

Douglas Shire News Newsport

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Making a big splash

Zac, 8, and Ruby, 6, at the opening of the new Port Douglas Splash Park, Page 10. Picture: Santiago Gonzalez



Captain blazing a trail - P3



Formal style on show - P6&7



Dance troupe reunion - P10

HIT OVERSEAS

Shaun Hollis

A record international marketing blitz has helped propel the Great Barrier Reef to the forefront of many travellers' bucket lists across the world in the past year,

according to the latest report by industry body Tourism Tropical North Queensland.

About 110 international campaigns were run across 2024/25 in a host of countries including the US, England, Japan and China,

funded through the Federal Government's \$15m five-year International Tourism Recovery Program, designed to help the region recover from Covid-19 and Cyclone Jasper.

Continued Page 5



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Cape Trib supply crisis

Shaun Hollis

The Douglas Shire Mayor has moved to reassure the Cape Tribulation community all is being done to make sure deliveries of essential goods across Noah Creek are secure in the long term.

The assurances come as Cape Tribulation businesses said last week they were down to their final reserves of gas and other essential supplies following heavy rain temporarily shutting down the Noah Creek Causeway - just as the busy school holiday period was starting up.

Mayor Lisa Scmazzon said on Tuesday the council had looked closely at upgrading the causeway, but "this is not a viable solution due to lengthy approval processes and would likely not provide the resilience required in heavy rain events".

So the council was instead focusing on fixing the bridge next month so 16-tonne trucks could then make it through to Cape Trib via that route.

"Council has prioritised re-rating the bridge to 16 tonnes, understanding that this will be vitally im-



Cape Tribulation businesses loading supplies into utes and small trucks.

portant through the wet season," Mayor Scmazzon said.

"Council will continue to work closely with communities north of the Daintree River throughout the road-upgrade process and remains focused on long-term solutions that improve resilience and connectivity."

The Mayor also ruled out for now paying to help businesses ferry their supplies across the creek.

"At this stage, no formal commitments have been made regarding the funding or deployment of Council resources for supply deliveries," she said.

Julian Pagani, who owns Cape

Tribulation Camping and Cape Tribulation Horse Rides, said last week he had contacted the DSC to access emergency funding to help pay for the cost of hauling supplies from Noah Creek to Cape Tribulation on smaller trucks and utes.

"Due to their mismanagement, they can pay for it," he said.

Mr Pagani said he and other tourism operators and shop owners had been struggling most of last week to bring in essential supplies such as gas bottles and pallets of food and alcohol in preparation for the busy three-week holiday season. He said, if more supplies did not get through, his business was facing another "disaster" similar to past major shutdowns.

"We may be shutting down the kitchen, shutting down the campground," he said. "This is nearly as bad as Cyclone Jasper again."

Mr Pagani said on Friday he was down to 15 per cent of his gas supplies at a time his businesses were fully booked with peak-season travellers.

"You rely on that last bit of income to get you through the wet," he said.

PORT SHORTS
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Chop chop cops

Shaun Hollis

There have not yet been any raids by Queensland Health officials on tobacco shops in the council areas of Douglas Shire and Mareeba during the most recent State Government push to crack down on illegal tobacco sales, a spokesman for the Cairns and Hinterland Hospital and Health Service says.

Health Minister Tim Nicholls this month announced a government blitz on the sale of illicit

tobacco and illegal vapes, saying authorities had the power to shut down operations following new legislation introduced to State Parliament.

Newsport contacted Queensland Police following the announcement, but was redirected to the CHHHS, which is taking the lead on the illegal tobacco crackdown.

But there have so far been no raids carried out in either Douglas

Shire Council or Mareeba Shire Council, the CHHHS spokesman said.

The new laws increase maximum penalties to more than \$160,000 and a year in jail for landlords who knowingly allow illegal activity to take place.

And Queensland Health has also been given the authority to employ undercover officers to investigate illegal operations.

News in Brief

WATER USE WARNINGS

Douglas Shire residents are reminded of the Level 1 water restrictions permanently in place for the council region as the Shire's southern neighbours in Cairns face news the council may look to implement water restrictions sooner than usual.

Cairns' water supply is being affected by ongoing challenges at several water reservoirs and high usage in recent hot and dry weather.

