

# Politis full of praise for JWH

Pamela Whaley

Sydney Roosters supremo Nick Politis believes the modern game has left true firebrands like departing star Jared Waerea-Hargreaves in the past.

The 35-year-old, who returns for Saturday night's semi-final with Manly, will spend next season with Hull KR in the Super League before retiring from the game.

It will bring to an end a career of extraordinary achievement and controversy.

A series of suspensions have kept him sidelined for nine of the past 10 weeks as his specific style of aggression is slowly wiped from the game under more advanced concussion protocols and safety precautions.

And as Waerea-Hargreaves' time in the NRL winds up after 16 seasons, Politis has an inkling we won't see another player like him again.

"I think the new rules are making it hard for players like him to survive ... the real firebrand players. It doesn't mean he's a dirty player, it's just how he plays," Politis says.

Fittingly, the most-capped Roosters player of all time makes his return from suspension in his 309th game for the club against his former team on Saturday night.

"He was young and wry," Politis says of the kid they recruited from Manly back in 2009. "But he's matured a lot now and I'm very proud of him."

"He's a family man off the field. A lot of people see what he's like on the field and think he's an aggressive, dirty player but he's not, he just plays hard and tough."

"He's a wonderful person."

As the ferocious prop nears the end of his decorated career at the Roosters after 15 years and three premierships at the club, Politis is considering ways to keep him involved with a role if and when he wants it.

"We want him to come back to the club after he spends the year overseas," he said.

"Hopefully he wants to come back here with the club in some capacity."

Wayne Bennett has predicted the Dolphins will become a powerhouse of the NRL in the next three years as the club targets evolving into the Penrith of Queensland.

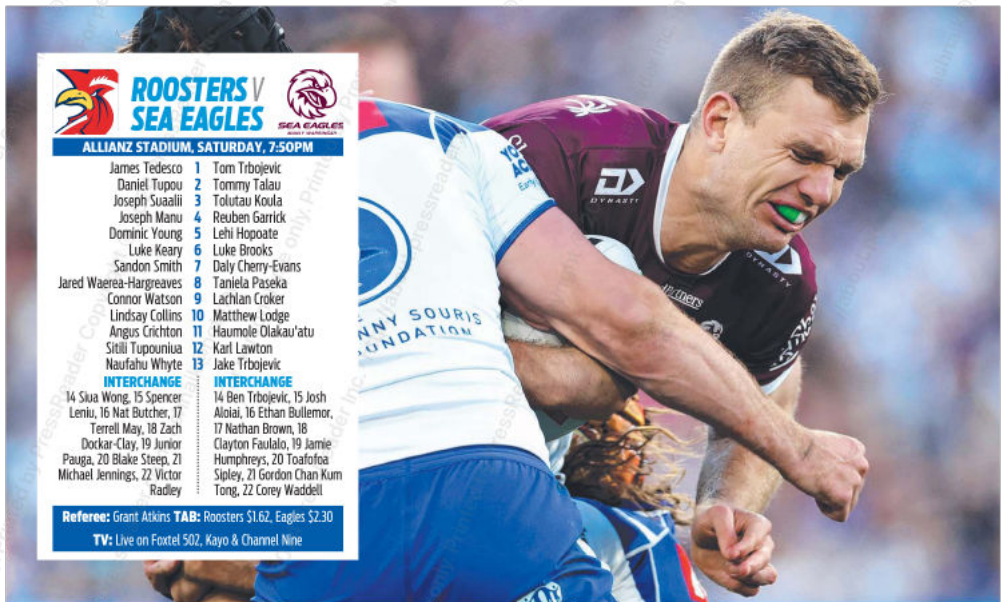
Bennett delivered his final speech as head coach of the Dolphins at the club's Arthur Beetson Medal presentation.

The Redcliffe franchise fell agonisingly short of a maiden NRL finals appearance following a last-round loss to

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# Trbojevic tackles cryotherapy to help play on

# Turbo-charged pain can't stop Manly star



Manly star Tom Trbojevic has been in the wars recently but is determined to rise above the pain. Picture: Cameron Spencer/Getty Image

**David Riccio, Brent Read and Michael Carayannis**

Unable to sleep, enduring searing pain simply turning the steering wheel of his car, and immersing his body into -162 degree temperatures.

