

Drugs allegedly smuggled inside of a PlayStation 5

LEA EMERY

A BRICK of cocaine worth more than \$346,000 hidden in a PlayStation 5 was destined to be sold on Gold Coast streets, it will be alleged.

The 1.5kg of cocaine was allegedly found during a joint Australian Federal Police, Queensland Police, Border Force and NSW Police operation on the Gold Coast.

The drugs were found in a "suspicious consignment" which arrived in Sydney from Portugal last month.

Police examined the package and found the PlayStation



1.5kg of cocaine allegedly hidden inside a PlayStation.

5 allegedly filled with white powder. It will be alleged that tests found the powder to be cocaine.

The package was destined for an address in Tweed Heads. Investigators replaced the

original parcel with a replica which was allegedly collected by a 48-year-old man.

Three men were arrested on October 12 and search warrants were later conducted in Burleigh Heads and Tugun.

A 48-year-old Tweed Heads man and a 32-year-old Palm Beach man are both scheduled to appear in Southport Magistrates Court on Monday.

They have been charged with attempting to possess a marketable quantity of border controlled drugs, namely cocaine.

A Burleigh Heads man, 35,

was charged with attempting to possess a marketable quantity of border controlled drugs. He is scheduled to appear in Southport Magistrates Court on Thursday.

About 1.5kg of cocaine has an estimated street value of \$346,500 – more than six times and annual median wage.

AFP Detective Acting Superintendent Ben Moses said the goal was to disrupt the flow of illicit drugs from overseas.

"Illicit drugs continue to enrich organised crime, enabling them to buy more guns, fueling more violence and making



Alleged cocaine package.

our communities less safe," he said.

ABF Acting Commander Amanda Coppleman said that this case showed how border detection capabilities were helping combat the drug trade.

"Border detections by our officers are generating hundreds of referrals to the taskforce.

These detection referrals have included narcotic detections comprising cocaine, MDMA, GHB and heroin," Acting Commander Coppleman said.

Taskforce Sentry – the operation the ran the bust – consists of a number of police agencies at a federal and state level working together to take down syndicates who smuggle and distribute illicit items through the post and cargo systems.

Bitcoin's back, but is it any better?

ANTHONY KEANE

BITCOIN – fresh from bouncing back to record highs – plunged 11 per cent last week in a sharp reminder of how it and other cryptocurrencies remain a risky rollercoaster ride.

With new kid on the crypto block Shiba Inu coin climbing 1000 per cent last month, financial specialists warn that people buying into the digital currency sector should treat it as a casino.

They say the movements of cryptocurrencies are largely a mystery, but have climbed recently amid the launch of crypto-focused exchange-traded funds and some investors seeing bitcoin as "digital gold" to protect against rising inflation.

Bitcoin's 50 per cent fall between April and August was not as steep as many had expected and shallower than previous plunges, and now there are forecasts that its price could multiply.

A recent report by Europe's Forex Suggest predicted the value of a bitcoin – currently about \$81,000 – would jump six-fold by 2024, while No.2 crypto Ethereum would rise almost ten-fold.

Tribeca Financial CEO Ryan Watson said bitcoin "really is the great unknown".

"It's not bad, it's not good – it's just high risk. And for the potential upside there's significant downside," he said.

IG Markets analyst Kyle Rodda said bitcoin was driven by speculative money flows and traded on its own news and momentum.

"In the short term it's a very popular gambling chip – every cryptocurrency is," he said.

"If you're buying on the assumption everything's going up, it's like walking into a casino. Expect a chance to lose."



Adair Woodward, 8, and Henry Woodward, 12 with dog Roscoe at the Lost Dogs Disco. Picture: Jerad Williams

GLORIOUS CELEBRATION ON MAN'S BEST FRIEND

CRYSTAL FOX

A COAST production which will pull at the heart strings shares how dogs "mark their territory" on one's life.

HOTA's 10-day Wonder program will feature 16 large-scale inflatable and interactive dog characters with

shows running until November 7.

Rachel Rigg, the co-producer and casting director of the Let's Be Friends Forever segment, said the show will follow the journey of the relationship between a dog and their owner.

"The show is real people talking about their experiences," she said.

"It's all heart and it makes you laugh but will also pull at heart strings.

"Dogs are a real marker of time because they are there for significant moments and chapters of our lives."

The free show explains the history of dogs and includes 100 videos. There will be nine live on stage

elements with people and their dogs.

"We have an ex special forces commando who worked in domestic counter terrorism for three years with his K-9 partner and he talks about how they both retired together on the Gold Coast and their experience in the army together," Ms Rigg said.



Lucy Braida and Lee Palmer. Picture: Mike Batterham

Celebrating Galway's oysters

CRYSTAL FOX

THE Coast's oldest Irish pub celebrated its annual Galway Oyster and Seafood festival with plenty of ice-cold stout and seafood over the weekend.

D'Arcy Arms in Surfers Paradise held their fifth festival to pay tribute to Galway's rich annual oyster harvest.

D'Arcy Arms manager Janene Porter said the crowds

loved the traditional Irish music from The Gathering and Mark and Mary Butler.

"We had fantastic fun," she said.

She said everyone loved the Irish dancing displays by the Carolan Academy of Irish Dance and gave the festival goers a taste of Galway.

There was an array of seafood at the pub with oysters kilpatrick, creamy garlic prawns, fish burgers and

prawn risotto. Everyone loved the oysters so much D'Arcy Arms ran out of oysters by day two.

"Our owner Mick grabbed the microphone and entertained the patrons by signing a fabulous rendition of Galway Bay," Ms Porter said.

"He also assured the patrons that D'Arcy Arms has not been sold and is not for sale despite recent reports of it being so," she said.