

Congratulations Craig 'Squirter' Leach 300 A Grade games

Upcoming Games

FRIDAY 25th August
Austar Rugby Park 1

6.00 **U10** v University

Austar Rugby Park 2

6.00 **U6**

6.00 **U8** v University

SATURDAY 26th August

Austar Rugby Park 1

1.15 **B** v Jabiru

5.20 **A** v South Darwin

A Grade Tooheys New Cup							
	P	W	D	L	BP	PT	
Dragons	16	12	0	4	10	58	
Uni versi ty	16	10	1	5	7	49	
Palmerston	16	8	0	8	11	43	
Souths	16	8	0	8	6	38	
Casuari na	16	1	1	14	2	8	

B Grade Abel FI nance Cup							
	P	W	D	L	JF	BP	PT
Palmerston	20	19	0	1	0	11	87
Jabi ru	19	9	0	10	0	12	51
Uni versi ty	20	11	0	9	1	10	50
Dragons	20	11	0	9	1	8	48
Casuari na	20	9	0	11	0	11	47
Souths	19	0	0	19	2	1	-4

Coming Events

Squirter's 300th

It's here, this Saturday, 26th August; Craig 'Squirter' Leach will play his 300th A Grade game for the club.

An absolutely fantastic effort. I would love to see every past and present Crocs player and supporter along to cheer him on.

Our A Grade game kicks off at 5:20pm, so be there in plenty of time.

After the game, it is straight back to Lizards Bar and Grill to continue the celebrations. \$15 / head for some finger food and drinks.

NTRU Presentation Night

This one is on **Saturday 2nd September** (Preliminary Final night) from 7:00pm at the Deck Bar.

It is a great night (sit down dinner, drinks etc) and should be supported strongly by all players, officials and supporters.

The club will be subsidising the ticket price for the first 20 A Grade players who wish to attend. Subsidised tickets are \$35, normal tickets are \$60 and non-drinker tickets are \$25.

See me with money or pen (to sign credit card form) if you wish to come along.

Juniors

Presentation Day

Get **Sunday 10th September** in your diaries for this one.

It will again be at **Berry Springs** with plenty of space for our growing numbers of juniors.

The plan at this stage is to get underway at **9:00am**.

BYO a chair, breakfast / brunch and swimming things (if you're game).

PRUC Presentation Night & 30th Anniversary Celebration

Saturday 16th September.

It's all starting to come together.

It will be held at the **Long Tan Club** which is right out at the end of the point inside the **Larrakeyah Navy Base**. An absolutely beautiful location.

This brings with it some special security challenges. That is, **NO TICKETS at the DOOR** and everyone will need to arrive within an agreed timeframe, with **photo id**, and be checked off the list at the gate.

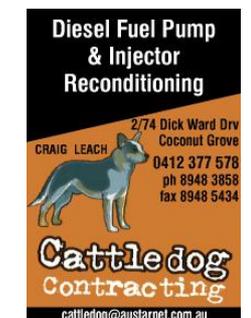
Ticket prices / structure etc is still being determined.

Last Week's Games

A v Dragons

Although this game ended up as a **loss, 23 - 28**, we showed this week that when we put our mind to it we can compete and beat any team in the competition.

A **much more disciplined approach** for most of the game saw us actually hang onto the ball instead of giving it back to the opposition. This allowed us to build some pressure and get over the try



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Palmerston



line.

The **Player's Player** voting reflected a good team effort with points being spread across the team.

Congratulations to Sean Jolley on a great game and sneaking home with the **Player's Player Award** this week. He also won this week's **Coaches Award**.

Tries were scored by **Sean Jolley, Dan Maroulis** and **Shane Stoeckert**. **John 'Sully' Sullivan** kicked 2 conversions and 1 penalty goal.

B v Dragons

The financial crisis at DEET is over and we have **Coach Blyton's** game report again this week.

'B Grade won again this week making it **19 out of 20 for the season**, so well done to all the 84 B Graders that have had a game this year.

This weeks game saw us play Dragons and for 85% of the game we played extremely well.

The **forwards completely outplayed their opposition**, dominating line outs, scrums and rucks and mauls. The highlight being a driving maul from a lineout which went 30 metres plus.

(**Dave Ley** was keeping a close eye on the **forward reserves** to make sure they didn't get **too excited** at this effort.)

The **backs were running strongly**, staying on their feet in the contact situation and looking dangerous every

time they ran the ball. The backs defence was also outstanding with a dangerous looking Dragons back line looking very out of sorts due to the pressure applied by our guys.

Unfortunately, for the last 10 minutes of the game we were our own worst enemy.

Tackles were being missed, kicks were not going out and turnovers gave Dragons a lot of ball which they ran in for two late tries making the final score 25 - 12.

