

Topic : MOTION

Subject : Olympic And Paralympic Participants

Date : 08/14/1996

Member : Mr STONE

Status :

Information :

Mr STONE (Chief Minister): Mr Speaker, I move:

that this Assembly -

(1) acknowledges the achievements of the Australian Olympians at the centenary Olympics in Atlanta and, in particular, the participation of Territorians Nova Peris, Ian Vander-Wal, James Swan and Kerry Dienelt;

(2) conveys its best wishes and encouragement to Territory Para-Olympians Mark Davies, Sam Rickard, Hamish McDonald and Russell Short, who are currently in Atlanta for the commencement of the Para-Olympic Games; and

(3) acknowledges the outstanding contribution of the Northern Territory police officers who participated in a voluntary capacity in the security arrangements for the centenary Olympics in Atlanta.

I am delighted to speak to this motion today to acknowledge those Olympians who participated in the centenary Atlanta Olympics recently concluded. In particular, I acknowledge the participation of Territorians Nova Peris, Ian Vander-Wal, James Swan and Kerry Dienelt. I also acknowledge those Northern Territory policemen and women who voluntarily gave their time to the security of the games, and wish our Paralympians all the very best on the commencement of their games in Atlanta.

To achieve selection in the Olympic team is an outstanding achievement in its own right. I was greatly saddened by much of the coverage that I saw of our Olympians and the expectations that were set by commentators whose greatest physical exertion at times amounts to walking to the local pub. To be in the Olympic team, actually to compete, and to achieve a personal best - these are all achievements. The ultimate goal is the medal, but the fact that you are there, part of it and representing your country in the community of nations is an achievement in its own right.

The gold medal of Nova Peris, the bronze medal win of softball player Kerry Dienelt, the swimming effort of Ian Vander-Wal and the courage in the boxing ring of James Swan are a credit to them all and to their families in the Territory.

Tomorrow, 4 Paralympians, Mark Davies, Sam Rickard, Hamish McDonald and Russell Short, embark on a similar courageous pursuit of sporting glory for their country.

More than 30 years ago the legendary late Michael Ah Mat was the Northern Territory's first Olympic hero. Michael Ah Mat was an outstanding athlete in his sport and represented Australia in basketball at the 1964 Tokyo and 1968 Mexico Olympics. His sporting success served as an inspiration, not only to countless Territory basketballers but also to many in South Australia where Michael travelled to achieve his goal of playing at the highest level possible. The Territory's athletes in the 1996 Olympics had a common bond which helped them to reach Atlanta. Like Michael Ah Mat, they had a single-minded belief in themselves and their ability

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to succeed. Each has had to achieve their goals under different circumstances, some more difficult than the others but each, as did Michael Ah Mat 30 years ago, had to endure the sacrifices which go with being an elite athlete in their chosen sports.

For instance, if Nova Peris had not had that single-minded belief in herself that I referred to, she would not be an Olympic gold medallist today. She would not have represented Australia in 95 internationals, been a World Cup gold medallist or been a part of Two Champions trophies. Had Nova listened to the advice she received as a teenage single mother, Atlanta would have been nothing more than a daydream and a constant inner questioning: 'I wonder what if ...?' She was told she

would not make it, but Nova Peris believed that she had what it took to compete with the best. She did what most elite athletes living in small, remote centres have had to do, including Kerry Dienelt and Ian Vander-Wal. She moved to where she could be with the best. In her case, it was Perth. In Kerry Dienelt's case, it has been America and, in Ian Vander-Wal's case, it has been Queensland. In some ways, James Swan has done it harder. Boxing is not considered a glamorous sport these days and does not attract a high level of funding. However, with the support of family and friends, he has persevered and gained selection for the Olympic Games. Further, he has won a Commonwealth Games bronze medal, is a 3-time Australian champion, 2-time Oceania champion, a Liverpool Cup gold and silver medallist and last year's Young Territorian of the Year. The day that Territory athletes such as Nova Peris, Kerry Dienelt and Ian Vander-Wal, no longer have to move interstate, away from their home, their families and their support base, to pursue sporting greatness cannot come soon enough for my government. Slowly but surely, that day will come. The Northern Territory Institute of Sport, our coaches-in-residence programs and other Northern Territory government funding initiatives have all been part of working towards making this a reality.

It is now the turn of Nova Peris, Kerry Dienelt, Ian Vander-Wal and James Swan to take up the mantle as the sporting inspiration for a whole new generation of Territorians. As role models for thousands of Territorians, they have an important task ahead. They join the likes of the late Michael Ah Mat and the late David Kantilla, and modern-day achievers Michael Long, Christine Trefry, Stephen Holt, Melissa On, Nathan Buckley, Shayne Bannon, Michael McLean, Warren Eakins, Shelley Lingman and Gilbert McAdam, who have set standards of excellence in their fields for others to strive to emulate. It is not beyond the realms of possibility that our 4 current Olympians will be competing for Australia at the Sydney 2000 Olympics. Equally, it is not beyond expectation that they will be joined on the Olympic stage by other Territorians who have that single-minded grit and determination to make the sacrifices to be an elite athlete.

I am pleased to report that the government's parade for its Olympic heroes will be held in conjunction with the Darwin City Council and Darwin Festival Parade on Saturday 24 August. The Territory Olympians will lead the Darwin Festival Parade and later will attend a civic reception at Parliament House where they will receive formal recognition of their achievements from the government and the Lord Mayor of Darwin. I again thank the NT News for the role it has played in this event. The local newspaper helped the government liaise with the Territory athletes while they

were in Atlanta and helped put the plans in place to celebrate their return.

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I remind members again that our Paralympians begin competition in Atlanta tomorrow. I am sure all Territorians not only wish them every success, but also look forward to their return with the same enthusiasm and anticipation inspired by other Olympians. When we speak about people competing under difficult circumstances, the efforts of our Paralympians deserve equally high praise. Sadly, their life has been made more difficult. As I understand it, even before the games have begun, the Australian contingent has suffered a setback. They have been the victims of theft. While the full details are still not known, the incident will come as no surprise to those Territorians who have first-hand knowledge of the difficult conditions which can be encountered. I am referring there to the Territory's police contingent of 6 women and 4 men who travelled to Atlanta to serve as security personnel.

