



than black and white? But the sinking feeling went in a fraction of a second, and I was consoled with the thought that the result was an injustice, an aberration, and we would prove as much the following year.

We didn't. In fact, my years at school (1984-88) coincided with one of Boys' High's worst series of results since the fixture began in 1892 (four losses and one win). No other five-year period provides a worse record for School. Their slow start in the 1890s comes pretty close, as they lost seven of the



any other New Zealand schools, we are often beaten, and frequently see better forwards, but the passing of no team in New Zealand can compare with that of Christ's College and Christchurch Boys' High School."

In both 1919 and 1920, the School team contained five future All Blacks (a total of seven during the two years) including Bill Dalley, a great-uncle of Dan Carter.

With fellow old boy Jim Parker, Dalley toured with the Invincibles in 1924-25, but he was only 15 and weighed a little more than 45 kilograms when

However, the College headmaster Rev E C Crosse wasn't happy with these big, public matches, believing that the large, noisy crowd with its partisan barracking pla

The following year he captained the team at centre (and had the services of future All Black Richard Loe) but had the misfortune to face a College team

and on a sunny day at College's "Upper", in College's 150th year, faced a very good School team, which included Adam Thomson and Dan Carter.

The win, with a try to his name, and a mass school haka after the game, made it a memorable occasion for Ryan: "I hold it as close to my heart as my All Black debut."

That remains College's last victory in the fixture.

School has been dominant this century, not least with its record 73-nil victory in 2004. The team of that year included Owen Franks, Nasi Manu, Tim Bateman and Colin Slade.

School has had the advantage of many very good players - there are seven in the current Crusaders squad.

It takes special circumstances for the match to be moved away from either of the two school grounds, and this occurred in 1981 and 2006 when Rugby Park was used in honour of Boys' High's 100th and 125th anniversary celebrations.

The 1981 result was a respectful 9-all draw in front of the Governor-General and a crowd of 7000, but the treatment by some School old boys of the College mascot was not so respectful: it was retrieved after a sideline scuffle minus one leg and a quantity of straw.

In recent years, Rugby Park has also been used as a substitute venue for School's Straven Rd grounds since, unlike College, it cannot provide a secure, gated area, a measure that had become necessary for a fixture that was attracting small groups of intoxicated old boys.

The mutilation of mascots and a growing history of isolated sideline incidents had, by the mid-90s, been replaced by fights, and the presence of police and security guards.

Some years were trouble free, but others witnessed ejections and arrests of a few ex-students, and even a mass brawl after the game, along with a string of arrests in 2009.

The following year, Boys' High endorsed and supported a Christ's College initiative to eliminate all alcohol from the event. With the help of police and the breath testing of all spectators at the 2010 and 2011 fixtures, the event has been transformed and past tensions eliminated.

College headmaster Simon Leese says the schools will keep breath testing until the history of difficulties has been forgotten.

There will be breath testing at the entrance of the College grounds again this year, but once inside the gate spectators will see more than just another rugby game in the Press Cup competition. They will join thousands of other supporters and rugby lovers keen to witness the spectacle of this traditional rivalry in its 121st year.

The players will run on in traditional caps, hundreds of school boys will perform their haka in unison, and there will be the intense excitement of the game.