



MEDIA RELEASE

Tuesday, March 14, 2023

SBS Bank brings the Highlanders home to the deep south

As the Highlanders return to Invercargill this week, from a four-year hiatus, official sponsor SBS Bank has lined up plenty of opportunities for fans to meet the players ahead of Sunday's match against the Western Force.

"It means a lot to SBS Bank and the community to have the Highlanders back in our region for a home game after a four-year wait," says SBS Bank Group CEO Mark McLean.

"As the official jersey sponsor, SBS has formed a close partnership with the Highlanders and as the bank with heart, we understand what this Super Rugby Pacific game will mean to the Southland community," he says.

"We know many of our Members will be looking forward to getting along to the game for a family day out and we have worked closely with the team to create some other special opportunities to see the players up close in the community as we build up to Sunday," Mr. McLean says.

These include Highlanders visits to two local primary schools and an SBS branch, a skills and drills session for Members' children and grandchildren and the opportunity for our Members to watch the Captain's Run as the team prepares for game day on Sunday. *(Event information outlined further below).*

Highlanders CEO Roger Clark says, "I must acknowledge the support of our official front of jersey sponsor, SBS Bank, who has been vital in helping us bring a Super Rugby Pacific game to Invercargill. There are some financial imperatives for us when we play away from Forsyth Barr Stadium, and I am delighted SBS were able to assist in making this game possible.

After a few seasons away, we're really excited to be able to come and play a game in Invercargill and it wouldn't be possible without the unwavering support of SBS Bank, official front of jersey sponsor, who have been vital in this process. We're also thrilled to be able to welcome the SBS Bank Members to our Captain's Run on Saturday at Rugby Park to meet our team as one of the many opportunities SBS Bank have created for their Members throughout this weekend.

Southland holds a special place in the hearts of all Highlanders and once again thank you to SBS Bank for making this possible." He said.

Great Rate Roar Down

When the Highlanders take their half-time break during Sunday's match, an SBS Bank first home buyer will have the chance to win a discounted interest rate on their first home loan.

The 'Great Rate Roar Down' will invite the crowd to show support for first home buyers simply by the volume of noise they can make. The louder fans cheer, as measured in decibels, the lower the buyer's one-year fixed-rate home loan will be on the SBS FirstHome Combo.

“Helping Southlanders achieve their home-ownership dreams is how the story of SBS began more than 150 years ago, and we still work hard to help our younger Members get on the property ladder. In the last 12 months we have helped 1,383 new borrowers into their own homes” Mr McLean says.

SBS supports first home buyers through its market-leading, FirstHome Combo package that combines product offerings from SBS Bank in the form of a highly competitive first home buyer’s home loan and a credit card offer, along with KiwiSaver and insurance contributions. In the last 12 months first home buyers made up 57% of all its home lending growth with 73% of its first home buyers using their KiwiSaver to purchase their first home.

“The ‘Grate Rate Roar Down’ at the Highlanders game is a fun way to demonstrate our commitment to first home buyers,” Mr. McLean says. “The more noise the crowd makes, the lower the rate will go. We are well and truly flying the flag for the Highlanders and our first home buyers this weekend.”

SBS was proud to be named Bank of the Year Awards (Home Loans and First Home Buyers) by independent researcher Canstar NZ in 2022.

The Highlanders are coming

Friday, March 17

- **Meet the Highlanders at SBS Bank Invercargill Branch (Don Street)**
4:30pm-5:30pm
Come and meet some of the players at our Invercargill branch and get your shirts signed, with Highlanders merchandise giveaways.
Open to everyone
- **Highlanders school visits**
Two primary schools will receive a visit from the Highlanders with giveaways and a chance for autographs and photos.
 - Ascot Community School, 580 Tay Street at 1:15pm
 - New River Primary School, 117 Elizabeth Street at 2:15pm*Media welcome*

Saturday, March 18

- **SBS Bank Captain’s Run**
2:30pm-3:30pm at Rugby Park Invercargill
Watch the Highlanders’ Captain’s Run as they prepare for game day on Sunday.
This event is open to SBS Bank Members only
- **SBS Bank Kids Skills and Drills Session with the Highlanders**
4:15pm-5pm (Southland Girls’ High School)
Register your children or grandchildren by visiting sbsbank.co.nz/train-with-the-highlanders as numbers are strictly limited. There will be an opportunity for autographs and photos after the session.
This event is open to SBS Bank Members only.

Note to editors: All the events listed above open to media. Please contact media@sbsbank.co.nz if you are planning to attend.

ENDS

About SBS Bank

Established in 1869, SBS Bank is a building society that has achieved bank registration while retaining its mutual structure. Mutual ownership means SBS Bank is 100% owned by its members (customers) and is uniquely positioned to provide benefits to its members. SBS Bank has 14 branches across the North and South Islands and a full online banking service.

SBS in the community

SBS is proud of our commitment to our communities and the diverse range of organisations we have been able to help through our sponsorship programme. This has included Breast Cancer Foundation NZ, Ronald McDonald House South Island, The Graeme Dingle Foundation, Volunteer South, the Southland Loss and Grief Centre and the Timaru Family Works Food Bank.

sbsbank.co.nz

Contact: media@sbsbank.co.nz - Mandy Oosterbroek 027 500 1247