



2010 Bartercard
NBL

Grand Finals Media Guide



V



Game One: Tuesday, June 29
Game Two: Wednesday, June 30
Games Three (If needed): Thursday, July 1
(All Live on Sky Sport Three, 7.30 Tip off)

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STANDINGS

Team	P	W	L	Win %	GB	Pts
&-Exodus Saints	18	14	4	77.8	0	28
z-Waikato Pistons	18	13	5	72.2	1	26
y-Fico Finance Nelson Giants	18	12	6	66.7	2	24
y-Harbour Heat	18	11	7	61.1	3	22
x-0800 Easy LPG Bay Hawks	18	11	7	61.1	3	22
x-Zerofees Southland Sharks	18	9	9	50.0	5	18
e-Christchurch Cougars	18	9	9	50.0	5	18
e-Taranaki Mountainairs	18	6	12	33.3	8	12
e-McDonalds Manawatu Jets	18	5	13	27.8	9	10
e-OceanaGold Nuggets	18	0	18	0.0	14	0

Win % - Win Percentage, GB – Games Back

&- clinched regular season

z- home semifinal

y- home quarterfinal

x- clinched playoff berth

e- eliminated

LAST WEEK

Bartercard NBL – Playoffs

Quarterfinals

Tuesday, June 22

At Trafalgar Centre, Nelson

Fico Finance Nelson Giants 82 (Michael Harrison 23, Phill Jones 20, Mika Vukona 17)
Zerofees Southland Sharks 67 (Mike Helms 19, Luke Martin 18, Rene Rougeau 16)

Wednesday, June 23

At North Shore Events Centre, North Shore

Harbour Heat 77 (Rick Rickert 30, Beny Anthony 17, Reece Cassidy 12)
0800 Easy LPG Bay Hawks 82 (Josh Pace 28, Three Tied 9)

Semifinals

Friday, June 25

At TSB Arena, Wellington

Exodus Saints 98 (Erron Maxey 24, Eric Devendorf 22, Nick Horvath 13, Lindsay Tait 13)
0800 Easy LPG Bay Hawks 92 (Josh Pace 30, Jon Rogers 16, Chris Daniel 16)

At Hamilton Boys High, Hamilton

Waikato Pistons 74 (Hayden Allen 28, Alex Pledger 16, Thomas Abercrombie 14)
Fico Finance Nelson Giants 62 (Michael Harrison 18, Mike Fitchett 18)

NBL Grand Finals Preview

Game One

Tuesday, June 29

Waikato Pistons (14-5) v Exodus Saints (15-4), 7.30pm

At Hamilton Boys High, Hamilton

Live on Sky Sport 3

Referees – Tim Brown, Dallas Pickering, Gavin Whiu

Game Two

Wednesday, June 30

Exodus Saints v Waikato Pistons, 7.30pm

At TSB Bank Arena, Wellington

Live on Sky Sport 3

Referees – Tim Brown, Dallas Pickering, Andy Thackray

Game Three (If Required)

Thursday, July 1

Exodus Saints v Waikato Pistons, 7.30pm

At TSB Bank Arena, Wellington

Live on Sky Sport 3

Referees – Tim Brown, Dallas Pickering, Andy Thackray

Rosters

No.	Waikato Pistons	Games Played
4	Tony Ronaldson	17
6	Ray Cameron	85
8	Roble Ali	4
9	Hayden Allen	205
10	Thomas Abercrombie	38
11	Alex Pledger	27
12	Rashad Tucker	6
13	John Auld	4
14	Dennis Tawhiti	4
25	Gerard Bowden	54
33	Puke Lendon	202
40	Mike Homik	160

No.	Exodus Saints	Games Played
4	Lindsay Tait	163
6	Erron Maxey	18
7	Damien Ekenasio	130
9	George Le'afa	201
10	Leon Henry	71
15	Ross Taurima	12
23	Eric Devendorf	14
31	Randall Bishop	24
43	Casey Frank	165
44	Nick Horvath	61
55	Troy McLean	240

