NORTH QUEENSLAND
SPORTS FOUNDATION.

2025-2026 FY Recap

Here's what you might have missed this last year

The North Queensland Sports Foundation is the region's longest-standing independent sporting body - coordinating events, advocating for industry, recognising excellence, and investing in physical activity across more than 25 Local Government Areas and a community of over 700,000 North Queenslanders.

North Queensland SPORTSTAR AWARDS

MOVE IT NQ.

NORTH QUEENSLAND SPORTS HALL OF FAME

NORTH QLD Games MMXXVI MACKAY

The 35th Annual North Queensland Sportstar Awards

Our largest *ever* sports awards!

- **Over 340 tickets sold at Townsville Entertainment and Convention Centre**
- **Celebrated with sporting royalty including Natalie Cook OAM, Gene Miles OAM and Sam Thaiday**
- **Featuring a jazz band, fireworks, acrobatic entertainment & more**

Highlights

Celebrating 35 years of awards in Townsville
Thanks to our valued member and host Townsville City Council, we were able to host the biggest awards yet. Marked a significant milestone as we celebrate at home.

Biggest Prize Pool in NQ Sportstar Awards History!
We gave out over $40,000 in cash prizes and financial scholarships to 20 winners and runners up as well as bespoke awards for around 100 finalists.

VIP Guests & Speaker
Rugby League Legend Sam Thaiday plus special attendees such as Gold Medal Olympian Nat Cook and Hall of Fame Inductee Gene Miles as well as many other sports stars joined us for a night of celebration.

Our next awards are in Cairns on October 17th - Only 230 tickets available, save the date now!

Winners

Senior Sportstar
Winner – Alexander Ferlazzo – Luge (Townsville)
Runner up – Liam Paro – Boxing (Mackay)

Junior Sportstar
Winner – Uwezo Lubenda – Sprinting (Townsville)
Runner up – Dylan Wright – Waterskiing (Cairns)

Rural & Remote Sportstar
Winner – Cade Furguson – Rodeo (Cloncurry)
Runner up –Jack Larsen – Go Karting (Hinchinbrook)

Para Athlete of the Year
Winner – Dale Potter – Bowling & Bocce (Mackay)
Runner up – Sidney Whipp – Goalball (Cairns)

Team of the Year
Winner – U18 Mackay Meteorettes – Basketball (Mackay)
Runner up – F/TR Team – Shooting (Burdekin)

Masters
Winner – John McKaig – Swimming (Townsville)
Runner up –Roscoe McDonnell – Athletics (Mackay)

Service to Sport
Winner – Lenny Chiesa – Surf Life Saving & Rugby League (Hinchinbrook)
Runner Up – Beverley Knowles – Special Olympics – (Townsville)

Sporting Impact
Winner – Lewis Fuller – Dragon Boating (Townsville)
Runner up – Kimberley Doyle – Special Olympics (Mackay)

Sporting Excellence
Winner – Karin Thorburn– Celebrating her 500th Marathon (Burdekin)

Scholarship Winners
Uwezo Lubenda, Zoe Chester and Jack Olsen were selected for our new initiative to help them 'Towards 2032' receiving $10,000 each in funding.



Our Favourite Photos



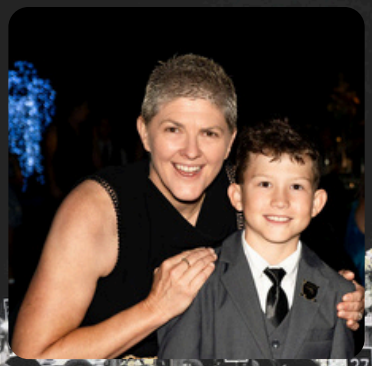






Congratulations!



















The 2026 North Queensland Games

1–4 May 2026 | Mackay, Isaac & Whitsunday Regions

The 42nd North Queensland Games - the largest regularly run multi-sport event in regional Australia - was delivered across three host councils in May 2026.
More than 2,000 registered athletes competed across 23 sports, with the Opening Ceremony held at Harrup Park, Mackay on 1 May.

