



CARBINE CLUB OF NSW

SCRUMS, SUMOS AND SAKE: CARBINE CLUB'S RUGBY LUNCH 2019

MEDIA RELEASE

The Four Seasons Hotel in the heart of Sydney's city played host to the Carbine's Club annual Rugby lunch. In honour of the upcoming Rugby World Cup in Japan, the Carbine Club chairman Bernie Campbell promised Scrums, Sumo and Sake and it certainly delivered. Club member and former Wallabies champion Phil Kearns took the reigns of Master of ceremonies for the afternoon and did an outstanding job in the role with his interviewing skills and great wit.

To commence proceedings, Kearns interviewed special guest Craig Wing, former NRL legend and Japanese rugby international. The pair touched on a variety of topics, including Wing's rugby roots at his old school at Sydney Boys High School to his time under current England rugby coach Eddie Jones. The most riveting portion of this interview was Craig explaining the path that led him to play for Japan. After a shoulder injury in the twilight of his NRL career, He admitted that his "career was finite" and that he had always had a desire to play overseas and was then part of many historic moments for the Japanese Cherry Blossoms including their first win against a top nation with their 23-8 win over Wales in 2015. "It was all about making history for Japan" he said and Craig firmly believed that Japan would bring the same mentality heading into the World Cup in September.

After the first interview, it was time for the Sumo portion of the lunch. In what was the indisputable highlight of the day, President of the Australian Sumo Federation John Traill introduced those in attendance to the three champion sumos that were brought particularly for the occasion. The three sumo wrestlers engaged in numerous bouts. Audible gasps and exclams were heard amongst the crowd as the sumos battled it out amongst each other.

After a superb lunch of Japanese wagyu beef, Phil Kearns then conducted the next set of interviews with Wallabies champions George Gregan, Phil Waugh and Rod Kafer for a general discussion about memorable world cup experiences, the changing nature of the game and the future of Australian rugby. George gave some wonderful insight into his time playing in Japan and how the love of rugby is far greater in Japan than one might expect. He repeatedly stated that Japan will go all out for this world cup. Phil spoke mostly from the administrative side and how his role in rugby has changed from a player to being a member on the Rugby Australia and SCG Trust boards. Lastly, Rod had the crowd in stitches as he gleefully recounted many funny stories from his playing days.

In particular, the times when All-Blacks legend Jonah Lomu squared the ledger after Kafer got the better of him on a few occasions. Kearns made the interviews incredibly entertaining as he would show photos and clips of the three featuring the lighter side of their respective highlights reels.

As part of the Carbine Club's commitment to junior sport, a number of grants and donations were given at the beginning of the luncheon. The first being a \$5000 donation the Surf Life Saving Club of NSW (SLSC). To collect the cheque was SLSC CEO Steven Pearce who praised the Carbine Club for giving assisting "the most iconic life saving group in Australia". Pearce stated that the donation would help support the 75,000 nippers including the special nippers program and 314 Surf Life Saving clubs across Australia. The second donation was of \$10,000 presented to Australian Schools Rugby Union. In addition to ensuring that all can participate at the school level, the \$10,000 will also go towards the Samoan Schools Rugby Tour which shall be held in September and October later this year and ensure the country NSW venues will be able to host the fixtures.

In keeping with the Scrums, Sumos and Sake title of the lunch, one lucky member of each table went home with a 1.8 litre bottle of authentic Japanese Sake. Finally, Peter Falk addressed in his toast to rugby towards the start of the lunch that whilst rugby in Australia may not be at the levels in once was, we only need to look at the recent performance of the Under-20's in Argentina to see that the future looks bright. Furthermore, that we all need to get behind our Wallabies as they prepare for an incredible World Cup campaign in Japan.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

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