

Moresby South Rugby Football League Sports Magazine

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Moresby South Rugby Football League Sports Magazine, your premier source for the latest updates on local sports action, expertly curated by John Fred. Our mission is to celebrate the dynamic sports culture of Moresby South, shining a spotlight on the athletes, teams, and events that drive our community's passion for rugby league. Each of our insightful articles is produced through Lagu Media Agency, ensuring top-quality sports journalism that keeps you informed and inspired. Stay tuned for exclusive interviews, match analyses, and more!

This magazine is dedicated to showcasing the exceptional rugby league talents in Moresby South, helping them gain recognition and thrive in the broader rugby league arena. It also aims to promote the Moresby South Rugby Football League as a whole, fostering growth and excitement for the sport.

All articles are written by John Fred, and featured on his Facebook page, Lagu Media Agency.

John Fred is a freelance writer and aspiring journalist currently pursuing a Bachelor of Arts in Language and Communication at the University of Papua New Guinea, where he is in his first year. He previously completed a Certificate in Business Management from Kokopo Business College and earned National Certificates (NC) 1, 2, and 3 in Metal Fabrication and Welding at Port Moresby Technical College.

John's passion for writing began at a young age when he developed a love for reading newspapers during his primary school years. This early interest in journalism sparked his dream of becoming a sports analyst or journalist, and he has since been dedicated to turning that dream into reality.

He currently freelances with the Sunday Bulletin, a locally owned news company. To date, the Sunday Bulletin has published eight of his articles in print and nine on their online platform. Recognizing his passion and dedication to reporting, the company invited John to contribute to their publication as a freelance journalist.

In an effort to further expose his talent and share his passion for sports, John created the Facebook page Lagu Media Agency, where he reports on sports-related news. Through his page, he shares stories about local rugby and basketball players, showcasing their journeys and achievements.

After gaining recognition for his work, John was engaged by the Sunday Bulletin, which allowed him to officially publish his articles. To date, more than seventeen of his articles have been published, marking a significant step in his journey as a writer and fulfilling his long-held dream.

John has now taken his passion further by launching the Moresby South Rugby Football League Magazine, a platform dedicated to showcasing the rising rugby talents in Moresby South and promoting the Port Moresby South Rugby Football League. Through this magazine, he hopes to highlight the achievements of young athletes and contribute to the development of local sports.

Special Thanks:

1. Miriam Malawa – Editor, Sunday Bulletin
2. Caroline Mom – Director, Gulf Isou
3. Ruthen Memafu – Editor

Edited by: *Justin Andrew*

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From Talai Spartans to Casino RMS Cougars RFLC.

At Just 24 years old, Joshua Tala from Gailala in Central Province is making waves in the rugby league scene. His Journey has taken him from the humble beginning from his hometown to playing for the Casino RMS Cougars Rugby Football League Club in the Northern Rivers Regional Rugby League in Australia.



Picture: Joshua Tala in Casino RMS Cougars training session.



The proud son of Goilala was honored with the Encouragement Award during the Casino RMS Cougars Awards night. This recognition has given Tala a tremendous boost, motivating him to aim higher in his rugby league journey. Tala has proved himself as a Versatile utility forward, capable of playing anywhere in the backline. His flexibility allows him to cover various positions, from center to wing, making him an invaluable asset to the team.

Joshua Posing for a photo after receiving Encouragement Award

Joshua Tala's rugby league journey took an exciting turn when he joined the Casino RMS Cougars through a company he currently works for in Australia. As one of the seasonal workers from Moresby South, Joshua has not only embraced his job but has also taken bold steps to pursue his passion for rugby league.

Hailing from Talai-Gorobe, Joshua couldn't hold back from asking his supervisors and manager for permission to chase his rugby dream while working. His determination paid off as he secured a spot with the Cougars, playing as second-rower throughout the season. Joshua has proven his worth in every match, showcasing his talent and earning two Man of the Match awards so far. Week in and week out, he gives his best for the Casino RMS Cougars RFLC, demonstrating that he is ready for bigger rugby league competitions in Australia.

Joshua's ultimate goal is to play in the Queensland-based Intrust Super Cup, a prestigious stepping stone for many aspiring rugby players. His journey began in school boys' rugby league competitions, representing St. Therese Primary School from U12 to U18. Joshua picked up the sport when he was just 10 years old and became a regular face at the old Kaugere Oval, where he participated in informal rugby league games, known as Wasa League, for kids aged 14 to 18 every Friday.