As a first step, Cairns Regional Council has recently launched an awareness campaign on water restrictions leading into the wet season, reminding everyone just how important it is to use water wisely.

FRESH RESCUE BOAT

A brand new \$1.2m volunteer rescue boat has arrived in Port Douglas.

Part of a State Government plan to upgrade rescue boats across Queensland, Douglas Shire volunteer rescuers have been keenly awaiting the arrival for months.

Once the volunteers have been trained to operate the powerful 11.5m twin-engine boat across the coming two months, it will assume its rightful place near the Tin Shed ready to undertake sea rescues between Ellis Beach and Hope Island.

GUARD AGAINST MEASLES

A measles outbreak first detected in Cairns has expanded to at least 12 cases, with reports from Mareeba and other locations released by Cairns and Hinterland Hospital and Health Service.

Mask wearing was last week mandatory in select areas of Cairns Hospital, following confirmation of three new measles cases there. It followed more identified cases in the community, and the declaration of a measles outbreak in Cairns on September 11.

Living life of luxury on high seas



Lumir Captain Charlie Kinder (second from left) with some of her crew and (inset) the ship. Pictures: Supplied

When luxury superyacht Lumir glides into Port Douglas at the start of next month, young Captain Charlie Kinder will be behind the wheel.

Captain Kinder, who took com-

mand of Lumir at just 21, is one of fewer than 2 per cent of female superyacht captains in the world.

She says she has had to work for respect in a male-dominated industry: "Being a captain isn't

rocket science, it's about fast problem-solving, keeping a calm head, working hard, and prioritising safety." The Lumir is up for private hire from Oct 1-Nov 15. Details: visitportdouglasdaintree.com

DINE, DAZZLE & BE DARING

\$99 PER TICKET PER ADULT
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SATURDAY 4 OCTOBER 2025



Operating in the eye of the storm

BUSINESS FEATURE

Jamie Jansen

When disaster strikes the Douglas Shire, one of the calmest voices in the room is often that of Paul Hoyer.

As manager of the Disaster Management Unit and the Shire's local disaster coordinator, Paul guides the region through floods, cyclones, and everything in between. The DMU is Douglas Shire Council's dedicated team for emergency planning, preparation, response, and recovery.

Cyclone Jasper and the subsequent rain event highlighted the need for a specialised disaster team. The DMU now works year round across all four phases of disaster management: prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery, while also managing projects to ensure the Douglas Shire is better prepared and more resilient for the next event.

Before establishing the DMU, Paul had already served the Shire for more than 29 years, beginning in environmental and waste management before stepping into disaster coordination in 2014.



Paul Hoyer steers Douglas Shire through floods and cyclones with calm leadership and a focus on resilience. Picture: Supplied

He has since guided the Shire through numerous events, including Cyclone Ita, the 2018 Murphy Street landslips, the 2019 Monsoon and Daintree River flood, and the aftermath of Cyclone Jasper's record-breaking floods.

When a disaster strikes, Paul serves as local disaster coordinator under Queensland's Disaster Management Act, partnering with the Local Disaster Management Group, chaired by Mayor Lisa Scamazzon. This group includes representatives from police, am-

bulance, health services, council staff and other emergency and government agencies.

When he first stepped into the role in 2014, it was a part-time responsibility, but over time the workload kept growing and disasters kept occurring.

"That's when we knew we needed a dedicated unit and we established the DMU," Paul said.

His deep local knowledge and calm leadership are vital and are shaped by decades of service and personal experience.

His role balances strategy and humanity.

He liaises with councillors, state agencies, and neighbouring councils to secure funding and coordinate projects, while also connecting with residents.

"After Jasper, I met with people in Degarra who were significantly affected," he recalled. "They'd tell you about their experience and what they'd lost, but also how grateful they were for the help."

In fact, it is what drives him.

"I want to ensure residents understand the risks they face, have the tools to make informed decisions, and receive the support they need to recover," he explained.

Paul has overseen a shift in approach so that recovery begins alongside response, bringing help sooner and embedding that mindset into the DMU's operations.



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DOUGLAS SHIRE COUNCIL

Paradise found

From Page One

The most successful examples included the Guardian of the Reef travel campaign in the US and UK, which TTNQ said reached about five billion viewers, and the Lifetime of Greatness push to have the Reef be declared the first non-human to win a UN Environment Program Lifetime Achievement Award, which now has more than 1.3 million signatories.

