

# NRL NT excited about big 2017

JOSH SPASARO

DUNCAN MacGillivray is super excited about what lies ahead for Northern Territory rugby league in 2017.

The former Penrith and Rabbitohs representative has taken on a new role as the NRL NT's pathways manager, after serving six years in that role for the NT Institute of Sport.

His job at the NTIS was rolled over to the NRL NT, and the 40-year-old believes it's a great time to come on board.

"It's a huge year for rugby league this year, and I'm really happy to be a part of it," MacGillivray said from the NRL NT's new offices in Parap.

"There's the Test match in Darwin (World Cup quarter-final on November 17), and Parramatta playing the Cowboys which will be a huge game with the likes of Johnathan Thurston (to feature in the June 10 game in the Top End).

"We've got under-14s and 16s rep teams going to Townsville, and that's on the back of our under-15s and 18s going to Adelaide.

"It's a really big year for rugby league, and it's really exciting."

MacGillivray has built up a strong relationship with respected rugby league nursery Kirwan High School, in Townsville. Kiah Ryder of the Litchfield Bears and Mackillop Shark Jacob Chiplen were offered the chance to study there and participate in the school's renowned league program earlier this month.

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**NRL NT PATHWAYS MANAGER DUNCAN MACGILLIVRAY**

And MacGillivray's NTIS talents Will Fox, Sam Stopp and Brayden Daly made the final cut of the Townsville Blackhawks' Under-18 squad in Queensland's Mal Meninga Cup, last November.

"They (youngsters who relocate to Townsville from the NT) have got to start from scratch," MacGillivray said.

"They've got to make an impression on their coaches and teammates, and focus on their studies.

"We've been sending kids there for the past five to six years. It's a fantastic environment to be in."

MacGillivray said the NRL NT encouraged local coaches to develop through the ranks.

"Kids who have gone on through the academies and now play locally, we're trying to get them to re-engage back in our program and give something back," he said.



Former NRL player Duncan MacGillivray is the new NRL NT pathways manager Picture: KATRINA BRIDGEFORD

"Blake Fletcher is a good one. He's come through our system and is playing A-grade for Brothers and he helps out with our under-18s academy.

"We've got some incentives for coaches, for them to be involved through the Queensland Academy of Sport and the Parramatta Eels — who allow

us to send some coaches every year. There are some really good people involved. Generally they all want to get some success."

## Drink-drive drama for Eels player

EELS forward Peni Terepo has been stood down indefinitely and faces the prospect of being sacked after failing to inform the club about a drink driving incident in Auckland in early January.

During sentencing at Auckland District Court yesterday, the court heard that Terepo drove drunk on January 8 before crashing and being thrown into the windscreen. When police arrived, the 25-year-old was asked to give a blood alcohol reading and refused.

As a result, Terepo has pleaded guilty to careless, drunken driving and refusing to give a blood-alcohol test.

The Tongan international has been fined \$500 and \$130 in court costs, while he has been disqualified from driving for seven months.

More seriously, though, Terepo faces the prospect of the sack after failing to inform Parramatta about the incident.

## NRL boss meets with Roberts

NRL supremo Todd Greenberg has met with Brisbane's James Roberts over his off-field behaviour, with the centre understood to be on his last chance.

"The meeting was aimed at encouraging him to make the right choices going forward," an NRL spokesman said.

Greenberg met with Roberts in his office at NRL headquarters on Wednesday where he and integrity unit boss Nick Weeks delivered the Broncos centre his final warning.

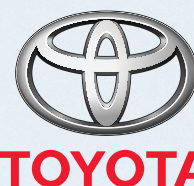
Roberts was reportedly ordered by Greenberg to fly to Sydney for the meeting.

The 23-year-old Roberts' career was hanging by a thread following accusations he pulled a young woman by the hair at a Gold Coast nightclub earlier this month before he was issued with a drunk diversion notice.

The NRL spokesman did not confirm if Roberts was on his last chance.

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