After his school years, Joshua joined the Talai Spartans Rugby League Club in 2015, competing in the Moresby South Rugby Football League. His exceptional performances caught the attention of selectors, and he was chosen to represent the Southern Blacks at the Southern Confederation Zone Trials. He also played for the Goilala Karukas in the Central Premier League, contributing to their title-winning campaign.

While Joshua's achievements on the field are remarkable, his ambitions go beyond personal success. He wants to set a benchmark for young players from Goilala, both in Port Moresby and in his home villages, showing them that they too can excel in the rugby league arena.

"I come from a village and district where many young men are often overlooked because of where we come from. In Port Moresby, when people hear that someone is from Goilala, the first thought that comes to mind is that he's a thief or has attitude problems," Joshua said.


Determined to break these stereotypes, Joshua is working hard to make a name for himself in Australian rugby league. "I will give my best and try to secure a spot with one of the clubs in the Queensland Cup," he added.

Joshua's journey has also been enriched by the opportunity to train alongside former PNG Hunters player Gairo Kapana, who is also part of the Casino RMS Cougars team. This experience has only fueled his desire to push further and achieve greater things in his rugby career.



Joshua Tala in action for Casino RMS against one of the team in Northern River Regional Rugby League competition

Player Profiles



PLAYER Profile

**IVO
JOE
Talai
Spartans**

Age: 17
Origin:
CENTRAL
Height: 100cm
Weight: 62kg

Role model:
Kyle Laybutt

Position:
Halfback



Atti Bradle

AGE: 21

ORIGIN: GULF

Height: 183cm

Weight: 68k

CLUB: Gulf Isou Development

SCHOOL BOYS TEAM: KPS

ROLE MODE: DOUGLAS PIRIKA

POSITION: UTILITY BACKS

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Stanley Olo forgoes rugby league career to start Academy program.



Stanley Olo lifting the famous Digicel Cup after the grand final victory for Snax Tigers

Former Sp Hunters and PM's 13 representative player Stanley Olo has decided to forgo his rugby league career and start up a rugby academy, SO Academy to help develop and shape young rugby league players in his community.

Olo is one of the household names in the Digicel Cup competition for nearly a decade. Known for his fast ball rucking from the tackles, Olo is one of the best Digicel Cup hooker so far. The Simbu man started his rugby league career with 2 City Rabbitohs before making his way up to Digicel Cup. So far, Stanley Olo has played with five different teams in Digicel Cup competition, Olo played for Mendi

Muruks, Rabaul Gurias, Hela Wigmen, Snax Tigers and Enga Mioks. Out from that five clubs, Olo play three Digicel Cup grand finals, two with Rabaul Gurias which they lost both grand finals, and one with premierships victory with Snax Tigers.

“SO Academy was planned five years ago. However, due to other reason we did not manage to run program, so it was just established last year. Our motive is to promote and develop young rugby league talents in the community and suburbs by providing opportunities for players to grow and excel in sports”. Olo said. Olo also added, “SO Academy is a newly established pathway for player – agent, so its developing”.



Kids from Stanley Olo Academy Program with official from PNG NRL BID

The former and Hunters and PM's 13 representative player also runs coaching clinics for children below the age of 12 during school holidays. He believes that one way to help players become next Justin Olam and Edwin Ipape is by teaching them the basic skills and art of rugby league at young age. For Olo, forgoing rugby league career and starting up his own Academy program was a challenging decision to make. The star hooker said, one thing that forced him to forgo rugby league is the passion that he sees in each kid and young adult who wants to know and learn more about rugby league. Olo is not only teaching them rugby league skills, he sets values and standards that his players must abide with. The key Values for the SO Academy are, discipline on and off the rugby league field, good attitude and growth mind set, following simple Christian values such as pray before game and after games, and most importantly to become good citizen on the community.



Olo sitting left with players from his pathway and Academy Program posing for photo after a gym session.

Tala: Waidex to Participate in Snax 9's



Waidex players and coaching staff celebrating after their win



Waidex Rugby League Club Founder Bixsy Tala has continue his support to the team. Tala has pledge his support to the team for this year's rugby league 9's tournaments throughout the country.

