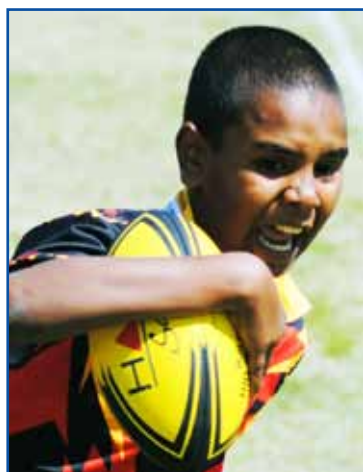




## From boys to men – footy PI-style



*Above: Palm Arch Angels  
centre Eliar Charles in  
the Obe Geia Challenge;  
Right: PIRL grand final  
winners Jets*



**Jets triumphed over Brothers in the Palm Island Rugby League grand finals, and 11 schools competed in this year's Obe Geia Challenge - see inside for more...**

## It's not every day...!



*Eight lucky Palm Island students got to play in snow for the first time earlier this month when students visited the snow fields of Mt Buller in Victoria as a reward for their school achievements.*

**More on page 5!**

AND there's more to come with attention is turning is to the coming Allblacks carnivals.

In the first weekend of October a Barracudas side will compete at the Daisy Cup Carnival as well as a Hornettes ladies side.

A week later, at the Bindal Carnival in Townsville, it is expected four men's Palm sides will take part alongside reigning champions Curacoa Crusaders.

A week later one men's team is expected to compete at the Cairns Allblacks Carnival. In late October Jets will travel to Cardwell to compete against Girringun Pirates.



# STOP PRESS STOP PRESS STOP PRESS STOP PRESS

## CASEMENT BAY CROCODILE SIGHTING

### PALM ISLAND POLICE ISSUE WARNING TO PARENTS

Palm Island OIC Paul James said they wanted to let people know urgently, "as it is a popular spot for people with dogs and kids etc," he said. "There have been a number of sightings in the Pencil Bay and Casement Bay area over recent months and National Parks have erected signs in the Old School Road area to alert people. We believe the crocodile has been inhabiting that area around the paperbark swamp for a while now and may have been getting more brazen in attempting to take some dogs in that area. The crocodile has been photographed and would appear to be about 3m long."

## It's a whale of a show

**IT'S** like having a ringside seat at a major event which would be the envy of whale watchers from around the world these past few weeks, as hundreds of Palm Islanders have spotted whales frolicking and playing about in local waters.

Ben Kennedy and Russell Parker were amongst lucky passengers late last month to get a close up look at two playful whales from the SeaLink ferry to Palm.

Elizabeth Doomadgee was another who stood out on the downstairs back section of the ferry as it was travelling near Punishment Island, not far from home.

"It was amazing they came up pretty close to the ferry and really entertained us," Mr Parker said., Palm Island Mayor Alf Lacey said whales had also been sighted by a number of local anglers in small boats.

"They have even come up close to the jetty here on Palm Island," Mayor Lacey said.

Another five Islanders who saw whales in Palm Island waters in recent weeks were Allisa Pearson, Karleen Pearson, Jeanelle Creed, baby Viviahn Creed, aged 1, and Lance Castors (*pictured below*).

"We were fishing and saw the whales close up, there was a mother whale and a calf and they also come up close to the jetty here." Mr Castors said. Several whales have also been spotted by West Wing pilots as they land on the Island each day.



# Men's Group to take on health issues

**PALMISLAND has a new Men's Group called Bwgcorman/Manbarra Brotherhood which is aiming to help men take back ownership of physical and mental health issues.**

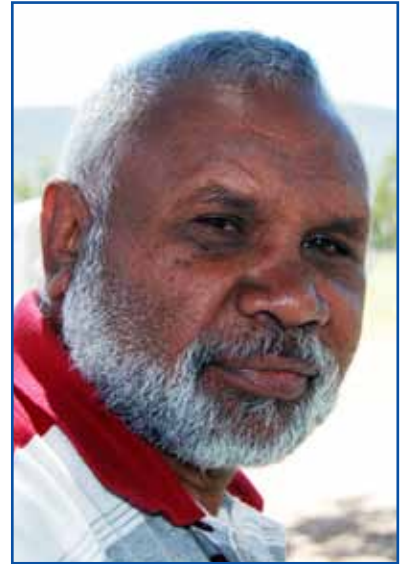
"We will be offering assistance to men here on Palm, but will be also networking with mainland men's group's," Secretary Philip Obah (*pictured*) said. "We want to tap into other networks to get the best outcome so men can take ownership again."

