




Speech By
Mark Robinson

MEMBER FOR OODGEROO

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PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT

Labuschagne, Mr M

 **Dr ROBINSON** (Oodgeroo—LNP) (2.18 pm): I rise to speak about one of the Redlands coast's favourite sons, Ashes hero Marnus Labuschagne. If there was ever a testament to junior sport and junior cricket in the Redlands, it is Marnus. Girls and boys out there each weekend, striving to be their best in their chosen sport, can look to Marnus for inspiration because a few short years ago he was one of them. Nurtured by Redlands Tigers Cricket Club, his talents took him to the Queensland team and then national selection in the Australian team, getting his baggy green in 2014.

When Steve Smith was felled by a Jofra Archer bouncer, during the first innings of the second test at Lord's, Marnus was called up, becoming the world's first concussion substitute under new introduced rules. No sooner had Marnus taken to the crease on world cricket's most prestigious stage that he, too, was struck and felled by a vicious Archer bouncer hurtling at him at close to 100 miles per hour. Everyone back home in the Redlands who stayed up late to watch him, including moi, held their breath as he got to this feet. Undeterred, Marnus went on to make a gritty 59, helping steer Australia to a draw, saving the Aussies from a loss.

With Smith ruled out of the third test at Headingley, a big score was needed from other batsmen. Marnus stood up yet again and top scored in the first innings with 74. In his second innings while on 70, he was again struck on the grille of his helmet by an Archer bouncer. He went on to make 80, his third consecutive half-century in the top order.

For the fourth test at Old Trafford and with Smith back in the side, Marnus continued his consistent form, particularly in the first innings, contributing to Australia's win which clinched the Ashes for Australia. It was the first time Australia had retained the urn on English soil in 18 years.

Playing for pride in the fifth test at The Oval, Australia went down to England with Marnus contributing a solid 48 in the first innings. Despite copping a couple of knocks on the head from Jofra, Marnus told the media, 'Being out there is probably less nerve-wracking than being off the field.' A committed Christian, he tapes a sticker of an eagle at the bottom of his bat to remind him of the Bible verse which says—

But those who hope in the Lord shall renew their strength. They shall soar on wings like eagles; they shall run and not grow weary, they shall walk and not be faint.

This certainly sums up his Ashes series. His rise from a young immigrant from South Africa playing for Redlands Tigers as an 11-year-old boy to becoming a mainstay of the Australian top order shows the strength of junior cricket in our area and is a testament to the coaches and volunteers of clubs like Redlands Tigers and Cleveland Thornlands Cougars and other clubs in the Redlands.

This coming Australian summer we will be watching closely as Marnus scores a tonne of runs. Marnus, you have done us proud. God bless you.