



Speech by

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SUNSHINE COAST SHOWJUMPING AND EQUESTRIAN CLUB

Miss ELISA ROBERTS (Gympie—ONP) (7.14 p.m.): The Sunshine Coast Showjumping and Equestrian Club of Cooroy, which was established in 1994, is the only showjumping club on the Sunshine Coast. This equestrian club is probably most well known due to the fact that two of its riders, Billy Raymont and Tim Amitrano, were selected last year for the Olympic training squad for the 2004 Olympic Games. Not only does this club boast success stories such as the aforementioned, it trains and assists many young riders in their equestrian pursuits. Currently the club has 90 members, most of whom reside in the Cooroy area.

The Sunshine Coast Showjumping and Equestrian Club is proud to acknowledge the fact that all club purchases are made within Cooroy, thus vastly assisting the community, and the majority of the club's sponsors are businesses within the town. Unfortunately, though, the club is currently facing the difficulty of being without a regular local training area. As a result, club members have to travel to the Nambour showgrounds for their regular showjumping days. Whilst they are grateful for the use of this space, the allocated area, at only 50 metres by 30 metres, is akin to trying to play cricket on half a pitch and, therefore, is not very conducive to equestrian and showjumping activities.

The club would greatly appreciate the opportunity to carry out its practice sessions and regular meetings closer to Cooroy, as it has done since the club's inception and until the land it was using was sold. Nevertheless, the club has approached both the Noosa and Maroochydore councils in its endeavours to obtain an appropriate parcel of land for usage, preferably within close proximity to the schools and homes of those who participate. The club is keen to conduct these jump meetings under competition conditions which mimic those which the riders would encounter during competition.

After experiencing the pleasure of presenting one of the instructors with an award, I was able to meet some of the club's members. I was immediately struck by the group's dedication to the kids and their riding. The enthusiasm of the members and riders is contagious. I genuinely hope that the club is successful in its quest to locate an appropriate training area so that it may continue to provide safe, challenging and joyful experiences to its current and future generations of budding equestrians.