Projected Starting Fives

	Pistons	Saints
Point Guard	Rashad Tucker	Lindsay Tait
Shooting Guard	Hayden Allen	Eric Devendorf
Small Forward	Thomas Abercrombie	Leon Henry
Power Forward	Tony Ronaldson	Casey Frank
Center	Alex Pledger	Nick Horvath

Leading Scorers (Points per game)

Pistons	Saints
Thomas Abercrombie (20.7)	Eric Devendorf (25.6)
Hayden Allen (15.3)	Lindsay Tait (16.6)
Tony Ronaldson (13.6)	Erron Maxey (13.8)

Team Leaders in Other Categories (Per game)

	Pistons	Saints
Rebounds	Alex Pledger (12.6)	Casey Frank (7.8)
Assists	Thomas Abercrombie (2.9)	Lindsay Tait (7.8)
Steals	Thomas Abercrombie (1.6)	Eric Devendorf (2.2)
Blocks	Thomas Abercrombie (2.0)	Nick Horvath (0.8)

Team Stats (Per game) & (NBL Rank)

	Pistons	Saints
Scoring	87.6 (4 th)	94.5 (1 st)
Rebounds	45.7 (1 st)	40.8 (5 th)
Assists	14.8 (2 nd)	18.3 (1 st)
FG%	46.1 (4 th)	49.1 (1 st)
FT%	70.8 (6 th)	73.9 (2 nd)
3pt%	35.8 (4 th)	37.5 (3 rd)

2010 Head to Head

Round 13

At TSB Arena, Wellington

Exodus Saints 103 (Troy McLean 27, Lindsay Tait 19, Leon Henry 14)

Waikato Pistons 84 (Thomas Abercrombie 21, Tony Ronaldson 14, Hayden Allen 14)

Round 16

At Hamilton Boys High, Hamilton

Waikato Pistons 74 (Hayden Allen 15, Tony Ronaldson 14, Thomas Abercrombie 12)

Exodus Saints 78 (Lindsay Tait 22, Erron Maxey 16, Nick Horvath 12)

Notes

- *Head to Head Wins (Since 1995): Saints 21 Pistons 15*
- *Head to Head Playoffs (Since 1995): Saints 1 Pistons 3*

Saints

- Saints Eric Devendorf leads the league in points (13 games 25.6 ppg), 7 games for Waikato averaging 24.3 points, 6 games for Saints averaging 27.2.
- Devendorf also has a league high this year in points in a game scoring 49 against Nelson Giants in Round one in his debut for the Pistons, 1st in three point percentage (59.6), 3rd free throw percentage (85.1), 6th in steals (2.2), 8th assists (3.5)
- Lindsay Tait leads the league in assists at 7.1 a game. Also a league high 16 assists against Otago Nuggets and also got 15 assists against the Pistons in Round 13.
- Saints lead the league in team points, assists, field goal percentage
- Casey Frank leads the league in field goal percentage (58.9), 8th in the league in rebounds 7.8 per game
- 9-1 at home, only loss was to the Nelson Giants 80-65.
- Saints 6-3 away

Pistons

- Thomas Abercrombie is second in the league in blocks (2.0), 10th in rebounds (7.7), 10th in scoring (20.7). Abercrombie leads his team in points, blocks, steals and assists.
- In his second year in the league Alex Pledger leads the league in rebounding at 12.6 per game and third in blocks (1.9). In the regular season Pledger had 11 double doubles in points and rebounds.
- Hayden Allen is 2nd in free throw percentage (85.2)
- Pistons lead the league in team blocks (5.33) and rebounds (45.7) and opponents shoot on average a league low 41% against them.
- Pistons are 9-0 if they score over ninety points and are 2-4 if they score under 80.
- Pistons have a 9-1 record at home. Only loss was to the Saints 78-74 in Round 16.
- Pistons 5-4 away

Preview

Waikato Pistons will look to win their fifth NBL Championship when they host the first final of a best of three series against the Exodus Saints who are a familiar opponent when it comes to finals having met each other four times since 2001.

