

# Ready with questions and coconut rough

By Laura Basham

laurab@nelsonmail.co.nz

Caitlin Lund, 9, and her brother Mason, 7, were as nervous as rugby players before a test match as they waited to meet All Blacks Piri Weepu and Neemia Tialata on their visit to Nelson.

They scored the chance to meet their heroes when they won the MasterCard All Black Roadshow Nelson's Number One All Black Fan Competition run through *The Nelson Mail*.

At home in Takaka they prepared for the big day, making chocolate coconut rough, with help from mum, Gretchen, to give to the stars. "They will probably need it after training, and it's got Weet-Bix in it," she said.

As they waited patiently at the

roadshow at the Tahunanui Recreation Reserve, they passed new footballs with five-year-old sister Bridie and dad Dean.

The youngsters rehearsed their questions. Caitlin wanted to know what jobs they did when they weren't playing rugby, Bridie wanted to ask if they knew Kevin Mealamu and Mason wanted to know how many Weet-Bix they ate for breakfast.

Then the big moment came, and clasping the footballs the lucky trio walked onto the roadshow stage to cheers from the 1000-plus crowd.

Master of ceremonies Andrew Eggleton was impressed with the coconut rough. "You wouldn't get that in Auckland," he said. Tialata and

Weepu said hi, signed their footballs, and posed with them for photos while Mason looked staunch, Caitlin smiled and Bridie looked bewildered.

Their verdict: "It was exciting."

They didn't get to ask their question but they got to test their rugby skills, with Mason and Caitlin both successfully scoring in the kicking challenge.

Weepu said it was great getting amongst the community, and fun challenging kids to pass, kick and catch. "It's good to mix it up with them and put a smile on people's faces."

Tialata said he enjoyed it. "It's an opportunity to bring the All Blacks closer to a small community."

See **PIX** Page 13

See **WEEPU** Page 14



**Meeting their heroes:** Nelson's Number One All Black Fan Competition winners, from left, Mason, 7, Caitlin, 9, and Bridie, 5, from Takaka, flanked by All Blacks Neemia Tialata, left, and Piri Weepu at Tahunanui Recreation Reserve on Saturday.

Photo: COLIN SMITH

# All Blacks in town

**W**annabe All Blacks got to test their rugby skills at the MasterCard All Blacks Roadshow at Tahunanui on Saturday and meet heroes Piri Weepu and Neemia Tialata.

The pair presented Nelson Mayor Kerry Marshall with an All Black jersey to thank Nelson for its support. *Nelson Mail* photographer **Colin Smith** captured some of the action.

These pictures and others taken at the event can be ordered from any of the *Nelson Mail's* offices.



**Family game:** The Plank family of Nelson from left, Juliette, Mai, 9, Brook, 4, Ross, 11, and Russ enjoying the event.

218857



**Their heroes:** A section of the large crowd watch the action. 218851



**Young buck:**  
All Black Piri Weepu, left, restrained by a bungee cord heads to the line ahead of rugby legend Buck Shelford. 218842



**Punt for touch:** Caitlin Lund, 9, from Takaka, kicks a ball watched by All Black Neemia Tialata. 218846



**Go Caleb:**  
Kaleb McKay,  
8, of Stoke  
restrained by a  
bungee cord  
heads to the  
line. 218855



**In with a chance:** BNZ staff members Penny Lindup, left, and Jo Street, both from Nelson, watch as Bas Ratcliffe, 12, of Nelson, enters the win-a-signed All Black competition.