League Favourite Son**, awarded to a player who acts as a true role model to younger players and whose off-field characteristics embody the values of the Rugby League community.



- The **Learn. Earn. Legend! Close the Gap Round** (Round 24), annual **Reconciliation Cup** game and 'Learn. Earn. Legend!' campaign in partnership with the Department of Education, Employment & Workplace Relations continued to support Rugby League's commitment to Indigenous and Torres Strait Islander communities.
- The NRL and NRL clubs have raised close to **\$2 million for charity**, including Rugby League's new One Community charity partners:
  - *Australian Literacy & Numeracy Foundation*, partnering Rugby League Reads and Learning With League education initiatives
  - *Life Education*, partnering Eat Well, Play Well, Stay Well and Dream Believe Achieve
  - *Australian Red Cross Blood Service*, 'Donate for your State' partnering the Harvey Norman State of Origin Series
  - *Cancer Council*, Call To Arms partnering the game's grassroots; also partnering the Telstra Premiership Finals Series
  - *McGrath Foundation*, partnering Harvey Norman Women in League
  - *Men of League Foundation*, partnering Heritage Round
  - *White Ribbon Foundation*, partnering the Kangaroos







- The **Good Guy of the Month** award has so far this year recognised five players and the inaugural Good Girl of the Month to coincide with the Women in League Round. Initiated in 2009, the award recognises the significant community work undertaken by NRL players throughout the Telstra Premiership season.
- Nominees for the **2010 Ken Stephen Medal** for outstanding community service are: Aaron Heremaia (Warriors), Andrew Ryan (Bulldogs), Anthony Cherrington (Roosters), Chris Heighington (Wests Tigers), Corey Parker (Broncos), David Williams (Sea Eagles), Jarrod Mullen (Knights), Luke Priddis (Dragons), Preston Campbell (Titans), Petero Civoniceva (Panthers), Reece Williams (Sharks), Ryan Hoffman (Storm), Scott Bolton (Cowboys), Terry Campese (Raiders), Tim Mannah (Eels).



## PARTICIPATION

- Rugby League is on track to create a new record with more than 470,000 children expected to participate in the game across clubs and schools in 2010, surpassing last year's record of 456,142 registrations.
- Junior registrations for 10-18 years age groups are on track to create a new participation record, with almost 90,000 registrations.
- Female participation has increased 11% in 2010 to 4,362.
- Interest in the game at entry age levels is unprecedented in 2010, with 4-12 years age group already at 72,309 registrations, compared to 71,269 at the end of last year.



*Figures current as at 31 July 2010*





## PARTICIPATION

- 54,470 school students have so far been engaged in One Community programs in the classroom including 'Eat Well, Play Well, Stay Well' and 'Rugby League Reads' - up 13% on 2009.
- More school students participated in regular competitions and competitive Gala Days than ever before.
- Participation in Primary and High School based programs is on track to engage over one million school students in 2010, with the game already engaging 727,038 students (up 7% on 2009), including over 70,000 school students participating in the five-session module of the new Harvey Norman Backyard League program.
- Over 100,000 students in both Primary and High Schools participated in regular school competitions of six rounds or more (up 13% on 2009).

*Figure current as at 31<sup>st</sup> July 2010*



## WESTERN SYDNEY ACADEMY

- 2010 player participation statistics have confirmed that Western Sydney continues to be the heartland of Rugby League, accounting for 60% of all participants in the Greater Sydney region.
- Parramatta's Nathan Hindmarsh signed on as a key adviser and ambassador of the Integral Energy NSWRL Western Sydney Academy.
- In partnership with the Children's Hospital at Westmead, the Academy is undertaking a 'Weight & Age' project for 12 year olds at 55kg, to measure the impact of varying sizes among junior Rugby League players on injury and to consider the opportunities to introduce Weight & Age competitions.
- A Positional Camp focusing on skill development for fullbacks, five-eighths, halves and hookers was held at St Gregory's College in Campbelltown.
- A Learning with League Centre was established at Parramatta Stadium and will deliver the game's Eat Well, Play Well, Stay Well program to primary school children from across the Parramatta region.
- The increased involvement of Indigenous players led to the establishment of the Koori Cup tournament for Under 15s and Under 16s.