He said the group would assist

with restoring affected men's health and renewing their roles while observing traditional law. The group was formed last week and the interim committee group includes President Zac Sam, Vice-President Norris Daphney, secretary Philip Obah, Treasurer Ben Nomoa and Public Officer Vaughn Charles.

Mr Obah said three generations of men were involved.

**The next group meeting will be September 28 at the Coolgaree Sports Bar & Grill.**



# Ambos take out top gong

**DEDICATED Palm Island worker William Obah (*pictured below with Brances Millar & Ian Day*) was surprised and honoured to win the Patient Transport Officer of the Year title at an Awards presentation in Townsville earlier this month.**

"It was very hard to believe that I won," Mr Obah said.

"I have been four years in the ambulance here and love it."

Also celebrating a major win was the Palm Island Ambulance Station, which beat 21 other stations across the region



to win the Ambulance Station of the Year award.

The Northern Region Star Care Awards were made during Ambulance Week September 6-12.

The annual event is co-ordinated by the Queensland Ambulance Service designed to celebrate and recognise the dedication and commitment of QAS members.

State Member for Townsville Mandy Johnstone congratulated workers at the facility and thanked them for their contribution to the Palm Island community and the QAS.

"I urge everyone to think of the efforts made by all QAS personnel day in, day out that are saving lives and helping keep the community safe," she said.

Palm Island QAS Officer-in-Charge Ian Day said they worked very hard to provide the community with a exceptional ambulance service.

"We strive to do our best in this community and for this community - long hours, some fatigue issues and an ever increasing work load does make it a challenge at times but we all work together to provide the service that we do," he said.

"I just want to thank my staff for their ongoing efforts and congratulate them all in achieving this award.

"I'm very proud of them all."

Ambulance Station staff include Mr Day, Greg Clark, William Landers, Robert Blackley, Mr Obah, and female officers Gemma Armit and Brances Millar.



# Sparky urges youngsters to 'stick with it'

**COMPLETING an electrical apprenticeship was not something Kelly James had considered doing, but when the opportunity presented itself, he realised it was too good to pass up.**

More than 17 years on, Kelly remains with the same employer and has continued to develop new skills and advance his career. He currently works in Ergon Energy's Operations Control Centre as a network operations officer.

He started his career with a four-year apprenticeship as an electrical fitter mechanic with NORQEB, Ergon's predecessor. He joined the company through a program for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders.

"There weren't initially many Indigenous employees in the

business," he says. "As well as my apprenticeship, I was asked to help promote Indigenous opportunities. It's been very good for me. We have a lot more Indigenous employees coming through now. There's a lot of encouragement."

Kelly's advice to other Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders looking for a rewarding career is to seize the opportunities that are available.

"You need to knuckle down and do the hard work and stick at it," he said. "Don't be afraid to take the opportunities when they're offered. I've been able to get out and promote the company, and I've been happy to go and do it."

Born on Palm Island, Kelly completed his primary schooling in Bowen and attended high



school in Townsville before starting his apprenticeship.

He worked across a range of teams in Ergon Energy before becoming a network operations officer. He works a nine-day fortnight, which he enjoys as it gives him more time to spend with his wife Lisa and their two daughters. "It's very flexible, and we can achieve a good balance," he said.

**Story & pic courtesy National Indigenous Times**

## ...Out & About with Bob Katter...



*Mr Katter is pictured here (clockwise from top left) with Doreen Morton; Mayor Alf Lacey; Shane Stratton; Tom Geia; and George Tanna, Bob Katter, Barry Rosser & Balla Kerr*



# Snow time!

**EIGHT students from Palm Island saw snow for the first time earlier this month when they enjoyed an exciting holiday to Victoria as a reward for their school achievements.**

The children were participating in the Cathy Freeman Foundation Horizons Program which in partnership with Cottage by the Sea awards interstate experiences and excursions to top-achieving students based on positive outcomes in literacy, good behaviour and school attendance.

The Palm Island students travelled to the snowfields of Mt Buller in Victoria.