TTNQ chair John O'Sullivan said bookings across the past two years had already generated close to 200,000 more international visitors to Far North Queensland.

"TTNQ's management has made the best use of the funding to deliver exceptional results that have exceeded targets," Mr O'Sullivan said.

And recent lobbying of the Federal Government has secured an extra \$3m to help fund more campaigns across the next two years now that the ITRP grants have come to an end, the report outlined.

TTNQ chief executive Mark Olsen said the GOTR campaign had generated \$13.4m in sales across the entire Reef region, and the LOG project had also been highly successful - it was launched in April to help drive global publicity and more Reef visits.

Mr Olsen said the international market focus also included four new direct international routes starting up in 2024/25 - although one of those, AirAsia flights be-

tween Cairns and Bali, no longer operated.

"Since the borders reopened, international visitor spend in Tropical North Queensland has rebounded to nearly \$1.1 billion, on par with 2019 expenditure, powered by the strong partnership of the tourism industry, TTNQ and Cairns Airport," Mr Olsen said.


"International visitor expenditure now supports nearly one-quarter of the one-in-six jobs in our community that depend on tourism."

The other new direct plane routes introduced in 2024/25 were Cathay Pacific starting seasonal flights from Hong Kong across Chinese New Year, Fiji Airways starting flights to and from Nadi in April with links to the US, and Jetstar flying year-round to Christchurch, NZ, starting last August.

Data for the year ending March, 2025, showed TNQ attracted more than 550,000 international visitors, up 13.4 per cent on the year before, but those travellers stayed an average of 1.8 nights less.

The industry will face some challenges this year, however, with the TTNQ budget forecasted to drop to less than a third of the 2024/25 one.

"Alternative forms of sustainable funding are needed for TTNQ to continue to deliver the record return on investment the organisation has delivered," the report read.



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10 YEARS AGO

Citizen ceremony in perfect setting

National Citizenship Day is celebrated on September 17 and today was an opportunity to host a Citizenship Ceremony for 16 new citizens at Rex Smeal Park.

Pledges and affirmations were made from citizens from France, India, Sri Lanka, USA, Italy, New Zealand, Croatia, Netherlands, South Africa and Poland.

The official proceedings were presided over by Mayor Leu with a warm reception from onlookers and supporters. While citizenship celebrates democracy, it is a unique symbol of formal identification with Australia, acknowledging responsibilities which allow people to participate fully in the community.

Mayor Leu said "while being invited to preside over many events and ceremonies, being part of the Citizenship Ceremonies is my favourite."



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Stepping out

Mossman High School's seniors Class of 2025 turned out in style at Sheraton Mirage Port Douglas this month for the Year 12 Formal.

The night's highlights were kicked off with the arrivals from 5pm to 6pm, parents and families on hand to see the spectacular formal transformations of the students, some arriving in classy cars, while all excited for the night.

Students moved into the Ballroom for dinner followed by dancing, with the event concluding at 9pm.

A photobooth with balloon backdrop was in place to capture images of the special night.

Head of Department Senior School Belinda Guthrie said it was a relief the night ran as planned.

"The students looked absolutely spectacular, and their arrivals with the fancy cars and pomp and ceremony was a highlight for everyone who witnessed it," she said.

"It is wonderful to have families and community members



Emilie Pedemay and Kai Hahne at the Mossman school formal.

share this part of the evening. The Year 12 students' conduct and behaviour throughout the evening was exemplary, and they were wonderful ambassadors for

Mossman High School. Our school is very proud of this cohort and wish them all the very best as they head into their final senior exams," she said.

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in some fine style



Amber Schumacher, Charli Padovan, Alex Ziesler and Violet Kitto.



Mira Bannerman and Lincon Moull at the Mossman school formal.



Hanah Lennox and Ella Fapani.



Apinan Ewkanich, Jack Veltman and Brian Harris.



Iris Rice and Bronte Fraser.



Cash Johnson and Nanami Anderson.



Lenny Feben.



Deklen Reynolds.



James O'Donoghue and Mia White.



Charli Padovan, Violet Kitto, Alex Ziesler and Amber Schumacher.



Kalen Thomson, Thomas Gardner and Jack-Kenney Nimmo.



Kara Gibson and Jasmine Rennings.



Nicola Lane, Nanami Anderson and Lani Enoch.