## RUGBY LEAGUE ALL STARS

- The Harvey Norman Rugby League All Stars has become the centrepiece of Rugby League's recognition of and commitment to Indigenous Australia.
- The inaugural match attracted a sell-out crowd of 26,687 and a live TV audience of 1.292 million viewers.
- It also broke new ground for fan engagement, with 50,000 supporters becoming online selectors to choose both teams.





## RUGBY LEAGUE ALL STARS

- The All Stars is continuing to deliver a lasting, positive impact on communities across Australia with \$1.5 million raised going to NRL club and One Community programs with a particular focus on Indigenous issues.
- The success of the All Stars has seen the NRL and Queensland Events partner to host the event in Queensland for 2011-2013, including a new Indigenous Festival to coincide with the 2011 game on the Gold Coast.
- Australian Government launched “Learn.Earn.Legend!” program with the All Stars game - the program encourages and supports young Indigenous Australians to stay at school so they can get a job and be a legend for themselves, their family and their community.



## RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN

- Rugby League reinforced its commitment to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with the launch of the game's second ***Reconciliation Action Plan***, which remains the only plan registered with Reconciliation Australia by any sport in Australia.
- The plan targets Indigenous employment, education, health and sporting opportunities under the key areas of Relationships, Respect and Opportunities and includes specific obligations for tracking and reporting progress.
- The RAP forms a key part of Rugby League's strategic plan and reflects its core values of Pride, Decency, Innovation, Community Spirit, Opportunity and Inclusiveness.
- Rugby League in 2008 became the first national sporting body to commit to a RAP with Reconciliation Australia.

## CULTURAL AWARENESS

- The ARL Indigenous Council, NRL and ARL announced a range of game-wide measures to promote cultural awareness and address racial vilification issues.
- The new measures follow an independent review by the Australian Human Rights Commission of Rugby League's vilification procedures which included consultation with the ARL, NRL and RLPA.
- The new measures include:
  - Cultural Support Officers identified within each NRL club
  - Cultural awareness training reinforced across the game, with suspensions, fines and the compulsory investigation of all vilification issues
  - Zero tolerance to all forms of vilification reinforced through codes of conduct from the grass-roots to elite teams and through coaching and refereeing accreditation courses



## EDUCATION & WELFARE

The NRL's Education & Welfare Department provides NRL and Toyota Cup players with a balanced program that not only enhances their involvement within the game, but also supports their ability to develop a professional career outside of Rugby League.

Underpinned by a five-year Education & Welfare Strategic Plan, which links back to the broader NRL Strategic Plan (2010-2013), highlights of the program this year include:

- 88% of NRL players have post-secondary school qualifications, which is more than double the number since the introduction of education grants in 2004
- Currently, 110 NRL-contracted players are completing or have completed a trade apprenticeship and 166 are completing or have completed a degree or diploma
- 98% of Toyota Cup players are taking part in further education or employment
- The total direct investment in education across the game is \$2.3 million (up from \$2.1 million in 2009)





## EDUCATION & WELFARE

Key programs being delivered to all NRL squads and to football and administration staff this year include:

- ***Respectful Relationships***, attitudes and behaviour towards women (presented as part of the 'Playing By The Rules' project) by recently-retired/current players, after Rugby League piloted the program in 2009
- ***Social Media***, online awareness and safety seminar presented in conjunction with the Australian Federal Police
- Australian Drug Foundation and Federal Government Club Champions ***alcohol management*** programs
- ***Career Transition*** program (over 27-year-olds)



## EDUCATION & WELFARE

The NRL's Indigenous and Pacifica Players Advisory Groups have been integral in delivering key cultural awareness initiatives including:

- ***Indigenous education and employment expos*** for 2,000 students in NSW and Queensland, delivered in conjunction with the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations' 'Learn. Earn. Legend!' campaign.
- ***Body Pacifica exhibition, festival and calendar***, featuring some of the NRL's most prominent Pacific Islands and Maori players and delivered in partnership with the Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre.





