

Media release

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Crusaders hire mental toughness coach

Super 14's dream team have hired mental toughness and resilience training organisation the Foresight Institute to boost their on-field performance to new heights.

Seven-time champions the Crusaders have engaged Foresight director and mental toughness coach Jamie Ford to provide coaches and leaders with the knowledge and skills necessary to further embed the team's match-winning attitude in their DNA.

Ford, who last year correctly predicted that the Australian netball team's optimistic attitude and superior resilience would see them claim the Netball World Cup from the Silver Ferns, said the Crusaders' determination to embed a world-beating attitude was the mark of true champions.

"Over the past 40 years, study after study has shown that remaining at the top of your game – in sports or business – requires optimism and the mental toughness to take setbacks in your stride as you push for success.

"The Crusaders have demonstrated this attitude over many seasons – but they also know that other Super 14 teams are hungry for the championship title.

"No team can afford to become complacent with success – failure to step up to new levels of performance means falling behind and that is not the Crusaders way.

"Like the champions they are, the Crusaders are constantly looking for proven expertise that provides them with an even greater competitive advantage in their on-field performance."

The two-year agreement between the Crusaders and Foresight runs from November this year. Ford will use Foresight's proven training methods to develop a real understanding of mental toughness, resilience and optimism in Crusaders and Canterbury coaches, including the Academy coach, and management.

"The knowledge and skills they gain will help them lift their coaching game even further, by assessing players' resilience and optimism, and helping them to push through any attitudes that may be holding them back from absolutely peak performance," said Ford.

As a result of this training the Crusaders would bounce back faster from on-field setbacks, recover from injuries more quickly, remain composed under pressure and become the best in the business at handling conditions that might harm their health and fitness, he said.

"This commitment to developing the entire team will ensure the Crusaders' match-winning attitude is embedded into their culture, as they attempt to ensure their on-field performance remains peerless."

A Cantabrian by birth, Ford said he was delighted to be working with his home province's dream team as they continued striving for enduring sporting success.

Steve Lancaster, High Performance Leader with the Crusaders, said the team were excited about the partnership with the Foresight Institute and the benefits that would bring.

"As our relationship with Foresight and Jamie Ford has grown over the past seven to eight months, we have seen how learned optimism and positive psychology applies to sport and developed a real belief in the benefits that will flow.

"We know that staying at the top of our game requires constant effort and constant innovation – and we believe this relationship will bring real benefits not only to the individual coaches and players, but also to the team and the wider organisation.

"This programme to integrate learned optimism and mental toughness into our organisation is another next step in the Crusaders' constant quest for success."

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The Foresight Institute is an HR consultancy, which focuses on building mental toughness and resilience. For further information, please contact director Jamie Ford on (09) 478 4066 or 021 772 079. See www.foresight.co.nz. To contact Steve Lancaster, phone 027 221 3166.