**1981 Springbok Tour**

**Series of Events**

The Springboks were officially welcomed to New Zealand on the Poho-o-Rawiri marae in Gisborne on 19 July 1981.

22 July, Gisborne. The first game against Poverty Bay - the visitors won 24–6. As was to be the case for the entire tour, however, the real action was taking place on the streets surrounding the venue.

25 July, Hamilton – game cancelled. The game against Waikato was called off in front of a full house at Rugby Park. A pitch invasion by several hundred anti-tour protesters and rumours that a light aircraft had been stolen from Taupō and was headed for Rugby Park proved too much for the authorities.

27th July 1981 The government says it won't back down in the face of violent protests and promises the police the assistance of the NZ army if required.

29 July, Molesworth Street, Wellington – an ‘eruption of violence’. The Springboks defeated Taranaki in New Plymouth, but the real action that day occurred on Molesworth Street, outside Parliament in Wellington. Police used batons on anti-tour protesters for the first time.

15 August, first test, Christchurch. The All Blacks won the first test 14–9. Protest action at the ground and around the country led one policeman to recall that it was ‘sheer luck’ that no one was killed that day

29 August, second test, Wellington. The tourists squared the series with a convincing 24–12 victory at Athletic Park. The streets surrounding the ground resembled a battlefield as major protests occurred. Action began early that morning when 7000 protesters gathered in central Wellington. Groups blocked the motorway exits into the city as well as road and pedestrian access to Athletic Park. Police responded by forming human wedges to allow rugby spectators through. There were many scuffles as protesters were dragged away. Some rugby fans lashed out at them with fists and boots and once more police batons were used on suburban New Zealand streets

12 September, third test, Auckland. The All Blacks won the deciding third test 25–22. It was a game when ‘all hell broke loose’ as protesters fought with police outside the grounds and flour and smoke bombs were dropped from a Cessna aircraft inside