



Speech by

## LINDA LAVARCH

STATE MEMBER FOR KURWONGBAH

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Hansard 24 November 1999

### MR T. MCMURTRIE

**Mrs LAVARCH** (Kurwongbah—ALP) (10.21 a.m.): This morning I am delighted to inform honourable members of the remarkable achievements of a young 19 year old man with a big future. Tom McMurtrie is intellectually disabled but is a very talented athlete. On 2 October this year, at the Sporting Wheelies and Disabled Association Queensland Games 1999 State Athletic Championships, he broke existing records and now holds the Queensland record for the under-20 100 metres at a remarkable 12.74 seconds, the under-20 shot-put, the under-20 long jump, the open long jump and the under-20 high jump.

These magnificent achievements secured Tom a place in the Queensland team to compete at the recent 1999 Southern Cross Multidisability Championships (Athletics) at the Olympic stadium at Homebush in Sydney. Competitors from 56 countries attended those games. I understand that they were well attended by the public, and from all reports the atmosphere was electric. Tom came home triumphant, winning six medals: a gold for the 4 x 400-metre relay; silver medals for the shot-put, the 200 metres, the long jump and the 100 metres; and a bronze medal in the 800 metres.

Tom's very proud parents, Jan and Darcy, are well known to me, and I know how much time and effort they devote to Tom so that he can reach his full potential. But Jan and Darcy are pensioners, and they struggle financially to meet the costs of day-to-day living, let alone the costs of getting Tom to competitions.

It is my understanding that there is funding for disability sports associations but not for individuals. I would be interested to hear from the Minister for Sport whether this is the case and, if it is, whether there is any scope to widen the availability of funding. The reason I ask this is that Tom's parents found themselves in the situation in which, for Tom to compete at the Southern Cross championships, he needed a new pair of running shoes, but they cost \$180, the club had no funding, and the money was beyond their means. Upon learning of this, I did not hesitate to provide that funding for him.

Time expired.

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