"This is the first time these kids had ever seen snow, and you can imagine the looks on their faces when they first saw the cold white ice," Cathy Freeman Foundation CEO, Sonya Stephen said.

"We are so excited and proud to offer students such wonderful opportunities for being amongst the top achieving students at their school.

"The Horizons program gives students the opportunity to see, learn and experience a whole range of new things. We hope the kids left, not only full of energy and excitement, but inspired to move forward on their education pathway."

The Horizons program is an initiative of the Cathy Freeman Foundation with Cottage by the Sea being a key partner in its delivery.

"We aim to empower children by supporting them to develop their mind, body and wellbeing," Cottage by the Sea General Manager Tony Featherston said.

"With camps like these we believe we are able to achieve some of these objectives."

The Cathy Freeman Foundation works in partnership with the Palm Island Council, schools, parents and children to support and improve education outcomes for approximately 500 school-aged children on Palm Island. The Horizons group created a buzz around Mt Buller and amongst friends and family back home when they were featured on the 6 o'clock news on Channel 7 across Victoria, Cairns and Townsville.

**For more information on the Cathy Freeman Foundation see [www.cathyfreemanfoundation.org.au](http://www.cathyfreemanfoundation.org.au)**



*Above: Nakieza James  
Below: Tobias Prior*



**Need help to get the job you want?** JOB seekers on Palm Island now have the best chance possible to gain employment through helping you to put together your Certificates, Tickets, Resumes and any other information you might have at home on the one USB. Skills and Knowledge Project will give you a USB when you Register with us, and put all your information on it for you. The Skills and Knowledge Project is a four-way partnership between Coolgaree CDEP, Natural Partners, Palm Island Aboriginal Shire Council and JobFind. "There are three weeks left to register for this project for your personal USB storage device which they can store and have updated whenever they like," CDEP's Skills & Knowledge Co-ordinator Kalie Obah said. **For information contact Kalie Obah at Coolgaree CDEP on 4770 1087.**



**THREE Palm Island teams were amongst footballers from 11 schools who contested the third annual Obe Geia Junior Rugby League Challenge at the Palm Island football oval on September 15.**

Local sides were Barracudas, Warriors and Arch Angels with players from Bwgcolman and St Michael's schools. Each of the sides played five games in two pools and the leaders in each met in the grand final.

Barracudas were coached by Steve Bennett and reached the final before being gallantly beaten 24-20 to Heatley Primary from Townsville.

Try scorers for the Barracudas were scored by Allan Walsh (two), Quinton Panuel, Isaac Bulsey and Nickarlin Baira.

Barracudas would certainly have won except for a five try effort out of six by giant Heatley Queensland Schoolboys representative Ethan James.

In their qualifying games, the young Barracudas won four games and drew one. Arch Angels were coached by local boxer and trainer Chris Gundy and won three games and lost two.

One standout player was Eliar Charles who scored three great tries in one match.

"This was a great effort by our lads as most of them are on grades five and six and some of the opponents were much bigger," Mr Gundy said. Warriors were coached by star Palm Island Brothers A



# 2011 Obe Geia



*Palm Island teams were Barracudas; Warriors and Arch Angels. Also on this page Obe Geia Jnr, Norman Bounghi, Peena Geia & Allan Palm Island*



# Junior RL Challenge



***This page proudly sponsored by Cr Ruth Gorringer & her family who would like to congratulate all the players and organisers of the Obe Geia Jnr Challenge***

grade centre Mickeal Sibley and they won two games and lost three.

At the opening ceremony Palm Deputy Mayor Raymond Sibley thanked all of the visiting teams whose players and teachers/coaches had travelled by ferry earlier in the morning.

Guests were welcomed to country by elder Allan Palm Island and Obe's grandmother Peena Geia gave an emotional speech when she read passages from Psalm 133 of the Bible. Deanne Sibley did a great job as MC and the barbecue lunch was delicious.

Townsville District schools to compete were winners Heatley, St Joseph's, Magnetic Island, Good Shepherd, Shalom, Rasmussen, Vincent, Marian and Kelso. The Challenge is a partnership between the Palm Island community, the North Queensland Toyota Cowboys, the NRL All Stars Game, the Department of Sport and Recreation and the Palm Island PCYC, and is hosted and run by the Palm Island community.

