



KICK-OFF | 7:35PM (AEST)



GAME

Day



FEATURING

Conrad Sewell

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LACHIE ANDERSON BACK FOR CHIEFS CLASH

WORDS | **Jim Tucker**

Winger Lachie Anderson makes his return from a long lay-off in the Queensland Reds team to face the Chiefs on Friday night at Suncorp Stadium.

The experienced finisher has made a strong recovery from the dislocated wrist which has kept him out of Swyftx Super Rugby Pacific since the March clash against the ACT Brumbies in Canberra.

His comeback for University of Queensland in the Sumo Energy Hospital Cup last Saturday was the final tick to return him to selection contention.

On Friday night, he will replace the in-form Tim Ryan, whose workload is being managed after playing some of the biggest minutes of any Reds player this season.

George Blake will start at prop with Wallaby Aidan Ross sidelined by a toe issue. Flyhalf Carter Gordon returns on the bench after overcoming a minor knee injury.

"I'm stoked to be back. The injury was frustrating but I've worked really hard on my rehab and it's progressed a lot quicker than initially anticipated," Anderson said.

"What a game to come back in. The Chiefs are a big challenge but one we are up for. They are hard to beat anywhere so to have them in our own backyard is huge for us.

"Watching on, our backs have been excellent and our back three of Tim, Filippo (Daugunu) and Jock Campbell, the veteran at the back, have been in career-best form I think. Treyvon (Pritchard) has been getting better and more confident with every game."

The match between the fourth-placed Reds and third-placed Chiefs can have a bearing on final ladder positions with both clubs having four games to play in the regular season.

"'Ando' made a solid return for UQ. He gets his chance on the wing this week," Reds Head Coach Les Kiss said.

"We are really happy with Tim's form. He's played massive minutes for us this year so we are able to rotate him this week. It shows the depth we have in the back three.

"Aidan has a toe issue. It's a difficult one to assess but we feel it is a short-term issue. We have the experienced George Blake to come in there plus all that Jeffery Toomaga-Allen has given us in each game off the bench.

"Carter comes back on the bench. The squad has really benefitted from the depth we have at No.10. Harry McLaughlin-Phillips has been in excellent form and has grown his tactical acumen. Ben Volavola has also been a positive in recent games when showing his wares."

The Reds have beaten the Highlanders and Crusaders and lost to the Hurricanes and Blues in their previous games against Kiwi sides in 2026.

“Along with the Hurricanes, the Chiefs are the most in-form team in the competition to date,” Kiss said.

“We are well aware they are a dangerous team. A match like this will again require our mental toughness to shine through to keep at the task throughout.”

Friday night is Member Appreciation Round where the Reds’ most loyal supporters are recognised.



Jeff Toomaga-Allen of the Reds gets a photo with students from The Anglican Church Grammar School after the round 12



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Louis Werchon



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REDS ANSWER QUESTIONS, SEEK MORE IN CRUNCH CHIEFS CLASH

WORDS | Murray Wenzel - AAP

Breakdown menace Fraser McReight will push longer-term thoughts of finals football to the side when the Queensland Reds host the Chiefs in a telling Brisbane clash.

The Reds (6-4), equal fourth and nine points shy of the third-placed Chiefs, would find it near impossible to secure a top-three finish and home final without victory at Suncorp Stadium on Friday.

The Chiefs (8-2) are four points - equivalent to one non-bonus-point win - from top spot and face a tricky run home against the Reds, Highlanders, Crusaders and Blues.

Both have a game in hand on the second-placed Blues and the Crusaders, who sit equal with the Reds.

It's the last time in the regular season an Australian team will face any of the New Zealand sides currently occupying the top three spots on the ladder.

The Reds' run home includes games away to the Western Force, Moana Pasifika and Fijian Drua.

"Everyone deep down has those standards (they want to set) in their head," Reds captain McReight said of the chance to make a statement.

"It's a big game in the scheme of things but we're not worried about that ... there's a lot of football left and we're just chasing consistency and the challenge is to back up last week."

The Reds beat the Crusaders and Brumbies and lost to the Blues in extra time before a hefty loss to the Western Force dropped them to sixth and left them licking their wounds.

"Definitely there were a few questions asked

of us a month ago and I said at the time people don't know how hard Super Rugby is," McReight said.

