




Speech By
Scott Stewart

MEMBER FOR TOWNSVILLE

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ADJOURNMENT

North Queensland Cowboys

 **Mr STEWART** (Townsville—ALP) (6.51 pm): I rise to inform the House of a civil war that occurred last Friday night. It was bigger than state versus state. It was bigger than mate versus mate. It was the north versus the south. It was brother versus brother as the North Queensland Cowboys took on the Brisbane Broncos.

Mr Rickuss interjected.

Mr STEWART: This was the biggest game of the year. Over 25,000 people attended the game that evening. They travelled from as far away as Cooktown to the north, Sarina to the south and as far west as Mount Isa. People travelled from all over North Queensland to come to this particular game. They brought their families with them, and what a great night it was, too. Such a game brings confidence to the town. The week leading up to it is bigger than Ben Hur. It is bigger than State of Origin. You can see that throughout the town. People wear their jerseys and fly the colours of the team that they support. It is great to see. This game is really important for a city such as Townsville. Currently, we have 8.7 per cent unemployment and youth unemployment is over 17 per cent. So when the game comes to town, this is a little bit of light relief.

The final score, of course, ended up being for the good guys: 31 to 20 to the North Queensland Cowboys. I will answer and acknowledge the member who asked what the overall scenario was. We have had 37 Cowboys versus Broncos games and of those 37 games the older brothers, the Broncos, have won 26 of them. The Cowboys have now won nine games and there have been two draws. But the most significant factor is that it took the Cowboys 17 games to win their first Cowboys versus Broncos game. I remember that game. It took 10 years, but the score was 10 nil. So that really shows how much the Cowboys have matured.

On the Saturday night we then had the 20-year anniversary of the Cowboys in Townsville. It was amazing to see some of that vision of the old trotting track and how people came along and volunteered their machinery and hundreds and hundreds of hours to make sure that that vision would become a reality. The 1300SMILES Stadium that we have now is the home of the North Queensland Cowboys.

The North Queensland Cowboys is more than just a football team. It brings economic benefits to the city. Investment and confidence grows from North Queensland Cowboys games and a sense of unity is developed in the community, something of which all of us in North Queensland are very proud.

Unfortunately, the federal government is not coming to the party. The Labor government has committed \$100 million over four years to see a new stadium built in the CBD, but the federal government is all talk and no action. It talks about developing the north of Australia, but it is not backing it up with the money.