



Speech by

Hon. Nita Cunningham

MEMBER FOR BUNDABERG

Hansard Thursday, 30 September 2004

ATHENS OLYMPICS; BUNDABERG COMPETITORS

Hon. N.I. CUNNINGHAM (Bundaberg—ALP) (5.58 p.m.): Athens has been the best ever olympics for Bundaberg. Our whole city is proud of the achievements of Troy Elder, a member of the victorious men's hockey team that won the gold medal. Chantel Wolfenden, who the premier mentioned this morning, won one gold, one silver and four bronze medals at the Paralympics, the most medals won by a Queenslander.

While Bundaberg is renowned for its sporting prowess and the many champions it has produced, Troy Elder's gold medal was the first Olympic gold ever won by a Bundaberg sportsman or woman. The Kookaburras played magnificently and it was with enormous pride that we heard Troy referred to by the commentators during the very exciting final—which was watched by most of Bundaberg—as 'the boy from Bundy'. Athens was the second Olympics for Troy, the first being Sydney where he won bronze.

While the Australian men's team has won world championships and silver and bronze medals at Olympic level, until Athens the gold medal had eluded them. Troy Elder was outstanding. Undoubtedly, he was one of the stars. Our very strong Bundaberg hockey community is over the moon about the first Olympic gold medal in men's hockey.

Chantel Wolfenden, who will be home in Bundaberg this weekend, has cerebral palsy. Her wins are the result of massive training, dedication and determination. Chantel is a credit to herself, to her family and to our swimming community, which is another very strong sport in Bundaberg. Chantel's one gold, one silver and four bronze performances were, I believe, the biggest tally of individual medals by any Queenslander at the Athens Paralympics. It was an outstanding performance at her first Paralympics.

I place on record our community's congratulations to both Troy and Chantel on their outstanding performances. I also congratulate their families, who have supported them throughout their careers and their preparation for the Games. Considerable support is necessary for any sportsperson to reach this level of success, and that support has been there for both of those champions. Their successes are a fine example of what champions are made of and will serve to inspire other young hockey players and swimmers, not just in Bundaberg but throughout Australia.