Best players in no particular order were Kapu Hita-Duval, Damian Collie, Glen Tanonef, Hunter McGee, Denny Johnston and Michael Killiner. Player's player was Michael Killiner.

The Finals are now here and it all starts again. We play Jabiru this week.

The key to this week's game will be a good start - Let's get there early, get prepared and start strongly from the opening kick off.

The game starts earlier than normal at 1:15pm. The team will be announced at training on Thursday.'

Our **tries** were scored by **Dan Simmonds, Gareth Felton, Tom Grieve, Sean Gill** and **Kapu Hita-Duval**.

Happy Birthday!!

Scott Curtis	16 on 28 th
Rodrigo Barua	16 on 29 th
Paul Veach	32 on 29 th

Try Scorers

As you will all remember, I failed to get accurate scorer information in last week's CrocTales. Fortunately some people have taken pity on me and sent me further information.

Glen Tanonef tells me that he has only scored **one try** so far this season and it was in A Grade to boot.

Unfortunately his try was one of the ones I missed. The other A Grade try scorer I missed was **Dan Maroulis**. **Sorry Glen & Dan**.

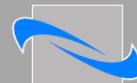
Glen also tells me that **Kapu Hita-Duval** was one of the missing try scorers in B Grade. The other was **Keve Jones**. **Sorry Kapu & Keve**.

Connop's Corner

Coach Connop congratulates the A Grade team on the week-end's effort even though we lost. I believe that we should have been awarded a penalty try towards the end, but any way, let's refocus on this week's semi finals.

We need to re-visualise where our strengths are, individually we need to look at what strengths we have and what opportunities we can create. We need to analyse the opposition's weakness and attack it. **We can create opportunities for our forwards and backs if we believe in ourselves.** We do have the fitness and the right skill levels and now

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This week-end at the Top End Hotel

- Friday Lunches @ Honey Pot Club - 12 - 4pm (\$60) 3 course meal plus show
- Chase the Ace @ Lizards Bar this Friday 5-8pm -\$2,900 up for grabs and with only 1 ace left on the board
- Malibu Promotion
- Loaded playing from 8pm on Friday and Saturday nights
- **Goose Club Raffle @ Lizards Bar - Fridays 6-9pm for Palmerston Rugby Union Club**
- Darwin Cricket club Raffles - Saturday night from 6pm + Live music from 8pm on Saturday

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we must have the right mental approach. This comes from each persons own discipline, attitude and will to win. **I personally believe that the Palmerston Crocs are the team of the year and deserve to win.**

Congratulations to Squirter for 300 A Grade games.

Also, congratulations to the **B Grade and Coach Ben Blyton** on finishing **Minor Premiers** with 19 wins and only a single loss for the season.

Not Nice!

For those who have been around for a while you will understand the competitiveness between **Shaun 'Gilly' Gill** and the **Nikki boys** from Dragons. Even Gilly had to smile last Saturday as he lined up across the ditch between the centres, facing off with Manuel when Manny called out **"Where's your purple shorts old man."** Cheeky bugger!

Later in the game, after another long blast from the Nikki boys which involved daring **Hunter McGee** to try to run it at them, **Hunter** received a ball off a scrum, took the Nikkis up on the offer, **ran through the first**, got to the second and **popped the ball to Gilly** who **scored between the posts**. Nothing needed to be said; just a **small smile told the story**.

Wisdom from the Gecko

Col 'Gecko' Hillery will be in Sydney and the NSW south coast visiting family throughout the finals series.

He sent the following thoughts: ***'I wish all players the best of luck, not that you need it you're playing very well. I look forward to celebrating two grand final victories when I get back – in a non-alcoholic and fully clothed way of course. Well.....non-alcoholic at the very least.***

I do feel very bad about not watching the finals.

*To all the players, think about the following quote by **Mark Ella** which I recently wrote in a birthday card for my nephew in Sydney, "If I handle the ball twice we (usually) score...if I handle the ball three times I score".*

And lastly, something to think about:

Give it all you've got – come off the field with nothing in the tank; don't die wondering; if you don't run much have a run – you may just catch the opposition off-guard; have no thoughts of self preservation; be totally committed; do at least one special thing, something you can be really proud of – be it a break, a covering tackle, a long touch finder, win against the feed/throw etc etc; and play some ad lib rugby, throw caution to the wind - if there's one thing that drives me nuts these days it's too much structure.'

Squirter's Rugby History

In case you haven't been around the club for all of the last 21 years, here is a potted rugby history of one **Craig 'Squirter' Leach**.

