

We're all here ready for the games to begin. Opportunities are out there for you and the people surrounding you to all come together and get behind our boys in black. Our kiwi kids are lucky to also be a part of "coming one". A school programme has been offered to get the kids involved in rugby, to learn the rules and have some fun together. After all, it is our nation's no 1 sport; they're bound to get into it at some stage in their lives. For the ladies, fashion shows are taking place all up the country to make sure they are looking fresh to death over the period of world class event. Men the bars are open for you and your mates to pop in for a beer and support your favourite team (All Blacks I hope). And for the whole family, the Real NZ festival is touring the country with many events to keep everyone pleased.

Coming together will allow us to learn more about our nation's culture and traditions, celebrate and have fun, and meet new people - bringing us together. "It is expected that the Rugby World Cup (RWC) will bring rugby fans together from around the world to create a vibe that will be unique to New Zealand" – (Wellington City Council).

The 2011 RWC is expected to bring many opportunities to benefit New Zealand's economy, for us as a society and a nation. With a range of activities held for our visitors, we expect to benefit from this major event. However if we do not meet expectations, New Zealand's economy could be in jeopardy, costing us kiwis.

The RWC is a great way to showcase New Zealand and to climb the global market. We want to make sure that local communities and businesses benefit from the opportunity to engage with this international event and the visitors it brings. This is to maximise the economic benefits and so our residents and communities can take part and enjoy being part of the third largest event in the world. Auckland City Council states one of the major ways we can benefit our economy is to simply buy NZ made products and sell NZ made products. This will benefit the domestic economy rather than the international. There are approximately 20,000 manufacturing firms in NZ, who employ over 250,000 people. That's a huge contribution to our economy and society and one that deserves to be supported. **With an expected over 60,000 tourists, no doubt we will benefit by the amount of money they will be spending on travel, food, tourism, souvenirs etc. The expected total amount of income NZ is expecting is around \$ 5400 million dollars. "It is estimated that it [The Rugby World Cup] will attract around 60,000 visitors to New Zealand, this will generate an extra \$400 million for the economy, and result in an extra tax take exceeding \$90 million." - Trevor Mallard, minister of sport and recreation NZ.**

But if the income does not reach where it is expected, there could be a huge downfall for New Zealand Markets. For residents in central Auckland (others), the rates increase to help pay for the upgrades to Eden Park have been barely affordable to some homeowners "An extra 3.17 million is added to bill for RWC. Pushing home rates increase to 4.9% to 5.1%" - Bernard Orsman, New Zealand Herald. If we do not reach expectations, our economy could be damaged therefore, costing us as a nation a huge amount of money. Although, there are some doubts about New Zealand hosting the event, I feel that there are enough people backing us up to support New Zealand and its economy so if all of us are in this together, and are positive about it, New Zealand could have huge opportunities to make a hefty amount of money, and possibly the chance to hold other world class events that could benefit our economy in the future.

I also surveyed my friends around me. Of the people I asked 100% were excited about New Zealand hosting the event, 23% are going to see a game live and 80% said they are going to watch all games on the television. These results from my survey meant that the event is definitely worthwhile to my friends and maybe all the money New Zealand has spent on upgrading everything is not all a waste as it is going to create excitement and a great atmosphere among supporters, like my friends, nationwide. Many commented on how costing was high (food, tickets for matches, flights) but feel that "these prices are what tourist should be expecting to pay when they get to come to an amazing event in such a beautiful country "- Caitlin Crymble a friend of mine stated. 100% of people I surveyed said that they will watch the final if the All Blacks are in it. There are many events and areas which have been introduced to also foster this excitement despite not being able to attend actual matches such as REAL NZ, party centrals, fan trails, big screen areas for families and so on. My friends intend to meet at such places to soak up the atmosphere of the 'stadium of 4 million'.

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For me the RWC is significant because while I have lived in NZ for many years now, I can also celebrate my home land of Tonga. I have already started to see this patriotism to homelands (beyond NZ) with people starting to buy flags from the \$2 shop and other clothes in support of their country. I think this will send a positive message about NZ's multiculturalism and make me proud to be a Tongan Kiwi! I am very excited to be going to the Tonga vs. Japan in Whangarei and be a part of all the hype, support my homeland, and wave my \$2 flag!!

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In conclusion it seems a privilege and exciting to be hosting this world class event. We are all hoping for the RWC to bring us economic benefits, a fun time, and hopefully it will create history for us and the All Blacks – winning the Rugby World Cup 2011.