

Getting a bit expensive!

ONCE UPON A TIME, MANY moons ago, I made a promise to a young grandson. "I'll pay you five dollars for every try!" And I meant it. I wasn't trying to bribe him or corrupt him – just motivate him.

He'd been playing junior rugby, you see. And I'd grown tired of standing on the side-line in the freezing rain, watching his team lose. Saturday after Saturday, I would abandon my warm bed, pull on my cold gumboots, join the cheering mob, and will him to perform.

But he wouldn't.

It was always other people's kids who got the ball, other people's kids who scored the tries. My little guy, as much as I loved him, was only there for the half-time oranges. Or so it seemed.

So we had a little talk. And I made my five-dollar-promise. And he told me he'd try harder.

And he did!

Some Saturdays it got expensive, with him scoring not just one try, but two. And some Saturdays it got embarrassing, with him shouting from the touchline, "You owe me five bucks, Grandad!" ... while other parents glared at me and muttered.

As the years passed, and his younger brothers and cousins took up rugby, they too laid claim to my five-dollar-promise. And I must've forked-out a fortune.



But last Saturday, it came to a head ...

I didn't watch this particular grandson play. But he obviously played well. In fact, the final score was 85-10. And he sent me this text: "I got six tries, Grandad. That will be 30 dollars!"

I told him I didn't believe him. I said, "You're having me on!" I asked if they'd won against three-year-old girls. And warned that he'd send me broke. But he's stubborn like his mother, and wouldn't let me off the hook.

So he got his 30 dollars. And I've told him I'm gonna have to sell Gran's car and make her walk!

But I really don't think he believes me

...

JOHN (GRAPEVINE'S FOUNDER) HAS HAD TO TOP-UP HIS MORTGAGE. THE GAMES MUST GO ON – AND A PROMISE IS A PROMISE.
