



Monday July 4 2016

Publicity release: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Matariki Ki-o-Rahi Games 2016 set to shine in Doubtless Bay

The game is on for Matariki, the Maori new year celebrations, as 23 Northland schools prepare to converge on Taipa Area School for the Matariki Ki-o-Rahi Games 2016 this Tuesday July 5 2016.

The games, now in their sixth year, will see teams from as far afield as Te Hapua, Whangarei and Panguru compete in a bid to celebrate and preserve traditional Maori sports in schools.

Tuturu Tangata senior co-ordinator Paulette Lewis says the games were borne out of the initiative's work in schools. Contracted to Te Rarawa Anga Mua, Tuturu Tangata is a programme that utilises matauranga Maori to strengthen and develop Far North communities that contribute to mana oranga, or the ownership of total wellbeing.

Paulette says the games have been held each year at Taipa Area School since traditional Maori games guru Harko Brown first held a workshop in the Far North in 2009.

"The games really came about off the back of the work that we had already been doing with Ki-o-Rahi in schools. We thought that since the game in schools was a regular thing, annual games would be a great way for schools to see how each other play it and what they bring," she says.

Ki-o-Rahi is a ball game set out in circular formation with a central tupu, or rock, at its middle. Although today's variation has typically seen the rock replaced with a large drum, the game's play remains the same – that is to combine teamwork and quick hand-eye co-ordination to reach the central target.

Paulette says participants in this year's event range from years 3 to year 13. Although Ki-o-Rahi is the only taonga taakaro featured, she is keen to introduce other games such as Ti uru or Hakariki in future events.

Healthy Families Far North manager Allan Pivac says the Matariki Ki-o-Rahi Games are a wonderful opportunity to tie in Maori concepts of wellbeing and whanaungatanga through Far North schools.

"Good health and wellbeing occur where mind, body, spirit, relationships and environment are in harmony. The Matariki Ki-o-Rahi Games are a shining example of this concept at work. Bring it on!" he says.