I had the opportunity to meet with a number of these officers in Atlanta. Make no mistake about it, they have had to endure extreme conditions. It is a credit to them that they stuck to the task while others returned to their countries of origin, despairing at what they had to contend with. I underscore the point that our officers made it very clear to me that they were not complaining. The officers concerned - Senior Sergeant Allan Mitchell, Sergeant Lane Crews, Senior Constable Wendy Brown, Senior Constable Debbie Harris, Senior Constable Martin Holloway, Senior Constable Mary-Ann Stuy, Senior Constable Colin Klingsporn, Senior Constable Christine Leo, Senior Constable Glenys Green and First Class Constable Rhonda Holloway - are all to be congratulated on the contribution they made to the success of the Atlanta Olympics. I commend the motion to members.

Mrs HICKEY (Opposition Leader): Mr Speaker, I rise today to honour the dedication, efforts and success of our 4 Territory Olympic athletes, 4 Territory Paralympic athletes and 10 members of the Northern Territory Police Force who risked their lives to defend those athletes.

Like all Territorians, I am very proud of the achievements of the Territory Olympians and Paralympians. I am proud of them first and foremost for the fact that they were selected to represent their country. I suspect sometimes that we all focus too much on medals and forget that being selected for the Olympics is in itself a major achievement. It is the greatest honour that a nation can bestow on its

athletes. To be selected to represent Australia means that this country considers you the best of all its people in your field of endeavour. It is a fitting reward for the years of toil, blood, sweat and tears that our youth put into striving to be the best. Nova Peris, James Swan, Ian Vander-Wal and Kerry Dienelt achieved that pinnacle in their fields. Sam Rickard, Hamish McDonald, Mark Davies and Russell Short achieved the same honour in their field of endeavour.

Beyond being selected to represent our nation, our 4 Territory Olympians have redeemed beyond all doubt the faith that we all had in them. Nova Peris is not only the first athlete from the Territory to be a recipient of a gold medal, she is also to my knowledge the first Aboriginal person in Australia to win a gold medal. That is a great achievement. Nova does not come from a wealthy family. She was not born into privilege and advantage. She comes from hardworking and decent folk. She comes from a family who have sacrificed to support her struggle to be the best. She has repaid that debt by providing her family and her Territory with the chance to see her win at the Olympics, the world's premier sporting event. Kerry Dienelt became the first Territory athlete to win a medal at the Olympics. She and her team showed the strength and determination that Australians are renowned for worldwide when we work

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together and perform as a team. James Swan and Ian Vander-Wal demonstrated the strength and diversity of the Territory's sporting abilities by their strong showing in swimming and in boxing respectively. They showed that we are building and developing a broad range of skills and sports in our community.

These 4 athletes have earned our respect and are deserving of our congratulations, but they are not alone. Behind every athlete is a team of people. There are the families that I have mentioned briefly. All members who have children will have experienced the Saturday morning shuffle, moving your kids from sporting event to sporting event. They will have spent many hours, helping their children to prepare for their competitions. How much more have the parents of the Territory's Olympians and Paralympians been through? On top of that is the cost, the thousands and thousands of dollars that parents and families kick in to allow their children to achieve their dreams. It has meant going without some things to provide those opportunities. In honouring those athletes, we must honour their families alongside of them, as I do today. In addition, there are the support services, the coaches and the thousands of Territorians who volunteer their time for

major sporting events, to umpire, to officiate and to be part of our Territory sporting life. These people also deserve the support, recognition and congratulations of this House.

Very soon, our Paralympians will have their turn to take on the world's best. Russell Short, Sam Rickard, Hamish McDonald and Mark Davies are about to take part in the Paralympic events being held in Atlanta, in conjunction with the 26th Games of the Olympiad. All of these athletes have a history of smashing records. Russell Short has held 3 world records in 3 different disciplines: discus, shot and javelin. He attended the 1988 and 1992 Paralympics, winning gold medals at both, and has competed at world championships in between. He has 5 gold and 1 bronze Olympic medals to his credit, and he is only 27. Sam Rickard competed at Seoul and Barcelona, as well as at other international events. He has been awarded bronze on 2 occasions at the Olympics. Mark Davies, who works in the Department Sport and Recreation as a disabled sports project officer, will represent the Territory in track and field events. He has an impressive record in world games, including a world record in 1984. He competed in the Paralympics at Seoul and Barcelona. Hamish McDonald has represented Australia twice this year. He competed also at the Paralympics in Barcelona. These young men have taken on the myths that exist unfairly about people who live with disabilities. They have worked to ensure that the more complex challenges that life has presented them with are overcome. They are in many ways an inspiration. They epitomise a level of determination and commitment that more of us could learn from. Behind these 4 Territory Paralympians are the families, the coaches and the officials who have worked to ensure the dreams and hopes of these athletes are met. These people also deserve our congratulations and support.

I wish to join with all members of the Assembly in congratulating the policemen and policewomen of the Northern Territory who placed themselves between the crime of Atlanta and the athletes of the world. All Australians were shocked to see the explosion of a bomb at the Olympics. It sent a chill down our spines to think that this is what we may have to face in Sydney in 4 years time. I hope and fervently pray that that will not be the case. That explosion makes the contribution of the Territory's 10 police officers even more pertinent to us all. The Territory police went to Atlanta to help in protecting and defending the Olympic ideals. They did so with great credit to themselves and the Territory's police force as a whole.

The opposition is more than happy to support any event organised for the Territory Olympians, Paralympians and police representatives who have done us all proud. I was delighted to hear the Chief Minister's announcement in that regard today. We are very happy and very proud to support the motion today.

Mr HATTON (Sport and Recreation): Mr Deputy Speaker, it is with enormous pleasure that I rise to support this motion, and I do so in 2 capacities - first and foremost as a sports enthusiast and, secondly and very proudly, as Minister for Sport and Recreation in the Northern Territory. As a sports enthusiast I have been actively involved in sport since I was, I guess you could say, knee-high to a grasshopper. In the Northern Territory, I have been involved since 1973 when I first came here.

To watch the growth and development of sport in the Territory and to see Territorians starting to achieve, first at a national level and then in the highest competition in the world, gives one a great sense of reflected pride. As Territorians, we take pride in the achievements of Territorians. To watch those we know growing up and to see them achieving brings great warmth, and the pleasure that it brings to their families is something to behold. It also sets a standard for other young people in the Territory to develop their own potential towards. Particularly in sport, one of the great positive lessons to teach to people is that the pursuit of personal excellence, chasing your own goals, is something that can reflect right across your life. Having seen these young people achieving at this high level, many young Territorians are now saying: 'That is not beyond my grasp'. With that spirit in our sporting community, far beyond the immediate glory of these athletes whom we all honour today, the flow-on benefits to every young person in the Northern Territory can be quite incredible.

