

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**JOHN EALES IS ON THE ROAD TO REDEMPTION IN NEW DOCUMENTARY  
FOR DISCOVERY CHANNEL**

***JOHN EALES REVEALS: THE HAKA TO PREMIERE IN AUGUST***

New Zealand's sacred ritual, the Haka, will be the subject of the next instalment of the *John Eales Reveals* documentary series with Discovery Channel today announcing the commission of **John Eales Reveals: The Haka**.

By his own admission, rugby union legend John Eales has only one regret in his illustrious playing career – that as captain of his country in 1996, he and the Wallabies turned their backs on the All Blacks as they performed the Haka in Wellington, triggering outrage on both sides of The Ditch. For two decades, Eales has rued that decision and now he's ready to make peace with his past.

The one-hour documentary will follow Eales as he sets out to understand the deep cultural, historical, social, communal and psychological aspects that makes the Haka not just the greatest pre-match ritual in world sport, but a pivotal part of New Zealand's culture and identity. Under the stewardship of All Black legend Wayne 'Buck' Shelford, Eales will immerse himself in the Haka as he crisscrosses New Zealand – from Maori communities in Rotorua to Eden Park in Auckland – on his road to redemption. The documentary will also feature interviews with some of Australia and New Zealand's rugby greats.

*"This is a deeply personal project for John and a story that needs to be told,"* said Thierry Bled, Executive Producer Australia & New Zealand, Discovery Networks Asia-Pacific. *"We're proud to be bringing our viewers an in-depth look at one of the world's most iconic rituals, while also helping to close a chapter in John's illustrious rugby career. As the Haka is so symbolic in New Zealand's culture, to ensure the utmost respect is paid to the country's Maori community and their traditions, the producers have brought on board an indigenous production consultant for the documentary."*

*"Some of the first Hakas I remember were led by Buck Shelford so to have him taking me on this journey of discovery has been brilliant,"* said John Eales. *"Being able to dig deeper into Maori culture and into the history and significance of the Haka in sporting, military and broader societal context has been eye-opening. I still wish we had faced the Haka on that day in 1996, I can't have that time again, but now at least I have a greater sensitivity and appreciation for the powerful tradition that it is."*

Currently in production **John Eales Reveals: The Haka** will premiere in August, only on Discovery Channel.

**John Eales Reveals: The Haka** is produced by Mint Pictures for Discovery Channel. Indigenous New Zealand production company, Scottie Productions is consulting on the project.

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**About Discovery Networks Asia-Pacific**

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