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Financial advice platform launch

BUSINESS FEATURE

Jamie Jansen

Douglas Shire locals no longer need to travel long distances to access financial advice, thanks to a new collaboration between trusted local accounting firm Williams Cete & Co and the digital advice platform moneyGPS. This partnership offers Australians a simpler, more accessible way to get expert financial guidance, delivered through a platform designed to make financial advice clear and affordable.

Through the platform, users can access personalised, single-topic statements of advice online, covering areas such as superannuation, insurance and retirement planning. According to Mitch Williams, managing partner at Williams Cete & Co, the partnership is about bringing expert guidance within reach of everyday Australians.

“We’ve partnered with moneyGPS to offer clear, affordable financial advice tailored for individuals who wouldn’t normally be able to access or afford advice,”



In partnership with Williams Cete & Co, Douglas Shire now has digital financial guidance. Picture: Supplied

Mr Williams said. “For communities like ours, where there are no financial planning offices nearby, this ensures locals have access to the same level of quality advice in a digital format.”

The Money Check Up report is a free, detailed snapshot of your financial health and position. It shows how you’re tracking toward your goals and how you compare with others in a similar profile.

From there, you can choose to

buy single-topic advice and connect with a MoneyGPS coach.

For those seeking further help, qualified financial coaches are available for one-on-one online consultations to assist users to understand advice documents, implement recommendations, and plan next steps.

Additionally, Williams Cete & Co offers a comprehensive SMSF Check-Up for those managing self-managed super funds.

Powered by moneyGPS SMSF,

this 30-page digital report analyses fund compliance, cost-effectiveness, and strategic alignment, giving users a complete picture of their fund’s health.



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YOU SAID IT! Opinion Page

WATER USE WARNING

John Owen

Fix the tank on the hill so it can maintain more than the 30 per cent!

Cherie Greatrex

Yep, use some of the rates money they are ripping from us instead of the waste that is happening now.

Lyds Rani

Lol. Splash park.

Simon Salvage

Should have stayed with Cairns.

Liz Reedy

Simon Salvage, off you go now.

Flick Boucher

Hope the resorts know this!

Peter Brown

And the council still keeps their jobs.

Julie Robertson

And they keep building more resorts.

Chris McMullen

Julie Robertson where are all these new resorts?

LONG DRIVE FOR HELP WITH YOUR HEALTH

Geoff Field

Sounds to me like the local politicians need to start demanding funding for health services in Port Douglas. The situation as it stands is not satisfactory.

Lisa McCafferty

Wow, so lucky down near Byron/Ballina community transport \$40 return no matter how far you go.

Jade Phoenix

Is there room for a medic appointment based mini bus, sort of like a cancer council bus service in other rural areas? Head off in

the AM and return at the end of the day. Gives a chance for the participants of that run to get to their appointments then back home again. Only people who can prove it's a medical or specialist appointment can grab a seat so it's fair and dedicated.

Maureen Fraser

I so agree. Reason why we are selling and moving is because of access to medical.

Buddy St John

Port Douglas is a tourist town. Not practical to live there permanently. Cairns has all the options for medical needs and cheap public transport to get around.

Jackie Driscoll

I do genuinely feel for people in this situation, but we choose to live here. It would be even worse if you chose to live in say Cooktown or Chilligoe.

Janet Matejcek

I always warn anyone over 60 planning to relocate to Port how bad it is. I try and get phone appointments with specialists regarding ongoing follow-ups. It's crazy when you realise how many older people live here and how difficult it is to get medical service.

ARE WE MAYBE PLANNING TO FAIL?

Mark Rogers

Take back the land and do something between the Tin Shed and the marina.

Rod Jennings

Mareeba area did it with tobacco. The will will show the way.

Tom Patts

Whilst those few "fat controllers" are hell-bent on making the Shire just one big retirement



From the Holster



Shaun Hollis brings you a lighter look at local news.

village, say what you like. We are doomed whilst they, in the background, control this district.

Maureen Fraser

Trust me the Douglas Shire is not one big retirement village. For that to be true there would be have to be a 250 per cent upgrade in medical facilities in Mossman and surrounds.

NAME YOUR CROC

Jilly Ascough

Paul Hogan, Stevie I, Big Boy.

Rob

All very trendy and "woke", but wait until tragedy strikes and it all won't be so funny. And it will strike - more sooner than later.

