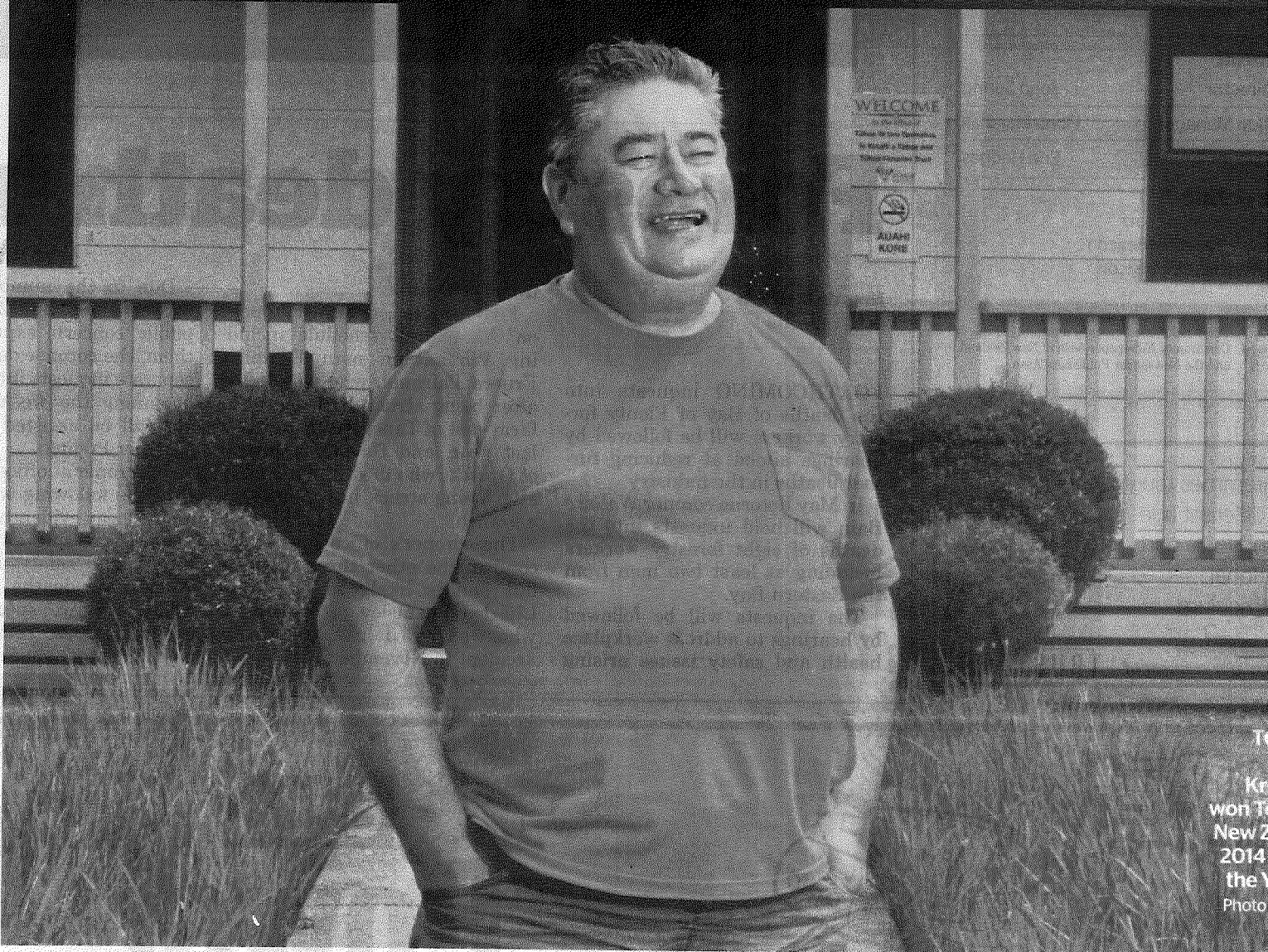


Kruger wins Maori of the Year



Geoff Mercer
Maori affairs reporter

TUHOE leader Tamati Kruger has been named 2014 Maori of the Year by Television New Zealand.

TV One's *Marae Investigates* programme named Mr Kruger, who led the negotiations that achieved the iwi's Treaty of Waitangi settlement in 2013, the supreme winner of its Maori of the Year awards on Waitangi Day, February 6.

He qualified by winning the community category, one of six for

which awards were issued.

Eastern Bay nominations were especially successful this year, supplying winners for three categories.

The other Eastern Bay winners were Whakatane artist Whirimako Black, in the reo, tikanga and arts category, and Lisa Carrington, in the hakinakina (sport) category.

Judge Michelle Hippolite, chief executive of Te Puni Kokiri, said the work Mr Kruger had done on behalf of his people was "truly inspiring".

"We thought it had such a legacy impact for now and into

the future that it was more than timely and relevant to recognise the work of Tuhoe, and particularly of Tamati."

Mr Kruger, 58, said his award was a big surprise.

"I do appreciate it, but it was very unexpected.

"Around here we don't go out seeking attention. If people notice ... that's fine, but as a rule we don't go out and show and tell people we're great."

Te Arawa kaumatua and judge Sir Toby Curtis said Ms Black was already an accomplished musician but "recent achievements as a screen artist set her

apart".

In her movie-acting debut year, Ms Black played the medicine woman Paraiti in film *White Lies*, earning an actress nomination in the Pacific Screen Awards.

Whakatane singer Ma Black was one of the three finalists in the same category.

Judge and sports broadcaster Jenny-May Coffin said Ms Carrington stood out by winning her K1 200 world championship title in Germany last September and a bronze at the same event and a bronze at the same event the K1 500. That "put her above everyone else", she

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TOP MAN: Tamati Kruger has won Television New Zealand's 2014 Maori of the Year title. Photo Troy Baker D0159-03

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In her movie-acting debut last year, Ms Black played the role of medicine woman Paraiti in the film *White Lies*, earning a best-actress nomination in the Asia Pacific Screen Awards.

Whakatane singer Maisey Rika was one of the three finalists in the same category.

Judge and sports broadcaster Jenny-May Coffin said Ms Carrington stood out by retaining her K1 200 world championship title in Germany last September and a bronze at the same event in the K1 500. That "put her far and above everyone else", she said.

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