Waidex founder Mr. Bixsy Tala

Tala is looking forward to send his team to participate in the Snax 9's in Lae, Morobe Province in December. This will be the second time for Waidex to participate in Snax 9's. They also took part in the Lae Biscuit Sponsored 9' tournament last year. Waidex will also participate in other 9's tournament in Port Moresby and Central Province, Mr. Tala said.

Mr. Tala said his aim this year is to focus on young players and develop them. "I will be sending a team to compete again in Snax 9's. This time around I will focus on young talents in Moresby South and NCD", said Tala. Mr. Tala is one of the individuals who have been giving their best to promote young rugby league talents in Moresby South and NCD. Tala is also the founder of Taurama Wolf packs Rugby League Club.

Under the leadership of Tala, the Waidex Rugby League Club has produced several players in the Digicel Cup Competition. Waidex is one of the club that always participate in every rugby 9's tournament. From Moresby South 9' to Southern 9's, Motu Koita Pepsi 9's, Central 9's, Snax 9's and other 9's tournament the club always gives good challenge to all the participating teams.

Apart from Participating and winning the tournaments, Mr. Tala always makes sure his players welfare is in good care. "My number one principle in Waidex Rugby League Club is to look after players well", Tala said.

From Kaugere Primary School Girls Rugby League to NCD Vipers Women's Squad



Ruth Gende in action for NCD Vipers during the Santos Woman's Cup Match against Dabaris

Amongst the experience players being named recently in the NCD Vipers Women's Team for Women's Digicel Cup Competition is one of the young rising stars from School Girls Rugby, Ruth Gende. Gende was named in NCD Vipers Women's final squad for the upcoming Women's Digicel Cup Competition.

Ruth comes from a rugby league background family. Her father (Mr Arnold Gende) is one of the hard work men behind the NCD School Boys Competition. Her father and two of her brothers are more like Ruth's personal coach and mentors in rugby league.

Ruth Gende's journey in rugby league started at a very young age. She would often follow her two brothers for their rugby league training at the Kaugere Primary School Oval for the Kaugere Primary School Boys Rugby League team which is also coached by her father. She started to train with the school boys team when she around age of 6, at that time there was no competition for school girls rugby league.

In 2017 when school girl's rugby league competition started Ruth start playing for Kaugere Primary School at the age of 12. Despite being youngest and smallest in the team back then, Ruth was seen as a most valuable player for Kaugere Primary School girls. Scoring try in every match becomes her hobby. Whenever she plays for her school team Ruth always gives her best and play with her heart.

The Simbu native becomes household name in school girl's rugby league competition. From try scoring to try saving, hard hit ups and bone crunching tackles Ruth tuck all the boxes.

Her skills and talent was recognized by Selector from Southern Confederation (Zone) in 2019 where she made her first selection appearance in her rugby league career. She was selected to take part in the School Confederation Championships held in Port Moresby.

In that same year (2019), Ruth also made her debut in senior rugby league competition. She took part in Moresby South Rugby Football League playing for Kaukana United Women's team. From that moment on, Ruth plays in several competitions and tournaments throughout NCD.

The Kaugere Primary School Product is part of the Junior Orchids team that play against the Australian School Girls team last year at NFS. This is one of the moment Ms. Gende will always cherish

"Representing PNG in front of my family and people is something that I will always remember and embrace for eternity ", Gende said.

The Junior Orchids star player is a Centre who can plays full back, wing and forwards as well. Ruth's childhood dream and goal is make the Orchids Senior Women's team one day.

Her main focus this year is to give her best for the NCD Vipers in Women's Digicel Cup Competition and also attract selectors from overseas clubs as well.



Player Profile

A photograph of a rugby player, Jack Aaron, in a dark blue jersey with yellow and red accents, running with the ball. The jersey has the number '17' on the back. He is wearing orange cleats and striped socks. The background shows a grassy field and red stadium seats. A small circular logo with 'LAGU' and 'MEDIA AGENCY' is in the top right corner of the photo.

