



Fast CARS, Fancy FROCKS & FESTIVAL Fever

It's all about events in the Capricorn Region

By Tony Walsh

With the depth and variety of its burgeoning annual program of major spectaculars, the Capricorn Region is now widely acknowledged as the Regional Events Capital of Queensland.

Though everything is possible under the Capricorn sun, this capacity to stage outstanding events is underpinned by an eclectic mix of conference facilities, sporting and special interest venues, natural attractions, ideal weather conditions and a wide variety of accommodation options, and importantly, easy transport access to Brisbane and the southern capitals.

New events are continually coming on line. The Camco Group MotorManiaCQ, which will run from 16-25 July, is a good example.

Chairman of the Camco Group MotorManiaCQ Committee, Ian Loxton, says the event has been two years in the planning and brings together 20 separate motor sport organisations in Rockhampton and Gladstone.

"Competitions and displays will include street sprints, rallying, off-roads, speedway, drags, motocross, enduro karts, show and shine expos, specialist swap and car boot sale and an extensive trade fair," Ian said.

"There will be something for everyone so you don't have to be a dedicated motor aficionado to come and enjoy. Visiting tourists will also find plenty to catch their interest here in Central Queensland."

Loxton and his committee already have plans for future expansion of the Camco Group MotorManiaCQ over the next few years to include a Hall of Fame which will honour the

contribution of local and national motoring and motor sporting personalities.

Chief Executive Officer for Capricorn Tourism based in Rockhampton, Mary Carroll, says her organisation is right behind the initiative. "This is clearly another major event-tourism project for Central Queensland. Estimates of visitation to this event alone puts the number of visitors and participants at around 20000."

'Bulls and birdies' are synonymous with the Capricorn Region in the sense that Rockhampton is the Beef Capital of Australia and the beachfront Capricorn Resort at Yeppoon features two world championship golf courses.

Two major events will focus on these aspects of the region from 22-25 July. The winner of the Paradise Lagoons Campdraft will be decided from 2,500 nominations during competition at Paradise Lagoon, Alton Downs. The prizewinning pool tops \$230,000. A highlight of the competition will be the third annual Saturday night State of Origin Campdraft between QLD and NSW. Meanwhile, competitors in the Pat O'Driscoll Real Estate Tropical Auto Group Pro Am Golf Classic at the Capricorn Resort will be endeavouring to score a birdie each time they tee off down the well-kept fairways. There will be \$100,000 in prizemoney on offer at this 12-time PGA award-winning event.

"I'd rather be sailing," could be the catch phrase for entrants in the 2010 Club Marine Brisbane to Keppel Tropical Yacht Race if they receive an unexpected email through their BlackBerry as they sail through the indigo waters of the Southern Great Barrier Reef from 6-10 August. Now in its fourth

year, the 348 nautical mile challenge has a time record of 29 hours 24 minutes 11 seconds set by Black Jack in 2009.

The Central Queensland Sapphire Gemfields, three hours' drive west of Rockhampton, are centred around the appropriately named villages of Anakie, Sapphire, Rubyvale and the Willows. This year, the annual Gemfest, Festival of Gems will be held from 12-15 August. It features Australia's largest sapphire exhibition and there are opportunities for visitors to learn the winning ways of fossicking or at least grab a bargain at one of the many local jewellery stores.

Gather some fitness friends and enter the 4th Ultimate Aussie Team Challenge at this year's 11th annual Capricorn Resort Half-Ironman Triathlon at the Capricorn Resort on 14-15 August. A new event this year is the Sunday Beach Fun Run.

The popular event for all the family, the Coastguard Tight Lines Fishing Classic, 20-22 August, will once again be held along the beautiful Capricorn Coast just 40 minutes' drive east of Rockhampton.

Would you like to cycle through some of the most scenic country on the east coast of Australia? Then 'get on your bike' and participate in Cycle Queensland's nine day tour from Yeppoon on the Capricorn Coast south to Bundaberg from 4-12 September. You will be in good company as 1,300 other riders are expected to saddle up as well.

The Capricorn Coast's major arts celebration for the year, the Village Festival of Arts and Music, will be staged at the Yeppoon Pony Club Grounds from 17-19 September.



Camco Group MotorManiaCQ.



Twilight Markets.



Great Western Hotel Rodeo.

