

CRUSADERS RUGBY KEEPING THE TEAM BEHIND THE TEAM CONNECTED

The Crusaders are one of the most successful rugby teams in the world and a legendary institution in Canterbury, New Zealand. But there is more to their success than the players on the field.

Behind the team is a network of coaches, medical specialists, strength and conditioning staff, nutrition and mental skills experts, commercial teams, and other support functions.

For the players to deliver their best performance, communication across those layers needs to be clear, coordinated, and tightly managed. As another Canterbury, New Zealand institution, Tait was excited to support the Crusaders future success with communications that work as hard as they do.



THE CHALLENGE CONNECTING THE TEAM BEHIND THE TEAM

The team's previous system did not always provide the audio clarity they needed. Messages sometimes had to be repeated or checked, creating extra friction during critical moments when instructions needed to move quickly.

It was clear the new system needed to meet several specific operational requirements:

- › Simple to use
- › Clear and loud enough to be heard over spectators and stadium noise
- › Sufficient battery life
- › Reception inside an indoor stadium
- › An encrypted channel to protect sensitive team communications

It also needed to work across more than one setting, supporting communication on the training pitch and during games, while being practical to transport between events and on flights.

**“ For us, it had to be simple.
It had to be clear.**

— Aaron Webb, Crusaders Team Manager



THE SOLUTION

BUILT AROUND HOW THE CRUSADERS ACTUALLY WORK

It all began with Tait Pre-Sales Engineer, Barry Deuart, taking the time to understand the Crusaders' requirements and translating them into a solution designed for the team's operating environment. Being open to listen and adapt our solutions is a critical part of our process with customers.

Barry worked with the team to make sure the radios themselves, the accessories used by individual coaches, and the way the equipment would be transported and managed between events suited their needs perfectly.

While Tait had an existing six-radio portable case, the Crusaders required it to suit a minimum of 12 radios. The team prototyped and modified the design to create a larger customized solution.

Weight was another practical consideration. Because the equipment travels with the team, the case needed to remain light enough to meet aircraft weight requirements.

Barry also worked with individual coaches and personnel to identify the accessories best suited to their roles and preferences. Some preferred an in-ear option, others an over-ear accessory, and others a full headset. Harnesses, carry cases, and belt options were also customized for various preferences across the team.

The resulting solution combined:

- › Tait TP9655 P25 portable radios
- › A secure, dedicated communications channel
- › User-specific audio accessories
- › A customized 12-radio Pelican case designed for charging, transport, and team logistics
- › Audio suitable for noisy sideline environments

The aim was to make communication reliable without adding complexity. Whether a message needed to reach someone across the training field or during game-day operations, the system was designed to carry the instruction clearly and quickly.

THE PAYOFF

CLEAR COMMUNICATION WHEN IT COUNTS

With the new system, instructions no longer need to be repeatedly checked because someone could not hear the original message. The Crusaders describe the change as clear, direct communication: one message delivered and understood.

“ Now we've got this amazingly clear radio system that we can hear everything on. It's one lot of communication, bang, done, message passed on.

— Aaron Webb, *Crusaders Team Manager*

That clarity supports different parts of the team's operation. On game day, coaches can communicate changes through substitutions. During training, they can provide timely direction about drills or where the players need to focus their energy.

“ The value of the system is the fact that it's almost unseen, because what it does, it supports everything from behind the front wall.

— Rob Penney, *Crusaders Head Coach*
2023-2026

SUPPORTING PERFORMANCE FROM BEHIND THE SCENES

In elite sport, performance depends on more than what happens in front of the crowd. It also relies on the people coordinating training, responding to changing conditions, and making decisions behind the scenes.

By giving the Crusaders a clear, secure, and practical way to communicate, Tait helps the wider team stay connected while coaches, players, and support staff focus on their roles.

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