

an offer of providing uniforms and training for 2 teams, they will place them in competition games and encourage them. I'm really grateful to the Te Mangungu people for their generous offer."

Howie Tamati

Seaview Kokiri Marae is a whirlwind of activity. Sounds of song and laughter of Te Kohanga Reo burst forth from within. Outside an apprentice skills workshop produces a cacophony of the sounds of industry. A fence is receiving a whitewash. Against this backdrop the lean lanky figure of Howie Tamati strides into view. He is in a hurry, but that is not unusual for him these days, he estimates that he works approximately 60-70 hours a week.

Meetings, training sessions, coaching workshops, phone calls and then more meetings.

"I came involved with the ACCESS programme as a Youth Development Officer after I came back from overseas and moved to Wellington.

"I've played Rugby League since I was a schoolboy. My father was a Maori rep in 1956. I've had a long association with the Waitara League Cup. My hapu is Puketapu and my home marae is Mururaputu of Waitara."

"I first wore the jersey for the Kiwis in 1979 and I've since worn it about fifty times since then. I toured with them in 1980-82-85 through *England* 80-85 *France* and *Australia* 82, *PNG*, the year we beat the Aussies, 1983, was the turning point with our 2nd test win and went out at prime time TV live.

Howie returned to England after the tour to play for Wigan after which he rejoined the Kiwi's in 1984 to play with the team he considers the best league team in the past 10 years which won a 3-0 series over in Britain. Then it was back to England and France yet again at the end of 1985.

The offer of a coaching position in Wellington lured Howie back in 1986. In his spare time from coaching the senior division, he started the Wellington College under 15 League Competition. He plans to start a similar series this year in the Hutt. As well as league coaching, Howie has formed vocational groups with past players.

"We travelled to a lot of schools and spoke to kids. We came up with the idea of peer group counselling with 12 year old students. The counsellors are 15-17 year old students under supervision from more senior committee members. They discuss employment prospects, careers, and further education."

"I have received lots of help from past



Howie Tamati & Lovey Waitoa.

players of league who are helping to ease the work load."

Howie spends a considerable amount of time these days at the old transport centre in the Hutt. On loan from the council it has been converted to a drop in centre. As is the usual case, most of the work is done by a small group of local people.

"What we need is more support from other groups in the area. Unfortunately we had bad publicity from the newspaper in the early stages but now we are overcoming those problems. Most of the kids that use the centre come by at night after they have met their mates, they drop in for a coffee and bit of a chat so we try to get them to come along to training and get involved in the game.

His association with the drop in centre has been a benefit to all concerned. Howie has acquired local knowledge of people and organisations in the area. He enjoys his contact with the kids, and says with his varied background, can relate to people at all levels.

"The other night after a training session I was driving some young kids home. In the front was a young guy about 16, not a bad kid, been in a bit of trouble in the past, but going straight now. He was telling this other young

guy of about 13, not to be dumb and screw up his education by leaving school and going on the dole. Sitting there and listening to their conversation I could see that we are making some headway."

na Syd Bird

A total of 89,656 were either registered unemployed or on special work schemes in February — nearly 10,000 fewer than in January, the latest Labour Department figures show.

As well as those registered unemployed and on Government work schemes, there were 14,873 people on the training assistance programme last month, 5104 more than in January. There were 8563 new entrants to the programme during February, compared with 4960 in January.

Number of registered unemployed and on Government assisted work schemes.

LOWER HUTT . . . 1441 (down 6) 251.

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