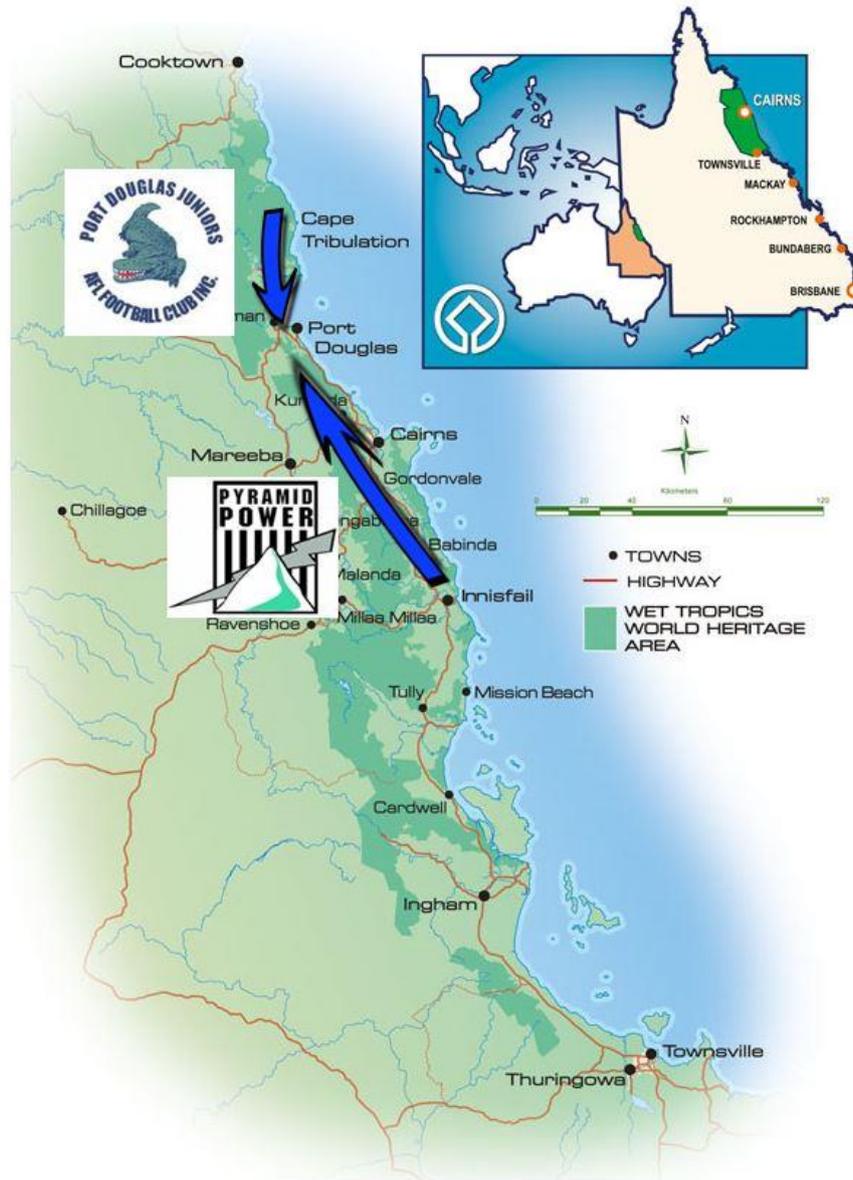


Between Goondi Bend and Cow Bay

How 2 clubs on opposite sides of Cairns have joined forces to ensure their teenage players have the opportunity to play AFL.



The Port Douglas Junior Crocs and Pyramid Power (based in Gordonvale) AFL Clubs have worked together to give their teenage players every opportunity to play AFL in what has been a disrupted 2020. Covid 19 has had an effect on player numbers at both clubs with both unable to field sides in the Under 14s and Under 15 Youth girls sides..

Initially, the Pyramid Power approached the Junior Crocs and a merge was formed with the Under 14 side. Their decision has, in essence, built what is a very competitive side. Both teams had around 10 Under 14 players and the season would've been a battle weekly to fill each side. What they have created is a group of 20+ kids that want to play AFL with the difficult task now being how they work well together on the field with both squads training apart.



Above: The merged Crocs/Power Under 14 team

In further developments the Junior Crocs were 3 girls short of fielding an Under 15 youth girls side. The committee had all but given up fielding a side in 2020 and were unsure what to do with the girls, considering that all the Cairns based teams were loaded with full lists and not in need of an extra 11 girls. The Pyramid Power were not sure that they had any girls keen to return following the lengthy break. Come game 1, a car load of girls travelled from Gordonvale up to Port Douglas to have a run and the team ended up walking away with a big win. Game 2 we had an extra 3 girls come in from down near Innisfail and 2 from up near Cape Tribulation. What has now been formed is a team of 13-15 year old girls that are spread out of a 200km radius. Numbers are at 20 and growing with more interest being generated as other girls see how much fun is being had.



Above: The Under 15 Youth Girls team



Above: Junior Croc Macy Crimmins kicking 1 her 6 goals



Above: Power player Tatiana Finlan laying a tackle

Pyramid Power has a good history of promoting female participation and had some premiership success in 2018 with the Under 14 youth Girls side. Pyramid Power also made history by entering an all-girls team (nicknamed the Warangus) in the Under 13 mixed competition in 2015 before girls only teams were even introduced to the AFL Cairns Juniors competition.

At the same time as Pyramid Power was taking home the 2018 Youth Girls premiership cup. The junior crocs had identified a great void of girl participation with only 2 girls on their list. Moving forward to 2020 and there are currently 30 girls registered at the club. This bond of teenage girls in 2020 should see both clubs strengthen their participation numbers and form stand-alone teams for years to come.

The junior crocs always knew that they had a great bunch of committed kids and families who are willing to regularly travel the 1 hour plus down the highway to play the Cairns sides. It is fair to say we have been taken aback by the commitment and willingness of the Power families to travel up to Port Douglas for home games so their kids can have a game of AFL.

Who would've thought that even 5 years ago we would be in a position where girls would be travelling up to 200km to play AFL in North Queensland.