I know that James Swan is bitterly disappointed with his performance at the Olympic Games. I think it sad that he is disappointed. He may be a boxer but, more than that, if ever there has been a fighter, if ever there was a young fellow you could look up to and respect, it is James Swan. This is a young fellow who has come up the hard way. He grew up in Alice Springs and went to the Gap Youth Centre. A little bloke, he kept getting beaten up. He learnt to box to protect himself, and he has gone on from there. James is very committed to his family, and was particularly attached to his grandmother. He was trying very hard, for the Territory and for the memory of his grandmother. Sadly, I think, that may have put too much of a load on his shoulders and his nerves got to him in that fight. I

agree with his comments, quoted in the paper this week. He is a far better fighter than we saw at Atlanta. His record of performance speaks for itself. He has won the national title a couple of times. He has won the Oceania championship, and he won a gold and a silver at Liverpool. He was ranked No. 4 in the world, and I believe that he still is, despite this event. I hope and pray that he will hang in there. I understand that we can look forward to him throwing his cap in the ring for Kuala Lumpur, in 1998, and Sydney in 2000. He should do it. He is good enough, and he has heart enough. He is the sort of young person we should back. He is someone every Territorian should be proud of.

Nova Peris? Let us not kid ourselves. She caused a considerable amount of controversy when she pulled out of the Territory and went south. However, she took a wise decision in the interests of chasing her personal goal of excellence. It has proven now to have been worth while, but she went through a fair bit of heartache when she went away from her family. A young single mum, she went south and put her head up in the big time, and she came through

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and succeeded. We all take pride in the fact that she is a Territorian - the first Territorian to win a gold medal at an Olympic Games - and in the fact that she is the first Australian Aboriginal to win a gold medal at an Olympic Games, but look at the struggle she had and the commitment she made to get there. When she came back, what did she say? When she arrived back in Darwin, her first comment was: 'I hope all those kids out there - there is so much talent - look and say, "Well, if she can do it, so can I"'. There was no selfishness. Her immediate response was: 'What can I give back to the people of the Territory?'

I remember Kerry Dienelt in the 1980s, when she was a junior of great promise. I think as Chief Minister, I saw her play softball at Gardens Oval, and we had a talk. She was growing then, and she went on from there. Now, she has come through. She is still very proudly a Territorian, and she will go down in history as the first Territorian ever to receive an Olympic medal. Nova has the first gold and is the first Aboriginal to get one. However, because of the timetabling of the Olympics, Kerry Dienelt became the first Territorian to receive an Olympic medal, and she did it in softball.

If ever there has been a young fellow who has had to fight and struggle, it is Ian Vander-Wal. It was a personal matter for me. I remember when Ian started

swimming. I do not think he was even at school at that stage. At the time, I was coaching at the Darwin Swimming Club. Ian, his 2 sisters and his brother were training under me. I do not claim any credit for his performance, but I have watched and followed him. The whole family remain very close friends of mine. Our friendship goes back to the 1970s. I watched Ian come through, under Fred Wilson's coaching, and then he went on from Fred. He decided that he wanted really to have a go. He received an AIS scholarship. I think he was at the Commonwealth Games in Auckland. Then he had a bit of a falling-out with the AIS. He has come back again. He has come through, and now he has competed in the Olympic Games. I do not think that Ian's swimming career is anywhere near over. He should stick with it. He is married now and has a young family, but I hope that he will maintain his commitment to sport. Certainly, 1998 should be in his eyes. He was the third-fastest 100 m freestyler in Australia at the national championships. I think someone should be taking a swab from the swimming selectors for not including him in the 100 m relay final at Atlanta. Be that as it may, Ian has the talent, and he should keep going. I have had a chance to speak with his family and others and I wish him well for the future.

We are celebrating the achievements of these people today, and we do that with great gusto. However, we ought also to remember the growth and development that has occurred across Territory sport. I ask honourable members to think about it. I really think we should take great pride in it, and I say that as a minister in this government. Since 1978, the Territory government has been initiating, implementing and expanding programs to nurture not only our elite athletes and naturally talented athletes, but all Territorians who take part in sport or recreational activity. Only 12 months after its formation, at the time of self-government in 1978, this government commenced construction of the Marrara Sporting Complex. In the same year, we opened a regional office of sport in Alice Springs. The early years of self-government required a massive effort to encourage local participation, provide basic facilities and develop a presence on the national scene. A mere handful of ovals with some club-funded sporting equipment were scattered across the Northern Territory when this government was first elected to office. Programs initiated in those years were designed with a

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vision of providing first-class facilities, not only for Territorians, but to attract southern and even international teams to the Northern Territory.

That vision has certainly paid dividends, with regular visits made now to the Territory by the world-class teams, such as the Australian Opals, the Australian Hockeyroos and the national cricket team. In addition, the 2 Olympic teams, which chose Darwin for their heat-acclimatisation training, won medals. The Hockeyroos won a gold medal in women's hockey and Australia's first-ever medal in basketball went to the Opals. Perhaps it was not entirely due to their training in Darwin, but it was an interesting coincidence. Other teams ought to think about that when they are looking towards Kuala Lumpur in 1998, especially now that Darwin is to be the AIS heat-acclimatisation and training centre through our new Northern Territory Institute of Sport.

The development of the Marrara Sporting Complex, the coaches-in-residence scheme and the introduction of fitness testing have all played a significant role in the evolution of sport in the Territory. A key initiative in the early days was the sports travel subsidy scheme which subsidised the Northern Territory Sporting Association for travel for official Territory, national and international events. This was seen as a key initiative to progress sport and achieve recognition as a serious participant. Today, we have come full-circle, with many of the nation's best coming north to the Territory to compete for Australian titles in Darwin and, I think, also in Alice Springs from time to time. The spin-off benefits for the economy run into many millions of dollars. Let me take the Arafura Sports Festival as an example. It attracts more than 5000 athletes and officials to the Northern Territory for 10 days. It is a multimillion-dollar success for the Territory. The Honda Masters Games attract in excess of 5000 competitors to central Australia for a 2-week carnival of sport, providing another huge windfall. Many hundreds of these visitors stay on as tourists after these events, spending their dollars across the board.

