

The following are previews with betting tips for Super Rugby AU Round 5 & Aotearoa Round 8 of the 2020 Super Rugby season.

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To take advantage of odds before they possibly shorten, these previews are published before the team sheets are announced. Those who are more risk-averse may prefer to wait for the squad lists before wagering.

Friday, 31 July Force vs. Rebels 7:05 PM AEST, HBF Park, Perth

[View a detailed form guide for Force vs. Rebels](#)

After putting in competitive losing performances in their first two fixtures the Force were thrashed 24-0 by the Brumbies in Sydney last week. While they were competitive in many aspects, the Perth side never really looked like scoring. The good news is the Force now have their first genuine home fixture when they host the Rebels at HBF Park in Perth.

The Rebels moved to 1-1-1 for the AU season with a 29-10 away win over the Waratahs. They led 19-10 at halftime before shutting the hosts out from the 24th-minute onward as the Waratahs suffered self-inflicted wounds through poor discipline, bad decision making and botched lineouts. It wasn't a pretty game but the Rebels will be pleased to have picked up their first win of the campaign.

Betting: I expect the Rebels will win but the 1.25 odds are pretty short and I'm not confident on predicting the winning margin. The Force have come off second best in the second half in all three games so I would back the Rebels to win the second half at 1.41 ([Unibet](#)).

Confidence/value: low

Saturday, 1 August Chiefs vs. Crusaders 5:05 PM AEST, FMG Stadium Waikato, Hamilton

[View a detailed form guide for Chiefs vs. Crusaders](#)

The Chiefs continued their habit of losing tight games when they fell 17-21 to the Blues in Auckland last week. It was their 7th win on the trot with all seven defeats coming by 1-12 points and six of those defeats coming by 1-7 points. They were left to rue several missed scoring opportunities as their next win continues to remain elusive. The Chiefs have also had a few bad calls go against them in recent weeks so they're not nearly as far of the pace as their win-loss record makes it appear. In team news, Solomon Alaimalo is out for the rest of the season with a shoulder injury.

The Crusaders fell 32-34 to the Hurricanes last week to snap a 36-game unbeaten streak at home. Richie Mo'unga missed a late touchline conversion that would have sent the game into Super Time. The Crusaders outscored the visitors four tries to three but came unstuck with too many errors, lineout issues and defensive lapses. Their previous home defeat came back in 2016, coincidentally to the Hurricanes. The Crusaders are now 4-1 for the season while the Blues and Hurricanes are both 4-2. The Christchurch side has a game in hand over both of those sides so their future remains in their own hands.

Betting: the two most recent fixtures between the two were settled by 10 points or fewer and given the Chiefs' recent track record of close fixtures, I would back both the Chiefs 1-12 at 4.50 ([bet365](#), [Sportsbet](#)) and the Crusaders 1-12 at 3.00 ([Sportsbet](#)). Those looking for more risk could simply back the Crusaders 1-12 selection.

Confidence/value: medium

Brumbies vs. Reds 7:15 PM AEST, GIO Stadium, Canberra

[View a detailed form guide for Brumbies vs. Reds](#)

The Brumbies maintained their perfect start to the AU competition with a 24-0 win over the Force at a neutral venue in Sydney. They are now 3-0 for the competition with a six-game

winning streak spanning this campaign and the pre-covid Super Rugby season. Winger Tom Wright had a field day in attack but the most impressive stat is the zero points conceded. The Brumbies have now won eight straight against domestic opposition. I wrote last week that it's ominous that the Brumbies continue to win despite showing room for improvement and it was the case again against the Force, with lineout mistakes, scrum penalties and breakdown infringements keeping the Force in the game.

Prior to their bye last week the Reds defeated a spirited Force side 31-24 in Brisbane. It was a highly entertaining game that helped to erase memories of their dour draw with the Rebels the week before. The Reds are now 2-1-0 for the campaign after a home win over the Waratahs and away draw against the Rebels. The Reds can be genuine Super Rugby AU contenders if they cut down on their mistakes.

Betting: the Reds have won three of their last four but those three wins were at home. The Queensland side has gone 0-1-4 away from Brisbane over the last 12 months and 0-4 as the away underdog. They have lost their last six trips to Canberra. The Brumbies meanwhile have gone 8-1 in 2020. I would back the Brumbies in the head-to-head at 1.36 ([Unibet](#)).

Confidence/value: medium

Sunday, 2 August Highlanders vs. Blues 1:35 PM AEST, Forsyth Barr Stadium, Dunedin

[View a detailed form guide for Highlanders vs. Blues](#)

Prior to their bye last week the Highlanders overturned a 24-point deficit to stun the Chiefs 33-31 in Hamilton. They showed moments of brilliance during the match as the side continues to perform more competitively than expected given the dearth of All Blacks in the squad. The Highlanders are now 2-3 for the Super Rugby Aotearoa campaign with both of their wins coming over the Chiefs.

The Blues snapped a 2-game losing streak by defeating the Chiefs 21-17 last week to move to 4-2 for the competition. They jumped out to a 14-0 lead before the Chiefs fought back to make the game competitive. The win was the Blues' fourth straight at Eden Park. They will be looking to end their two-game losing streak away from Auckland. Preceding that they enjoyed a five-game winning streak away from home.

Betting: the Highlanders have lost 8 of their last 11 games while the Blues have won 8 of their last 10. I would back the Blues in the head-to-head at 1.56 ([Sportsbet](#)). Given all nine previous meetings between the two in Dunedin were settled by 1-12 points, for those looking for more risk I would back the Blues 1-12 at 2.80 ([bet365](#)).

Confidence/value: medium

Best Bets of the Round

Brumbies in the head-to-head at 1.36 ([Unibet](#))

The post [Super Rugby AU Round 5 & Aotearoa Round 8 Preview & Betting Tips](#) appeared first on [Australia Sports Betting](#).

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