

Sports

Photo of the day



RIO DE JANEIRO, Brazil: Stuntrider, Aaron Colton performs at Santos Dumont airport in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. —Photo taken from www.redbullcontentpool.com

NRL embarrassed after players flout lockdown

MELBOURNE: Australia's National Rugby League has criticised two players for an "unacceptable" breach of social distancing rules by having a camping trip in rural New South Wales state. With the NRL season suspended due to the coronavirus, Australia internationals Latrell Mitchell and Josh Addo-Carr camped at Mitchell's farm near Taree, on NSW's mid-north coast, with Addo-Carr posting photos of the trip on social media.

One picture published widely in Australian media featured the Aboriginal rugby league stars gathered by a campfire with 10 other people. "Our players are role models and we expect them to lead by example during this pandemic," the NRL said in a statement on Monday.

"On face value, the image in today's media is both disappointing and an unacceptable breach of health orders. "The NRL will be speaking to the players involved to seek further information and we will ensure the players provide any assistance authorities require." Australia, which has recorded more than 6,700 COVID-19 cases and 83 deaths, has ordered people to stay at home with a few exceptions including trips to work or school, buying essential supplies and exercise.

NSW Police deputy commissioner Gary Worboys told Australian media police would investigate the camping trip. Addo-Carr, a winger for the Melbourne Storm club, said he was with family on the trip. "I don't know what to say. I came up here for my pregnant missus, she's about to have a baby, then spent some time with my family," Sydney newspaper, the Daily Telegraph, quoted him as saying.

"Mate, it was cultural gathering. Learning about our land and our culture, learning how to hunt, live off the land." The lockdown breach has embarrassed the NRL which is trying to build trust with authorities before it attempts to restart the competition on May 28. The season was suspended in March after two rounds due to travel restrictions aimed at containing the virus. "We are embarking on a significant education program to ensure our players understand what is acceptable behaviour ahead of the resumption of training," the NRL said.

"When training resumes our players and officials must comply with biosecurity protocols that go further than current government restrictions. "On face value, today's matter is unacceptable and we support the government in any action they believe necessary." —Reuters

New Zealand sets up committee to review Super Rugby future

Shutdown has idled hundreds of players and staff

MELBOURNE: New Zealand Rugby (NZR) have formed a committee with the country's five Super Rugby teams to review operating models and plot a way forward for the domestic game amid a shutdown in global sport brought by the coronavirus.

Super Rugby, which also includes teams from Australia, South Africa, Japan and Argentina, was suspended in March after seven rounds of the season when travel curbs and border controls aimed at containing the spread of COVID-19 made it untenable.

As in other rugby nations, the shutdown has idled hundreds of players and staff in New Zealand and placed pressure on the finances of NZR and provincial unions.

NZR said the review committee was comprised of the chairmen of the five Super Rugby sides and NZR, along with NZR Chief Executive Mark Robinson and prominent sports executive Liz Dawson as a "Private Investor Representative".

The committee's review called 'Aratipu', the Maori word for growth, will focus on "growing, regeneration and invigoration", NZR said in a

statement on Monday.

"All of the Super Rugby licenses were up for renewal in 2020 and a review was already underway as part of that, however, the impact of COVID-19 creates another dimension and means we need to take a broader look at how we continue the 25-year legacy of Super Rugby for New Zealand," Blues chairman Don Mackinnon, who will chair the committee, said in the statement.

"The scope of Aratipu will include the New Zealand Super Rugby competition (local and offshore), clarify Super Rugby's role in the domestic high-performance pathway, review the ownership and equity structure, and digital rights."

The committee is expected to submit a preliminary report to NZR by the end of June, with the

review's findings to be provided later in the year. New Zealand have dominated Super Rugby since its inception in 1996, claiming 17 out of 24 championships and the last five in succession.

With virtually all sport halted and teams unable to travel due to COVID-19 curbs, the future of the competition remains up in the air. NZR CEO Robinson said his administration was committed to SANZAAR, the governing body of Super Rugby which also includes the Australian, South African and Argentine rugby unions.

But Rugby Australia chairman Paul McLean cast doubt on the competition starting up again with South Africa and Argentina's involvement due to the coronavirus. "I can't see and (NZR) can't see South Africa

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Private Investor Representative”

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NZR Chief Executive Mark Robinson

and Argentina being involved anywhere in the short term along the way," McLean told The Australian newspaper. —Reuters

Belaey soars through epic trail across Lebanon's mountains



BEIRUT: Kenny Belaey, the Belgian athlete and trail bike champion, recently completed the 470 km Lebanon Mountain Trail, in what was a thrilling journey of exploration and wild earth. Watch the entire video and relive the ride with Kenny Belaey on the LMT on Facebook, Instagram or YouTube.

He is now the first to ever complete the entire trail by trial bike. "Lebanon is by far one of my favorite countries I ever visited." Said Kenny Belaey, having just been to 76 unique towns and villages that spanned from the north to the south of Lebanon. "It was an honor to be the first ever to ride over the extreme difficult hiking terrain on a bicycle." He said.

He was completely taken with every part of the experience. He began at Marjayoun in the south and made his way north from there.

A few of the places that really stuck out for him were the Shouf Biosphere Reserve, the Jezzine Waterfall, Aqoura Lakes, Niha, Hasbaya, Qehmez, the Tannourine Forest Reserve, the Fortress of Niha, Qadisha Valley, Bsharri and the Cedars of God.

Kenny only stayed at locally-owned-and-operated establishments, guesthouses, and bed and breakfasts. Eating what they prepared, and learning about their traditional way of life.



"Its charming people, rich culture and epic landscape made me want to discover the Mountain Trail even more." Continued Belaey. Among the amazing people he met was one of his trail guides, an 85-year-old villager who grew up along the trail, as his ancestors had before him.

This was not Kenny's first trip to Lebanon, having visited several times before. With each visit he found himself more curious about the country. Finishing the trail, he doesn't think this will be his last trip either. He considered his experiences of Lebanon. "After crossing this path, I felt like there were different countries in one: different weather,

sceneries, mountains, cultures, foods and varying architecture." He concluded by saying, "I loved it, and most of all, I loved the people I met along the way and how hospitable they were."

Kenny Belaey is a world champion trial bike athlete: 6 times overall World Cup winner with 4 European titles and 9 World titles. He is the world record medal holder with 20 medals out of 23 world championship entries. Kenny travels the world with his shows from NBA arenas in the USA to big events all over Europe. He was also the first biker ever to ride over a 16m long slack-line over a 120m gorge at 3500m elevation.