

SILVERDALE

Coach: Buddy Stevenson

Captain: Russell King

Squad: Inoke Vaitakane, Andrew Duff, Pip Griffin, Sio Tui-King, Hayden Rau, Ian Davidson, Clay Gallagher, John Dustow, Lama tone, Tony Hart, Dwayne Edge, Rana Horan, Dion Orbell, Eddie Rawhiri, Tim Cowley, Simon Dunn, Stephen Corlett, Greg Jones, Glen Donovan, Nevi McDougall, Lance Fitzpatrick, Aaron Spencer Brindley Jenkins, Steve Whitham, Mike Wilson, Harry Anesi, Brent Treadway, Chris Reid, Mark Hooker, Robert Shearer

Flashback "99"

Silverdale were the big improvers last season and despite the traditional slow start stormed home to finish second behind Takapuna. Silverdale went on to lose 14-17 in the semis before beating North Shore in a sudden death play off, 15-12 after leading points scorer Calvin Howarth slotted a penalty in extra time. Silverdale's fine run, however came to an end in the final beaten convincingly 41-16 by Takapuna.

"99 Stats": Championship Runners Up, Won 10, Lost 5, 47 Championship points (regular season). Calvin Howarth 127 points, Lance Fitzpatrick 7 tries.

Prospects 2000

With long-time leader John McKittrick now serving time as the North Harbour development squad coach, last year's senior reserves coach Buddy Stevenson knows full well the expectations Silverdale has on him after last season's great run and he is eager to maintain the moment.

The nucleus of the Dale squad remains, with the main losses coming in loose forward with Harbour Rep Blaire Foote and Leon Neville now both overseas. Calvin Howarth the Club's top points scorer for the past two seasons has also ventured overseas while first five Kent Currie has finally moved to Bays after a dispute.

On the import front former Mahurangi player Greg Jones returns after a year stint in Australia and Tony Hart joins the locking department after captaining the Northern Reds in last year's Conference competition. The big acquisition, however is Manu Samoa test lock Lama Tone, who will be trying his luck for the Harbour NPC team. Another possible recruit is Manawatu Colt Anaru Tauri at second five but is yet to confirm.

Last year's Harbour Reps Pip Griffin and Russell King combine again in a solid front row while in the backs Lance Fitzpatrick and Harry Anesi are back. Injuries have plagued Silverdale's build-up and Stevenson will be without four key players for Saturday's opener against Bays.

Former Auckland Blues Colt No:8 Tim Cowley is an outside chance but Eddie Rawiri (ankle) Rena Horan (elbow) and Pip Griffin (knee) are out.

A good solid team which has the goods to make the play offs again but could struggle to repeat last season's finals berth. The loss of Howarth will be hard felt.

First Round Opponents: East Coast Bays (home)

Kumeu

Coach: Phil Ridland

Captain: Sam Alatini

Squad: Sam Alatini, Tony Alatini, Vaiele Star, Etu Matangi, Alapate Tafoou, David Pae, Beau Matangi, Paea Mtangi, Tavita Tuifua, Daniel Maka, Diumau Maka, Simon Rakandroka, Semi Rakandroka, Isi Uta, Kiko Pomaee (Full list unavailable before deadline).

Flashback "99"

A new coach and a new team saw Kumeu stun the competition by making it through to the play offs after many seasons languishing alongside Navy at the bottom of the heap.

With exciting playmakers like Manako Tonga who finished as the competitions top try scorer and Fijian International winger Aisea Tuilevu, Kumeu scored a raft of tries, finishing fourth at the end of the regular season behind Silverdale and Northcote.

Kumeu's bubble burst in the semi finals and were ousted by a more professional Shore outfit 14-31. Season lowlight came with the one year ban to winger David Manako who was found guilty of manhandling referee Phil Fraser after the loss to Marist mid-season.

"99" Statistics: Semi-finalists. Won 9, Lost 6, 46 championship points (nine bonus points – the highest of any Club), Nash Jack 128 points (ranked third in the competition), Manako Tonga 12 Tries.

Prospects 2000

Trying to get a straight answer out of Kumeu coach Phil Ridland is akin to 1 10 year old from the depths of Siberia trying to decipher ancient Egyptian hieroglyphics ie: bloody impossible.

As usual Ridland is remaining coy about his prospects but has a totally different side to mould into the try-scoring, giant killers that took the competition by the throat in 1999.

A hoard of the side's players have moved on. Player dissatisfaction seems to be the common theme behind the movement. The key losses are North Harbour Reps Manako Tonga and Feliti Fakaongo, who along with others have moved to a strong looking East Coast Bays side.

