



MEDIA RELEASE

PNGRFL HIGH PERFORMANCE TOUR STRENGTHENS SANTOS CUP CLUBS AHEAD OF 2026 SEASON AND WORLD CUP

PORT MORESBY, 16th July 2026: The Papua New Guinea Rugby Football League (PNGRFL) has successfully completed the first of its high-performance program across the country, aimed at elevating professional standards within the Santos Cup and preparing our elite female athletes for potential 2026 Rugby League World Cup (RLWC26) selection.

Led by PNGRFL Physical Performance Manager Edward Moses Guise and PNG Orchids Head of Performance, Luke Portese, the performance team visited all six Santos Cup franchises across Port Moresby, Mt. Hagen, Goroka, Lae, and East New Britain. The tour focused on improving key skills identified by the PNGRFL, the direct physical development of identified Players of National Interest (PONI) and the professional capacity building of club coaching staff.

PNGRFL Chief Operating Officer Tony Archer said, "This program is a critical component of our on-going physical development program for our domestic players as they strive towards selection for the Orchids as we look toward the 2026 World Cup. It is about setting international standards for skill development and physical performance early in the season".

During the visits, performance staff conducted intensive sessions covering tackling technique and conditioning. Beyond group technique and skill sessions, the program provided a unique opportunity for local Santos Cup staff, including Head Coaches, Assistant Coaches, and Strength & Conditioning personnel, to work directly with international standard performance staff.

The program reached 150 players and over 30 coaches and support staff from the respective clubs, ensuring that the "Building Blocks" established during the pre-season are translated into high-performance habits during the season.

This high-performance program focused on female athlete development in the PNG National Rugby League Competition (PNG NRLC), is part of the Australian Government's PacificAus Sports Program, and support by Santos and KMHL.

APPROVED FOR RELEASE

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