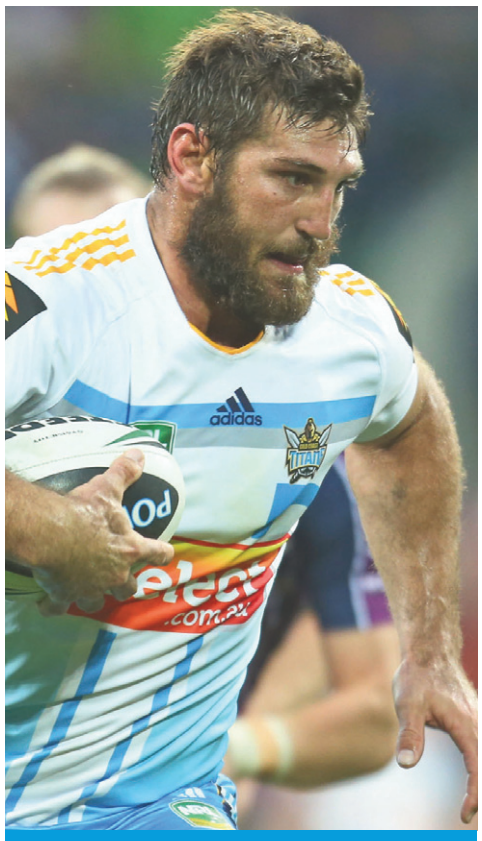


GOLD COAST TITANS

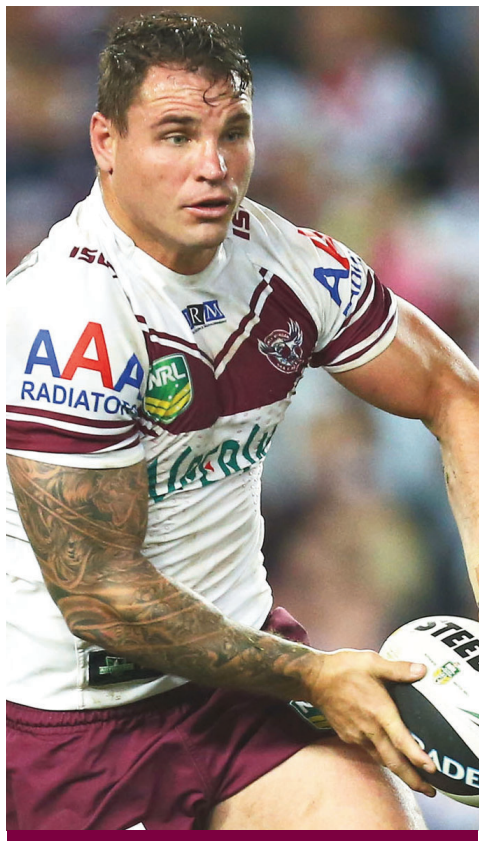
GAINS: Maurice Blair (Storm), Kalifa Faifai Loa (Cowboys), Siuatonga Likiliki (Knights), Paul Carter (Bulldogs), Christian Hazard (Rabbitohs), Brad Tighe (Panthers).
LOSSES: Luke O'Dwyer (retired), Hymel Hunt (Storm), Marmin Barba (Broncos), Jordan Rankin (Hull), Mark O'Dare (Sea Eagles), Matthew Russell (Warrington), Jamal Idris (Panthers).

OUR VIEW

Strengths: The addition of former Cowboys head coach Neil Henry as an assistant to coach John Cartwright is a major coup for the club.
Weaknesses: Inconsistency against the top teams cost the Titans a finals berth in 2013.
Prediction: 13th. Will struggle against the more fancied clubs.

THE DETAILS

Key player: The way he finished the 2013 season left league pundits scratching their heads for answers yet again: why can't Dave Taylor play like that all the time? When you are blessed with a 122 kilogram frame and silky skills much is expected and quite simply the one-Test wonder is yet to deliver on a consistent basis. But if his appearance in week one of pre-season training was any indication, then the 'Coal Train' might be gearing up for an extended stint at top speed.
The coach: Like his counterpart Anthony Griffin at nearby big brother, the Brisbane Broncos, Titans coach John Cartwright will need a solid start to the season to keep his critics at bay. The presence of Neil Henry as part of his coaching staff will place even more pressure on Cartwright.
The x-factor: In 2013 the Titans were forced to gamble on rookie halves Aidan Sezer and Albert Kelly following the departure of foundation co-captain Scott Prince. Sezer and Kelly clicked instantly and their combination will be vital in 2014.



MANLY SEA EAGLES

GAINS: Cheyse Blair (Eels), Josh Starling (Rabbitohs), Delroy Berryman (Broncos), Jayden Hodges (Cowboys), Tyson Andrews (Mackay Cutters), Dunamis Lui (Broncos).
LOSSES: Brent Kite (Panthers), George Rose (Storm), David Gower (Eels), Joe Galuvao (retired), Jacob Gagan (Sharks), Richie Fa'aoso (retirement).

OUR VIEW

Strengths: Big-match experience and the best halves combination in the NRL.
Weaknesses: Front row. The departures of Brent Kite, Joe Galuvao, George Rose and Richie Fa'aoso have put significant pressure on injury-prone prop Jason King to last a full season.
Prediction: 3rd. Too much class and experience not to finish in the top four.