Tonga's loss in particular is big. He was the side's most potent attacking weapon off the back or side of the scrum and won high praise from Harbour's NPC Coaches Buck Shelford and Allan Pollock, winning a starting berth late in the season.

Another key loss is Nash Jack who has returned to University while Ridland has a whole new front row combination to develop.

If there is one thing however, Ridland knows how to spot talent and the Kumeu side of 2000 will not be short of exciting playmakers.

Although Ridland is confident, it is hard seeing Kumeu reaching the same heights as last season. Mid-table finish with maybe a sniff at the playoffs.

First round Opponent: North Shore (at Kumeu)

GLENFIELD

Coach: Haydn Ferris (head) Steve Eskrigge (backs) Jason Matthews (forwards)

Captain: Myles Ferris

Squad: Peter Kumeroa, Joe McLean, Baden Woodman, Metu Egelani, Tama Wakelin, Adrian Ferris, Lawrence Little, Brent Ivory, Paora McPherson, Jason Egelani, Mani Faiiva, Tom Fafita, Iuni Mataafa, Mark Day, Gus White, Brent Bibble, Paul Turner, Jerry Domu, Joeli Savou, Steve Doherty, Una Katoa, Myles Ferris, Mike Sherry, Weaver Vagana, Mark King, Tristan Munroe, Justin Ryan

Flashback "99"

A disappointing season for the "Field" after showing strong pre-season signs when they clinched the North Harbour sevens title and finished second in their home tournament.

However they started poorly, continued to play poorly and as a result finished well below expectations in sixth, slipping four places from the previous season. Perhaps the season was summed up best when they lost to Helensville 13-20. Glenfield however, were the only team to defeat Takapuna during the season, 15-0 in round 14.

"99" Statistics: Sixth, won 8, Drew 1, Lost 6, 37 Championship Points. Alan Linstrom 68 Points, Metu Egelani 5 Tries.

Prospects 2000:

With eight senior players – Alan Linstrom, Chris Mayerhofler, Daniel Stead, Richard Shaw, Brett Ingham, Warren Hughes, Jeremy Hikuroa and Trent McMurray – still overseas, the first half of the season could be a struggle for Glenfield. Most of those players are expected back mid-season with Ingham and Hughes possibly within a month.

Long-time mates Hayden Ferris and Steve Eskerigge (of Takapuna fame) lead the side with former Coach Tony Keepa now in charge of the North Harbour Under-19. Keepa oversees the four Glenfield senior teams.

After the disappointments of 1999 this winter is all about restoring some pride in the Club with Ferris and Eskerigge looking at bringing in some fresh ideas.

New recruits include Northland Development squad and Northern Region Maori midfielder Tama Wakelin, while Northcote under-19 player Joe McLean has impressed and come across. Former King Country development squad member Justin Ryan joins the squad, while ex-Kumeu players Mark Davy and Jerry Domu have also transferred. Ferris and Eskerigge may pull on the boots if required.

May struggle early on but expect a late rally once their senior players return. Mid-table finish.

First Round Opponents: Mahurangi (away)

EAST COAST BAYS

Coach: Selwyn Wright / Mike Mills

Captain: Stu Denton

Squad: Dean Thompson, Stu Denton, Clayton Villars, Simon Moore, Jeremy Barton, Manako Tonga, Hayden Wright, Otila Moala, Darren Beckett, Kent Currie, John Redfearn, Simote Kama, Blair Skipper, Sefo Papani, James Leatrice, Ray Menzies, Bill Wigglesworth, Feliti Fakaongo, Paul Towersy, Darren Platt, Steve Cammell

Flashback "99"

After a 1998 season which saw Bays make the play-offs much was hoped in 1999. They soon turned out to be the surprise flop of the competition and finished in eighth position with just four wins to their name, only one more than cellar dwellers, Helensville and Mahurangi. Got hammered by Kumeu 12-68 in the first half of the season.

"99" Statistics: Eighth, Won 4, Drew 1, Lost 10. 24 Championship points, Campbell Burnes 46 points, Andrew Giles 4 Tries.

Prospects 2000

East Coast Bays have benefitted from the off-field turmoil at Kumeu with four class players coming their way including Harbour Reps Manako Tonga and Fleiti Fakaongo. They also have finally secured Kent Currie from Silverdale who will go up against his old side in Bays opener on Saturday.

Not surprisingly coach Selwyn Wright heads into the season feeling a lot more confident than that of last year. There's more depth and if injuries stay to a minimum unlike last season, Bays could be a contender to make the play-offs.

The 2000 side has a more balanced look to it and the new recruits from Kumeu will add plenty of firepower in the forwards. Hooker Stu Denton takes over the captaincy while long time player David Giles has retired. Veteran Bill Wigglesworth also makes an appearance later on.

