

## Case Study – Barron River Cricket Club

By Aaron Pereira

The passion for cricket is shown at the top level in many ways, the kiss of the helmet, the grasp of the flag and the love of the Baggy Green. But it's the grassroots successes that are the notable ones – especially from a club that found themselves more than \$17,000 in debt less than two years ago.

The Barron River Cricket Club (BRCC) – found 22km North of Cairns – was struggling, money owed and the future of the 21-year-old club in dire straits. Enter a tenacious President and *her* board that were determined to move past the misfortunes of previous times. BRCC President Narelle Emery didn't have to think long about whether to take on the monumental task of securing the future of her beloved club.

"It was pretty shocking, the debt we were in was daunting ... but we narrowed it down pretty quickly that Nautalis St. Trinity Beach was our home and we didn't want to take away the history of the club and relocate," Mrs Emery said.

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The 'commit' part of committee become critically imperative and Mrs Emery was exploring every avenue that could provide any assistance to the BRCC. After securing a number of grants that were 'fingers-crossed' applications, the club set about investing in the appropriate things.

"It's about sustainability over a short-term fix ... we invested in a mower and ensured it came with an extended warranty for maintenance regardless of the club's financial situation. "Volunteers also prepared the wicket, that saved us an unbelievable amount (of money) ... I found myself on the Bobcat digging up the ground."

A veteran of the club, Mrs Emery has played first XI cricket and only swapped places with her husband on field due to an impending birth. The BRCC is a female-inclusive club, with the Secretary and Treasurer also female and T20 and Under 14 competitions dedicated to girls. For Mrs Emery, the work isn't complete just yet.

"One thing that is guaranteed is the guardians of this great club will continue to work endlessly to provide the best opportunities for the growth both on and off the field."



**Image: Barron River Cricket Club opens their new ground, on the back oval at Crathern Park.**

Left to Right: Gary Young (President, AFL Cairns), Nick Hatzoglou (Manager – Club Cricket, Cricket Australia), Narelle Emery (Barron River CC President), Gavern Lovett (Club Coordinator Far North QLD - Queensland Cricket), Michael Trout (Barron River CC Member) and Matthew Robertson (Barron River CC bowler) on the new wicket.

**Picture: Stewart McLean**