Organised by the Keppel Coast Arts Council since 2002, it offers a kaleidoscope of contemporary culture featuring music, performing arts, visual arts, cultural arts, children's activities, street theatre, workshops and food stalls. Circus Oz will provide one of the main performances this year.

Can you image catching a magnificent barramundi in the heart of your home town or city? It's a regular occurrence in the mighty Fitzroy River which runs right through the centre of Rockhampton. To celebrate, the annual Carlton MID Barra Bounty fishing and release carnival will be held this year from 15-16 October. Get in early if you wish to compete, as last year this event attracted 70 two-person teams.

The refurbished track at the Callaghan Park racecourse will be the venue for the running of the Caulfield Cup premier race meeting on 16 October. Join in the fun and excitement, enter the Fashions on the Field, have a flutter or two and why not book into one of the many hotels, motels or apartments in Rockhampton and make a weekend of the 'Rocky Races'.

The good folk in the Capricorn Region just love a rodeo. You are invited to join them at this year's Central Rodeo Cowboys Association (CRCA) Bullzye Rodeo Finals from 12-13 November at the Gracemere Austradium, 9km west of Rockhampton. Last year, more than 4,500 locals and visitors attended and they weren't disappointed as the program encompasses bravado and dynamic action as competitors vie for the honoured title of All-round Cowboy or Cowgirl.

For more information on any of these events, entry tickets, accommodation and tour bookings, go to www.capricornevents.com.au or Freecall **1800 676 701** for your FREE information pack.



Rockhampton & Capricorn Coast

- 10-11 July Yeppoon Shell Club Annual Shell Show
- 11 July Heritage Village Markets, Rockhampton
- 16-25 July **Camco MotorManiaCQ (Inaugural)**
- 18 July Bell Park Markets, Emu Park
- 22-25 July **Paradise Lagoons Campdraft, Paradise Lagoons, Alton Downs**
- 22-25 July **Pat O'Driscoll Pro Am Golf, Capricorn Resort**
- 6-10 August **Club Marine Brisbane to Keppel Tropical Yacht Race**
- 7 August CRCA Rodeo, Great Western Hotel
- 13-15 August Rodeo Rockfest, Rockhampton Showgrounds
- 14-15 August **Capricorn Resort Half Ironman Triathlon**
- 20-22 August **Coastguard Tight Lines Fishing Classic**
- 22 August Golden Mount Markets
- 28 August Yeppoon Races, Yeppoon Turf Club
- 4-12 September **Cycle Queensland (4-5 in CQ)**
- 11 September Boots & All Ball, Great Western Hotel
- 17-19 September **Village Festival, Yeppoon Pony Club Grounds**
- 24 September Young Guns Series Bullride, Great Western Hotel
- 1-3 October National Baton Twirling Championships, CQ University (inaugural)
- 9-10 October Yeppoon Tropical Pinefest
- 9-10 October CQ Junior Masters Tennis Championships, Victoria Park
- 15-16 October **Barra Bounty, Fitzroy River**
- 16 October **Caulfield Cup Races, Callaghan Park**
- 23 October CRCA "Tough Enough to Wear Pink" Rodeo, Great Western
- 24 October Golden Mount Markets, Mt Morgan
- 30 October Emu Park Lions Club Oktoberfest, Bell Park
- 12-14 November **CRCA Rodeo Finals, Gracemere Austradium**
- 18 December "Battle of the Bulls" Rodeo, Great Western Hotel

Central Highlands

- 3 July Clermont Races
- 8-10 July AgGrow & QMIX, Emerald
- 10 July Emerald Rodeo
- 24 July Blackwater Lions Races
- 12-15 August **Gemfest Festival of Gems, Anakie**
- 14-15 August Relay for Life, Emerald Showgrounds
- 20-22 August Goldfest, Clermont
- 11 September Multicultural Festival, Emerald
- 18 September Springsure Cup Races, Springsure
- 24-26 September Twin Hills Races, Rodeo & Campdraft, Clermont
- 2 October World Dingo Trap Throwing Competition & Charity Races, Dingo Race track
- 9 October Emerald 100 Races, Pioneer Park
- 24 December Springsure Christmas Markets & Mardi Gras



Central Queensland
Capricorn Holidays
TAKE A REAL HOLIDAY