Bays have had two pre-season losses to Waitemata and Manurewa.

First Round Opposition: Silverdale (away)

HELENSVILLE

Coach: Rex George

Captain: Stan Phillips

Squad: Mark Tonga, Baden Meeuws, Callum McNeil, Stan Phillips, Mike Steadman, Aaron England, Doug Maynard, Mike Smith, Joel Nasmith, Daniel Keefe, Dean Phillips, Allan Riley, Adrian Ah Fook, Rob Steadman, Grant Nasmith, Tapsell Hetariki, Kris Stokes, Scott Stokes, Charus Chisholm, Paul Nasmith, Plus 2 others.

Flashback "99"

Helensville battled Mahurangi for the wooden spoon all season and only just missed out, finishing three points ahead of the northerners on the table.

Like the previous season when they finished ninth it wasn't the most memorable for the west Auckland side with player depth a constant problem. Poor early season form wasn't helped when coach Jeff Hutchinson was dumped due to internal ructions.

Darren Robinson was the only shining light for the club ranking high in the points scoring and try scoring charts. In fact he scored an amazing 44 per cent of all Helensville's points in 1999.

"99" Statistics: Tenth. Won 3, Lost 12. 19 championship points. Daren Robinson 112 points (ranked fourth in the comp), 6 tries (ranked fourth equal in the comp).

Prospects 2000:

New coach Rex George has his work cut out turning around a side that was once considered a major title contender but in recent seasons has slumped dramatically.

George, a former 85 veteran and captain for Bay of Plenty and New Zealand Maori rep will bring a strong work ethic to the club and already in pre-season his side has picked up some

big wins over Patumahoe and College Rifles. Lost to Manukau Rovers last weekend but George believes that's just what the team needs ahead of Saturday's home clash against Navy.

George leads a young side that is without the services of utility back Joe Faalogo who has shifted to defending champs, Takapuna. Leading points scorers Darren Robinson has jumped ship to Takapuna as well and will be sorely missed.

The gains include Number 8 Mike Smith, brother of former Manu Samoa rep Steve, who has just returned from playing league in the UK, as well as a Ponsonby flanker. New Zealand Under 19 prop Tony Woodcock makes the move up from 21's but will be absent due to commitments with the Auckland Blues Colts and the NZ Under 19's World Cup campaign in France next month.

The sight of Super 12 reps Matua Parkinson and Rua Tipoki in a Helensville jumper for 2000 are likely to be very rare. Veteran Stan Phillips will lead the forward pack while brother Dean is another experience figure at second five eight.

Can only improve on last season but don't expect anything too flash. Middle to lower table finish.

First Round Opposition: Navy (at home)

NAVY

Coach: Grant Simpkins

Captain: Tua Atkinson

Squad: Andre Schertenleib, Paul Warbrick, Nick Apikitoa, Kereama Blackman, Richard Bennett, Destry Gourlay, John Tumoloafoa, Muir Kara, Dave Laidlaw, Tony Bennett, Lance Easton, James Clarke, Tua Atkinson, Aaron Nepe, Trent Hill, John Aloua, Matt Jefferies, Matt Taylor, Darren Mills, Matt Haydon, Rob McIntosh, Michael Lili, Brendan Oakley.

Flashback "99"

The Navy side withdrew from the Senior A competition in 1999.

Prospects 2000

The Navy senior side returns after a self-imposed season off with North Harbour hooker Grant Simpkins at the helm. Whether that season off has helped is debatable but Simpkins says the Club has decided to give it a go. Rebuilding the spirit in the Club is paramount for Simpkins after many seasons where the senior side endured some horrendous hidings.

To help remedy the problems of the past the Club has decided to split the ratio of Navy and civilian players to 60-40, meaning a lack of player numbers won't be a constant worry this season.

Simpkins has brought in a couple of hard nuts to bolster the forward pack with John Aloua (Marist) and Nick Apikitoa (Otahuhu) propping up the scrum while Simpkins is expecting a New Zealand Under 19 halfback trialist to come in later.

Simpkins has also raided his old North Shore Club with five players including locks Brendan Oakley and Kereama Blackman coming across. Oakley has recently returned from his OE but is recovering from a bout of malaria which means he won't be back for a while.

Have a good chance of a first up win against Helensville but don't expect a major revival com season's finish. Lower table finish.

First Round Opposition: Helensville Away

HOW THE 2000 SEASON ACTUALLY PANNED OUT:

Championship Final

Takapuna 25 v Glenfield 13





IN THE NAVY: Former North Shore lock Brendon Oakley switches to Navy but will be absent for the early rounds as he is recovering from a bout of malaria.



East Coast Bays have secured try scoring Manako Tonga, one of four Kumeu players to transfer to the Club.