



Speech by  
**Mr TERRY SULLIVAN**  
MEMBER FOR CHERMSIDE

---

Hansard 1 December 1999

**WALLABIES; RUGBY WORLD CUP**

**Mr SULLIVAN** (ChermSIDE—ALP) (10.27 a.m.): Together with hundreds of thousands of fellow Australians, I followed the recent Rugby World Cup with great interest. My family was one of many which had very late nights as we stayed up into the early hours of the morning watching the Wallabies gain supremacy in their chosen sport.

I wish to comment on one aspect of the Wallabies' campaign, and that is the type of role models that the Wallabies represent for young Australians. We all know how youngsters like to imitate their heroes— particularly sporting heroes. The series of Energex advertisements, with the backyard imitation of Ben Tune, is familiar to all parents—particularly parents of young boys.

I want to pay tribute to the Wallabies for the role models that they have become for young Australians. We can all be proud of their presentation, their manner of speaking, their supportive comments even when there is some team controversy, their accessibility to the press and to their fans and their acceptance of success and defeat with grace and sportsmanship. Their off-field behaviour contrasts dramatically with certain other sportsman—English soccer players come to mind.

The behaviour of sporting heroes does affect young sports people. I remember when I was a teacher and John McEnroe started throwing tantrums on the world tennis stage. At that time, the standard of schoolboy tennis dropped dramatically. In one competition, schools had to specifically address this emerging problem.

I thank the Wallabies for the positive role they play in helping young Australians grow up with positive, healthy attitudes to sport and to life. The member for Toowoomba South can pass on my thanks personally to his son, of whom he can be justifiably proud. On behalf of all parents of young boys and girls involved in sports and of coaches in junior teams, I congratulate the Wallabies on their success, not only as great Rugby players but as great role models for our kids.

---