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Breakaway group plans to leave Central Australian Football League and form new league

- by: Jordan Gerrans AFL
- From: NT News
- October 12, 2015 1:52PM



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The Central Australian Football League may not have the presence of community team participation in 2016.

Source: News Corp Australia

THE Central Australian Football League is facing the daunting prospect of losing the majority of its clubs to a breakaway community league for season 2016.

The Centralian Advocate can reveal almost 10 Good Sports Country Division One and Two clubs from this season are in discussions to not play in the Alice Springs-based league next year.

It is understood the breakaway league would consist of Papunya, Yuendumu, Areyonga, Laramba, Nyrippi, Kintore, Hermannsburg, Ti Tree and Ali Curung, among others.

The majority of the communities involved sat down at the Papunya Sports Weekend to ratify plans for the potential competition.

It is understood a fixture of games has been produced.

The man pushing the league — Papunya Football Club founder Sid Anderson — is confident the new league will be up and running for the new season.

The reasons for the breakaway league are not solely focused on the field, with several communities not wanting young men to travel into Alice Springs and

face temptations of alcohol, drugs and crime.

“We have had a problem for a long time, we want to get away from the CAFL,” Anderson said.

“Things like domestic violence, kids getting into trouble and ending up in jail — all of these things have been considered for a long time.”

Anderson is confident communities will have the facilities and infrastructure to support the league.

One model suggested would see each individual community host a round of the season before the finals were played at Traeger Park.

“I have spoken to elders and I have got their support,” Anderson said.

Central Land Council supports the idea, according to Anderson.

The new structure of the CAFL introduced at the beginning of 2015 with community teams split into Division One and Two, playing 10 rounds with two byes each, was aimed to reduce travel time and time spent in Alice Springs.

AFLNT Central Australia regional manager Andy Hood said the breakaway would affect the CAFL “immensely”.

Hood was planning to sit down with Anderson for talks.

“The reasons behind it are more than acceptably with the thinking of not having young men come into town with the temptation of alcohol, drugs and not going home,” Hood said.

“We support and encourage conversations about how we can run our league better with transport. Certainly if their focus is the wellbeing of young men we are totally keen to be involved in that.”

