

NETBALL

Departures hit Daleys' plans

By STEVE SPINKS

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DESPITE winning the Far North Coast Premier Netball League last year, Lismore team Daleys has been forced to withdraw after losing a host of players in a remarkable turnaround in fortunes.

Daleys claimed the inaugural Premier League title over Ballina RSL but have been accused of abandoning the fledgling competition by not attempting to win back-to-back premierships.

But player-manager Lisa Brown has defended the decision.

"Basically we had a lot of girls leave," she said.

"We had two go overseas, two retire and one is involved with the Australian Touch team for a few weeks.

"We lost our three shooters but it was a hard decision not to enter. It's a great competition and we really enjoyed the Premier League but when we had to make the decision we didn't have a team."

Since then, Daleys

have managed to field a team in the Lismore first grade competition but it is short on experience.

"I guess one of the positive aspects is that those intermediate players are getting a go in first grade when they might not have got a go in the Premier League," Brown said.

"It (the Premier League) is fantastic. I hope it keeps going and that we can rebuild and rejoin next year."

Unfortunately, the other traditional powerhouse of the Lismore game, Breakaways, has disbanded and will not field a first grade side this season after they won the Lismore grand final last year over SCU.

With Daleys and also Grafton forfeiting spots in the Premier League, Ballina has nominated a second side called Headlands so that the competition has five sides.

In the first round last weekend, Clarence Coast defeated Casino Tatts 47-35 and Ballina RSL defeated Headlands 52-30.

Byron had the bye.

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