



Speech By  
**Dale Last**


**MEMBER FOR BURDEKIN**

---

Record of Proceedings, 13 June 2018

## **PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS**

### **Burdekin Electorate, PCYC**

 **Mr LAST** (Burdekin—LNP) (2.31 pm): Many times I have stood in this parliament and spoken to members about my electorate punching above its weight. I am pleased to inform the House that there is now absolute and undeniable proof that Burdekin does just that. In recent months, two young boxers from the Burdekin PCYC have achieved amazing things.

Emma Lawson has had a meteoric rise in the sport of boxing over the past few years. After impressing at the junior world championships in 2015 and the women's world youth championships last year, Emma has continued to set herself goals and achieve them. 2018 has certainly started the right way for Emma after she claimed the title for the 60 kilogram youth females at the Australian titles in Perth in March. She has also been selected in Boxing Queensland's talent identification squad. Just two weeks ago Emma won gold in the Oceania championships and in doing so earned a spot on the Australian team at the youth world championships in Budapest. This will be Emma's third international tournament. Emma has also been selected to participate in the Road to Buenos Aires camp which is seen as a clear pathway to the summer youth Olympic Games.

For a small club like the Burdekin PCYC one national champion would be a great achievement. However, there is more than just one champion to celebrate in my electorate. Damon Pitcher claimed the 66 kilogram schoolboys title at the Australian championships in March and also won gold at the recent North Queensland Games after stepping up an age division. He has also been selected in the Queensland development squad by Boxing Queensland. To say that the Burdekin is proud of these two young champions would be an understatement. They symbolise perfectly what can be achieved by the young people of regional Queensland. They are great role models for not only the people of the Burdekin but also young Queenslanders throughout the state.

Achievements like Emma's and Damon's do not come without the support of others. Congratulations are due to their families, as well as the staff and volunteers from the Burdekin PCYC. Both Emma and Damon are coached by Alex 'Chook' Lawson and supported by a small dedicated group of volunteers, including Russell Dingle, who travel thousands of kilometres each year to help these young people achieve their goals. Unlike some of their counterparts from the big cities, Emma, Damon and the other boxers at the Burdekin PCYC do not have the luxury of air-conditioned training facilities or world-class gyms. They are all perfect examples of Queenslanders from small country towns getting in and getting the job done. If you have been in North Queensland during summer you would certainly appreciate just how tough the environment is up there for these young athletes. As the member for Burdekin, I am inspired by their achievements and I wish them all the best for the future in their chosen sport.