



**Media Release  
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## **FOX LEAGUE USHERS IN NEW ERA FOR RUGBY LEAGUE**

**NEW 24/7 DEDICATED RUGBY LEAGUE CHANNEL 'FOX LEAGUE' TO  
CHAMPION AND CELEBRATE THE GAME**

**YVONNE SAMPSON, JUSTIN HODGES, HANNAH HOLLIS JOIN THE  
FOX TEAM IN 2017**

**SIX NEW ENTERTAINMENT SHOWS**

**MORE QUEENSLAND FLAVOUR WITH NEW  
'QUEENSLANDERS ONLY' PROGRAM**

**FEMALE PRESENTERS TAKE THE LEAD ACROSS  
THE FOX LEAGUE WEEK**

**FIRST ALL FEMALE SPORTS PANEL SHOW 'LEAGUE LIFE'**

**NEW GAME DAY INNOVATIONS**

**FOX LEAGUE SWITCHES ON FEBRUARY 20, 2017**

FOX SPORTS, exclusively on Foxtel, is giving Rugby League the coverage it deserves in 2017. Every game of every round, plus every final in September LIVE, ad-break free during play and in HD all on a dedicated 24/7 Rugby League channel, 'FOX LEAGUE'.

Launched tonight at Birchgrove Oval in Balmain, the spiritual birthplace of Rugby League in Australia, FOX LEAGUE will honour the origins of the game and champion and celebrate Rugby League like no one else.

Switching on February 20, channel FOX SPORTS 502 will become FOX LEAGUE with all the shows firing up from February 27 before Round 1 kicks off on March 2. FOX LEAGUE will give fans what they have been asking for – every game, every round live, guided by the best commentary team in the business, on their very own channel that never switches off.

Joining the FOX family in 2017 is the highly sought-after sports presenter, **Yvonne Sampson**, who will lead a new era for Rugby League coverage alongside one of Australia's brightest broadcasters, **Matty Johns**.

Other new faces joining the network, as it gears up for its biggest and best year ever, is recently retired Broncos great, **Justin Hodges**, former half-back star, **Brett Finch** and popular sports presenter **Hannah Hollis**. Fans will see more of **Corey Parker** and **Mick Ennis** plus hear from new match-day caller, **Brenton Speed**.

Sharing play-by-play commentary duties with Speed is **Warren Smith** and **Andrew Voss**.

Hodges, Parker and Sampson join **Mal Meninga**, **Kevin Walters**, **Ben Ikin** and **Gorden Tallis** to lead the strongest Queensland contingent ever assembled at FOX SPORTS.

In 2017, fans will hear from more of the most respected female sports presenters in the country with Sampson joined by Hollis, **Lara Pitt**, **Megan Barnard**, **Tara Rushton** and **Jess Yates** to feature prominently across the week's programming.

The LIVE on-field action starts earlier in the week this season, with the new Thursday night match hosted by Sampson, Johns and a bumper panel of experts weekly from 7.00pm EDT.

Then it's a Friday double-header, with the new 6pm match only on FOX LEAGUE, before a massive Super Saturday EXCLUSIVE triple-header. FOX LEAGUE will be the only place to watch both Sunday matches LIVE, wrapping up the weekend's action.

And it gets better. Across the week, six new magazine shows will keep fans entertained, informed and across all Rugby League's big issues. There will be something for everyone - more fun and more debate, bringing fans even closer to the game they love.

New to the FOX LEAGUE Lab is the Whizz-kid, whose razor sharp brain and home-made algorithms correctly predicted 80 per cent of last season's results. New additions to FOX SPORTS' in-broadcast Augmented Reality, will see a new virtual tackle marker, keeping track of the tackle-count as well as showing subscribers exactly where it took place. And shedding new light on what was a recurring point of contention last year, a new virtual 10-metre line will make it clearer for fans to know when refs are getting it right.

