



Speech by

Hon. PETER BEATTIE

MEMBER FOR BRISBANE CENTRAL

Hansard Wednesday, 6 June 2007

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Australian Rugby Union

Hon. PD BEATTIE (Brisbane Central—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (9.52 am): Finally, for our north Queensland Rugby fans, I note that on Saturday the next generation of Wallabies stars will battle Japan at Dairy Farmers Stadium. The Pacific Nations Cup encounter between Australia and Japan marks the return of international Rugby to Dairy Farmers Stadium for the first time since the 2003 Rugby World Cup. I am sure the next generation of Wallabies will be out to impress national selectors to win a berth in the Wallabies World Cup squad. I expect my members in north Queensland to be well represented at that game. I seek leave to have the details incorporated in *Hansard*.

Leave granted.

It will be an exciting weekend for sports fans in North Queensland this weekend.

With the Rugby World Cup in France only months away, this match provides those players on the brink of selection with an opportunity to put their best foot forward.

Townsville showed a great deal of support for rugby union during the World Cup matches played at Dairy Farmers Stadium and also during last year's Queensland Reds Super 14 match so it is great to see another high class match coming to the north.

It is important that the people of North Queensland come out on June 9 and support this match.

If they do there is every chance that the ARU will bring another match to North Queensland in the coming seasons.

Mr Speaker, Townsville showed strong support for the Cherry Blossoms during the 2003 Rugby World Cup.

This support was repaid with some exciting Rugby played by the Japanese and Saturday promises to be no different.

It is pleasing to see that top quality matches are being attracted to Dairy Farmers Stadium on the back of our Government's investment.

We invested more than \$16 million over the past four years to improve the facilities at Dairy Farmers Stadium.

This included increasing capacity to 26,000 as well as upgrading the stadium's lighting to broadcast standards and improving catering concessions around the venue.