This government has also encouraged, and contributed financially towards, the development of accredited coaches, referees and sports administrators, who are all part of the necessary infrastructure to make sport happen for Territorians. Clearly, the government sponsorship program has underpinned many of the Territory's sporting initiatives. Assistance and support from the Department of Sport and Recreation has kept pace with the growing needs of sport. Some areas the government has sponsored include travel, events, operational salaries for administrators, coaches and development officers, Aboriginal sport and recreation, women in sport, disabled sport, scholarships, facilities development, and coaching, education and sport science which today is run through the Northern Territory Institute of Sport. The government also allocates in excess of \$1m annually under

the sports development program for sporting organisations to assist with such items as travel, operational expenses, salary assistance, training programs, and state and national championships.

New initiatives now coming to the fore include Lasseter's Indoor Challenge. The inaugural challenge was first held in January of this year. The challenge will be on the sport and recreation program again for January of next year. As well as the department's major events, emphasis is placed on encouraging Territory sport and recreation organisations to host major national and international events. This exposes participants to that quality of elite sport, and provides them with the vision at which to target their achievements. On 1 July of this year, we saw the beginning of a new era for elite sport in the Territory. It was the day the Northern

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Territory Institute of Sport opened its doors at the Arafura Stadium in the Marrara Sporting Complex. I have some exciting news on the institute to announce during my budget speech which I will deliver later in these sittings. Therefore, I will not speak at length about that now.

Another exciting initiative, which commenced on 1 July, was the formation of a participation branch in my department. This program is run in partnership with the Australian Sports Commission. The branch provides support and services in AUSSIE Sport, the Australian Coaching Council, the Volunteer Improvement Program, and Women in Sport and Recreation. AUSSIE Sport is a national program that develops young people through sport. It provides services and programs to schools, sporting clubs and community organisations, all aimed at increasing participation and building the foundation stone for our future sports people. This will enable youngsters, who enjoy sport and have the skill, ability and dedication needed to excel, to be better identified and grow through sport. The Australian Coaching Council aims to improve the number and standard of coaches in Australia, mainly through national accreditation. That will improve the quality of coaching and development that we can provide to our local athletes. The Volunteer Improvement Program aims to assist sporting club volunteers through providing courses in club administration, finance and fundraising. This helps to ensure that clubs are running smoothly, the coaches are as skilled as possible and as many people as possible are accessing these programs, thereby increasing our participation to build the foundations for our sport.

The Women in Sport and Recreation (WISAR) program continues to be one of the most successful in Australia, with additional programs now in place. Through the Sport Through Action Recreation and Training (START) program, girls between the ages of 12 and 20 are being encouraged to take up or maintain an interest in physical activity. The main focus of the Women in Sport and Recreation program is the WISAR weekend, held biennially. The participation program provides a consultancy service to South-East Asia, and it provides and will continue to deliver training in AUSSIE Sport programs in Indonesia.

Those are the programs that have been developed since 1978, that are building the foundations and providing opportunities and exposure for those young Territory athletes whom we are seeing now coming through. Our heroes of the day are the 4 who went to the Olympics last month. However, behind them is a whole host of talent, including those who are on the fringes and those who are in non-Olympic sports but who are performing on the world stage. We should recognise those people as well, because this is a celebration of the sports development and sports achievement that these people represent. I am sure they would agree that that is what they represent. We honour them and we praise them for their achievements, but let us remember also some of the other people who are involved.

I would like to name some Northern Territory sportspeople who have achieved notable accomplishments recently. Recent successes of the Northern Territory powerlifting team include: Rohan Smith, gold in the overall lifter titles awards; Bernie Devine gold in bench press, and a Commonwealth record in the open senior class; Phoebe Woods, gold and third in the Australian titles; Ted Dean, silver, and set a masters bench press record; and Bernie Welsford, who was a silver medallist behind Rohan Smith. Candis McClellan and Kelly Korfias were selected for team training in soccer at the AIS. World champion titles were achieved by Ben Crawley in 8-ball, Tyron Bellman in junior pistol and Ross Newell in senior pistol. Leitcha Clarke was selected to play in the Women's National Basketball League, and

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Tim Duggan was selected on a National Basketball League team, the Gold Coast Rollers. Timmy and Leitcha are the first Territorians to play in the NBL. Michael Long was selected for the Australian Football League 'All Australian' team. Kay Kilgariff, of Alice Springs, won the 5500 km Australian Safari. Eddie O'Brien was

selected in the Australian Under-20 hockey team to tour Europe in September this year. Kelly Fong was placed first in the Oceania/Pacific Judo Championships. Kelly was the first Territorian to win a gold medal in an international judo competition. Lachlan Burrows was named in the Australian Under-15 baseball team for the world championships in Japan. Victor Ferteklis won the national double-barrel trap shooting title at Evandale in Tasmania.

In addition, the following Territory athletes have represented Australia since June 1995: Tracey Parker in hockey; Phoebe Woods and Rowan Smith in powerlifting; Ronald Voukolous in tenpin bowling; Pedro Stefandakis and Candis McLellan in soccer; Kelly Fong, Susan Fong, Paul Fisher and Yvonne Mitchell in judo; Ben Crawley in 8-ball; Bonnie Palmer in Aerobic Chapter; John Myles and Maurie Blake in rifle; Melanie Goehr in NT Women's Rugby; Coralie Volgyesi in bow hunting; Warrene Ekins in motor sports and speedway; Adrian Burnside in baseball; Aaron Appo in Rugby League and Chris Jongewaard in BMX. That is a extraordinary list of achievements from a population of 190 000, and it is remarkable that so many Territorians have represented Australia.

We celebrate our Olympians and we celebrate them greatly, but we also remember those who are on the fringes now and those who are achieving at the junior national and international levels or who are completing at world standard in non-Olympic sports today. However, as I have said, that level of growth and development of sport has not come about by accident. It has come as a result of a great deal of work by many dedicated people: the volunteers, the officials, the coaches and the government who have worked for 20 years and lifted Territory sport and recreation to the standard it is reaching now.

I would like to talk briefly about the Paralympians, Mark Davies, Hamish McDonald, Sam Rickard and Russell Short. They are among the world's best in track and field disciplines, and they are really something special. Anyone who has had the time to meet these people and look at their training commitment will agree. I think it leaves many of the others for dead. They work hard. It is true that they have physical disabilities, but their dedication is at least as strong as that of any Olympian one would see. They commit themselves. Like Nova Peris, James Swan, Kerry Dienelt and Ian Vander-Wal, they are proud Territorians. On behalf of the Territory, I wish them every success in Atlanta and feel confident that gold will reward their efforts.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The honourable minister's time has expired.