Quick Hits

- Economic Impact $1.24 Million (up 18%)
- Individual Players 2,225 (up 30%)
- Sports 25 (up from 19)
- Total Direct Bed Nights 6,352 (up 12%)
- Intrastate visitors 2767 (up 21%)
- First-time competitors 61% *new

Local Representation Matters

We were proud to promote **3 former North Queensland Games players** as our Games Ambassadors

1. **Liam Paro** (Mackay | Boxing). Liam recently won the IBF Welterweight title in June 2026, his second World Title.
2. **Tori West** (NQ | Athletics). Tori represented Australia at the Paris 2024 Olympics in the Heptathlon and is competing in July at the Commonwealth Games.
3. **Natalie Cook** (Townsville | Beach Volleyball). Olympic Gold and Bronze Medallist, Nat's been on a crusade to raise money for regional athletes via her Aussie Athlete Fund.



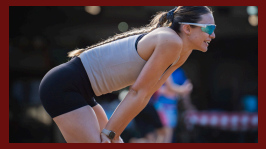
















































The North Queensland Games is proudly supported by the Queensland Government


KINGSWOOD
Skateboards!
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NORTH QLD Games
The Largest Multi-Sport Festival in Regional Australia
REGISTER TO PLAY!
MAY 1 - 4, 2026
NQGAMES.COM.AU
"IT'S OUR GAMES"
NORTH QUEENSLAND SPORTS FOUNDATION
Fostering & Strengthening Active Participation in NQ
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NORTH QLD Games

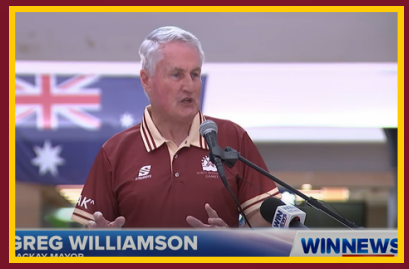

Mackay
Queensland Government
PEAK^
bishopp
ISAAC REGION
Mackay


rth Queensland Games spark regional sport revival
ABC Tropical North
3 May at 12:12 ·


origin
NORTH QLD Games
NORTH QUEENSLAND GAMES
THOUSANDS OF ATHLETES PREPARE FOR THE OPENING CE


MARCH OF ATHLETES LEADS
ECTACULAR NORTH QUEENSLAND
GAMES OPENING
READ MORE
MACKAY & WHITSUNDAY
LiFE


SPORTS EXPO
Friday February 7th 2025
NORTH QUEENSLAND SPORTS FOUNDATION
YOUR GATEWAY TO GETTING ACTIVE
NQ GAMES
KICK OFF YOUR FOOTY JOURNEY
WITH AFL MACKAY!


GREG WILLIAMSON
WINNEWS




LIVE
HARRUP PARK
6:22 PM




Create
THE NEXT MASCOT
MTP




NORTH QLD Games

Announcing a home for the North Queensland Sports Hall of Fame

After 13 years, the Hall of Fame finds a permanent home

- At an intimate event in front of 100 at Queensland Country Bank Stadium, we celebrated the induction of 8 more North Queensland heroes into our Hall of Fame, and unveiled plans for public infrastructure external to the site.



