## EDUCATION & WELFARE

A significant focus of Education & Welfare is to ensure players in the Toyota Cup national youth competition develop skills and a career outside of Rugby League.

Highlights include:

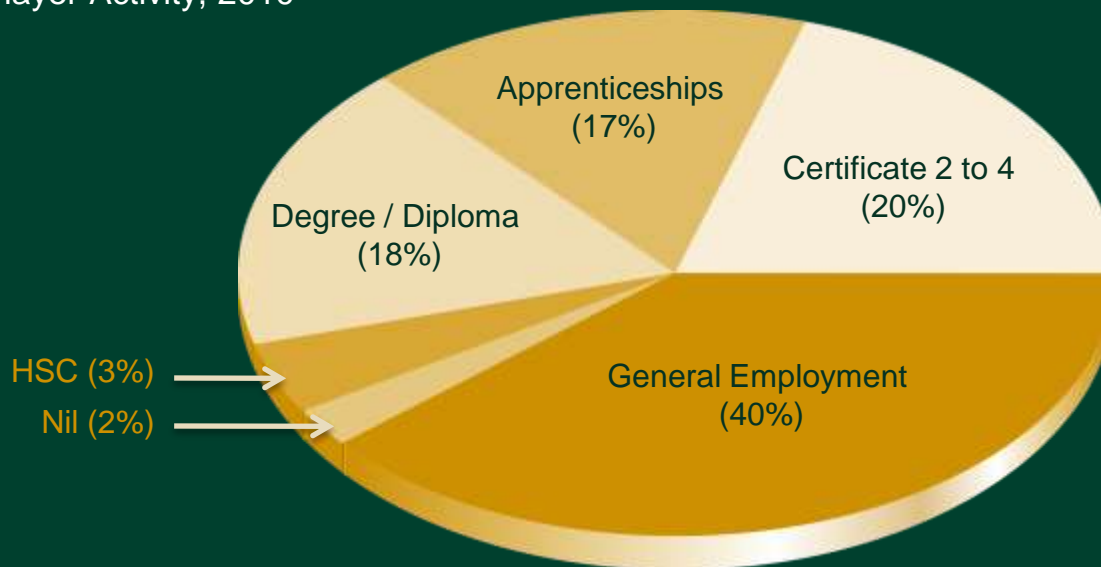
- At the beginning of the 2010 season, all 240 newly-contracted Toyota Cup players attended two-day Induction Camps which discuss the responsibilities of players in areas including Cultural Awareness, Illicit Drugs and Alcohol, Media Training, Respectful Relationships, Electronic and Social Media, Career Planning and Money Matters.
- All Toyota Cup squads have also taken part in the 'Putting Youth in the Picture' workshop which **considers issues and decision making confronting young people.**
- Several NRL clubs have delivered the Respectful Relationships program to senior players in their Toyota Cup, Under 18 and Under 16 squads.



## EDUCATION & WELFARE

Toyota Cup players must also undertake some form of work or study for a minimum 24 hours per week.

Toyota Cup Player Activity, 2010





## TOYOTA CUP

The Toyota Cup continues to be the best elite development program in Australian sport. It is also the only elite national junior competition in the country that has national television coverage.

### Highlights:

- 515 players competed in the Toyota Cup up to Round 26 of the 2010 season, compared to 546 players in 2009.
- In the past three seasons, more than 150 Toyota Cup players have gone on to play in the NRL.
- The average score-line in a Toyota Cup match in 2010 is 34-20. In comparison, the average score in an NRL match in 2010 is 28-14 – only one try per side difference.



## TOYOTA CUP

- The average age of players in the Toyota Cup has increased with 50% of players taking the field each week now 20 years of age.
- Less than 3% of players who compete in the Toyota Cup do not play Rugby League the following season. 97% continue to play in either the Toyota Cup the following season or graduate to the NRL, NSW Cup, QLD Cup or other all-age competitions, further strengthening those Leagues.
- Average ratings for the Toyota Cup are 42,234 viewers per game (end of Round 25), compared to 44,169 viewers per game (end of Rd 25, 2009).
- The highest rating match this year was the Sharks v Bulldogs in Round 17, which attracted 79,607 viewers.





