



Speech by

Stirling Hinchliffe

MEMBER FOR STAFFORD

Hansard Thursday, 28 August 2008

REDDY, MR J

Mr HINCHLIFFE (Stafford—ALP) (5.15 pm): In this year when the centenary of Rugby League in Australia is being celebrated, it is appropriate to pay tribute to a person who committed his life to his passion for the 13-a-side game. One such person was John Reddy, who passed away too young at the age of 66 on 18 August.

John commenced his passionate association with Rugby League at Norths in Rockhampton and went on to play—in what we would now regard as those semiprofessional days of the 1960s—for All Whites in the highly regarded Toowoomba competition and in Mossman before finally settling on the Sunshine Coast. It was there that he played for Nambour All Whites—leading them as captain-coach to five premierships, including an undefeated season in 1969. John then successfully coached the fledgling Caloundra Sharks and was chosen to coach the Wide Bay team in the QRL's inaugural state league.

At his funeral service on Monday, attended by more than 300 people, John was eulogised by players who recognised the way he brought young men together and brought the best out in them. John was later appointed to his dream job, as his son Peter described it, as a QRL development officer until illness struck.

Mr Reeves: He did a great job at that, too.

Mr HINCHLIFFE: I acknowledge the interjection from the member for Mansfield and the contact that the member had with him. Fifteen-odd years ago a debilitating and painful spinal condition severely constrained his mobility and ultimately just exhausted him. But it never won possession of his happy-go-lucky outlook and irreverent determination to keep putting in in everything he did. John's achievements in and passion for Rugby League were recognised earlier this year when he was named as captain, coach and five-eighth in the Sunshine Coast team of the century.

Members might ask why I am paying tribute to a footballer from the Sunshine Coast. I therefore must declare an interest and acknowledge John Reddy as my uncle. John is one of my mother's younger brothers and she is deeply saddened by his passing. John is survived by his siblings Noeleen, Maureen, Len, Allan, Janice, Stephanie, Cliff and Rod, his sons Wayne, Trevor, Peter and Paul and his six-month-old granddaughter, Larna.

John was clearly respected greatly by the Rugby League community that meant so much to him. But he was loved greatly by his family. I am sure other honourable members have or had exciting and interesting uncles whom they loved just being around. They will understand my emotions at this point. At the old Pearl Hotel at Kings Beach, and any number of other likely locations, John would enjoy a beer, a punt and the friendship of many. When I next enjoy a beer, while talking about football, I will be thinking of my Uncle John.