Inductees (as of 2025)

- Brad Beven
- Ashleigh Stebbings
- Pat Rafter
- Cathy Freeman
- Jon Sieben
- Laurie Lawrence
- Tom Gorman
- Arch Foley
- George Moore
- Tracey Belbin
- Karrie Webb
- Natalie Cook
- Sam Thaiday
- Gorden Tallis
- Jim Paterson
- Vern Daisy
- Gene Miles
- Mitchell Johnson
- Glenn Buchanan

Coverage

It's been a big 12 months - here's links to some external coverage

Queensland Department of Sport -
2026 North Queensland Games wrap up with strong regional participation and community impact

Mackay & Whitsunday Life -
March of Athletes Leads Spectacular North Queensland Games Opening

Ministry of Sport -
Team Townsville Launched to Fuel Regional Athletic Pathways to Brisbane 2032

Australian Leisure Management -
Planet Fitness backs Townsville Athletes

ABC -
Thousands of athletes descend on Mackay for regional Australia's biggest multi-sport event

FOGS -
Miles, Tallis and Thaiday inducted into North Queensland Sports Hall of Fame

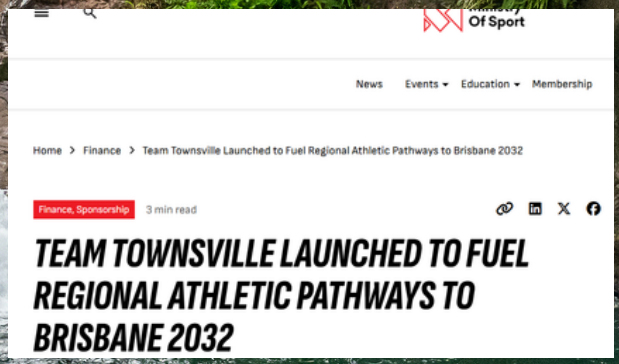
Townsville Bulletin -
A 'Team Townsville' boost for our NQ sports stars

Other Bites:

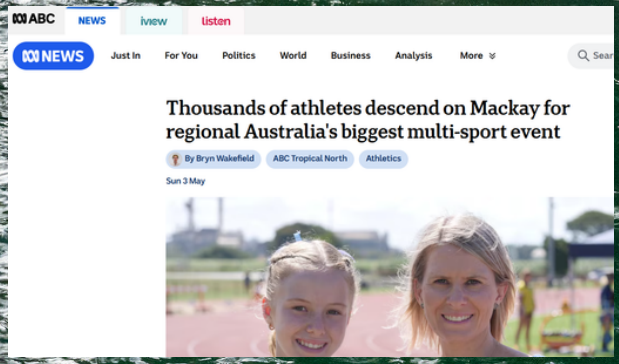
- Published a community sports app
- Funded NQ First Nations Boxing Championships in Cloncurry (with Boxing QLD)
- Funded 3 regional Awards winners to State event in Brisbane
- Resigned 15 Member Councils onto 3-year agreements

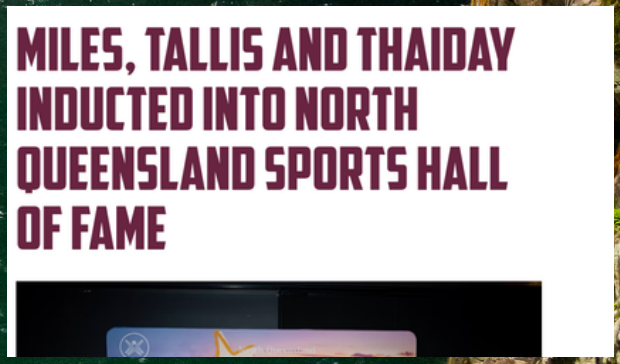


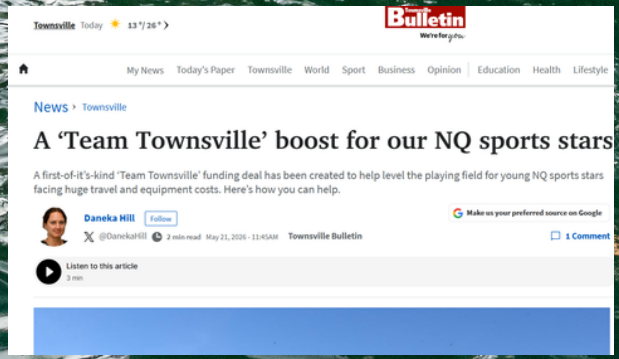

















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