Maree (not a crocodile)

I'm a regular here in the tropics and have a unit which I've stayed in for over 20 years. Never tire from this amazing place. I'm loving the croc Maree. I have been here for a month and visit Anzac

Bridge (Mowbray River Bridge) regularly, I love the croc there, but she's shy. I also found a 60cm croc swimming under the bridge and thought that unusual. I rang Douglas Shire, she had no clue what to do but said "enjoy it". Which I certainly have. I filmed it - was quite a treat.

CHEEKY CODY IS FULL OF LIFE

Marilyn Watson

He's certainly a fighter.

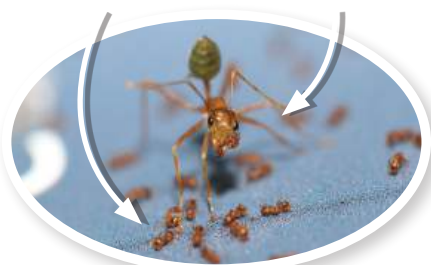
Stacy Louise

Thank you for your support guys. And sharing Cody's story and letting our supporters know he's doing so much better.

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SOCIALS

The Bodies in Motion Dance School 25th Anniversary party was held at Oaks Port Douglas on Saturday, September 13, while the Port Douglas Splash Park opening took place on Saturday, September 20. Pictures: Santiago Gonzalez, Shaun Hollis



Vanessa Caligari, Katrina Muller and Barbara Cabalza at Bodies in Motion.



Tully Smith and Tilly Borzi at the Bodies in Motion anniversary.



Raine Ward, Mia Ferrero, Elise Bellero, Saskia Turner and Maddison Bellero at the Bodies in Motion anniversary.



Vanessa Carey at the splash park opening.



Valeria Cifuentes at the splash park opening.



Rio, 4, and Ketlin Laan at the splash park opening.

WHAT'S ON

STAY UP TO DATE

Scan this QR code to stay up to date with the latest events in the region



SEPTEMBER 29

RECKLESS - The Australian Crawl Tribute, Time: 6:00pm, Location: Ellis Beach Bar & Grill

SEPTEMBER 30

School Holiday Activity 'Sketch to Shirt', Time: 10:30am - 12:30pm, Location: Mossman Library

Food Gardening at CIRCLE OF PLENTY, Time: 8am - 9am, Location: Circle of Plenty, Mossman Botanic Garden, Mossman

SEPTEMBER 25

Escape Artists - Contemporaries In Fng (until Oct 4), Time: 10am - 4.30pm, Location: Port Douglas Community Hall, Mowbray Street, Port Douglas

School Holiday Activity 'Sketch to Shirt', Time: 10:30am - 12:30pm, Location: Mossman Library

The SpongeBob Musical: Youth Edition (until Oct 5, Time: 2PM, Location: Click Theatre

Trivia with Supa Sal and Wevs, Time: 7:00pm - 8:30pm, Location: Club Mossman

OCTOBER 1

School Holiday Activity 'Sketch to Shirt', Time: 10:30am - 12:30pm, Location: Mossman Library

SEPTEMBER 26

Cam Kettle @ Ellis Beach Bar & Grill, Time: 5:30pm - 8:30pm, Location: Ellis Beach Bar & Grill

Sound Healing, Time: 7pm - 8pm, Location: Port Douglas Yoga Studio

Rockin' Rick Karaoke, Time: 7:30pm - 10:30pm, Location: Club Mossman

OCTOBER 1

2025 Great Barrier Reef Clean-up, Location: Far North Queensland

OCTOBER 2

School Holiday Activity 'Drop in and Build', Time: 1:30pm - 3:30pm, Location: Mossman Library

Bingo, Time: 7:00pm - 9:00pm, Location: Club Mossman

SEPTEMBER 27

Shanice, Time: 7:00pm - 10:00pm, Location: Club Mossman

Nicole Nighthawk @ Ellis Beach Bar & Grill, Time: 5:30pm - 8:30pm, Location: Ellis Beach Bar & Grill

OCTOBER 3

Jamie Mac, Time: 7:00pm - 10:00pm, Location: Club Mossman

Sound Healing, Time: 7pm - 8pm, Location: Port Douglas Yoga Studio

Monthly Social Dancing, Time: 6:30pm - 9:30pm, Location: Pullman Sea Temple Resort Port Douglas