PLAYER Profile

**Jack
Aaron**

Age: 21
Origin: EHP

Local Club:
Talai
Spartans

Role Model:
Alex Max - Sp
Hunters

Position:
Lock/center

From Isou Player to Isou Development Coach



Former Gulf Isou Canter Mark Kumbi is grateful for the opportunity to Coach the Gulf Isou Development side in Moresby South Rugby Football League. Kumbi plays for the Gulf Franchise in Digicel Cup Season 2021.

The former Centre of Gulf Franchise start his rugby league career in 2008, playing for Erema in Kaugere Off-season. Before playing rugby league, Mark Kumbi plays basketball for the South's Club in old Hohola Basketball Court in year 2006 and 2007. Kumbi forgoes basketball and fall in love with rugby league when he went to Don Bosco Technical Secondary School. After spending some good number of years in Kaugere Off Season, Kumbi has played Several Grand Final with Gabutu Dragons

In 2017 after Kaugere Off Season transits into Moresby South Rugby Football League, Mark Kumbi was selected for train and trial squad for the Port Moresby Vipers together with Shane Haro and Edene Gebi. After the pre-season with Vipers, Kumbi did not make the final squad. He went back and continue to play with Gabutu Dragons. In 2019, Kumbi was selected to train with Gulf Isou this time. However, due to season ending injuries Kumbi was omitted from the Isou final squad. After being drop twice in preseason train and trial, Kumbi gives all his best and made the Central Dabaris 2020 Digicel Cup team. After spending the year with Dabaris, Mark Kumbi was selected to play for his home provincial team, the Gulf Isou. Kumbi spent a year with Isou before he becomes coach.

Mark Kumbi has also represented Southern Zone in Confederate Championship. Kumbi is also part of Southern Confederate that won the first every Digicel Cup 9's in 2015. Kumbi also lead Moresby South Blacks to claim the Southern Confederation titles. Mark Kumbi also plays in several rugby league 9's tournaments throughout the country.

Mark Kumbi's coaching career began in 2023. When he made his first coaching appearance and lead Gabutu Dragons U20 side to claim the Minor Premier in Moresby South Rugby Football League. Kumbi also Coach Southern Blacks in Southern Zone trials last year. He also Coach and lead Waidex 9's team to claim and win the Plate finals in Southern Zone 9's last year. And Kumbi also Coached Moresby South Gulf team early this year to win the Gulf Isou Talent Identification Program titles.

"There are so many things that motivate me to become a coach. As a Coach, we often focus on what motives an athlete. Indeed, one of our primary role is to help an athlete stay on track with their goals and keep their motivation high. I take up coach because I see there's a lot of talent that needs to be expose to the next level and stay away from there conform zone. In today's generation, we have a lot of talent but our mind-sets are still killing our own talent". Kumbi said.

Kumbi is a coach who has already adopted a winning culture in clubs that he coaches. Kumbi is a coach who always encourage and motivates his players the importance of balancing education and rugby league.



Gulf Isou Development Coach Mark Kumbi with his players

Meet Michael Kiki: Aspiring Young Lad from 2 City Rabbitohs.



At 19 years of age Michael Kiki has 2 years of experience in playing in Senior Men's Division (A Grade) in Moresby South Rugby Football League. Start playing MSRFL in 2021 for Kaugere Bulldogs at 15 years of age, Kiki has already climb the ranks from U20 to A Grade in four years.

The Young lad started playing A Grade Division in 2023 for 2 City Rabbitohs. Michael start his career from Backline before switching to forward in Senior Men's Division. Michael is Currently Playing Second rower for the 2 City Rabbitohs A Grade Division.

From Height Advantage to discipline on and off the field, hard hits ups to fearless runs, and never give up attitude when it comes to tackle and defense, Michael Kiki tick all the boxes. Michael's aim and goal is to make the Southern Confederation side and Junior Kumuls in the near future. The 19 year is giving all his best to make it to Southern Blacks.

From Observation and watch this games, Michael Kiki is a young talented player that is giving all his best every match that he plays. Week in week out, he always makes sure to put his body in the line and give his best for his team and Community.

Meet Quentin Waripe: One of Talented Youngster from Moresby South Rugby Football League.



Kaugere Bulldogs Utility player Quentin Waripe has been one of the best talented player in Moresby South Rugby Football League ever since he made his debut in rugby league.

Quentin is a young energetic athlete who can plays Fullback, Winger, Center and anywhere in halves position. From Halfback to Hooker to five eight, this young lad has tick all the boxes.

