



Speech by

DESLEY SCOTT

MEMBER FOR WOODRIDGE

Hansard 1 May 2003

SPORTS DRUG TESTING BILL

Mrs DESLEY SCOTT (Woodridge—ALP) (2.32 p.m.): Our children and young people are our future, and we need to inspire and challenge them to set high and lofty goals and to provide opportunities for them to reach their full potential. It is for this reason that I rise to speak on this bill today and to applaud these additional measures to ensure that our young sportsmen and women who represent our state in open age competition are drug free and thus able to not only compete proudly on their own merits but, very importantly, be suitable role models for our young students.

May I say how proud I am to see so many young Queenslanders competing both for our state and country and how much that experience does for their confidence, leadership and their ability to pass on the torch to other aspiring young athletes. The ability of these athletes to mentor and inspire our youth cannot be measured. By inviting elite sportsmen and women into our schools we are encouraging wider participation in sport, which is an important health issue in this day and age when many children have too little exercise, but also encouraging those with sporting talent to set their goals high.

I have seen the enthusiasm engendered when members of the Broncos, swimming legends and the like visit a school or a shopping centre. They are heroes. In Logan, we have seen such local stars as Leroy Loggins, Jai Wallace, Brian Harvey—a wonderful world record holding disabled athlete—and many others all play a very important role in our schools and sporting clubs. For these reasons and more it is imperative that our athletes are able to stand tall without any shadow of implication of drug use. Indeed, our athletes wish to retain their clean image.

The Queensland drug testing program commenced in 1999 and until now has operated as a voluntary regime. This legislation will empower the Australian Sports Drug Agency to test Queensland athletes who compete, or are selected, in open age competition. It does not involve minors nor age level competition or school sporting events. I applaud these measures and commend the minister and his staff for ensuring our state is brought into line with other states and the national regime.