FOX SPORTS CEO, **Patrick Delany**, said:

"This is a game changing day for NRL. We've listened to fans and responded to their desire to see their game celebrated and enshrined in a place all of its own. That new place is FOX LEAGUE. We are going to make what is already awesome, more awesome!

"We will share our love of the game with fans around the country delivering the best coverage to more fans, in more ways than ever before.

"Your game, your team and now your channel. We will have double, triple, double live coverage from Friday to Sunday, plus the best Thursday night line-up kicking off the round's action.

"With all the live broadcasts, all the shows – we will do what no one else can. It's a massive investment for us but we are committed to making our coverage of the game even more awesome."

FOX SPORTS Head of Television, Steve Crawley, said: "FOX LEAGUE will put Rugby League onto the world map of sports broadcasting. It will be like no other and nothing Australian sports fans have ever experienced.

"We have an army of producers charging the channel and we have assembled the biggest, and best, line-up of talent possible. This channel has it all and we can't wait for fans to experience it."

Foxsports.com.au will be the ultimate online destination with all the news, videos, stats and analysis plus the most comprehensive live Match Centres in the game and NRL SuperCoach. Australia's only dedicated 24/7 sports news channel, FOX SPORTS News 500 will have nightly dedicated bulletins with the return of *NRL Tonight* plus extensive league coverage across the day.

## MONDAYS

Monday Night with Matty Johns  
Monday nights at 7.30pm

*Monday Night with Matty Johns* returns in 2017 at the new, family-friendly time of 7.30pm. **Matty Johns** and his regular crew of **Gorden Tallis**, **Bryan Fletcher**, **Nathan Hindmarsh** and **Lara Pitt** will wrap up the round's action with plenty of laughs along the way.

NRL 360  
Monday – Wednesday 6.30pm

From Monday to Wednesday, **Ben Ikin** and **Paul Kent** set the NRL agenda by dissecting all the big talking points impacting the game from every angle. Origin Coaches **Laurie Daley** and **Kevin Walters** combine for

Coaches' Night each Monday. Wests Tigers' **Aaron Woods**, the Bulldogs' **James Graham** and the Broncos' **Benji Marshall** team up for Players' Night on Tuesdays, while **Billy Moore** returns for Legends' Night on Wednesdays. A collection of renowned Rugby League journalists, including **Buzz Rothfield, Andrew Webster, Paul Crawley** and **Dean Ritchie** will feature across the week to offer their take on the biggest news stories.

## TUESDAYS

On the Couch with Sterlo  
Tuesday nights at 7.30pm

League legend **Peter Sterling** is joined each week by NRL greats **Corey Parker, Michael Ennis** and **Steve 'Blocker' Roach**, plus NRL news-breaker **James Hooper** for *On the Couch with Sterlo*, at the new time of 7.30pm on Tuesday nights. Some of the biggest names in the game will join the team on the couch, plus Sterlo sits down with current and former players for insightful one-on-one interviews.

## WEDNESDAYS

League Life  
Wednesday nights at 7.30pm

League Life will see **Yvonne Sampson, Lara Pitt, Jess Yates** and **Hannah Hollis** combine for Australia's first all-female sports panel show, League Life, each Wednesday night. The 30-minute program will deliver topical discussion and debate about the key issues and talking points along with stories from grass roots and those living the League Life. It's going to be a lot of fun with some very different views on the game among the panel.

Queenslanders Only  
Wednesday nights at 8.00pm

By Queenslanders. For Queenslanders. This is the show all NRL fans in Queensland have been waiting for. **Robert 'Crash' Craddock** is joined by a rotating panel of Queensland Rugby League legends, including **Mal Meninga, Kevin Walters, Gorden Tallis, Corey Parker** and **Justin Hodges** for a special take on the NRL news.