History has been in favour for Waikato who won the 2001 and 2008 championships against the Saints and has only lost to them once in a finals series.

One former Waikato player who was a major part in all their championships is Tall Black legend Pero Cameron who ironically will be on the opposite team as Head Coach of the Saints in his debut season. Cameron played over 150 games for the Waikato franchise beginning his career their back in 1992 as a young 17 year old.

2009 coach of the year Dean Vickerman is in his second year with the Pistons, beginning his coaching in the NBL back in 2002 for the Saints. Vickerman has amassed a 31-7 record with the Pistons in two seasons, including the 2009 championship.

2010 could also be the year that the Pistons win a three peat, which they had an opportunity to do back in 2003 only to fall short in a 97-88 overtime loss to none other than the Saints. The only player that is left from that Waikato team in this year's Pistons side is Puke Lendon who will have to play a big part in this year's finals with the injuries of Mike Homik who will not be playing and Tony Ronaldson who has a knee injury that may keep him out. Lendon was the named the Most Valuable Player in the 2008 finals series against the Saints and had a season high 14 points this year against the Saints in Round13.

If Ronaldson does not play it will be a severe blow to the Pistons who have relied on his leadership and ability to spread the floor with his outside shooting. The former Australian Boomer has averaged 14 points in the two games against the Saints and has shot the ball at 67% from the outside.

2008 was exactly the same as this year, with the Saints winning the regular season and Pistons placed second.

Pistons won Game One in Te Awamutu 95-78 and then Game Two 84-79 at TSB Arena which is only one of three losses the Saints have had there since then.

When it comes to form the Saints have been on a roll of late winning 12 of their last 13 games, including two against the Pistons. The last time the two teams met was only a couple of weeks ago when they played in the final round of the regular season to decide who would win the regular season.

Saints won in an unlikely 78-74 game in which they were down as many as 15. Pistons were without their big man Alex Pledger and their import Rashaad Tucker who suffered an injury in the first half.

Hayden Allen top scored for the Pistons in that game with 15 and was also the top scorer in the Pistons 74-62 semi final win over the Fico Finance Nelson Giants with 28 points.

Allen and the Pistons will look to put the defensive clamps on Lindsay Tait who had a game high 22 in the win over them and has played some of his best basketball against Waikato averaging 20 points and 10 assists in the two wins.

Saints will be quietly confident having beaten the Pistons without the league's leading scorer Eric Devendorf who has yet to play his former team that released him mid season. Devendorf scored a league high 49 points on debut for the Pistons in their opening round win over the Giants and has gone on to average 25.6 points per game shooting the three pointer at a 59.6%.

Since the departure of Devendorf, second year swingman Thomas Abercrombie has lifted his game offensively averaging just over 20 points a game. The 2009 forward of the year will again be odds on favorite to win the award again and is a top candidate for the Most Valuable player award.

Abercrombie is averaging just under 17 a game against the Saints this season and has had some good battles against a Tall Black team mate Leon Henry who has had his best season in the NBL starting in all of the Saints games averaging 10.3 points.

In a three game series with no rest in between the games bench of both teams could be the difference and for both teams they have experience with Lendon, Ray Cameron and Gerard Bowden for the Pistons and for the Saints the likes of Troy McLean, George Le'afa and Damien Ekenasio who were all in the 2003 Saints championship teams and between them have nearly played a combined 600 NBL games.

In the Semi Final win against the Hawks bench played a major role for the Saints with their import Erron Maxey who had 24 points, scoring 12 in the final period. Maxey is very familiar with his role off the bench having won the sixth man award in the Australian League last with the Gold Coast Blaze.

Since 2007 when the three game finals series began none have had to go to a third game, therefore the odds are grossly against the team who loses game one.

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