Each young footballer has earned the right to play in the carnival through regular attendance and positive behaviour at school all year. Each player received a participation medal or a winners/runners-up trophy, supplied by the Palm Island Council; a drink bottle donated by Sucrogen; and a participant's Obe Geia 2011 shirt supplied by the Toyota Cowboys.



# Palm Island

## Spring Festival Celebrations

September 2011 1st, 2nd & 3rd





# FROM the opening ceremony to the final community breakfast, Palm Island Spring Festival was a huge success thanks mainly to our Elders Group.

Organisers said the success of the annual event would not have been possible without the time and personal commitment of Elders who spent many hours meeting and planning in the weeks leading up to the festival to ensure community expectations for the Spring Fair were realised.

Working closely alongside the Group to make the event a success was the Palm Island Aboriginal Shire Council, Jenny Pryor, the Palm Island

Co-ordinator of the PICC Diversion Service worked non-stop on the community kup murri with the Woorabinda u n d e r - 1 8 s football team, and Diversion staff assisted

with dance costumes and the production of banners.

Disability staff put their hands up to work alongside Red Cross

to organise the community breakfast, and PICC staff handed out informational show bags.

Staff provided transport



A highlight was the Elders' dinner dance, which started at 6:30pm and finished at midnight. And the food, which was prepared by the ladies from Murray Island, was just beautiful and enjoyed by all.

As Winnie Obah commented in the weekly PICC Whichway! newsletter, "The entertainment was brilliant with Mary G doing her comic show and Mop and the Dropouts singing their songs that the people got into as well," she wrote.

"They also sang a lot of the oldies songs that the Elders knew and this was where you saw the Elders getting up and taking to the floor, waltzing.

Community Company and the many community volunteers. PICC committed staff and resources and were instrumental in co-ordinating weekly meetings at the Council office.

Chair Jim Petrich took part in the opening ceremony and addressed the community on behalf of the Palm Island Community Company, directors and staff.

Many staff were involved in preparations and events on the day.



throughout and also helped to decorate the hall and set the tables for the Elders' dinner dance. It was a fantastic program of dancing, feasting and great entertainment.



"It was just great to see them enjoying themselves."



**Photos on page 9  
courtesy  
Winnie Obah**



# Palm Island Voice

## Public & Community Notices

Palm Island Voice Public & Community Notices are your best choice for Birthdays, Anniversaries, Meeting Notices, sales & all your classified needs - and most of them are free!

**MANDY JOHNSTONE MP**

Member for Townsville



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### **Palm Island Aboriginal Shire Council**

is closed every second Friday  
(Council pay week) for RDO. The  
next RDO is Friday 30 September.  
For emergencies on a Friday please  
call **0458 789 011**

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT  
THE COUNCIL ON 4770 1177

**Palm Island Voice is a fortnightly community newsletter, first launched in August 2007.**

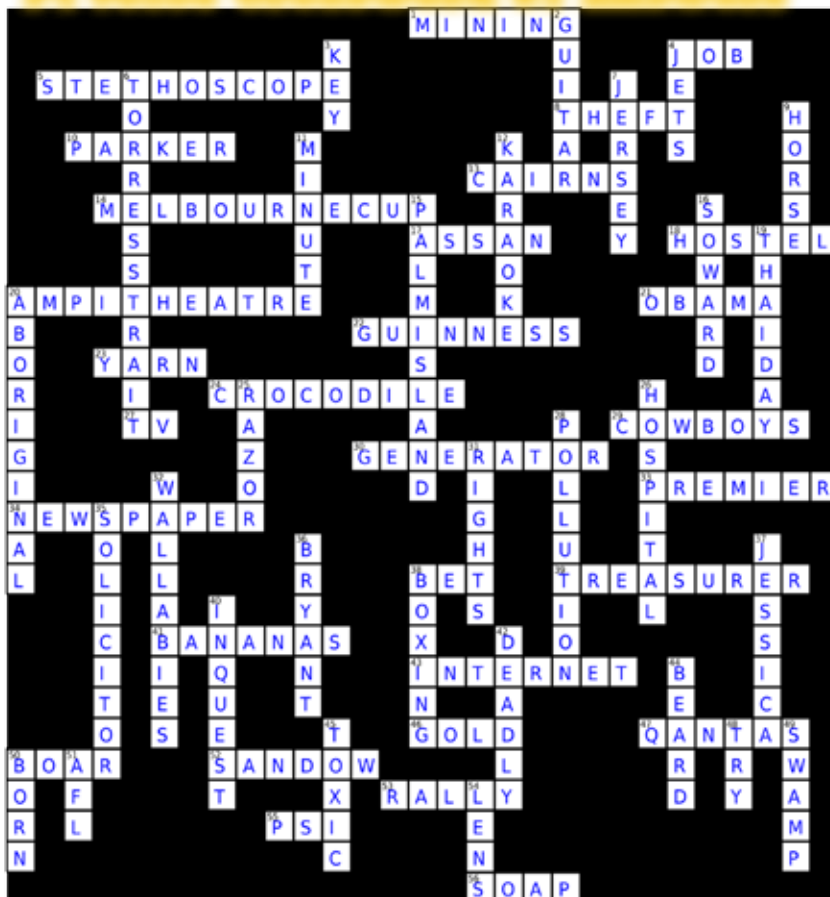
Advertising space is available to any businesses, organisations and individuals who have an interest in promoting services and events to members of the Palm Island community.