"It's about chasing that consistency and getting better and we've had a good month's stretch.

"The Chiefs play a great style of football and so do we and we want to put on a performance."

The Chiefs lead the head-to-head 4-3 in their past seven clashes and knocked the Reds out of the quarter-finals in back-to-back seasons in 2023-24.

But the Reds are 6-2 against New Zealand opposition in Australia.

McReight has hit 124 defensive rucks this season, 49 more than any other player in the competition.

On the opposite side of the field on Friday will be arguably the form man of Super Rugby, Quinn Tupaea.

The All Blacks centre comfortably led the player-of-the-year race when voting went behind closed doors a fortnight ago.

"It's a massive game for us; a couple points off top and the Reds and Crusaders are coming up," Tupaea said.

"It's four or five points we definitely need ... you always (feel that pressure from below) and we're always chasing the top as well, and it's pretty important to have home finals.

"We've got a big four weeks ahead of us and it starts now."



TEAM LIST



STARTERS

- 1 GEORGE BLAKE
- 2 MATT FAESSLER
- 3 ZANE NONGGORR
- 4 SERU URU
- 5 LUKHAN SALAKAIA-LOTO
- 6 JOE BRIAL
- 7 FRASER MCREIGHT (C)
- 8 HARRY WILSON
- 9 KALANI THOMAS
- 10 HARRY MCLAUGHLIN-PHILLIPS
- 11 LACHIE ANDERSON
- 12 HUNTER PAISAMI
- 13 JOSH FLOOK
- 14 FILIPO DAUGUNU
- 15 JOCK CAMPBELL

RESERVES

- 16 JOSH NASSER
- 17 JEFFERY TOOMAGA-ALLEN
- 18 NICK BLOOMFIELD
- 19 HAMISH MULLER
- 20 VAIUTA LATU
- 21 LOUIS WERCHON
- 22 CARTER GORDON
- 23 TREYVON PRITCHARD

HEAD COACH

LES KISS



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- 2 TYRONE THOMPSON
- 3 GEORGE DYER
- 4 JOSH LORD
- 5 TUPOU VAA'I
- 6 SIMON PARKER
- 7 LUKE JACOBSON
- 8 WALLACE SITITI
- 9 XAVIER ROE
- 10 DAMIAN MCKENZIE
- 11 LIAM COOMBES-FABLING
- 12 QUINN TUPAEA
- 13 KYLE BROWN
- 14 KYREN TAUMOEFOLOU
- 15 ISAAC HUTCHINSON

RESERVES

- 16 SAMISONI TAUKEI'AHO
- 17 JARED PROFFIT
- 18 REUBEN O'NEILL
- 19 FITI SA
- 20 SEUSEU NAITOA AH KUOI
- 21 CORTEZ RATIMA
- 22 JOSH JACOMB
- 23 LALAKAI FOKETI



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MCREIGHT BACKS OVERDUE ANZAC DAY BRISBANE BLEDISLOE FIRST

WORDS | Murray Wenzel - AAP

Wallabies star Fraser McReight has backed Brisbane to host an overdue Anzac Day Bledisloe Cup Test as the concept nears reality.

The hyped fixture, a long-term vision of Rugby Australia, is growing momentum now that fresh New Zealand Rugby (NZR) leadership have warmed to the idea.

It's been reported that Brisbane's Suncorp Stadium and Optus Stadium in Perth are jostling for hosting rights of a fixture that would return the Bledisloe Cup to a three-Test series and produce a reported \$10 million to be split between the unions.

It would likely shift Super Round, wildly successful in its Christchurch debut over the Anzac Day weekend last month, to a later date in 2027 as part of a restructured domestic season.

An extra Bledisloe Cup Test would favour the Wallabies, who haven't held the trophy since 2002 and been unable to win both Tests since it became a two-game duel in 2022.

"It's such an awesome thing that rugby has the ability to do," McReight said.

"Look at AFL and NRL, they have such big crowds for that weekend and just with Australian teams.

"We have that unique opportunity to have a special event.

"Why not Brisbane ... Sydney (NRL), Melbourne (AFL) have huge events that day and Brisbane doesn't and we have a fantastic stadium."

Whether Super Rugby Pacific pauses, or plays around the Test akin to NRL and State of Origin, is a point of conjecture.

