

PRESIDENTS REPORT

2020 is a season that, in many ways, we will want to forget. However there have been some highlights that will make AFL Cairns stronger in the short, medium and long-term future.

The season started as expected with a normal season and no AFL elite football. The COVID19 broke out and it looked like footy was off altogether for the year. Then, after some improvements in the Queensland health climate, we were allowed to have crowds and it was game on again. However, as the nation unravelled AFL Premiership was coming to Queensland and Cairns was in line for four or five matches. What an incredible turn around in such a short period of time.

The AFL matches were great for our region in that it put us well and truly on the national map. The feedback from the AFL and the Clubs was very positive. There is now a good chance of more to come which assists us in promoting the game up here and improving the quality of our footy. People down South are now recognising us as a footy region.

The season across all competitions was a long one with the men's and women's Grand Finals being played on the weekend after the AFL final. This gave us the opportunity to play a twilight men's final when it was cooler and the "Cazalys Breeze" had less affect. The Women and Ressies played in the heat of the day and, all credit to them, put on competitive games that were good to watch. The Senior men's final saw the Crocs take out the big game making it five in a row.

The season itself was difficult for most clubs and the league itself. Cost cutting was required with our normal revenue streams significantly curtailed due to the pandemic. As many of you would have been subjected to or witnessed first-hand in your everyday lives, our AFL team had to be stood down for a period of time until some reduced revenue started to flow and our season got back on track.

I thank our team and everyone within our clubs for their patience and resilience in 2020. It has been tough and everyone that has made footy happen at every level this year must take credit for the season's successes.

Season 2020 Highlights

- Round 1 started on 11 July.
- The Senior Premiership season was generally competitive despite some recruitment being curtailed by Covid19.
- South Cairns Cutters, Port Douglas Crocs, Cairns Saints and Cairns City Lions played in the senior finals.
- Port and Saints played off in the Grand Final. The match was in the balance until half time but a big third quarter gave Port the ascendancy and they went on to win by five goals.
- Cairns Saints won the Women's Grand Final with a strong and decisive win over North Cairns Tigers. The game was highlighted by AFLCW legend Jo Butland playing her 200th game.
- Reserve Grade saw Port Douglas start Grand Final Day positively by winning the flag against South Cairns.
- AFL Premiership football returned to Cazalys with four matches played late in the season. Local MP Michael Healy's support at State Government level was superb in getting footy to Cairns in 2020. TTNQ, Advance Cairns and Cairns Regional Council were also strong partners assisting in getting elite football back to Cairns.
- AFL Cairns acknowledges the resignation of long time Umpire Coach Rowan Tattersall. "Tatts" went off to join the Federal Police. We thank him for his work as both an umpire and mentor for the umpire group.
- We sadly also announce the retirement of long-time AFL Cairns stalwart Mike Diversi. Most will know Mike as the Financial Controller of AFLC and Cazalys Cairns but his role was bigger than that as he was the key contact on financial matters between our Clubs and the League.

Mike has been involved in CAFL and AFLC since 1988 starting to look after the books on a part-time basis. This grew into the “more than” full-time role he has successfully undertaken for twenty- something years. In that time he has also been a director of the League and Cazalys.

Mike won't be leaving us immediately as he has offered to assist in the handover to his successor who will be named before Christmas this year.

Every season concludes with a list of award winners. Congratulations go to all winners of individual awards. Some regular Awards were not presented due to the restrictive nature of the Covid affected year. The winners were;

- Crathern Medallist – Joshua Matulis (Cairns Saints)
- Runner Up – Ben Morrow (Pt Douglas)
- Leading Goal Kicker – Tom Eltringham (Centrals Trinity Beach) – 46 goals
- Coach of the Year – X
- Jo Butland Medal – Jen Robinson (Manunda), Karina White (Manunda), Laquoyia Cockatoo-Motlop (Lions)
- Dean Medallist – Gavin Jacks (Pt Douglas)
- Troy Clarke Rising Star – X
- Lillywhite Medallist – Connor Munro
- Umpire of the Year – X
- Volunteer of the Year – X

Grants and Funding

- No significant grants were achieved by AFL Cairns in 2020 due to the pandemic.

Cazalys Cairns

AFL Cairns acknowledges the contribution provided by Cazalys to AFL football in our region. We thank the Cazalys Board for their ongoing support and contribution to Australian football in FNQ.

AFL Cairns acknowledges all our League partners and Club sponsors. Their contribution ensures our sport continues to prosper in a competitive environment.

Seniors

Cazalys Cairns, Triple M, Cairns Total Physio, Intersport Cairns, Event Cinemas, Rapid Spin, The Cheese Cake Shop, McDonalds, East Coast traffic Control, Cairns Post, Seven, Victor, CAPTA Group, Sanctuary Early Learning, Heightened Security Solutions, The Pearl Galleria, Sunlover Reef Cruises, Genesis Health and Fitness, Local Search, Tribal Sportswear and BCS (Body Corporate Services).

Juniors

Cazalys, Bendigo Bank, McDonalds, Ronald McDonald House Palm Cove, Cairns Golf Centre, Sunlover Cruises, Lane Orthodontics, Cheese Cake Shop, Intersport Cairns, Cairns Zoom.

Umpires

Cazalys, Tribal Sport, McDonalds, Tropical North Wholesalers, Donut King Stockland.

Finally, I thank the AFL Cairns team who, after being stood down, went on to successfully run all our local competitions and also the AFL Premiership matches inside a difficult Covid Bubble.

Congratulations to everyone on your efforts this year.

Yours sincerely,



Gary Young - President