



ROUND 18  
JUNE 29 – JULY 2

“ We're all  
beanieficiaries ”



Media Release  
Sunday 2 July, 2023

# \$3.5 MILLION RAISED IN NRL BEANIE FOR BRAIN CANCER ROUND

ONE MILLIONTH BEANIE PRESENTED TO FAMILY OF BEANIE  
ROUND FOUNDER MATT CALLANDER IN TOUCHING TRIBUTE

THE BIG THREE NEWCASTLE TO SYDNEY TREK SURPASSES \$250,000

2023 MHF BEANIES STILL ON SALE WITH 140,000 SOLD

Australian's have landed a huge blow in the battle against Brain Cancer with an incredible \$3.5 million raised across *NRL Beanie for Brain Cancer Round* by the Mark Hughes Foundation this week.

As donations continue, this year's brain cancer research target of \$3.5 million was surpassed this afternoon – Sunday, July 2 – during the final game of the round between the Manly Sea Eagles and Sydney Roosters fixture on Sydney's Northern Beaches.

Once again the Rugby League community dug deep to donate or buy an MHF Beanie online or at Lowes and participating IGA stores.

In a special moment during 2023 Beanie Round, Mark Hughes presented beanie number 1,000,000 to the family of Beanie Round founder Matt Callander.



**IMAGES – ONE MILLIONTH MHF BEANIE PRESENTATION**

MHF Founder, **Mark Hughes**, who was on site at 4 Pines Park for the final game of the round said: “We understand that financially times are tough for everyone in the country right now so it’s not lost on me how special it is for people to still find it important to buy a beanie or donate to MHF again this year.

“To all the families who have suffered from the horrible effects of this disease, and any cancer for that matter, this shows that hope is out there and I know every time I see one of our beanie’s on someone’s head it certainly keeps me going. We will keep fighting.

“The support we receive is phenomenal. I’d like to thank the NRL, Nine, Fox League, the rugby league media, our incredible sponsors and every single person who made a contribution to our cause.

“Our small MHF team back in Newcastle and the amazing volunteers who work so hard to bring this round to life are the backbone of this round. There’s now \$3.5 million dollars going straight to brain cancer research because of this round. From the bottom of my heart, thank you.”

NRL CEO, **Andrew Abdo**, said: “Once again the game can stand tall following another successful Beanie for Brain Cancer Round.

“The Rugby League community continues to be a driver for awareness and fundraising for brain cancer research.

“I’d like to thank the players, clubs, broadcasters and fans for once again coming together to support the Mark Hughes Foundation.”

Significant financial contributions were made throughout Beanie Round that pushed the final amount to the target set by MHF. **Forming the Big Three Trek, 61 trekkers departed McDonald Jones Stadium, Newcastle on Friday to walk 150km across three days to 4 Pines Park Manly raising over \$254,000 for MHF.**

**140,000 MHF Beanie’s were sold during the Beanie for Brain Cancer campaign.**

**Sportsbet donated \$72,000 after 72 tries were scored in Round 18 (\$1000 per try).**

The Mark Hughes Foundation Centre for Brain Cancer Research at the University of Newcastle will open the 2023 Innovation Grants applications for six research grants of up to \$120,000 over two years soon.

### **Brain Cancer statistics**

- Survival rates have increased by 1% over the last 35 years
- Kills more children than any other disease
- Only 2/10 people diagnosed will live more than 5 years
- Kills more people under 40 than any other cancer
- Receives less than 5% of federal funding for cancer research
- One person every 5 hours is diagnosed in Australia

### **About NRL Beanie Round and MHF**

2023 is the seventh *NRL Beanie for Brain Cancer Round* since it began in 2017. The officially themed NRL round was the idea of former Channel Nine NRL producer Matt Callander in collaboration with MHF, who bravely battled a stage 4 Glioblastoma himself. He sadly lost his battle with brain cancer in October 2017.

The Mark Hughes Foundation (MHF) is a charity formed in Newcastle by Mark and Kirralee Hughes following Mark's diagnosis with Brain Cancer in 2013. The Mark Hughes Foundation's mission is to raise much needed funds for research, to create awareness and support brain cancer patients and their families.

### **#MHFBeanie**

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