THE DETAILS

Key player: Daly Cherry-Evans. At the rate he's going, there's every chance the talented Queenslander can establish himself as the dominant half in the league in 2014, and if that's the case then Manly will be tough to beat come September.
The coach: There are NRL coaches who are under pressure to justify their positions, and there are coaches that currently are not. Manly mentor Ggeoff Toovey is very much in the latter camp. Along with Storm clipboard-holder Craig Bellamy and current premiership coach Trent Robinson it's hard to think of a coach with a much safer job right now.
The x-factor: With players in the backline like Peta Hiku and Cheyse Blair waiting to fill in for any players injured or on rep duty, Jamie Buhrer generally playing off the bench and forwards such as James Hasson, Tom Symonds, and new buys Dunamis Lui and Josh Starling all unlikely to feature in a full-strength starting 13, Manly are not only strong but have plenty of bases covered in the event of injury.

MELBOURNE STORM

GAINS: George Rose (Sea Eagles), Travis Robinson (Panthers), Cody Walker (Brisbane Easts Tigers), Hymel Hunt (Titans), Felise Kaufusi (Cowboys), Dayne Weston (Panthers), Ben Roberts (Eels), Joel Romelo (Bulldogs).
LOSSES: Gareth Widdop (Dragons), Maurice Blair (Titans), Jason Ryles (retired), Brett Finch (retired), Junior Sa'u (Salford Red Devils), Lagi Setu (Raiders).

OUR VIEW

Strengths: Three of the best playes in the world and one of the best coaches in the NRL over the past decade.
Weaknesses: Five-eighth Gareth Widdop's exit to St George Illawarra has weakened the imposing Melbourne spine, heaping more pressure on Billy Slater, Cooper Cronk and Cameron Smith to keep the attack flowing.
Prediction: 4th. Will struggle when fatigue sets in to the 'big three' after Origin.

THE DETAILS

Key player: Billy Slater. A winner of the 2011 Dally M medal, it would not surprise to see the Storm custodian rank among the frontrunners for this year's award.
The coach: You don't necessarily need decades of experience to achieve success as an NRL coach – just ask the Roosters' Trent Robinson – but when the club's mentor has overseen a period of sustained success as Craig Bellamy has you know the team is in safe hands. Bellamy's success rate in the NRL of a tick under 70 per cent over 10 years and over 270 games is better than the likes of super coaches Wayne Bennett and Jack Gibson.
The x-factor: One of Melbourne's biggest advantages over their past few years of dominance has been the club, State and now Test 1-7-9 combination of Billy Slater, Cooper Cronk and Cameron Smith. Expect more of the same in 2014.

NEW ZEALAND WARRIORS

GAINS: Sam Tomkins (Wigan), Jayson Bukuya (Sharks), Chad Townsend (Sharks).
LOSSES: Elijah Taylor (Panthers), Steve Rapira (Salford Red Devils), Russell Packer (Knights), Todd Lowrie (Broncos) , Sio Siua Taukeiaho (Roosters), Bill Tupou (Raiders), Pita Godinet (Wakefield).

OUR VIEW

Strengths: One of the most free-spirited sides in the NRL with an entertaining throw-the-ball-around style.
Weaknesses: Flamboyant attack can often produce leaky defence.
Prediction: 9th. Away losses will again be the problem for the Kiwi boys.

THE DETAILS

Key player: English Test fullback Sam Tomkins is the Warriors' marquee signing going into 2014, and he arrives after a starring role in tthe 2013 World Cup. Has the skills to fill in as a running five-eighth if Shaun Johnson is able to step up to chief playmaking duties.
The coach: Having had a full season with the Warriors and a chance to welcome some new recruits – including mobile back-rower Jayson Bukuya from the Sharks, as well as Tomkins – Matthew Elliott could be in a position to start getting the consistent performances out of his charges that fans would be hoping for.
The x-factor: Warriors and New Zealand Test halfback Shaun Johnson is well suited to the team's improvisational style, which tends to mean he will always be a rocks-or-diamonds type of player, but his consistency is on the improve – if he can maintain the quality on a regular basis like he did for most of the World Cup the Warriors will be a force to be reckoned with in 2014. Johnson's form in the pre-season trials as well as the Auckland Nines has been encouraging and points to a strong start to the season.

COWRA JUNIOR RUGBY LEAGUE 2014

HOW TO REGISTER

New Players can download the NRL Player Form www.cowrajrl@leaguenet.com.au
Please bring your child's birth certificate along for notation on the database.
Don't forget to bring a current credit card for payment.

New Players Registration:
Saturday 8th March from 10am to 12 noon at Riverpark, Vaux St, Cowra.
2014 Fees include shorts & socks

$70 for Ages 5 through to 12 years (players born 2009 to 2000)
$100 for 13years through to 16 years (players born 2001 to 1998)

Enquiries can be directed via email cowrajrl@hotmail.com or inbox CJRL facebook page.

Cowra Junior Magpies
CJRL Inc. Est. 1971

Online Registrations are now open for returning players

SEASON KICK OFF
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