



Speech by

**CHRIS CUMMINS**

**MEMBER FOR KAWANA**

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Hansard 14 May 2003

### **RACING INDUSTRY**

**Mr CUMMINS** (Kawana—ALP) (6.39 p.m.): It is a fact that the Queensland parliament recognises Queensland Racing as the control body for thoroughbred racing in Queensland and that this parliament recognises Queensland Racing's independence. It does this to ensure Queensland is not disqualified from the Australian racing system.

I trust that *Hansard* will record for history the Freudian slip by an earlier National Party speaker when he said that the member for Toowoomba South had no idea and just did not care. The people of racing do not give any credit to this shadow spokesperson or his race calling predecessor. The people of the Sunshine Coast know the health of the—

**An honourable member** interjected.

**Mr CUMMINS:** I ask you: did you write that for Ray? Did you write it for him? Are you trying to set him up again? You like setting him up, do you not?

The people of the Sunshine Coast know the health of the Queensland racing industry—they were there in huge numbers for the Sunshine Coast Turf Club's first prime Saturday race meeting. They saw two horses, Victory Smile and Scenic Peak, win the club's feature races, the cup and the Glasshouse, before going on to win group one races in Sydney and Melbourne. It was a fantastic day. It was at Corbould Park, home of the Sunshine Coast Turf Club.

The Sunshine Coast's first prime Saturday race day was a deserving result for the hard work of the Sunshine Coast Turf Club and the foresight of Queensland Racing. It was a decision that broke the shackles of traditional thinking and exposed a whole new audience, which will only grow in future years to high quality racing, exactly what Queensland punters demand and deserve statewide. It also disproved the theory spread by some that the world would not end if the major race meeting in Queensland was held outside of Brisbane. We had it on the Sunshine Coast. We did it well.

Week in, week out, the Sunshine Coast does the grunt work for the Queensland racing industry by filling a slot that needs to be filled to fulfil the industry's obligation to the TAB and Sky Channel. But the Sunshine Coast Turf Club has made the most of its lot and, through excellent management, every week manages to top up its prize money allocation, which goes straight into the pockets of grateful Queensland owners, trainers and jockeys.

The Sunshine Coast has earned its shot at the big time and, like its provincial brothers at Ipswich and the Gold Coast, has shown it can put on a meeting better, or as good as, the Brisbane clubs and those clubs programmed to stop it. We can be sure it is only going to get bigger and better this year. I, and indeed the minister of our government, have confidence in the Sunshine Coast Turf Club again delivering quality race days.

I wish to bring to the attention of the House an issue that I have raised previously in this House. The freehold title of Corbould Park is currently held by the Caloundra City Council. The racing industry is a very important employer and community asset to the city of Caloundra; in fact, to all of the Sunshine Coast. The Sunshine Coast Turf Club has already repaid the amount the council paid for the freehold title, but now the council wants the club to stump up with millions to have the land handed over to them.

The Queensland government has shown the way on this issue previously with the transfer of racecourses in Toowoomba, Ipswich, Dalby and Mackay to their resident race club. It is time that the

Caloundra City Council showed the commitment to such an important industry by handing over a piece of land, which has effectively cost it nothing, to help ensure the Sunshine Coast Turf Club's long-term future. Caloundra City Council has done some great work, introduced some excellent positive initiatives, and the majority of the can-do councillors and Mayor Don Aldous will be judged well. This is another opportunity that they should not let go. They should sign over Corbould Park to the Sunshine Coast Turf Club for a small token amount, thus allowing the Sunshine Coast Turf Club to be the real master of its own destiny.

What do we have here from this coalition opposition? The former Leader of the Opposition, and now shadow racing minister, I thought could not do a worse job than the previous shadow minister, but I was obviously wrong. It is a sad reflection upon this struggling opposition that at functions where I host the Minister for Racing, Tourism and Fair Trading I normally offer a prize to any guest if they can identify a conservative spokesman on any of the portfolios of racing, tourism and fair trading. I must advise the House that normally no-one knows. In fact, no-one probably cares.

Queenslanders, I believe, embrace change, not purely for change's sake but when they realise a better, more positive outcome can be achieved. If the majority of stakeholders agree—

Time expired.