

All Black great mourned

ONE of the fastest running backs ever to play rugby, and a man renowned for his contribution to the game's administration, was buried in New Plymouth yesterday.

The high regard held for John (Jack) Lorraine Sullivan CBE was reflected by the huge attendance at the graveside service at Te Henui Cemetery.

In paying tribute to Mr Sullivan, Taranaki Rugby Football Union past president Peter Burke said it was difficult to describe the life performance of a man like him. "One could go on for hours and days and weeks and remember the wonderful contribution of a man like Jack."

The man who was born in Stratford and played his first game of rugby at Tangaraka Primary School went on to represent Taranaki and New Zealand in the game he loved most.

And when a leg injury finally ended Mr Sullivan's playing days he focused his attention on the administrative side of rugby. He was New Zealand selector in 1954-60, coach of the 1960 All Blacks who toured South Africa, president and life member of the TRFU and sat on the New Zealand Rugby Union Council from 1962-65 and 1967-77, the last eight years as chairman.

"Rugby was his great love. He dedicated himself to his province and his country," Mr Burke said.

Mr Sullivan is survived by his wife Mary, a son and a daughter.



John Sullivan CBE (known as Jack) returns home to Taranaki for the last time. Pallbearers represented his family (from left), grandson and son — both John Sullivan; his war service, Ray Potter, 22nd Battalion (middle right); and rugby life member (middle left), Peter Burke, Taranaki Rugby Football Union life member (right), and Leo Walsh (TRFU chairman).