Palm Island Voice was initially launched with the assistance of a Queensland State Government initiative through the Community Renewal program. It is now funded by the Palm Island Aboriginal Shire Council and supported by advertising and subscriptions. Up to 800 copies of the Palm Island Voice are distributed to retail outlets on Palm Island and in Townsville. For distribution inquiries contact the Editor (details next page).

### **Contributions**

Article and photo submissions to the *Palm Island Voice* are very welcome. Original submissions of articles or photographs must belong to the contributor, and/or delivered with an indication of the owner's permission to publish, no later than 5pm on deadline day. Articles should be no longer than 400 words, unless by prior arrangement, and digital photographs should be as high quality as possible (at least 250dpi & no thumbnails please!). **Final say on advertising, news items, other contributions and photo reproductions is at the discretion of the Palm Island Voice Editor, Christine Howes.**

## **PI Voice Crossword 87 Answers**



Crossword completed with thanks again  
to David Goeldner & the Crossword Puzzle  
Maker at [www.armoredpenguin.com](http://www.armoredpenguin.com)



# **Palm Island Voice**

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18 point (about 1cm), single colour, include your logo by negotiation, multiple weeks by negotiation - only \$99 (incl GST) per page! Your contribution will help us to print extra pages and photographs of your favourite sporting team or event as required.

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**Ads are to be booked by no later than 5pm on deadline day and material submitted no later than COB the next day. For more information contact the Editor on 0419 656 277 or at [chowes@westnet.com.au](mailto:chowes@westnet.com.au)**

**PLEASE SUPPORT US SO WE CAN CONTINUE TO SUPPORT YOU!!**

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The Department of Human Services is about people and delivering the services they may need at different stages of their lives. It includes Child Support, Centrelink and Medicare as well as CRS Australia and Australian Hearing. Each day, about a million people make contact with the Department of Human Services and each year we deliver more than \$90 billion in payments. The department is seeking highly talented and motivated people to join its team.

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***The Palm Island Voice is delivered to Palm Island courtesy of West Wing Aviation & to our Townsville locations thanks to PICC.***



## Dear Editor

Re Palm Island Spring Festival celebrations September 1-3. Mayor Alf Lacey and his Councillors, Ross Norman, CEO, and his staff need to be commended for the tireless hours they committed to the organising of this year's Festival as the major sponsor.

Along with the Council were the Palm Island Community Company, Rachel Atkinson and her staff, especially Vaughn Charles, Frank Conway from the Diversionary Centre, Ethel Robertson and staff from the Women's Shelter and Sam Conway from the Family Hub.

A special big thanks goes to Sergeant Bernie who went beyond the call of duty from the PCYC and his staff and Phillip Geia who was instrumental in pulling off the first Bwgcolman's Got Talent competition.

Todd Chatterton from Bwgcolman School also worked tirelessly ensuring the students of the school were actively involved in the preparation of the Festival, decorating the jetty, as did the St Michael's school in decorating the airport.

Both schools did a brilliant job. Bwgcolman students assisted with presenting Elders, performers and visitors with leis, adding to the festive atmosphere and making the Festival colourful and hospitable to all who came.

Without their support and roles in the Festival we would not have had a successful event.

Remember, most of these people worked voluntarily for the event.