Mr STIRLING (Nhulunbuy): Mr Deputy Speaker, I know that countries are not supposed to gloat over the number of medals won or the successes achieved at these games. The idea is to have been good enough to be selected and to participate. In the same way, I suppose we are not supposed to gloat over where the athletes come from within Australia. However, I think it is an impressive achievement for the Northern Territory to produce 4 Olympian athletes and 4 Paralympians for Atlanta. That must push the Territory to the top in terms of per capita representation. We may well have had 5 Olympians at Atlanta if

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Christine Trefry had gained a place on the national shooting team following her success at the Commonwealth Games.

We know that Nova Peris has the speed of a sprinter. She was interested in athletics and, at one stage not so very long ago, she had another dip at it. I think we should all be thankful that she did not pursue that interest at that time because it could well have cost her a gold medal with the hockey team at these Olympics. In the hockey games that I saw, I thought she played a dominant role in taking the play up to the forwards of opposing teams and many times dispossessing them of the ball. She was rarely, if at all, off the field and I think it is testament to her skill, her persistence, her fitness and her stamina that she was able to see those games through. She set herself to win gold to prove that the Australian women's hockey team was the best in the world, and she must be proud to have achieved that. Indeed, I believe she has brought pride to all Territorians. In order to continue to compete at the highest level in Australia, Nova had to move to Perth, Australia's traditionally strongest hockey state. She is an example to others who dream of a sporting career. Her commitment and the sacrifices she has had to make to get to the top are an inspiration to us all. Like Cathy Freeman, with her free spirit, infectious smile and unbounded enthusiasm, Nova presents herself as an outstanding role model to all young people.

Ian Vander-Wal must be considered unlucky again not to have been selected for the relay final, despite his impressive times through the qualifying heats. I think it is tough indeed to be called on to keep going at that level when the selectors continue to look to someone else to swim the final. He is right on the margin of the very best where hundreds and tenths of a second mean the difference between fifth and fourth place and the difference between selection for the final and not being

selected. Ian is still young. He has a huge heart, which all swimmers must have, and I have no doubt that he will be there for the next Commonwealth Games and the 2000 Sydney Olympics.

I had high hopes for James Swan at Atlanta. He had done everything asked of him in the lead-up and had gained international success. I did not see the bout that put him out of medal contention, but I am told he looked all at sea against his opponent. However, he is young and tough and, like Vander-Wal, has a heart as big as a horse. He will be back. I wish him well and I hope he is back into the game in the near future because he too should still be there for the next Commonwealth and Olympic Games. When the Minister for Sport hosted a reception for his return to the Northern Territory a couple of years ago, James took the microphone to say that he did not know what to say. Then he took a deep breath and did not stop speaking for about 20 minutes. He is a champion, and we will certainly see more of him.

Kerry Dienelt was a key player in the softball team, crashing home runs in crucial wins on the way to a bronze medal, including a win over the United States team which is almost on the level of the US 'dream team' basketball squad. I think it was Kerry who waited patiently on the sidelines to report to the umpire that a US runner had not touched home base on the way through. She waited just as long as was necessary to prevent that player doubling back to touch home base and thereby validate the run. It obviously took the wind out of the US team to lose that run because it was a low-scoring game that Australia got home in. The Australian softball team will never be taken lightly again by any team in the world. Kerry's big hitting was a key factor in its success.

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Sam Rickard used to train with an old mate of mine from DEET, a blind runner, Phil Deveraux. Phil used to sit at the front desk at reception at the DEET office. On 3 or 4 mornings out of 5, when you walked through and said good morning to him, he would hit you for a \$2 or \$5 raffle ticket. He would be fundraising to travel to some Australian or overseas city for further athletics experience. Phil represented the Northern Territory a number of times and with outstanding success. In 1992, Sam took bronze in the 800 m at the Paralympic Games at Barcelona and was fifth in the 1500 m, setting an Australian record. We should be fairly hopeful of his prospects over the next few days.

Hamish McDonald, from Alice Springs, suffers from cerebral palsy. He also competed at Barcelona, gaining sixth place in the 100 m and 200 m finals. That speaks highly of his prospects at Atlanta. Mark Davies has been representing Australia since as far back as the 1984 Los Angeles Paralympics, winning gold in the 100 m and the pentathlon and breaking the world pentathlon record. He is a visually disabled athlete. Russell Short has competed since 1988 at Seoul. He participated in the discus, javelin and shot, winning gold in the discus and javelin and bronze in the shot. He is not far behind his personal goal of being competitive with able-bodied peers in those sports. I join with other members in wishing those 4 Paralympians all the very best over the next few days. We look forward to basking in glory again.

I understand that police from the states in Australia went over to Atlanta at their own cost to volunteer their services for security at these games. I saw on television that some were so disappointed with the standard of accommodation and the inadequacy of arrangements for them that they returned home in disgust. I do not think that any Northern Territory police were put out to that extent. I certainly hope that was not the case. I hope that the experience gained by those officers will stand them in good stead in their careers in our police force. Those officers are to be commended for their efforts and I join with my colleagues in that respect.

Mr MITCHELL (Millner): Mr Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to rise today and join other honourable members in supporting the motion. Our Australian Olympians have done us proud, none more so than our 4 Territorians. Achieving the level required to represent your country in any sport is, in itself, a major and magnificent achievement.

Ian Vander-Wal and James Swan have been placed among the elite of the elite, simply by having the honour to wear the Australian uniform. Medals are a bonus. Kerry Dienelt's bronze medal bears testament to her part in the Australian softball team that performed so well against the best in the world. Who can forget that gutsy win against the gold medallists, the US team? It had been beaten previously only twice in 10 years.

Mr Hatton: Both times by Australia.

Mr MITCHELL: There you go.

Nova Peris's gold in the women's hockey was the peak after years of hard work and

dedication. The trials and tribulations she endured are well known to all. For all its size, the Territory is really a very small place. People are much closer here than are most of our southern counterparts. Almost every day, I see the name Vander-Wal outside my office in Rapid Creek. James Swan's trainer, Bob Barber, lives only a few doors from me in the same

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street. Only a few weeks ago, just before leaving for Atlanta, Kerry Dienelt was taking my wife's softball team through the finer points of batting and other field activities.