SEPTEMBER 28

TYDE @ Ellis Beach Bar & Grill

Date: Sunday 28 September 2025, Time: 2:00pm - 6:00pm, Location: Ellis Beach Bar & Grill

OCTOBER 4

Mossman Botanic Gardens Working Bee at the Garden of Woven Memories, Time: 8am - 10am, Location: Circle of Plenty, Mossman Botanic Garden, Mossman

Dine, Dazzle & Be Daring, Time: 6 PM - 9 PM, Location: Oaks Resort

OCTOBER 5

Britfest Cairns - Long Weekend, Time: 6:30pm - 10:30pm, Location: Ellis Beach Bar & Grill

REAL ESTATE

OPEN HOME
Number 2 @ 9 Andrews Close, Port Douglas, Friday, September 26 3pm-3.30pm
Pink Real Estate

OPEN HOME
2&3/2 St Crispins Avenue, Port Douglas Saturday, September 27 9am-10am
Ray White

OPEN HOME
111 Thornton Peak Drive, Forest Creek Sunday, September 28 11.15am-12pm
Sotheby's



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SPORTS DIGEST

Crocs win awards but miss out on flag

From Page 12

The weekend before last was a nightmare for the Crocs, with both the men's and women's sides bundled out of the premiership race.

The men's minor premiers went down to eventual winners North Cairns Tigers in shocking conditions at Cazalys Stadium in Cairns, with constant rain making for a hard slog.

The Crocs failed to adapt to

the conditions, still trying to chip around with their high-possession game instead of just forcing the ball forward at all costs.

With the slippery ball and strong winds, the plan came unstuck too many times.

The Crocs were still in the game at three quarter time, trailing by 14 points, but were blown away in the last quarter, going down 2.14 (26) to 9.16 (70).

The women, however, came within a few seconds of an upset win against Trinity Bulldogs.

Leading for much of the day, they let through two goals midway through the last quarter to concede the lead.

But they then scored a late goal and were streaming into attack when the siren sounded.

The final score was Trinity 2.4 (16) to Port Douglas 2.1 (13).



Nick Salter is the Coach of the Year. Picture: Richard Nichol

SPORTS BRIEFS

CRICKET

The Port Douglas Muddies third grade team won easily on Saturday despite fielding nine players.

The Muddies dismissed Mareeba for 72, then chased down the total with just three wickets down.

Andy Fenwick top scored with 31 not out, while Fenwick took 3/14 with the ball and Adrian Banerman took 3/19.

GRAN FONDO CYCLING

The men's 136km cycling race was a thriller, with five riders finishing within two seconds of each other.

NSW rider Glen Wojcinski won the race with a time of 3 hours, 47 minutes and 53 seconds, with Queenslanders Kyal Velonias and Jadd Cohu second and third. In the women, Queenslanders took all three placings, with Gabrielle Thomasz winning the 136km race in a time of 3 hours, 39 minutes and 20 seconds, about five minutes faster than Petra Anderson, with Leah Horstmann third.

Other results included:

100km race men's winner:

Jackson Starmer (NSW) 2.39.34, women's winner: Chloe White (Qld) 3.00.27. 60km race men's: Andrew McKerracher (NT) 1.50.35, women's: Paula Ewing (Qld) 1.58.44. 48km race men's: Tim Vallance-Webb (Qld) 1.39.06, women's Phoebe Pembroke (Qld) 1.51.16. Hartley to Port Douglas Mountain Bike Race men's: Vincenzo Mento (Qld) 1.40.42, women's: Meredith Watkins (Qld) 2.13.00.