## SALARY CAP

- NRL players enjoy a higher percentage of the game's revenue than rival sports, with 24% of game revenue going directly to player wages in 2009 (compared to 19% in the AFL).
- NRL returns a higher proportion of its overall revenue to the clubs as grants (38%) than its competitors (AFL 36%).
- Individual players have registered third party agreements totaling more than \$5 million in 2010, which are outside of the Salary Cap.

SALARY CAP	
2006	\$3.6 million
2007	\$3.9 million
2008	\$4.0 million
2009	\$4.1 million
2010	\$4.1 million
2011	\$4.2 million



## SALARY CAP

Following a review of game-wide submissions on the Salary Cap and discussions with the Collective Bargaining Agreement sub-committee earlier this year, the following proposals are set for implementation for the 2011 Telstra Premiership season:

- A lift in the Salary Cap of \$100,000 to \$4.2 million
- An increase in the Marquee Player Allowance (the amount for third party agreements players can enter into with sponsors) from \$150,000 to \$300,000, plus three cars per club
- A commitment to develop further rewards under the cap for long-serving players
- Increased representative payments
- Greater responsibility on player agents
- Relaxation of injury allowances
- The opportunity for players to maximise their income by maximising tax structures around image rights
- A commitment to introduce a system of travel concessions for the family members of players attending milestone games



## JUDICIARY

- Again the large majority of players accepted the charges as laid by the Match Review Committee, while the total number of weeks served through suspension increased in 2010. The biggest change in charges laid was the reduction of wrestling charges for the second successive year.

Category	2009	2010
Charges	78	79
Weeks in Suspension	50	62
% Players entering Early Plea	83	84
Wrestling Related Charges	23	9



## GAME STATISTICS

Category	2009	2010
Tries	1407	1420
Tries Scored From Kicks	288	309
Dummy Half Runs	8160	7880
Average Winning Margin	28	28.1
Number of Draws	3 (1.56%)	0 (0%)
Margin: 1-10 pts	85 (44.27%)	90 (46.88%)
Margin: 11-20pts	58 (30.21%)	59 (30.73%)
Margin: 21-30pts	24 (12.5%)	29 (15.10%)
Margin: 31+plus	22 (11.46%)	14 (7.29%)



## REFEREEING

- The two referee system continues to have a positive impact on the game with the hold down and grapple tackle penalties again significantly reduced.

Category	2009	2010
Penalties	2291	2187
Holding Down	469	360
Grapple	69	34
Video Ref	492	512



## INJURY SURVEILLANCE

- The NRL this year unveiled findings from its latest and most comprehensive Injury Tracking report, conducted throughout the 2009 season.
- Findings showed that while there had been a slight increase in the total number of injuries (mainly attributed to increased data available), the amount of playing time players missed declined and the number of serious injuries also declined.
- In fact, 57% of injuries recorded resulted in NRL players missing just one match or part of a match (45% Toyota Cup).
- A preliminary review of injury rates in the opening rounds of 2010 showed that there was no significant increase in the number or the severity of injuries over the opening six rounds.





## INJURY SURVEILLANCE

A review of age-related injuries conducted this year showed that Toyota Cup players competing in the NRL were less likely to suffer injuries than more senior players.

*Incidence rate for sustaining an injury (significant to see a player miss all or part of a game) in 2009*

- Players in Toyota Cup competition = 69.4/1000 hrs
- Toyota Cup eligible players competing in the NRL = 68.9/1000hrs
- NRL players no longer eligible for Toyota Cup = 82.6/1000hrs

*Incidence rate for sustaining a 'major' injury (five games or more) in 2009*

- Players in Toyota Cup competition = 13.6/1000 hrs
- Toyota Cup eligible players competing in the NRL = 12.2/1000hrs
- NRL players no longer eligible for Toyota Cup = 9.4/1000hrs

*Risk of sustaining an injury in 2009*

- A Toyota Cup eligible player competing in NRL has a 7% risk of sustaining an injury
- An NRL player no longer eligible for Toyota Cup has an 8.5% risk of sustaining an injury.



## **NATIONAL RUGBY LEAGUE**

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