Nova Peris is even more special to me personally. I nursed and baby-sat Nova and her sister, Vanessa, when they were toddlers. She is first cousin to my 3 oldest children, Kelly, Jarrard and Richard. I cannot describe how immensely proud of Nova I feel. However, my pride would pale in comparison with the pride that her mother, Joan, her husband, Sean, her daughter, Jessica, and all the other members of the Peris family must feel. Nova's grounding in the Territory is very special. She is the granddaughter of a former attendant in this House, John Peris. Not too many people would be aware that she is also the grandniece of 'Big Bill' Neidjie of Kakadu Man fame, one of the main traditional owners at Kakadu. Not only is she the first Territorian to win a Olympic gold medal, she is also the first Aboriginal person to win a gold medal at the Olympics. She is a role model to be held up to all young Territorians, and I wish her well in any future endeavours. I hear she intends to give her attention to athletics now. Some people may be aware that several Northern Territory Little Athletics records in various track and field events still stand in her name.

In closing, I again congratulate Nova, James Swan, Ian Vander-Wal and Kerry Dienelt. They will hold their heads high wherever they go. They are real achievers. I express my best wishes to our Territory Paralympians, Mark Davies, Sam Rickard, Hamish McDonald and Russell Short. All they have to do is give their best. They must know that we are all very proud of them.

I must also mention the Territory police officers who volunteered for security duty at the games. I have been told they excelled themselves in Atlanta. Their expertise was called on countless times. One example I heard of was Allan Mitchell, a senior officer based in Darwin, who was given the operation of security at the equestrian events. All in all, the Territory contribution to the Australian Olympic effort was

very significant and a credit to all involved. I salute them.

Mr ADAMSON (Casuarina): Mr Deputy Speaker, I too place on record my appreciation and admiration of, and congratulations to, the Territorians involved in the recent Atlanta Olympics - the Olympians and the policemen and women who went there in a voluntary capacity - and our Paralympians who are about to compete in Georgia. I have been fortunate to have watched a great deal of sport at the top level over the years, but I would have traded any of that for the chance to represent my country at that high level. The only person in this place who can testify to what it must be like is probably the member for Arafura who has come as close as any of us to achieving that goal.

To represent your country at any level in sport is a tremendous achievement and that alone should never be underplayed. However, to go that bit further and be able to represent your country at an Olympics is a remarkable achievement. What you do at the Olympics and how you conduct yourself is almost secondary after that. When Olympians do compete, they have already shown the mettle and the character that they possess to get there. You can always be assured of a sterling performance from them. Whether or not they came away with a medal, that title of Olympian can never be taken away from our 4 Territorians who returned recently from Atlanta.

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As honourable members have noted, to achieve such a standard in the Northern Territory is still against all the odds. Any location that happens to be fairly remote from the major centres will have those problems. While our Institute of Sport will overcome much of that, even some athletes in the biggest of cities are forced to move from city to city to achieve their goals. It is a credit to these Territorians who have stuck by their guns over the years and it is a credit to their discipline.

I will refer very briefly to individual cases. The Minister for Sport and Recreation noted the decision that Nova Peris made, amid some controversy, as to whether she would stay in the Northern Territory or pursue her elite aspirations elsewhere, at the highest of levels. As the minister pointed out, Nova certainly made the right decision but it was not easy for her. The location she picked, Perth, is probably the toughest city for hockey anywhere in the world. Western Australia is recognised as being one of the real powerhouses of hockey, not only in Australia but worldwide. Against all the odds, Nova has done remarkably well.

We have heard about Ian Vander-Wal. Like the minister, I think Ian has been a little unlucky on some occasions in not being selected for some events. That goes back to Auckland where he represented in a couple of relay heats but was not selected for the final. Commentators I spoke to at the time were a little surprised by that. I think Ian could count himself unlucky.

James Swan is probably feeling quite disappointed at the moment, but he really has no reason to. He is a man who has achieved a great deal without leaving the Northern Territory. He has spent as much time here as possible. Much of that was very grassroots. I recall attending a fundraising event with the minister, at an hotel in the northern suburbs ...

Mr Hatton: I still have the shorts.

Mr ADAMSON: You still have the shorts.

James was raising funds for his coach and mentor to travel with him to the Olympics.

Mr Hatton: To Sydney.

Mr ADAMSON: That is right. It was to train in Sydney.

Other Australian athletes were being looked after much better, but here was a real battler from the northern suburbs. A couple of months away from the Olympics, he was struggling to obtain that little extra amount of assistance that almost every athlete in a larger country, such as the United States, would have taken for granted. That is an indication of the character of the man and what he has had to go through - fundraising one minute and having the eyes of all the world on him the next. I have the most tremendous admiration for James Swan. He is a great example to all Territorians, particularly young Territory athletes. I wish him well for the future.

There are 80 000 to 100 000 registered softball players in Australia. It is one of the most significant participation sports in our country which seems to be on the verge of establishing itself on the world stage. In fact, our team has done that in the Olympics with that tremendous

win over the United States. As the member for Nhulunbuy pointed out, it was Kerry Dienelt who picked up on that mistake by the Americans. There are athletes who are gifted with a natural ability and who have almost not to have think about what they are doing. There are such athletes at all levels. They are naturals who do not have to give it a second thought. There are other athletes who are blessed with ability and dedication, but also a great sporting brain. Occurrences such as this demonstrate that Kerry and others have that sporting brain and discipline in addition to their natural abilities.

We have spoken about Russell, Sam, Hamish and Mark. Australia is really at the forefront in Paralympic sports. It is a style, a formal code of sport that is very much in its infancy around the world, but Australia and the Northern Territory are leaders. In fact, our representation per capita at this level in Australia far exceeds that of any state. We must give credit to those athletes for their achievements to date.

Mention has been made of the Northern Territory police who went to Atlanta. To volunteer for duty at an event of this kind, as thousands of people did in the United States, is one thing, but to actually pay your own air fare to the United States from Australia, to take part in a very responsible task of this kind is something else again. We have heard about the conditions our police had to face. The Australian and Northern Territory police have given a good indication to the rest of the world of the standard, the attitude and the discipline of our police services. Our military has gained recognition around the world for doing much more with less. Our Northern Territory police and police officers from the rest of Australia have now demonstrated that they have similar mettle.

We have referred to these sportspeople as role models. It is important, in holding these people up as examples, that as many young Territory athletes as possible meet with them. It is one thing to see them on television and to read about them in the newspaper, and quite another to meet them personally and realise that they are not 10 ft tall and cast in bronze, but ordinary human beings performing extraordinary tasks and doing so because of their dedication and their talent. The more these 4 Territory Olympians move around and meet their fellow athletes in the Northern Territory, the better sport will be for it.