Craig Leach started his rugby career at Brisbane Boys College where he was sent to boarding school as a 12 year

old. His parents **Mal** and **Wendy Leach** worked Mount Ringwood Station just south of Adelaide River and so both of their boys, Cameron then Craig, had to leave home for their schooling.

When Craig finished year 12 he returned to work in the Territory and by then rugby had become his game of choice. He **joined Palmerston Rugby Union Club in 1985** and began playing in C grade. Within no time he was called up into A Grade where he remained for most of the rest of his career.

At Palmerston in those days he can remember **massive forward packs** who fed on small unsuspecting backs such as himself. He was given his **nickname of 'Squirter'** by just such a forward, **Tony Morris**, who coined it because of Craig's skinny body. Craig says it was these large forwards who helped harness his skill of elusive running and fast release of the ball.

The half back in those days was his brother Cameron and the two soon formed a great partnership which lasted for nearly 100 games.

In Craig's time at Palmerston he has won many awards; A Grade Best and Fairest in 1996/97, Best Back three times. He was awarded the club's highest honour of **Life Member No 10** in 2003.

Craig has **played in all three of Palmerston's winning A Grade Grand Finals**. A big moment in Craig's rugby career came in 1992 when he **captained the NT representative side to an historic 17-16 win over Scotland** at Rugby Park in Darwin.



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From 1992 until 1994 Craig moved south to try his hand at rugby in Sydney where he played for Eastern Suburbs. On returning to Darwin Craig slotted back into the NT side and Palmerston. In 2000, when the Mosquitoes concept was born for the NT representative side, Craig was the first captain. He **played 55 games for the NT** between 1988 and 2001 including being captain during 1990-1992 and 1995-2000.

He remembers well when he was moved from his favourite #10 spot to inside centre against Queensland when Kris Shirley took the #10 position. His opposite opponent was Tim Horan who went on to make the inside centre position his own with the Wallabies for many years. It was a long day at the office trying to contain the running skills of Horan.

Craig is proud that he has played rugby in every state of Australia. Also, he has represented the NT U20s in Taiwan and captained the Mosquitoes in Sri Lanka. He remembers well his battles with such greats of the game as Wylie Lingman. He has traveled with his first love rugby and met some great friends and had great experiences. He counts **playing NT representative rugby with his brother Cameron as one of his great thrills.**

While not admitting to be ready to hang up the boots yet, Craig is preparing for life off the field. He has recently married Mel and they have a lovely daughter Jessie. Craig is this year coaching the NT U16 side which will soon travel to Sydney for the national championships. He is a level 2 national coach and is

interested in pursuing this side of the game.

On Saturday when Craig runs on to the field for Palmerston for the 300th time in A grade, his parents Mal and Wendy will surely be there as they have been for nearly all of the 300 games. They traveled from the station at Mount Ringwood for many years until they moved to Bachelor and then continued their weekend journey to support their son, a return journey of over 200km.

Career Statistics:

- A Grade player 1985 - 2006
- A Grade Palmerston captain 1989 - 1992 and 1995 - 2002
- 55 representative games for the NT
- Captain of NT in 1990, 1991, 1992, 1995, 1996, 1997, 1999, 2000
- Kicked the winning penalty in Palmerston's 1st A Grade Grand Final win in 1990/91
- Captain of the Palmerston A Grade winning side in 1998/99
- NT player of the Year 1996
- Top Point Scorer NTRU A Grade competition 3 times.
- Australian Sports Medal 2000

Goose Club Roster

This Friday night it is the **B Grade forwards** turn to do the honours. Be there by 6.00pm to do your duty.

Next Friday it will be the **A Grade backs** turn.

Final's Series Rules

The NTRU and the Club Presidents have **agreed the following for the finals series:**

- The A Grade 15 that play on the weekend will be ineligible for their B Grade on the following two

weekends if their team is eliminated or goes straight through to the Grand Final.

- The scrum policy will be:
 - A Grade as per the laws of the game;
 - B Grade are required to have 4 front rowers;
 - The replacement front row forwards on the reserves bench must be marked on the team sheet.
- All replacement players must report to the touch judge before going on to the field. This includes replacements made at half time informing the touch judge.
- All clubs are to talk to players to control the excessive swearing that has been creeping into the game in the last few weeks.
- All games must commence on time.

Rose of Tralee

Paddy Killen's sister, **Brigid**, is Darwin's Rose of Tralee and is over in Ireland right now competing with all of the other Roses from round the world. **We wish her all the best.** For more see:

<http://www.rte.ie/rose06/darwin.html>

Croc Jottings

I reported last week about **Sean Kearns'** deployment to the UK for 10 months. Well, I have subsequently learned that he **broke his leg** days before being due to depart and is obviously still here.

And I thought he sounded keen to go.



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