Eels to take on Titans in a pre-season thriller

Jordan Gerrans  
RUGBY LEAGUE

THE rugby league stars of the Gold Coast are set to hit Central Australia next February. After two years of the Wests Tigers being the away side to face the Territory’s own Parramatta Eels, the Titans of the Gold Coast arrive for a pre-season match in Alice Springs next year on Saturday, February 13.

Parramatta Eels chief executive John Boulton said the Eels had enjoyed their visits to Alice Springs in the past two pre-seasons and were anticipating another successful stint in Central Australia.

“Our club is proud of what we have achieved so far in our partnership with the NT Government in promoting rugby league, developing talent through the Eels Academy across the Territory and also empowering strong support from Territorians,” he said.

“We look forward to again holding activities such as clinics, opportunities to meet the players and developmental opportunities for players, coaches and officials during our time in the Territory in 2016.”

Eels player Pauli Pauli searches for a breakthrough in the defence during Parramatta’s clash with Wests Tigers in a pre-season thriller.

Momentum builds for more rep football

Jordan Gerrans  
GREY MORRIS  
AFL

A SECOND Northern Territory football identity has backed a return for regional representative games after a decade in mothballs.

Barkly Australian Football League president Steven Edgington has long called for a representative carnival to be played.

“In the Centralian Advocate in June, Edgington suggested a model that would involve the BAFL, Central Australian Football League, Big Rivers Football League and AFL Mount Isa playing off over a weekend.

The potential representative carnival could act as an alternative for the Town v Country game, which has been replaced by the APY Lands v Country game this season in Alice Springs.

Following the Big Rivers grand final over the weekend, Katherine football identity Paul Amarant said representative football was the only bump in an otherwise smooth pathway to the Territory Thunder program.

“The Big Rivers, CAFL in Alice Springs, Barkly League in Tennant Creek, Cove league and the Tiwi Island Football League are crying out for rep football,” Amarant said.

“The problem is there is no one in Darwin willing to push it through … To me, it’s a must if the pathway to Thunder is to be completed.”

Identification of footballers in the regional areas is an obvious positive for reintroducing rep games.

“They can identify players who are good enough to play for NT Thunder from the step-up in class from club footy to rep games.”

It would make the 2nd-man format work properly as well. Right now it’s a big farce and just another reason to throw in another player from Darwin to make up the numbers.”

Amarant proposes a knockout format, with the Wadayee league, a side from the Central Desert and even Mamingrida taking the number of competing leagues to night.

“You can’t play a round robin in Darwin, that would be too messy,” he said.

“There has to be a home-and-away series with winners from the first four games advancing through a knockout format to an eventual grand final.”

The potential carnival would be similar to that of the WorkSafe Country Championships in Victoria or the Landmark Country Championships in Western Australia, as the carnival would decide the best league outside of the NTFL in the region.

CENTRALIAN  Liam Knight.

Knight has sights on proud day

RUGBY LEAGUE

CENTRALIAN  Liam Knight is set to play the match of his life on Sunday at ANZ Stadium in Sydney.

The Alice Springs junior will start for the Mandy Sea Eagles under-20 side against Penrith in the Holden Cup grand final from 1.35pm.

Knight played a big part in a winning NSW under-20 side in the State of Origin curtain-raiser this season.

The Holden Cup is the first match on NRL Grand Final day, and will be followed by the NRL State Championship, the big one between the Broncos and the Cowboys.

Shooter’s firing off top scores

SHOOTING

THE Alice Springs Shooting Association held a Rimfire Rifle Silhouette shoot at their Butler Rd range in Central Australian Olympic Park on Saturday.

Rifle silhouette is a SSAA core and internationally recognised event that exposes the shooter to prevailing weather conditions, as well as the attempt to knock over metal targets in the shape of chickens, pigs, turkeys and rams over four distances while in the offhand (standing unsupported) position.

Nine shooters completed the 45-shot rim-fire match at the Alice Springs Shooting Complex in light breeze conditions, with six shooters making personal best scores.

Best score of the day went to master-grade shooter Russell Wilkie with a score of 21.

In B grade, four shooters tied with a score of 9 and, after a four-way sudden-death shoot-off on pig targets, Ian Kelly claimed victory in B grade over Simon Rowe (second), Graham Randell (third) and junior shooter Shae Wilkie (fourth), ASSA spokes- man Russell Wilkie said.

All shooters will represent Alice Springs and lodge their scores in the National Rifle Metallic Silhouette Postal competition that ends in October.