



Stewart asked for apology from Gallop as sorry affair drags on

Glenn Jackson and Brad Walter

MANLY'S Brett Stewart sensationally demanded an apology from NRL chief executive David Gallop while the pair were shaking hands on stage after Sunday night's grand final, it has been revealed.

Despite Stewart saying after Manly's 24-10 premiership win that he had "moved on", there appeared little doubt his conversation with Gallop during the post-match presentation was tense, and a body language expert yesterday told the *Herald* Stewart had shown anger towards Gallop, and had displayed "a lot of pent-up aggression".

Neither Stewart nor his brother Glenn had spoken to Gallop since he suspended Brett for four matches at the start of the 2009 season for bringing the game into disrepute, and there had been speculation the pair would refuse to shake hands with him on the podium.

Both did shake hands with Gallop, but first Glenn - the Clive Churchill Medal winner as man of the match - and then Brett, after accepting his premiership ring, engaged in lengthy conversations with the NRL boss.

Channel Nine last night reported Brett had said: "It's fine, I am here shaking your hand but, David, you owe me an apology."

The *Herald* was told those were not Stewart's exact words but they were an accurate summation of what he had said. Gallop again did not want to comment last night.

After viewing footage of Gallop's exchange with Stewart, Michael Kelly, a body language and speech communication expert, said: "As he's walking towards [David] Thodey [Telstra chief executive], he gives Gallop the evil eye. As he was

shaking Thodey's hand, he sent a side-glance at Gallop. Then he just steps right into Gallop."

While Kelly said Thodey "seemed to provide some support for Gallop", the reaction from the Telstra boss gave an insight into the altercation.

"Thodey's eyes are saying, 'This is serious'," Kelly said. "It's almost like he's saying with his eyes, 'I can't believe what he's saying'."

Kelly said the "pursed lips and closed eyes" of Gallop suggested tension, but he said he did not believe the Manly fullback had sworn at the NRL chief as "you could have got a bigger reaction from Gallop". He said he believed the comments were premeditated.

"He had his piece," Kelly said. "It seemed like he had been thinking about it for a while."

"He was very firm. There was a lot of pent-up aggression there. He came very close to him [Gallop] and kept shaking the hand. It was a serious incident."

"I think he had some anger there. Some of the NRL guys don't have a lot of verbal skills, so they show a lot through their body language."

Earlier, Glenn Stewart had put his left hand on Gallop's right arm as the pair shook hands and said something that appeared to prompt the NRL chief executive to say: "What?"

Stewart then turned back towards Gallop and spoke to him again. They both smiled but Stewart's expression became more serious as he walked to the front of the stage to make his acceptance speech.

Neither Gallop nor the Stewart brothers would reveal details of the conversations but sources in the Manly dressing room suggested the pair had said what they wanted to the NRL boss and wanted to "move on".