

## Footy fans warned of \$40 fines

COWBOYS fans are being warned to obey parking signs or risk being fined.

More than 15,000 fans are expected at Dairy Farmers Stadium tomorrow for the NBL match against the Penrith Panthers.

Townsville Traffic Branch officer-in-charge Acting Senior Sergeant Robert Nalder said \$40 fines would be issued for anyone found in the 750m radius parking restriction zone.

"If you are going to drive to the game be mindful about where you park in the suburban areas around the Willows," he said.

"There are a number of streets that have no-standing zones.

"It's the responsibility of the driver of the vehicle to park appropriately or people will be fined if they're not adhering to the signs."

Sen-Sgt Nalder said the best way to avoid parking troubles was to use public transport.

"We ask people to utilise public transport and to consider the timing of their arrival and departures for the benefit of traffic flow and minimising waiting times," he said.

"This will cut down on drivers of vehicles becoming frustrated with having to sit for so long waiting in traffic."

He also urged footy fans to avoid driving if they planned to drink.

"Townsville traffic branch will be performing traffic patrols around Dairy Farmers Stadium," Sen-Sgt Nalder said.

"You should consider your alcohol consumption for the night and if you're going to have even one drink then you should have a designated driver who does not drink, catch a taxi or use public transport."

The match starts at 7.30pm.

## Crash girl dies after mother

A SIX-YEAR-OLD girl has died from injuries received in a pedestrian crossing accident in Cairns which killed her mother.

Police said the pair were knocked down just after 8am on Tuesday by a utility after it collided with a bus at the intersection of Mulgrave Rd and Newell St, Westcourt.

The ute overturned and struck the pair as they were crossing Newell St.

The mother died in hospital on Tuesday and her daughter passed away on Wednesday.

## Hats off to Ren's great fundraising idea



IF THE HAT FITS . . . Ren Pedersen at St Anthony's Primary School with students, from left, Shanae McCormack, Brooke McKaig, Jaye Mustard, Rhys Westcott and Benjamin Williams

Photo: TROY RODGERS

# Wear a cap and beat this cancer

By KATHLEEN SKENE

ASSEMBLY time at St Anthony's Primary School has a lot of happy memories for Ren Pedersen – it's where his beautiful daughter Amy received awards for her outstanding school work, sporting and dance achievements.

But this week he returned for the first time since a rare and aggressive cancer – brain stem glioma – claimed the life of the beloved nine-year-old earlier this year.

The cancer affects one in 150,000 children and, after living through the unimaginable, Mr Pedersen is bravely leading a push for greater awareness of the disease in Australia.

He spoke to Amy's classmates on Wednesday ahead of the school's 'Caps for the Cure Day' today to raise funds and awareness.

"What this makes up for in its lack of numbers, it more than compensates for in debilitation," Mr Pedersen said. "If you wrote down a



Amy Pedersen

list of everything you could do to torture a human being, this is it."

Surgery is usually the only effective treatment for low-grade forms of the disease, but is not usually used for high-grade tumours, which infiltrate the brain stem too deeply.

The tumour's location damages the nerves within the brain stem that are vital for breathing,

swallowing, consciousness, arm, leg and eye movement, and most children do not survive more than six to nine months after diagnosis.

While researching the condition online, Mr Pedersen found a US-based organisation, The Cure Starts Now, which is funding research specifically targeted at brain cancer in children.

He is helping to kick-start an Australian arm of the organisation.

"In the medical field, doctors and researchers are shying away from this because it's just too hard," Mr Pedersen said.

"Radiation doesn't work, chemotherapy doesn't work.

"The hospital support was fantastic and the doctors were fantastic, but in Australia we're probably five years behind because we're more conservative in our approach."

The group has grants available for researchers willing to help work for a cure, and close to 100 per cent of funds raised go directly into re-

search. Amy's school friends will be among the first in Australia to contribute to the cause for the silly hat day today. Mr Pedersen hopes greater awareness of the disease will lead to the development of more treatment options for children like Amy.

"When your child has got that – and you don't want to think about it – that black hand, you have to be the greyhound at the front of the pack," he said.

"It's never been beaten. If we can beat this thing, it could help with treatments for other forms of cancer.

"It just pains me to think that there's other kids out there that have got no hope.

"She lived 16 months after her diagnosis – most die within six.

"My daughter has died in this battle, but hopefully we can try to win the war."

For more information, or to donate, visit [www.thecurestartsnow.org](http://www.thecurestartsnow.org)

## Opposition says government is snubbing the North



OPPOSITION MPs have accused the government of snubbing the North following the loss of a designated Minister to represent the Premier in the region.

The Premier has had representatives in both North and western Queensland since the 1980s, and the offices were upgraded from parliamentary secretary roles to ministries in 2001.

After this year's election, both portfolios vanished.

Hinchinbrook MP Andrew Cripps (pictured) said the lost

ministries, combined with a reduction in regional seats, reflected a 'diminished' view of North Queensland by the government.

"Before March there were five ministers in North Queensland, and following the election there is only three," he said.

"North Queensland is going to play a very important role in the economic recovery of Queensland – the rural sector, primary industries like horticulture, sugar and cattle are really the only

bright parts of the economy at the moment."

Burdekin MP Rosemary Menkens said the loss was a blow to the region.

"We're seeing the regions being forgotten," she said.

The last MP to hold the position, Thuringowa MP Craig Wallace, now Main Roads Minister said he was still the region's Cabinet advocate.

"There was a major restructure of all departments and positions, but I'm still Anna's bloke in North Queensland," he said. "There are things I've

delivered that haven't been in my portfolio, like the V8s, Flinders Mall redevelopment and Jezzine Barracks.

"We can be a bit pedantic about titles and names.

"I'm there every Monday morning at the Cabinet table being a voice for North Queensland."

Dalrymple MP Shane Knuth said North Queenslanders felt they were losing out with too much focus is on the south-east corner.

The LNP has retained their shadow portfolio for Northern Development.