



FA'ALOGO TANA UMAGA

HEAD COACH

Since 2024

NATIONALITY: Samoan

VILLAGES: Sagone, Afega,
Leulumoega Tuai, Satalo.



BACKGROUND

Fa'alogo Tana Umaga was born in Lower Hutt and is of Samoan descent. Umaga grew up playing rugby league in Wainuiomata, a suburb of Wellington, and was selected for the Wellington Under 16 and Under 17 teams. He also played for the Junior Kiwis in 1991. That team included future stars like Ruben Wiki.

Umaga played for the Wainuiomata Lions and signed a contract with the Newcastle Knights in 1991 but returned to New Zealand after three weeks due to homesickness. In 1993, his brother Mike Umaga persuaded him to switch to rugby union for the 1994 season, which led to his successful career with the Wellington Lions and eventually the All Blacks. He made his provincial debut for the Wellington Lions in 1994 and with the birth of Super 12 (now Super Rugby Pacific) he played for the Hurricanes from 1996. He became a standout on the wing and in the midfield known for his try-scoring, physicality, strong defence, and leadership.

In 1997, he set a record (at the time) of 12 tries in a Super season. He went on to make his test debut for the All Blacks in 1997 and earned a total of 74 test caps and 36 tries throughout his international career. In 2004 he was appointed captain of the All Blacks by coach Graham Henry. Under his captaincy the team won 19 of their 22 tests between 2004-05. He was the first All Blacks captain of Pacific Island heritage. Highlights of his captaincy include leading the All Blacks to a clean sweep of the British & Irish Lions series (2005) and achieving the Grand Slam in Europe. Umaga announced his retirement from international rugby at the end of 2005. As a pioneer on and off the field, he has had a positive influence on inspiring the next generation

of Pasifika leaders. After his playing days he transitioned into coaching. One of his early coaching roles was with the French club RC Toulon in the French Top 14.

He returned to New Zealand and took further coaching roles with Counties Manukau (as player-coach) in 2010 and then with the Blues where he served as Head Coach (2016-18) and later Defence Coach. In 2015 he was an assistant coach for the New Zealand Under 20s side and an assistant coach for Manu Samoa between 2021-2023.

In July 2023 it was announced that he would become Head Coach of Moana Pasifika. In his first season with the team in 2024, he led them to four wins, the most they had won prior to that. Then in 2025 he coached Moana Pasifika to six victories in a record-breaking season on and off the field for the club. Off the field, he and his wife Rochelle own *Viktual+*, a supplement business which uses native ingredients and ancient Māori and Samoan wisdom to support wellbeing. In recognition of his sporting achievements and service, he received a ONZM – Officer of the New Zealand Order of Merit in 2006. In his post-rugby life he also took up Brazilian Jiu Jitsu and in 2022 he earned a silver medal as a brown belt at the IBJJF Masters Worlds, and soon after was promoted to black belt.



TOAIGAOTUMUA TOM COVENTRY

ASSISTANT COACH

Since 2024

NATIONALITY: New Zealand

ORIGIN: Waikato



BACKGROUND

Toaigaotumua Tom Coventry was born and raised in Waikato. He has established himself as one of the top forwards coaches in New Zealand. This includes winning back to back titles with the Chiefs in 2012 and 2013, and then with the Blues in 2022.

Coventry played 51 games as a loose forward for Waikato between 1988 and 1994, scoring 14 tries and winning the NPC title in 1992. This included a hat-trick at Athletic Park against Wellington in 1992. He began his coaching career with Otago University.

After retiring from rugby, Coventry became a secondary school teacher at Cambridge High School, before joining the Hawke's Bay Magpies coaching team who he helped achieve Ranfurly shield dominance and win an ITM Cup.

Following Coventry's success with Hawke's Bay and the Chiefs, Coventry joined the London Irish in England in 2015. He returned to New Zealand to become the head coach of North Harbour in 2017, helping them get promoted to the NPC Premiership for the first time. From

North Harbour, he joined the Blues as an assistant coach in 2019.

Coventry became an Assistant coach for Manu Samoa in 2011. In 2023, he was honoured with a Samoan oratory title 'Toaigaotumua' in recognition of his long-term service to Manu Samoa and the development of Samoan rugby.



VAOVASAMANAIA SEILALA MAPUSUA

BACKS & SKILLS COACH

Since 2025

NATIONALITY: Samoan

VILLAGE: Moto'otua



BACKGROUND

Vaovasamanaia Seilala Mapusua was born in Moto'otua, Samoa and raised in Wellington New Zealand. He later attended Wesley College in Auckland. He is the father of three children.