The Northern Territory Institute of Sport has been created at almost the perfect time. What better start for a new organisation than having the success of our

athletes in Atlanta? I do not think the Institute of Sport needs our advice about how best to use those athletes as role models, but what we can do with our institute is quite exciting. Institutes can be seen as elite bodies and many of the sports dollars are spent at the elite level. However, in the Northern Territory, we can be proud of the fact that, while we are turning towards the elite, we do so still very much at the grassroots level. I think it is something that the Northern Territory government may be justly proud of, as can Northern Territory sporting organisations. To achieve what these Territorians have achieved has required countless hours of dedication by fellow competitors, coaches and administrators. Many of these people do the job on an unpaid basis and on virtually an uncredited basis. However, it is the thousands of hours put in by the thousands of these Territorians on a weekly basis that have provided a foundation for these 4 elite athletes to work on to achieve what they have. I congratulate all those involved in those sports throughout the Northern Territory.

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Other Northern Territory sportspeople, among the world's best, are probably disappointed that their sports are not included in the Olympics and may never be. While we acknowledge today the tremendous work done by our 4 Olympic athletes, we should also acknowledge that we have other tremendous athletes in all forms of sports. I would like to touch on a few of those other athletes that the minister mentioned earlier. We have Christine Trefry, who won 3 gold medals at the Commonwealth Games in Victoria, Canada; James Swan, who won bronze in boxing at the Commonwealth Games in Canada, gold in the Liverpool Cup in England last year, and silver in the Liverpool Cup this year; Brendan Tennant who placed ninth overall in the decathlon in the Commonwealth Games in Canada; and 2 young Territorians of whom we should be extremely proud, Joella Williams and her brother Warren from Hermannsburg.

I had the pleasure of meeting Joella and Warren at their school in Canberra last year. These 2 youngsters left their home in central Australia and moved to a totally new environment. They were a delight in the class. I am pleased to say they were getting on tremendously with their classmates who had taken an equally keen interest in their part of the world. I do not think any of those classmates had ever been in the Northern Territory. In fact, most of the students had not been outside of New South Wales. Some had never been outside the ACT. It was great to see both Joella and Warren. I did not see them training at the Institute of Sport, but I did see them in their classroom environment. The government should be congratulated for

the efforts it has made in giving those 2 youngsters a leg up. Joella has earned an AIS spot to train in gymnastics, while her brother has been granted a full residential scholarship which covers his educational training and his medical and transport expenses. These are 2 youngsters for whom I can only wish all the best. They are 2 very delightful young Territorians.

Hayley Edwards of Taminmin High School is placed in the world top 2 in water-skiing, and is partnered by Darwin waterski boat driver Rick Cranbrook. The Darwin boat driven by Cranbrook has won the past 2 world waterski titles, the latest being in Belgium early this year. Such competitors do not attract the headlines devoted to athletes in the higher-profile sports. Nonetheless, it is tremendous to see so much of this activity taking place, even if it does not receive the acknowledgment that it deserves.

However, it is only fitting today that we acknowledge the elite, the 4 Territorians who have achieved so much. To Nova, Ian, Kerry and James I must say that I am filled with pride, admiration and a little envy. They have achieved something that I and most other Australians will never achieve. These sportspeople are tremendous role models. I support the Chief Minister's motion.

Mr BELL (MacDonnell): Mr Speaker, I echo the sentiments of previous speakers in respect of this motion acknowledging the achievements of Australian Olympians, and particularly those of our Territorian participants. I take great pleasure in their success even as I took great pleasure in watching the television reports of those achievements.

I confess I am not a great watcher of sport. However, I have seen enough of the hockey played by Territory women's teams and the Australian teams here to have a great appreciation of the achievement of the Australian women's hockey team. One of the great games I saw at Marrara was a precursor to one of the medal games between Australia and South Korea.

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What a great match it was, and what a great privilege it was to be able to see it at Marrara. What I was able to see on television was amplified by that experience.

I think it is wonderful that we have been able to produce in the Territory a gold medal winner in Nova Peris. Many of us here have a personal association of one

sort or another with the Peris family. Nova's grandfather worked with the Department of the Legislative Assembly for many years, and we all feel part of one family. We almost feel as though it is a family achievement when a Territorian participates in such a wonderful team victory.

I take a particular interest in hockey. I am a patron of the Alice Springs Hockey Association, and a continuing participant in the game in what is very graciously referred to as the masters' competition. Thus, I have an appreciation of the game that goes beyond the ordinary, and I took a great deal of pleasure in seeing them win. It was a bit unfortunate that our men's Olympic team has not yet grasped gold. They have been so close on so many occasions, and it is certainly not for want of effort.

I will mention in passing one regrettable aspect of some of the reporting of the Olympics, and that has been the emphasis on winning at all costs. I do not think it has been as evident in the sports that Territory representatives have been involved in, although I suppose the swimming was part of that. My heart really went out to some of the young Australians whose efforts were, I thought, subject to harshly critical comment. There was one former champion, to whom I will not refer by name, whom I saw on television saying the team had not worked hard enough etc. I thought that was really very unfortunate.

Mr Finch interjecting.

Mr BELL: It would not do any good to mention it, even in the context of this debate. Those young people work exceptionally hard to make it to the barrier at the Olympic Games, and I think that single-minded concentration on the national medal tally is a bit over the top. I have a particular view, that I have expressed in this Assembly before, about government involvement in sport and sporting policy generally. My view is that there must be a balance between the pursuit of excellence and the participation of ordinary people. I echo the words of the Minister for Sport and Recreation, that we should be encouraging our kids to do the best they possibly can, and to have the opportunity of meeting the champions and feeling they too can achieve. It is important right around the Territory, in town and in the bush, that young people develop a real sense of self-respect and self-worth from participating in sporting activities of all sorts. If we can concentrate on the whole spectrum of participation, as well as on excellence, including debates like this one in which we honour achievement, we will have some positive flow-ons among people who are unlikely to be champions in the future, but who will be

very good participants. They will develop a keen sense of self-respect and self-worth from their participation that might not necessarily be available to them otherwise.

I mentioned earlier that James Swan was in a class with my daughter. I had not worked this out until recently, when I was speaking to a former teacher from Traegar Park Primary School in Alice Springs. She mentioned to me, at a social occasion, that James Swan had reminded her that he had been in her class one year. It was the year that my daughter was in that class. As a consequence, it is likely that I have a photograph of James as a young man on the wall at home, or in one of the family photograph albums. The Territory is indeed a small

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place. I think it is terrific that, of a population of 170 000, we have managed to produce 4 participants at Olympic level. That is a great achievement, and I think it is one area where unqualified bipartisanship by the government and the opposition is both present and welcome. Bipartisanship is rarely reported - I do not think this debate is likely to result in banner headlines - but I do believe the bipartisan support for our Olympians, and the institutional support we provide, is worth while.

