

# PLAYERS IN BUSINESS

Angus in action for the All Blacks in 2005.



## ANGUS MacDONALD STILL CLEANING UP

**ANGUS MACDONALD LOVED CLEANING UP RUCKS AND MAULS AS A PLAYER AND NOW HE'S TRANSFERRING THAT PASSION INTO CLEANING UP PROPERTIES WITH A NEW RUBBISH REMOVAL VENTURE CALLED SKIPPY BINS.**

The former loose forward returned to New Zealand after five years playing in Japan and Scotland with a view to starting a business. Before coming home, the 36-year-old had budgeted and saved accordingly to give himself a year to work out what he wanted to do.

Having played for the All Blacks, New Zealand Maori, and Blues, Angus said: "I knew from other players how hard transitioning out of the game could be, so saving money was the key to give me the breathing space to try different career options and finally work out where I wanted to go.

"It certainly has been an interesting journey and pretty challenging at times, but I am finally happy where we are heading,

**"I knew from other players how hard transitioning out of the game could be, so saving money was the key to give me the breathing space to try different career options and finally work out where I wanted to go." ANGUS MacDONALD**

"Being true to your values is really important," said Macdonald. "For me doing everything with integrity and honesty is important and you get more respect for being genuine."

His business, Skippy bins delivers easy-access, 3-metre cube stainless steel, mobile rubbish skips. The customers then have two options: to either have the rubbish loaded by two Skippy staff or to load the bin themselves.

"Before we started Skippy, I got into a start-up that never got off the ground, but I learned a lot of valuable lessons on the way," said Angus.

During this first exploration into business, he freely admits that he put too much trust into one of the partners instead of doing his own homework,

which resulted in Macdonald moving on and seeking other opportunities.

Whilst searching for a new opportunity, Angus did a bit of part-time work in a hotel that he had a financial interest in while he figured out his next move. Thanks to his time in Japan he learned the art of patience, which he says has paid off in business. "Things don't always happen as quickly as you expect, so you have to be prepared for that."

In his younger playing days, he quickly identified how important it was to build a network outside of rugby that he could tap into for advice at different stages of his career. Angus is clear that this important network of diverse people has been highly valuable with helping him in business.

His stockbroker brother Sam was

an important part of this group and introduced him to people outside his rugby circle. "Surrounding yourself with a variety of good and knowledgeable people is critical," he said.

"I have loved the learning. I have learned the skill-set to be able to analyse situations myself and make calculated decisions. As is true for most business owners you learn the most from the challenges."

While there has been plenty to learn, Angus believes that rugby gave him some useful transferable skills for the new business. Having a good work ethic, being able to build relationships with all different cultures, having good timekeeping and being punctual are vital. He says he is still half an hour early to all appointments.

With his learnings from his first unsuccessful start-up, Angus turned to his old family friend, Richard, who was also on the hunt for a new venture. They saw a similar concept for rubbish removal overseas and thought it would fit well in New Zealand.

They had calculated that it was a reasonably safe project because of the growing population and changing property market, a by-product of which is an ever-increasing amount of rubbish that needed to be disposed of.

"I am grateful to my mate Richard who has been a real backbone of this venture. His knowledge and experience is first-class".

Richard had started up The Coffee Guy franchise business so had some great wisdom to share. This – coupled with a few others behind the scenes providing some extra business mentoring – was a good base.

The pair spent a year doing their research to identify all the issues they expected they would have to overcome, and built the prototypes of the trailers and put them through rigorous testing.

Angus found the design process interesting and they made several prototypes



Angus with a Skippy bin.



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**ANGUS MacDONALD**

each bin looks almost brand new for each new client.

The company officially launched in Auckland in May 2016 and the business has steadily grown since then. The pair also have a view to establishing franchise networks around New Zealand in years to come. Macdonald believes the franchise model will work for Skippy and feels it will have wide appeal to people.

"It is an opportunity to get into a business without having too much business knowledge as it is a simple model and all the administration work is taken care of by head office."

The main depot is in Henderson in west Auckland, and you can also hire the bins out of Mitre 10 Mega stores in Henderson and Westgate. This range of locations is expected to expand to complement their delivery service.

Booking Skippy bins can either be done online at [www.getaskippy.co.nz](http://www.getaskippy.co.nz) or by phoning 0800 SKIPPY (0800 754779) where Angus will probably answer the phone.

Macdonald believes that going that extra mile and ensuring the customers' needs are met is crucial to the success of the business. They even leave tea bags for their clients so they can enjoy a cuppa when the job is done!

**GET IT GONE, GET A SKIPPY**

Phone: **0800 SKIPPY (0800 754779)**

Website: [www.getaskippy.co.nz](http://www.getaskippy.co.nz)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/getaskippy/](http://www.facebook.com/getaskippy/)

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