




Speech by  
**Ian Kaye**

**MEMBER FOR GREENSLOPES**

Hansard Thursday, 2 August 2012

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**KOKODA CHALLENGE**

 **Mr KAYE** (Greenslopes—LNP) (3.20 pm): Today I rise to speak about students of several schools in my electorate of Greenslopes who took part in the Kokoda Challenge on the Gold Coast in July this year. The Kokoda Challenge is regarded as one of the toughest endurance events in Australia. The Kokoda Challenge website states—

Participants trek a 96km course that leads along fire trails, crosses 12 creeks and summits 5,000m of vertical elevation.

The goal is to finish as a complete team of four in honour of the spirit forged on the Kokoda Track in 1942: Mateship, endurance, courage and sacrifice.

Regardless of fitness level, age or background, people from all walks of life find participating in the Kokoda Challenge not only a great personal achievement, but a way to honour the Kokoda legacy and support local teenagers to gain a brighter future for themselves and their families through The Kokoda Challenge Youth Program.

There is also a 48-kilometre version for those not able to complete the full 96 kilometres.

Students from three schools in the Greenslopes electorate took part: Cavendish Road State High School, Mount Gravatt State High School and Holland Park State High School. It is not just a case of turning up to complete the challenge. A great deal of preparation and training is done, requiring ongoing commitment from students.

In the 96-kilometre course, Cavendish Road State High School had five teams consisting of four students and a teacher. They came second and third in the Stan Bissett Cup. In the 48-kilometre course, 13 teams competed for the Jim Stillman Cup. Every year Cavendish Road State High School takes part in the Kokoda Challenge and usually has over 100 participants. The challenge plays an important role in the culture of the school and teaches students about mateship, endurance, spirit and courage.

From Mount Gravatt State High School, my old school, four senior students and one teacher took part in the challenge. Of 84 teams, Mount Gravatt State High School was one of only 17 to complete the 96-kilometre challenge with all team members intact—that is, no retirements from injury, fatigue and so on. The benefits Mount Gravatt State High School derived from the challenge were the promotion of working as a team, highlighting the importance of sticking at something and the promotion of mateship. Already a number of students have expressed an interest in competing in next year's competition. The school raised over \$2,200 for charity.

The Kokoda Challenge has fostered a sense of helping others, goal-orientation and the need to help the community. Holland Park State High School had a number of students participate, and I suspect that this number will grow as word spreads of their experience. Leading up to this year's challenge there had been a considerable amount of rain, which only added to the similarities to the actual Kokoda Track in Papua New Guinea. Over the duration of the entire course, participants in this challenge receive four 20-minute breaks.

In this speech I would like to be able to name all of the students and teachers who took part, but unfortunately time will not permit that. However, I acknowledge the efforts of those students and teachers and say how impressed I am with their achievements. The lessons and memories that they take away from this event will be lifelong. I encourage all schools to take part in this event, not only for the valuable lessons learnt and sense of achievement but also as a way of raising valuable money for charity.