There has been mention of other people who are in training, and who might have their eyes on future national representation. Warren and Joella Williams were mentioned. I place on record my strong support for the hard work of these 2 central Australian kids, who are in a difficult situation in Canberra. In August, I can say honestly that I am glad I am in Darwin, not in Canberra. I was talking to their grandfather, Gus Williams, at Hermannsburg last week about how well they were going in Canberra. He said: 'It's a bit chilly down at Aranda'. There is an irony there. I think one of the youngsters is involved in Aranda Primary School, which they are more used to referring to as 'Arrernte'. However, they cope - and not just with the climate. I think the institutional government support provided to those kids, through the Australian Institute for Sport, is something that should be encouraged.

I will conclude my remarks by acknowledging once again my support for the motion, my warm congratulations to the Territorians who have achieved so well, and my desire to give encouragement to the Paralympians, whose participation is recorded in this motion as well. I suppose the Paralympians symbolise that

philosophy of participation I was trying to talk about earlier. The sense of being involved and testing their limits is one of the very desirable affirmative action policies that has been developed over the last 10 or 15 years. It is the sort of activity that harks back to the International Year of the Disabled in 1981 or 1982. There was generally a real change in the attitude of people to the kinds of activities that disabled people are able to engage in, and the barriers that do but should not exist for them. The changes in what we regard as being acceptable has seen the creation of events like the Paralympics. Our Paralympians deserve equally warm congratulations for their achievement.

With those words, I indicate my support for the motion, and my support for those people. I hope that their example will provide a source of achievement and a sense of self-worth and self-respect for many more Territorians.

Mr BAILEY (Wanguri): Mr Speaker, I too place on the record my congratulations to and support for, not only the Australian Olympians but also all the athletes who participated in the Olympic Games and who have shown what people can achieve when they put in the level of commitment and dedication required of an athlete if he or she is to participate the Olympic Games. I also convey my support to all the Paralympians who will be participating in the coming days in their events. While their Games are not given anything like the coverage the Olympic Games receive, the amount of dedication and commitment that athletes have to put in to reach the Paralympics is just as great.

Looking at the motion, we have said largely that we acknowledge the achievements of the Australian Olympians and Paralympians, and in particular of those who emanate from the Northern Territory. Like other speakers before me, given the Territory's small population base, I think that what our athletes have achieved is quite remarkable. My recollection is that, when an analysis was done of the number of medals - and I agree with the member for

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MacDonnell that the number of medals won is not always a good measure of how well people have performed - Australia had by far the largest number of medals in relation to its population base of any of the countries participating at Atlanta. It was significantly greater than that for the host nation, the United States of America. I think Australia should be very proud of its achievements as a nation.

While I congratulate all of the Northern Territorians who participated in the Olympic Games and those who are about to participate in the Paralympics, since we tend to be rather parochial wherever we are, I would like to focus on my own electorate. Dripstone High School would have to be considered to have been almost the precursor to the institute of sport in the Northern Territory, prior to that body being established, because 2 of the Olympians and 1 of the Paralympians were students at that school. My wife, who has been a teacher there since the school opened in the early 1980s, is familiar with Nova Peris, Kerry Dienelt and Sam Rickard, either directly as their teacher in years gone by or from knowing them around the school. It has been with great interest that she has watched their participation and their development in the international sporting arena. I have a vague recollection that Sam Rickard was a student in the visual impairment unit at Tiwi when I was employed by the Department of Education as a guidance officer and had slight dealings with that unit. For those members who do not know, Sam Rickard is a visually-impaired athlete who is participating the Paralympics and he is considered technically blind. It is great to see that, from one educational institution, such a large number of students have gone on to such great sporting success. Dripstone's teachers, administration, former students and everyone else must be very proud.

Paragraph 3 of the motion acknowledges the contribution of the Northern Territory police officers who participated in a voluntary capacity, helping out with security at the centenary Olympics in Atlanta. Shortly before leaving for Atlanta, Allan Mitchell told me that he was not sure what facilities would be available there or exactly what he would be required to do. As the stories started to break about concern over the organisation and lack of facilities, I wondered how Allan was coping with all that trauma. When I have an opportunity to speak with him again, it will be interesting to hear how he enjoyed his time ...

Mr Mitchell: He had a role with security at the equestrian events.

Mr BAILEY: ... over there and what he actually saw. I believe the Chief Minister did catch up with him when he was there, and I have heard that he was involved with the equestrian events. At the time when he was leaving, they had not been informed of the areas they would be working in. I saw a story on a police officer who was sitting at a carpark and he said that, in the course of an entire day, he had guided only 3 cars to a space. Allan had been wondering which sports he would be working with and keeping his eyes open for what he might see. I had a vision then of him sitting in a carpark the whole time and guiding a small amount

of traffic, far from the sporting activity. However, I understand now that he was involved at the venue where the equestrian events were held. Hopefully, he had the opportunity to see some of the activity. The coverage I saw of the equestrian events left me with the impression that it was an interesting and exciting venue. It appeared that Australia did well there. I note that the Chief Minister is nodding. Perhaps Allan was in the carpark at the equestrian venue and was not able to see any of the events. Next time I see him, perhaps I will buy him a beer and invite him to watch some videos of those events.

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I conclude with a comment of a slightly different kind to those that have been expressed in support of all of our athletes and officials who participated at Atlanta. I refer to the thorny issue of Arthur Tunstall whose name came up again during these Olympic Games. His role as secretary of the Australian Commonwealth Games Association is one that ...

Mr Manzie: Sack him!

Mr BAILEY: I totally agree with the interjection from the member for Sanderson. I think that the comments that Arthur Tunstall has made on a number of occasions now, such as when Cathy Freeman won at the Commonwealth Games, and what he said about lowering the standard of Olympic sports with Paralympians participating at the same sort of level, have all shown that Arthur Tunstall is a person who belongs - to put it generously - to another generation. However, I do not believe that he deserves even that level of generosity. I believe his views would be supported by very few, if any, people in Australia, and I think his role as an ambassador and official in the Australian sporting scene should end.

I congratulate all our athletes, officials and the Northern Territory police who participated at the games at Atlanta, in their various roles.

Mr STONE Chief Minister): Mr Deputy Speaker, in reply closing the debate, I indicate to honourable members that the substance of this motion and contributions to debate on it by members will be bound and presented to the athletes, relevant members of the police force and members of the Paralympic team. I thank members for their comments.

Motion agreed to.

