



PRINCESSES ... Rachael Finch at the hospital with Selena Jenkins Photo: MEGAN BRAYLEY

Rachael queen of kids' hearts

SHE may have her own entourage, but this glamour queen is still a Townsville girl at heart.

Miss Universe Australia Rachael Finch jetted into the city yesterday and into the welcoming arms of family and friends.

Despite an entourage of a make-up artist, photographers and a public relations manager, the 20-year-old remained as down to earth as ever with everyone she met throughout the day.

"It's very exhilarating, very overwhelming, but it's so good to be home," she said.

"I've definitely missed the weather and the people — it's really the people that make a community and Townsville people are so relaxed and friendly."

The beauty queen proved she was not afraid of getting her hands dirty, visiting the Townsville Hospital children's ward to help sick children make their own tiaras, with glitter and paint flying across the



Rachael and her Proton

table as she laughed and played.

Selena Jenkins, 5, wasn't too sure what the fuss was all about when Rachael breezed into the children's ward, but was excited to have someone help her make a sparkly tiara.

Her mother Toni said Selena was in hospital for an operation to remove her tonsils and her adenoids, and to put grommets in her ears.

"This will make her day, she

absolutely hates hospitals and this will make her happy," Ms Jenkins said.

"She loves meeting new people."

Down the hall, 12-year-old Anton Hornby was waiting in bed for an overnight operation but was cheered up by Rachael's visit, saying she looked even better in real life than she did in pictures.

Rachael also enjoyed a civic reception yesterday afternoon which was hosted by Mayor Les Tyrrell, who commended the beautiful brunette on her role as an ambassador for Townsville.

She also showed she hadn't lost her North Queensland sense of fun during her speech, poking fun at southerners who had told her she needed elocution lessons to get rid of her 'accent'.

"I may speak a little differently but actions speak louder than words," she said.

Last night Rachael was guest of honour at the glitzy official launch of Jupiters' new J Bar.

— RACHEL TOUNE