But McReight is happy to negotiate the disruption, understanding of the buzz it would generate.

With only Australian-based players available for selection, it would also provide an early look at Les Kiss's Wallabies side before the

World Cup later in the year.

"I don't know what that new (Super Rugby) comp looks like, but you have to work around it and get that game committed," McReight said.

"It would mean a lot. Words can't really describe about how much it would mean for us and the Kiwis.

"Not just for the players, but the fans. A game in April, when you still have two months of Super Rugby left afterwards .. how exciting.

"Guys are going to be playing for their (Test) spots and then coming back to Super Rugby after this awesome weekend, it's going to be challenging but really cool."

Chiefs and All Blacks centre Quinn Tupaea, who will line up against the Reds at Suncorp Stadium on Friday, said there would be organic support from his side of the Tasman.

"To have a Test in the middle of the season, would be good for both nations and cool to be a part of," he said.

"There's a lot of Kiwis over here as well and we still feel a lot of that support."

NZR on Thursday confirmed Steve Lancaster's appointment as chief executive after serving in an interim capacity.

Members of the NZR board met with their Australian counterparts in Christchurch during Super Round, when discussions around the Anzac Day Test grew legs.

New All Blacks coach Dave Rennie, who coached the Wallabies, is also reportedly in favour of the concept.

Josh Nasser



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2026 SEASON DRAW



TRIAL 1

VERSUS
WESTERN FORCE

FRI, JAN 23	LOCAL 4:35PM	AEST 6:35PM
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SCOTCH COLLEGE, PERTH

TRIAL 2

VERSUS
WARATAHS

SAT, JAN 31	LOCAL 2:00PM	AEST 2:00PM
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BALLYMORE STADIUM

ROUND 01

NEW RUGBY
WARATAHS

FRI, FEB 13	LOCAL 7:35PM	AEST 6:35PM
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ALLIANZ STADIUM

ROUND 02

REDS

FEB 20-22
BYE

ROUND 03

HIGHLANDERS

FRI, FEB 27	LOCAL 6:35PM	AEST 6:35PM
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SUNCORP STADIUM

ROUND 04

BRAKEMETERS

SAT, MAR 7	LOCAL 7:35PM	AEST 6:35PM
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GIO STADIUM

ROUND 05

NEW RUGBY
WARATAHS

SAT, MAR 14	LOCAL 6:35PM	AEST 6:35PM
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SUNCORP STADIUM

ROUND 06

FUJIAN
DRUA

SAT, MAR 21	LOCAL 3:35PM	AEST 1:35PM
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CHURCHILL PARK, LAUTOKA

ROUND 07

HURICANS

SAT, MAR 28	LOCAL 4:35PM	AEST 1:35PM
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SKY STADIUM

ROUND 08

WESTERN
FORCE

SAT, APR 4	LOCAL 6:35PM	AEST 6:35PM
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SUNCORP STADIUM

ROUND 09

CRUSADERS

SAT, APR 11	LOCAL 7:35PM	AEST 7:35PM
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SUNCORP STADIUM

ROUND 10

REDS

APR 17-19
BYE

ROUND 11

BLUES

SAT, APR 25	LOCAL 7:35PM	AEST 5:35PM
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ONE NZ STADIUM

ROUND 12

BRAKEMETERS

SAT, MAY 2	LOCAL 7:35PM	AEST 7:35PM
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SUNCORP STADIUM

ROUND 13

CHIEFS

FRI, MAY 8	LOCAL 7:35PM	AEST 7:35PM
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SUNCORP STADIUM

ROUND 14

WESTERN
FORCE

SAT, MAY 16	LOCAL 5:35PM	AEST 7:35PM
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HBF PARK

ROUND 15

MOANA PASIFIKA

SAT, MAY 23	LOCAL 4:35PM	AEST 2:35PM
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NORTH HARBOUR STADIUM

ROUND 16

FUJIAN
DRUA

FRI, MAY 29	LOCAL 7:35PM	AEST 7:35PM
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SUNCORP STADIUM

QUALIFYING

TBC

FRI JUN 5	SAT JUN 6
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SEMI-FINALS

TBC

FRI JUN 12	SAT JUN 13
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FINALS

TBC

SAT, JUN 20



HOME AWAY

*SCHEDULE SUBJECT TO CHANGE

bms.



RUGBY RUNS RED