I, as co-ordinator of the Festival, would also like to thank Ms Lyn Freckleton, who was co-ordinating with me.

She can be on my team anytime.

Thanks Lyn for your professionalism and strong support for the success of the event.

**Jenny Pryor**

**Co-ordinator, Palm Island Spring Festival, 2011**

**12**



**POPULAR** fire fighter Nui Rabuka (above) says the Palm Island fire truck has "been a bit more active" of late. "There have been some grass fires lately so the truck it has been used fair bit," he said.

Nui said staff members were always on hand to respond to any fires.

A former quality rugby league player in his heyday, Nui still has the occasional footy game.



*WALKING past the Palm High School last month was Kiona Nallajar, Phyllis Clarke, aged 3, on bicycle and Tiana Friday*



# Boxers front up to state titles



**PALM Island's Dennis Haines Jnr and Patrick Clarke won their respective bouts on the opening night of the Queensland Sunstate Amateur Boxing Titles at the Townsville Showgrounds last weekend.**

They were the only two Palm boxers to compete on the first night of the elimination bouts.

Haines Jnr continued his recent good form with a points win over tough Babinda opponent Broughton Worth in a 57kg bout over four two-minute rounds.

Then Clarke had the big crowd entertained in the fourth and final round of his 67kg division bout win over Dragon Do Jos club Robert Martin.

Clarke was an easy points winner and finished strongly in the final round.

Six more Palm Island boxers were scheduled to fight on night two after the Palm Island Voice deadline.

The two-night titles featured boxers from throughout Queensland and Palm fighters Dennis Haines Jnr and Patrick Clarke were victorious.

**MORE PICS AND SATURDAY NIGHT RESULTS  
NEXT ISSUE!!!**



*These pics are from the Palm Island Boxing Tournament held late last month*



**This page proudly sponsored by the Palm Island boxers**



# Jets fly to 2011 finals victory

**MINOR premiers  
Jets thrashed  
Brothers 78-28 to  
win the grand final  
of the Palm Island  
Rugby League two  
weekends ago at  
the local football  
oval.**



A large crowd watched the Norman Bounghi-coached Jets dominate in all departments, even though they were without powerhouse forward Costa Sam, who was rushed to hospital for an appendix operation.

"It was good team effort and stand-outs were Assan Sam, Moa Sam, Tabua Oui, Gelam Geia, Douglas Miller and Germaine Bulsey," Mr Bounghi said.

Jets have invited past and present players and supporters to celebrate with them by attending the 2011 Presentations, to be held at the Coolgaree Bay Bistro on Saturday 24 September at 2pm.

Star Brothers player Mickeal Sibley had no excuses for their grand-final loss and said the Jets deserved the win.

"We lost a key player due to unexpected circumstances for the final, but our defence

was awful," he said.

Sibley was a standout for Brothers and said other standouts included reliable forward Joiji Dabea, winger William Bramwell, centre Sterling Aden, second rower Ben Baira and five-eighth Rod Shortjoe.

Jets Club officials and players had high praise for their supporters, among them Day & Day Shipping, PICC and Struddy's.

"As the Sport and Recreation Officer, and on behalf of the PIRL, I would like to thank the Palm Island PCYC and the Cape York PCYC for supplying the funds to have the referee and linesman flown over by Bluewater Aviation to officiate at the grand final, and we would also like to thank the Townsville & District Rugby League Referees Association," Mickeal said.

"We would finally like to thank the referee Matt Sibley and touch judges Mark Cunningham and Kevin Castors."

En route to the finals, Jets defeated Brothers 66-34 and Skipjacks eliminated Butler Bay Bulls 36-26 in semi finals.

A week later in the preliminary final Brothers defeated Skipjacks 38-36.

In the grand final, the Norman Bounghi Jets had the decider safely in their keeping by halftime when they led 38-16.

"Jets last won the Grand Final back in 1995 when they defeated Butler Bay Bulls," Mr Bounghi said. In the 2010 grand final, Jets lost by two points to Bulls, making this win an even sweeter victory.





# **PIRL PLAYER PROFILE:**

## **Luke James**

**CLASSY lock Luke James is confident his beloved Mundy Bay Warriors will rise up the Palm Island Rugby League domestic competition ladder next season.**

That confidence is well founded, considering Mundy Bay Warriors finished the 2011 season off on a strong note, winning several late fixtures. Mundy Bay Warriors were in just their second season of the comp and while they missed the finals series, they improved sharply on their debut year.