## THURSDAYS

League 13 – to – 1  
Thursday nights at 6.30pm

**Tara Rushton** and **Braith Anasta** combine to remember some of the greatest moments in NRL history each Thursday night on *League 13-to-1*. With a new theme each week, some of the biggest names in the game will join the duo to relive past glories and stories.

#### Thursday Night League

Thursday nights from 7.00pm

Rugby League finds a new home on Thursday nights, with a blockbuster clash set to start the weekend early. *Thursday Night League* will launch the round, with host **Yvonne Sampson** combining with an expert panel to deliver the best discussion and analysis of the game each week. Some of the biggest names to have played the game, including **Matty Johns, Mark Gasnier, Michael Ennis, Corey Parker, Justin Hodges** and **Braith Anasta** will feature alongside FOX LEAGUE presenter **Megan Barnard** to guide viewers throughout the night.

#### The Late Show with Matty Johns

Thursday nights from 10.00pm, after the footy.

NRL fans will have more Matty in 2017 with **Matty Johns** and his regular team of **Gorden Tallis, Nathan Hindmarsh, Bryan Fletcher** and **The Professor** teaming up for *The Late Show with Matty Johns* each Thursday night after for a preview of the weekend's footy. Viewers can kick their weekend off early with a raucous mix of jokes, banter, pranks and leftfield analysis.

### **FRIDAYS**

#### Friday Night Footy

Friday nights from 5.30pm

FOX LEAGUE will be the destination for NRL fans seeking their Friday night footy fix, with double the action every week. FOX LEAGUE will be the only place to catch the weekend's opening double-header, with host **Matt Shirvington** joined by a rotating panel of experts, including **Mark Gasnier, Kevin Walters, Justin Hodges, Braith Anasta** and **Steve Roach** to preview and review the action, while **Megan Barnard** delivers the latest news throughout the night. It all kicks off at 5.30pm, with the first game of the night EXCLUSIVE to FOX LEAGUE, before a prime-time blockbuster launches at 8.00pm.

#### The Professor's Second Year Syndrome

Friday nights at 10.00pm, after the footy

The breakout star from *Monday Night with Matty Johns*, **James 'The Professor' Rochford**, is back in 2017 with a brand new show of his own.

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*The Professor's Second Year Syndrome* will be satire at its sharpest, poking harmless fun at the game, clubs and players we all love. The Professor will be joined by Rugby League great **Brett Finch**, Triple M's **Chris Page**, plus special guests each week.

## **SATURDAYS**

### Super Saturday

Saturdays from 3.00pm

FOX LEAGUE's biggest day of NRL action returns in 2017, with up to three LIVE, ad-break free during play and EXCLUSIVE games back-to-back on *Super Saturday*. **Matt Shirvington** will host the opening match LIVE from the ground, before **Yvonne Sampson** takes the reigns from FOX LEAGUE HQ. League legend **Greg Alexander**, plus a rotation of experts, will be on hand to offer their expert insight and analysis.

## **SUNDAYS**

### Sunday Ticket

Sundays from 1.00pm

**Jess Yates** steps into the hosting chair on Sundays alongside **Braith Anasta, Michael Ennis** and **Lara Pitt** to deliver a LIVE, ad-break free during play and HIGH DEFINITION double-header on *Sunday Ticket*. There's no place like home on a Sunday, and the team will guide viewers through both games as they kick-back, relax and settle into a leisurely afternoon of Rugby League action.

### League Legends

Sunday nights at 6.30pm

Hosted by one of Australia's most respected television sports journalists, **Tim Sheridan**, *League Legends* is a series of insightful one-on-one, in-depth interviews with some of the biggest names to have ever played the game. Nothing is off limits in this revealing new series which delves deep into the lives and stories of Australia's greatest Rugby League players, detailing the highs and lows of their careers both on and off the field. Some of the legends set to feature on the premiere season include **Noel Kelly, Chris Close, Mal Meninga, Max Krilich, Mike Cleary, and Tom Raudonikis**.