



# MELANI MATAVAO

## KEY STATS

**NATIONALITY:** Samoan

**VILLAGES:** Fasito'o-Uta & Lauli'i,  
Sa'aga Siumu

**DATE OF BIRTH:** 19/11/1995

**POSITION:** Halfback

**HEIGHT:** 1.72m

**WEIGHT:** 83kgs



## BACKGROUND

Melani Matavao hails from the villages of Fasito'o Uta, Lau'l'i and Sa'aga Siumu in Samoa.

He is currently completing a building apprenticeship with the goal of becoming a qualified builder. Matavao's diligence in his off-field growth and holistic development earned him the Personal Development Awards at Moana Pasifika's 2025 Prizegiving.

## RUGBY JOURNEY

Matavao is known for being a threat on attack with amazing playmaking skills and an excellent knowledge of the game. Joining Moana Pasifika in 2024, he has become a true impact player, bringing his positive spirit and vigor to the squad. Matavao's achievements are a testament to his hard work and courage from his journey beginning in the villages of Samoa to earning his place in Super Rugby Pacific.

Matavao rose through the ranks playing in Samoa's PPS Super 9 Competition for the Aana Chiefs. From there he was selected for the Samoan Under 20s side for the 2015 Under 20 World Championship in Italy. In 2016 he made it in the Samoa A team, progressing to the Manu Samoa side in 2018, making his test debut against Scotland in Edinburgh.

Under World Rugby's Pacific Combine Program he was selected for Otago in 2018 and played in 7 matches during their NPC season.

Matavao played a significant role in Samoa's qualification for the 2019 Rugby World Cup, scoring two tries in a qualifier match against Germany in 2018 which saw Samoa win 108-43.

In February 2019, he was selected for the Samoan Sevens side in their Las Vegas and Vancouver series. He was then named to Manu Samoa's Rugby World Cup team the same year and returned to Sevens in 2020. He played for Samoa at the 2022 Rugby World Cup Sevens in Cape Town before also playing for Manu Samoa at the 2023 Rugby World Cup.

Matavao has continued to impress on the international scene, as a standout for Manu Samoa in their 2024 and 2025 Pacific Nations Cup campaigns.

In 2024 Matavao was called into Moana Pasifika as a replacement player and made his Super Rugby Pacific debut in Round 3 of the 2024 season against the Melbourne Rebels. Later that year he signed a two-year full time contract with Moana Pasifika.

The 2025 Super Rugby season saw Matavao own his role as an impact player, learning from fellow Manu Samoa half-back Jonathan Taumateine. Matavao scored a miraculous game-winning try against the Highlanders in Round 12 in Dunedin. With five minutes left to play, Moana Pasifika were down 29-27 when Matavao charged a Highlanders kick and scored a try mid-air to clinch the victory.