"We are all mates and stick together and will have some good recruits in 2012 including my brother Frank who played in Townsville with Bindal Sharks," Luke said. "Warriors will be strong next year. and our aim will be to make the finals for the first time." Luke, 29 years old, is the son of respected Palm elder Margaret Conway who is a local rugby league stalwart.

"I went to St Michael's School on Palm and later to Shalom Christian College in Townsville and Mt Carmel in Charters Towers," he said. Before joining Mundy Bay Warriors, Luke played with Palm clubs Raiders and Brothers. "I played my first football for Centrals in the Townsville under-14 junior grade," he said. Luke's favourite NRL players are Dragons playmaker Jamie Soward and Brisbane Broncos' champion Darren Lockyer. "I also was a big fan of retired player Trent Barrett," he said. One of Luke's biggest fans is his son Luke James Jnr, who wears his Mundy Bay Warriors jumper proudly. Luke senior's recreational hobby is fishing the idyllic blue waters around Palm Island.

"I catch plenty of trout and other types of fish," he said.



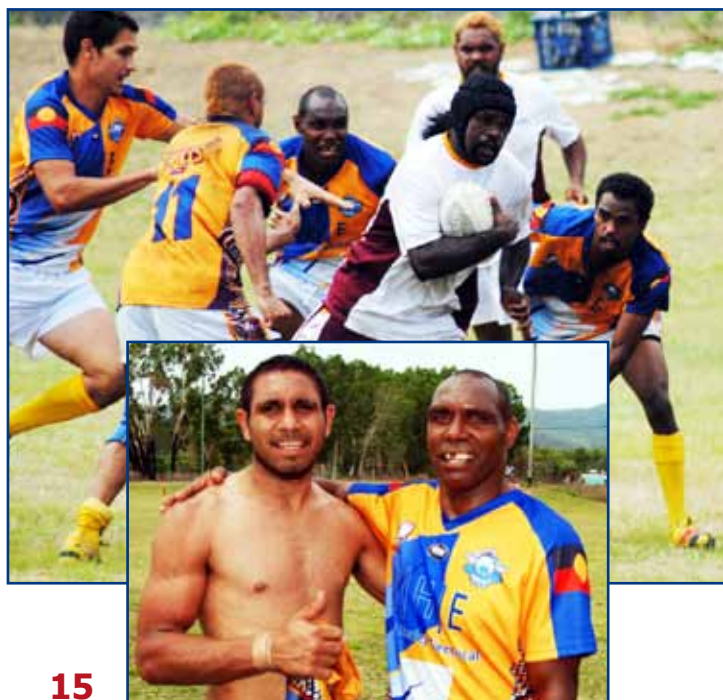
## **Father-son combo on side for Bulls in semis**

**FORMER Barracudas star footballer Lex Wotton has not only made a successful comeback to rugby league at 44 years of age, but played alongside his son in the Palm Island Rugby League semi-final match earlier this month.**

Lex, as the oldest player in the six-club competition, played for Butler Bay Bulls which lost the semi-final round 36-26 to Skipjacks.

In the same Bulls side his 21-year-old son Billo was one of the top try scorers former player in the competition. "Lex was very fast and enjoys playing next to his son Billo," official Algon Walsh said. Young rising footballer and star Palm Island boxer Selwyn Seaton said Mr Wotton earned his place in the Bulls side. "Lexy is tough and still has a lot of pace for his age," Selwyn said. Mr Wotton, a plumber who was also a top player in his heyday, played 10 years ago with the Palm Island Barracudas.

Cheering him on were his wife Cecilia, daughter Nazine, 16, and grandchildren Kyzearne, 2, Billo junior, 2, and Temera, 3.





# ...Out & About...

It's our own Island-style paparazzi – whether you're at an airport or a ferry terminal, coming or going, you never know when the *Palm Island Voice* is going to be snapping at your heels... Chief snapper Alf Wilson never wastes any airport or ferry waiting time, snapping locals left right and centre as they go about their business – never too busy for a smile though!



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With thanks to Alf Wilson  
and to all the Palm Islanders who have contributed  
to this issue of the *Palm Island Voice*.

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