RUN PORT DOUGLAS

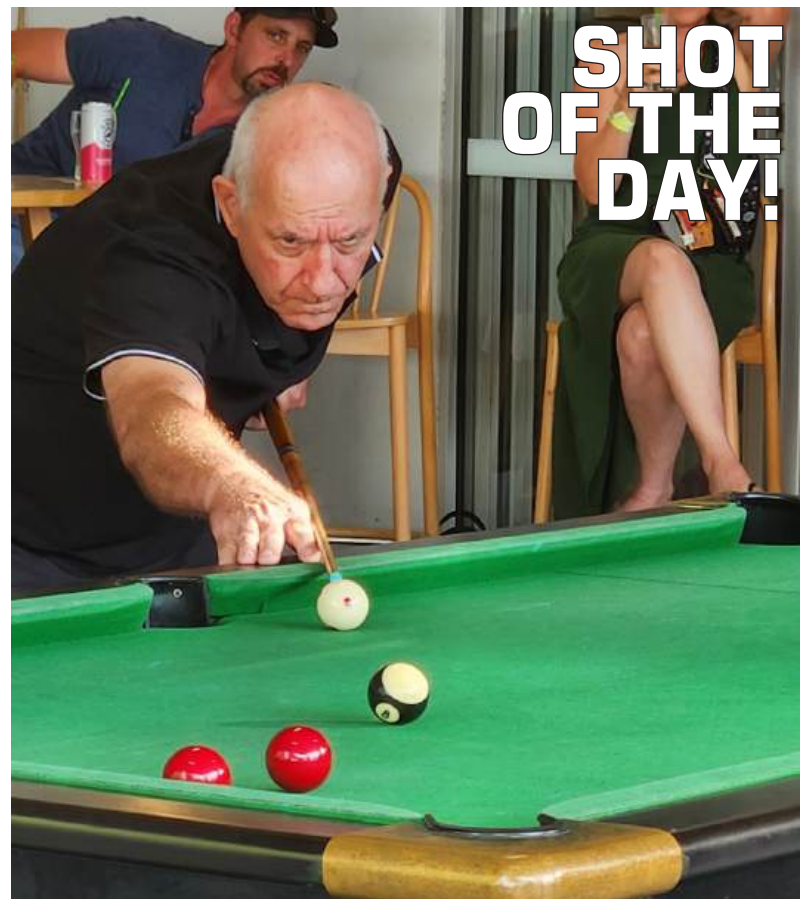
The half marathon was won by Queenslander Cody Williamson in a time of 1 hour, 13 minutes and 20 seconds, with fellow Queenslander Kate Wheaton winning the women's race in 1 hour 25 minutes and 30 seconds.

Other results included:

10km run men's Luke Swindale (Qld) 35.17, women's 42.19.

5km run men's William Grogan (Qld) 18.12, women's Kira Pearl Dalgety (Qld) 22.09.

2km men's Pierce Williams (Qld) 8.17, women's Matsumi Furuta (Qld) 5.48.



The Grand Final of the Port Douglas Pool Competition was an exciting showdown, with Club Mossman's Peter "Postie" O'Reilly snatching the win from Reef Tavern on the final shot. The Tav Rats led 6-4 before Mossman stormed home to win 7-6. Picture: Shaun Hollis

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HEAR THE DRAGONS ROAR



The Douglas Shire Dragons won their soccer Grand Final against minor premier Stratford Dolphins. Picture: Supplied

Shaun Hollis

Douglas United is the new Far North Community Division Two soccer champion after triumphing 2-0 against minor premier Stratford Dolphins in the Grand Final in Cairns.

Dragon Ignacio Ipinazar scored in the 21st minute, although the goal was officially recorded as an own goal.

The Dragons then kept the top side at bay until the 73rd minute until there was some bad news for Stratford, with player Matt Murray

sent off following a yellow card earlier in the match. Dragon Rafael Vihl then slotted one home not much over 10 minutes later.

Douglas had their own player sent off in the 89th minute, with Javier Puertos shown a red card, but it was too late by then for the

Dolphins to make an impact on the scoreboard.

After the Friday night win, the Dragons party continued across a weekend, with some sore heads at work on Monday.

The club is aiming to nominate a Division One team for next year.

Crocs receive reward for efforts this year at AFL awards



Crocs captains Ben and Caty McPhee. Picture: Richard Nichol

Port Douglas won a host of gongs at the AFL Cairns awards event, including Men's Coach of the Year, Men's Rising Star and both Most Valuable Players.

Senior coach Nick Salter was crowned best in the league, young gun Cayden Stabenow took out the Rising Star and Sam Fair-

clough and women's captain Caty McPhee were the MVPs.

Salter said, while he appreciated the honour, it was no compensation for missing out on the Grand Final after finishing top of the minor round.

"It's not really that good after losing," Salter said.

"We want to be winning premierships." He said most of the team would be back next year to chase the one that got away this year, and he was proud of the tightness of the playing unit.

"They love each others' company," he said.

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