Influential Sea Eagles star Tom Trbojevic has revealed the excruciating commitment he has made to push through agony and overcome the Roosters in a must-win semi-final on Saturday night at Allianz Stadium.

The champion fullback has captivated the rugby league audience with his extraordinary mental and physical resolve to play with an agonising grade three AC-joint injury and MCL knee injury. Requiring multiple painkilling injections to end the Bull-

dogs' season last Sunday afternoon, Trbojevic said he's ready to put his body on the line again against the Roosters.

"It's feeling better this week," Trbojevic said. "It's just a pain (tolerance) thing. The first game is going to be sore and then it gets better."

Trbojevic gave an insight into how his shoulder injury has impacted the rest of his life. Something as simple as writing his name, opening the fridge or reaching for the cereal tests his threshold for pain.

"Obviously shoulder injuries, when you initially get them they are quite sore. So it makes it difficult to sleep," Trbojevic said. "Driving is also different, trying to turn a wheel. It gets sore after games but that's no

different to any shoulder injury. "Initially you are in a sling so you can't do too much. But it is just sore."

NRL physio Brien Seeny said he was in awe of Trbojevic's modesty and bravery. "Along with rib injuries, I'd say AC joint injuries are the

**It hurts with every move that you make in that shoulder**

**Brien Seeny**  
NRL physio

two most painful injuries in football," Seeny said. "It hurts with every move that you make in that shoulder."

"It doesn't pose a lot of long-term issues, but in the short-term it does cause a lot of pain."

"You're literally playing with an unstable shoulder joint."

Trbojevic has been undertaking cryotherapy and a red light therapy - used by NFL heavyweights San Francisco 49ers - to help with his recovery.

He was there as recently as Thursday and uses the treatment up to three times a week.

Health practitioner and co-owner of CRYO Northern Beaches in Freshwater Dimple Naik said Trbojevic had been a regular in recent months.

"For the shoulder injury specifically, we have been ad-

ministering localised cryotherapy, where focused application of -162°C cryogenically cooled air is treated to the affected areas, penetrating in deeper layers of muscle tissue and joints," Naik said.

Of course, the end-goal for Trbojevic and the Sea Eagles is to win the coveted NRL premiership on that first Sunday in October.

The question is, will Trbojevic be able to continue to push through his shoulder pain and knee complaint for a further two weeks?

"Yes, he will get there," Seeny said.

"It's about luck as well. It's about avoiding obvious hits to that shoulder."

"He'll be trying to find that balance between protecting it, and also getting the most out of it, so Manly can win."

# Benny tips big things

Newcastle. But the seven-time premiership winner delivered a stirring sermon to farewell the club after three years before he returns to South Sydney next season.

The Dolphins finished 13th last year and 10th this season.

Bennett, 74, said the Dolphins had a bright future. "When I look at the Dolphins' future I have great confidence in it," he said.

The Dolphins produced a rousing haka to farewell retiring skipper Jesse Bromwich as Broncos reject Max Plath capped a remarkable season by being crowned the club's player of the year.

Plath received the Arthur Beetson Medal at the Dolphins' awards ceremony on Thursday night in Brisbane to wrap up the NRL expansion

club's second season. While Plath won the big gong, Bromwich was sent off in style as brother Kenny led the club's Kiwi contingent in a stirring haka to say goodbye to the 338-game NRL legend.

Kiwis Valynce Te Whare, Jarmayne Isaako, Kodi Nikorima and Connelly Lemuelu were among the Dolphins players to join the haka, which left Bromwich near tears.

# Fond farewell for Jesse as Max earns nod

**Travis Meyn**

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"I've tried not to get caught up too much in the emotional side of it," Bromwich said.

"I feel very grateful to have had the career I have. I was lucky enough to be coached by Craig Bellamy (Melbourne Storm) and then Wayne Bennett."

"The thing I enjoyed the most was the opportunity to play with my brother. He's played 250 games and I played in the majority of those."

The son of four-time Bron-

cos premiership winner Jon Plath, Max was on a train-and-trial contract with Brisbane before he was snapped up by the Dolphins.

Plath punched out 21 matches this year, averaging 68 minutes and 40 tackles per match.

He was also crowned the club's best forward and the Dolphins' players' player.

"I want to thank everyone for giving me an opportunity this year," Plath said.