

TRAPS WITH PETER CAMERON



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STATE'S NORTH FEELS THE LOVE

CAIRNS can bank on a \$176 million Entertainment Centre upgrade as the A-Pal team try to divert election politics from electricity. Household power bills are expected to increase next year despite the \$330 battlers' annual rebate going to 155,000 more households.

Domestic electricity may be cheaper from 2019 when 17 solar and wind projects operate. They include the Dalby and Oakey solar farms. Swanbank power capacity also is likely to increase when supplies lock in for the gas turbines.

Energy Minister **Mark Bailey** (pictured) remains the bright spark declaring: "Queensland has an abundant supply of solar, wind and hydro resources."

LNP push for north Queensland coal power has backing from a northern federal fund. It's still diesel power up Cape York way.

The Cairns Convention Centre upgrade coincides with \$900 million in NQ projects announced last week.

BLUES READY TO CHUCK IN TRYING

MCG tickets for Origin I next June go on sale tomorrow as beaten Blues question the future of the now lopsided series.

"State of Origin is almost dead," conceded Fairfax sheets as the impact of the Blues' 11th series loss in 12 years started to sink in. Reports prominent ex-NRL players from No South Wales lost their shirts with bookies on Origin II showed why Sydney's NRL push is all fed up.

A few Blues players from last Wednesday can forget about playing in Melbourne if Sydney accept an offer from their Origin legend **Tom Raudonikis** to come out of coaching retirement. NSW's coaching uproar contrasted with jubilant Maroons coach **Kevie Walters** producing a man-of-the-match display at the Story Bridge Hotel crab lunch Thursday.

A unanimous total of 10 *Daily Tele* experts had tipped NSW to win by up to

12 points. Blues players turned up on Sydney front pages looking like mugs. Different story in Queensland where per capita TV audiences on Wednesday left NSW for dead. An extra three million live in NSW and Bureau of Census offered no excuses: "Cockroaches are the bigger earners."

NSW tried front page trickery as well as ill-informed tips to delay the inevitable. Tele rated our fearless forward **Josh McGuire** "weak as XXXX" with accusations of "cannonballs, high shots and spear tackles". It's a wonder NSW have not asked for a **Manny Pacquiao**-style recount after McGuire helped lead the masterclass.

If Queensland dominates much longer we can expect NSW to resort to remoter venues, non-selection for their NRL elite or limit the



Johnathan Thurston and Cameron Smith in a very familiar pose.

Origin concept. Luckily Queensland's sports portfolio is brimming, led by success stories such as world champion **Jeff Horn**. Expect **Premier Stacia** to hold discreet talks soon with Horn's promoters over a late year rematch with Pacquiao at Boondall. Coinciding, of course, with a state election build-up.



FAST RAIL SPINS ITS WHEELS

INFRASTRUCTURE Australia's push for high-speed coastal rail from Brisbane to Melbourne is struggling to gain steam. Inland freight lines to Melbourne and XRR are state priorities.

UNIT RULES SHAKE-UP

BODY CORP rules are set for another shake-up with 64 angles reviewed including archaic admin provisions. Expect red tape to go, replaced with better consumer protection.

EMPTY BENCHES NEED FILLING

BENCH roles will have to be finalised before the state's election "caretaker" hiatus begins. *Traps*' latest count suggests there are 10 Supreme, District and Magistrate's Court vacancies.

Tim discovers Jones bear-pit a risky place

RUTHLESS radio ruler **Alan Jones** is stalking Opposition Leader **Tim Nicholls** as the LNP tries to finalise its state conference and Estimates strategies. Having savaged premiers **Stacia Palaszczuk** and **Gladys Berejiklian** (NSW) earlier in the week, Jones tore into Nicholls Thursday and Friday on his breakfast show heard on 4BC and regionals.

Jones was a newcomer to Queensland when he started thrashing former premier **Campbell Newman** daily on 4BC before the 2015 LNP election loss.

Last week Jones lifted his Brisbane ratings to 8.4 per cent closing on ABC



which fell below 11 per cent. Jones is ropeable about Acland coal mining on the Downs and rejected Nicholls' pleas to "accept and respect the Land Court process".

Jones: "People in your party are in bed with mining interests. You're equivocating. You want to win an election. Stand up for what is right. You're hiding behind a judicial review ... There are things going in this state that don't pass muster."

The premiers are expected to reappear with Jones (pictured).

Ditto Nicholls. "I'll be happy to go on his show again and talk Labor's crazy energy policies," he said. No word on Jones grilling PM **Turnbull**.

BEST SHOW IN TOWN

SCALPERS can sell seats for Estimates hearings involving Cross River Rail's Jackie Trad, Opposition 2IC Deb Frecklington and Labor MP Jo-Ann Miller. LNP reckon Deb scored a narrow points win over Jackie in their 2016 Estimates stoush. Jo-Ann can wade in on Jackie from Tuesday.

EMPEROR PETE

PETER Dutton is closer to a powerful Home Security Ministry with polls in his tricky Brisbane seat of Dickson rising on his hostility to illegal migration. Home Security may give Dutton control of federal cops and spy agencies as well as border protection.

CAIRNS A WINNER

RACING limbo worsens with TAB merger deal tied up in court and the Eagle Farm track review delayed. Better news for Cairns Jockey Club nabbing \$350,000 from a \$725,000 FNQ fund. Even Easter Einasleigh races will score. But no pet dogs at Einasleigh any more.

CONTEST ON CRIME

GOLD COAST crime stats worsen as GOLDOC front pages come thick and fast. But Police Commissioner **Ian Stewart** looks certain to continue until after the Commonwealth Games.

UNIONS CLEAN UP

UNION-friendly building contracts for the heavy construction at Star's Queens Wharf casino are the talk of George St. Reports **James Packer** has his eye on a Star takeover spice the mix.

UNFRIENDLY FIRE

ABC can ditch its "Australian" badge if it keeps firing anti-Army potshots over issues in Afghanistan. No luck in ABC sport either, with vision of Origin retiree **Paul Gallen**.

WHAT GAMES?

A-PAL team silent on chatter Queenslanders should pay billions for the 2032 Olympics.



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