



Speech by

**Hon. R. GIBBS**

**MEMBER FOR BUNDAMBA**

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Hansard 22 July 1999

**MINISTERIAL STATEMENT**

**Davis Cup; Mr W. Lewis**

**Hon. R. J. GIBBS** (Bundamba—ALP) (Minister for Tourism, Sport and Racing) (9.52 a.m.), by leave: All honourable members will join with me in congratulating Australia's Davis Cup tennis team for its resounding 4-1 victory over the United States at the weekend. Pat Rafter, Lleyton Hewitt, Sandon Stolle and Mark Woodforde did us proud in Boston and showed the world that Australia is still a force to be reckoned with in Davis Cup tennis. We are particularly proud of Queensland's own Pat Rafter, who next Monday will be ranked by the ATP as the world's No. 1 men's tennis player. But we still have Russia to beat to make the Davis Cup final.

It would be great for Rafter to lead Australia's hopes against Russia in front of a Brisbane home crowd. After all, Brisbane is the only State capital yet to see Rafter play. Accordingly, I have instructed the Queensland Events Corporation to join with the major venues division of the Brisbane City Council to lodge a bid for Brisbane to host the 1999 Davis Cup semifinal. Tennis Queensland endorses the bid. If Brisbane is successful, the semifinal against Russia will be staged at ANZ Stadium from 24-26 September. Brisbane has the advantage that weekend over both Sydney and Melbourne, which will be otherwise distracted by Rugby League and Australian Rules grand finals.

It is Brisbane's turn. Townsville hosted a qualifying round of the Davis Cup in 1998, which sold out for all three sessions and was a tremendous success. Brisbane, however, has not hosted a Davis Cup match since Wally Masur led Australia to a 3-2 victory over New Zealand at Milton in 1990. I believe local tennis fans have earned the opportunity to watch Pat Rafter and our other Davis Cup heroes playing in Brisbane.

I take this opportunity also to congratulate Wally Lewis for his induction into the Immortals at Tuesday night's Rugby League presentation in Sydney. It is a great honour for a Queenslanders to be recognised as only one of six Immortals now in Rugby League. As I look over at the honourable member for Southport I notice his sleek, trim body—the way he is losing weight. I have no doubt that, should he attempt a comeback, he too could become an Immortal.

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