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Pulse Energy Highlanders to play the NSW Waratahs

Liam Coltman will start in his 50th game for the Pulse Energy Highlanders against the NSW Waratahs in Sydney on Friday night. Coltman, Highlander number 199, made his debut in 2013 and is known as a hard-working, uncompromising hooker. Injuries have forced changes to the pack that defeated the Lions last week with lock Joe Wheeler and versatile loose Dan Pryor ruled out due to concussion. Luke Whitelock is also side-lined with a knee injury. After a week's rest Tom Franklin returns to lock the scrum and co-captain Shane Christie starts at openside, joining Elliot Dixon and a recovered Liam Squire in the back row. Mark Reddish is back from injury to take his place on the bench.

Ryan Tongia for an injured Patrick Osborne is the only change to the backline giving Tongia his 3rd cap. This round four match-up is a repeat of last season's semi-final, however the teams did meet during the preseason in Queenstown, where the Highlanders narrowly prevailed in a high-scoring affair.

NSW Waratahs v Pulse Energy Highlanders, Allianz Stadium, Sydney - Friday 18th March, 7.45pm (AEDT)

1. Brendon Edmonds
2. Liam Coltman
3. Siosua Halanukonuka
4. Alex Ainley
5. Tom Franklin
6. Elliot Dixon
7. Shane Christie(cc)
8. Liam Squire
9. Aaron Smith
10. Lima Sopoaga
11. Ryan Tongia
12. Rob Thompson
13. Malakai Fekitoa
14. Matt Faddes
15. Ben Smith (cc)

Reserves

16. Ash Dixon
17. Daniel Lienert-Brown
18. Ross Geldenhuys
19. Mark Reddish
20. Gareth Evans
21. Josh Renton
22. Hayden Parker
23. Jason Emery

Unavailable due to injury: Waisake Naholo (leg), Marty Banks (knee), Fumiaki Tanaka (calf), Tei Walden (concussion), Joe Wheeler (concussion), Dan Pryor (concussion), Josh Hohneck (head cut), Luke Whitelock (knee), Patrick Osborne (Hip)

Head Coach: Jamie Joseph **Assistant Coaches:** Tony Brown, Scott McLeod **Team Manager:** Paul McLaughlan



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www.thehighlanders.co.nz