




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR SOUTHPORT

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PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT

Gold Coast Sports Awards

 **Mr MOLHOEK** (Southport—LNP) (2.51 pm): It was a privilege to represent the Premier and Minister Mander at the Gold Coast Sports Awards last Saturday. Now in its 57th year, these awards celebrate and promote the very best of sport on the Gold Coast. More than 500 athletes, coaches, volunteers, partners and business leaders gathered at The Star Gold Coast to honour those who continue to shape our city's proud sporting identity, from grassroots clubs to the world stage.

This year's event was one of the most powerful in the awards' history—a true celebration of excellence, resilience and community spirit. It was a pleasure to share the evening with Geoff Smith, Chair of Sports Gold Coast since its inception in 2015. Geoff's passion for sport on the Gold Coast spans decades. From the fight to save the Chargers to major bid efforts and the success of the Commonwealth Games, his contribution to building our city's sporting reputation has been extraordinary.

As a founding director of the Gold Coast Titans, I was especially proud to witness Mat Rogers inducted into the Gold Coast Sporting Hall of Fame. An inaugural Titan, Mat delivered a heartfelt speech reflecting on his journey, his deep love for his family and his enduring passion for the Titans and the Gold Coast. He was certainly a hard act to follow.

The evening also recognised the extraordinary contribution of Daryl and Jo Kelly. It is no exaggeration to say that the Titans would not be where they are today without the Kellys. Over 13 years they helped secure the club's future, providing an incredibly generous financial lifeline and unwavering belief in its vision. Thanks to their commitment, the future shines brightly for both the NRL and NRLW Titans teams.

It was also wonderful to see Paralympian Alexa Leary receive her award. She lit up the room with warmth and positivity, a powerful reminder of the resilience and determination that define great athletes.

This year's winners included: Athlete of the Year, Matt Rowell from the Gold Coast Suns; Para-Sport Athlete of the Year, Alexa Leary for swimming; the Daphne Pirie AO MBE Spirit of Sport Medal, Daryl and Jo Kelly; the *Gold Coast Bulletin* Junior Athlete of the Year, Arisa Trew for skateboarding; the Eximm Junior Sports Volunteer, Noah Flaherty from the Gold Coast Touch Association; the City of Gold Coast Mayor's Sports Award, Kai Sakakibara for para-cycling; the Sporting Event of the Year, ASICS Gold Coast Marathon; the Use of Sport Technology or Innovation Award, Pitch Up; the Sports Photograph of the Year, Bailey Sands from Sandsy Creativz; the Triple M Club of the Year Award, Southport Sharks; and the Gold Coast Sporting Hall of Fame Inductee, Mat Rogers.

I look forward to seeing what the future holds for these amazing athletes, organisations and community leaders for the Gold Coast in the lead-up to the 2032 Olympics.