Mapusua began his provincial rugby career with Otago in 2000 after a brief stint with Counties Manukau.

He became a regular for the Highlanders from 2000-2006, and then moved to the London Irish where spent five years from 2006-2011, making 126 appearances. Mapusua had a standout campaign in 2008-2009, where he scored nine tries and was named the PRA Players' Player of the Year.

After leaving the London Irish, Mapusua moved to Japan and played for the Kubota Spears and later Kamaishi Seawaves.

Mapusua made his international debut for Samoa in 2006 against Japan, and also played at the 2007 and 2011 Rugby World Cups. During the 2011 campaign he was captain of Samoa. He was also part of the iconic Pacific Islanders

team which combined players from Fiji, Samoa and Tonga. He retired from professional play in 2016.

After retirement, he returned to New Zealand and served as a Coaching Development Officer for Otago Rugby. In August 2020, he was appointed head coach of Manu Samoa. He led the team to the 2023 Rugby World Cup.

Then in November 2024, he was announced as Backs & Skills Coach for Moana Pasifika for the 2025 and 2026 Super Rugby Pacific seasons.

In December 2020, he was bestowed the Fa'a-matai chiefly title of Vaovasamanaia in Samoa.



ALANDO SOAKAI

DEFENCE COACH

Since 2025

NATIONALITY: Tongan

VILLAGES: Kolomotu'a & Futu



BACKGROUND

Alando Soakai was born in Auckland, New Zealand, and is of Tongan descent. He attended Auckland Grammar School before moving to Dunedin to study at the University of Otago. He is a father of four. The openside flanker made his first class rugby debut while on loan to Southland in 2004, before playing for Otago from 2005 to 2010.

He became a standout flanker thanks to his speed, work rate, and leadership qualities. He eventually captained the side. He made his Super Rugby debut for the Highlanders in 2007. Known for his relentless tackling and breakdown work, he became a consistent presence for the team until his departure in 2011.

He played over 50 games for the Highlanders between 2007-2011 and represented the Junior All Blacks alongside players such as Israel Dagg, Hosea Gear, Sione Lauaki and Victor Vito. In 2006 he won a Commonwealth Games gold medal with the All Blacks Sevens in Melbourne, alongside the likes of Cory Jane, Liam Messam and Tamati Ellison.

After finishing up his rugby in New Zealand, Soakai moved to Japan in 2011 to play for the Kubota Spears.

He spent the next 12 years at the club as both a player and a coach. As an assistant under head coach Frans Ludeke, Soakai mentored a number of the world's top players including Duane Vermeulen, Malcom Marx, Bernard Foley and Ryan Crotty. His time there culminated with the Kubota Spears claiming their first ever League One Championship in the 2022-23 season.

In 2022 he also coached the Japan National Development Squad, before returning to New Zealand to take up a job as an assistant with the Wellington Lions. In 2024 he was promoted to head coach of the Wellington Lions. That same year, he led Wellington to win the NPC title. Following this success, Soakai joined Moana Pasifika as the Defence coach for the 2025 Super Rugby Pacific season. In 2025, he was also part of the 'Ikale Tahi coaching team for the Pacific Nations Cup.



PAULIASI MANU

SCRUM COACH

Since 2022

NATIONALITY: Tongan

VILLAGES: Neiafu (Vava'u) & Ha'ano
(Ha'apai).



BACKGROUND

Pauliasi Manu was born in Neiafu, Tonga. He attended Tamaki College in East Auckland.

Manu started his career with Auckland's NPC side in 2008, becoming Tamaki College's first Auckland representative. He later played for Counties Manukau.

In 2011 he became a member of the Blues wider training squad and made his Super Rugby debut for the Blues against the Waratahs. He moved to the Chiefs in 2013 and made 49 appearances for the side before returning to the Blues and playing 28 games for them.

Manu also played for the Hino Red Dolphins in the Japan Rugby League One competition and Sunwolves in Super Rugby. As a prop he was known for his physicality and excellent scrum-maging strength.

Manu spent three days as an All Black in 2015 and won a Rugby World Cup when the All Blacks were crowned champions against Australia in England.

He flew to London as standby cover after Wyatt Crockett was ruled out with injury in the quarterfinals. Despite not getting any game time and only taking part in a couple of training sessions, Manu was rightly awarded a World Cup winner's medal along with the rest of the squad.

After hanging up his boots at the end of 2019, Manu joined Moana Pasifika's coaching staff for their inaugural 2022 season.