He is a player who have a try scoring attitude. He always gives his best for whatever team that he plays, scoring a try or try assist is the trademark of young Quentin.

Born and raised in Kaugere, Quentin hails from Southern Highlands Province. The SHP lad start playing rugby league when he was 10 years, playing in the school boys league. From school boys he joined his community team Kaugere Bulldogs.

He was also part of the Southern Blacks team in several tournaments and trials. He has also a vast of experience from NCD Governors Cup and rugby league 9's tournament throughout the country.

With Southern Confederation trail yet to be played, Quentin has already set a goal to give his very best to be selected for the Southern Blacks team for the Southern Confederation trails in the future.

Like many other young kids in PNG who loves rugby league, Quentin is also chasing a childhood dream to play in the Digicel Cup Competition.

From offense to defense, the youngster has tick all the boxes. Quentin is young potential player who is ready and available for any Digicel Cup team for the Digicel Cup season 2025.

Nick Kusili the Pride of Kipo Eastern Pride.



For almost 10 solid years Nick Kusili has been playing with the Kipo Eastern Pride in Moresby South Rugby Football League. Nick started his rugby league career with Kipo Eastern Pride after transition from School boys to real rugby league competition.

Nick start playing rugby league in 2012 for the Bavaroko School Boys in U14 division. After playing school boys Nick and other young players from his community moved on to join the Kipo Eastern Pride Rugby League Club and took part in first ever MSRFL season in 2015, when Kaugere Off Season transits into MSRFL. Nick has been with the club from day one till now.

Nick hails from Eastern Highlands Province. He lives all his life in Kipo Community in Moresby South District. Nick is a utility player who can plays Full Back, half back, five eight or dummy half. Nick is one the familiar faces in the Moresby South Rugby League Selected side the Southern Blacks, he has represented Southern Blacks from U20 right up to senior division. He is also part of the Southern Blacks team that took part in Southern Super League.

Nick also plays 2 matches for the Enga Mioks in 2021 and one match for Goroka Lahanis in 2022 Digicel Cup season. With the experience that he has, Nick is currently keeping back to his beloved Kipo Eastern Pride rugby league club by coaching and mentoring young players and playing in A Grade division as well. As a Coach and player at the same time, time management and commitment is something that Nick is valuing as his main priorities in rugby league arena.

Tabo Grateful for Opportunity.



23 year-old Ismael Tabo is thank full and grateful for the opportunity to be with the PRK Gulf Isou for this year's Digicel Cup Season. This will be the second year for Ismael Tabo. Ismael's journey in Gulf Provincial Franchise started last year. This year will be his second year with the Club.

Ismael Tabo comes from a Mix Parentage of Hela and Eastern Highlands Province, but lives all is life with Gulf People in Sabama. Growing up in community where you have lot of friends from Gulf Province, Ismael also have that sense of humors of belonging to Gulf as well.

Tabo's rugby league journey started with his home team, the Sabama Raiders in Moresby South Rugby Football League, Ismael started his career from playing in the wing, then to center and finds himself comfortable in the forward position. Ismael is a forward. Who can play prop, front and second rover, and lock as well. Ismael also plays for Bige Gulf West, which is a feeder club of Gulf Isou in Port Moresby Rugby League. Ismael also represents Southern Black's (MSRFL Selected Side) in several tournaments and championships. The young forward is part of the Southern Blacks team that took part in the Southern Super League Competition.

Whether his in the team or not in the team, attending training and committing himself has become a bonnie and norm to him. Ismael is one of the committed and dedicated

player in the squad. He is well known for his shyness and Humbleness; these are the main attributes that will describe Ismael.

Like many other young talented rugby league players in Port Moresby Rugby League and Moresby South Rugby Football League, Ismael have been overlooked by other Digicel Cup teams until he receives the opportunity from the PRK Sponsored side. For Tabo, being two years with the Gulf Franchise is a blessing and an opportunity of a life time.

The PRK Gulf Isou will continue to develop and give opportunity to the young talented rugby league players, despite the results. Similar to other Digicel Cup players, Ismael's dream and goal is to make the Hunters Squad. Ismael is a humble and a committed player on and off the field. The young man is one of the youths in his beloved community Sabama, that many look up to.