



**McEvoy's**  
15 November 2000

**Mrs PENFOLD (Flinders):** The Melbourne Cup has become one of the enduring traditions in the Australian culture and psyche. The striving to be the top, the colour and pageantry and the unexpected are just some of the reasons why the nation stops for five minutes on the first Tuesday in November every year. Those reasons were fulfilled again this year when Streaky Bay jockey Kerrin McEvoy rode the New Zealand gelding Brew, first across the line to win the year 2000 Melbourne Cup.

Members would have all heard about the pub with no beer: Streaky Bay had the pub with no money. Streaky Bay Hotel manager Peter Johnson said Kerrin's win resulted in huge payouts to the Streaky Bay community members who literally cleaned out the safe, the tills and the office. In fact, some people had to come back the next day to collect. Just about everyone put a bit on the race, simply because Kerrin got a ride in the cup.

Kerrin McEvoy was born to ride. His parents and grandparents are active in the sport of racing as riders, trainers and owners. That does not always pass down to the next generation, but in Kerrin's case it did. As a child, Kerrin had a passion for horses, leaving school at the completion of year 10 to begin his riding career. His first ride at Ceduna when he was still 15 years old gave him his first win aboard Birdwood Flyer, with his successes continuing, winning the Port Lincoln cup on the Dennis O'Leary trained Final Statement in 1998. Kerrin moved from his grandfather's stables to spend six months at Morphettville with Russell Cameron, before joining the acclaimed Peter Hayes' stable in Angaston.

Fifteen months later, Kerrin was in Melbourne, and by the time he was 20 and riding in the Melbourne Cup he had ridden 170 winners, including trebles at Flemington and Moonee Valley. The 20 year old had completed his apprenticeship only one week before the big race and was not sure of a ride until the Saturday before the race.

Two other big name jockeys had refused the ride and, although Kerrin was in the short list because of his light weight, he was still not the next to be considered. It is the stuff that legends are made of. Jockeys, especially successful jockeys, must understand the horse that they are riding and work with their mount. Kerrin had previously ridden Brew, so he had some familiarity with the way Brew likes to run. Kerrin's father, Phillip McEvoy, was also a jockey and said he knew his son would win when he turned into the home straight. He said:

*You never let your horse go until you reach the clock tower, and from there Kerrin just motored him forward.*

Kerrin's parents, Phillip and Tracy McEvoy, and his grandparents, Bill and Atholy Holland, were at Flemington to share the excitement of the occasion, while other family members watched the race in the crowded bar at Streaky Bay Hotel. Even Kerrin's sister in London heard the race. However, whatever the future holds for this talented young South Australian, it must always be remembered that his start came in rural South Australia on country race tracks, with the support of his family, particularly uncles Tony and Darren McEvoy and friends.

Volunteers are the backbone of country racing, where the maintenance and improvement of facilities come back to what the local community is prepared to do. The McEvoy and Holland families have not only been riders and trainers but also have worked with their communities to present the best possible courses to the public for the enjoyment of the sport.

Streaky Bay hosts one meeting a year. Nevertheless, it has invested in an expensive set of starting gates which allow country jockeys such as Kerrin to gain all important experience. A race can be won or lost at the start. Therefore, it is an essential part of training that a jockey learns to start well.

I commend the state government's sports grants program, which enables rural and regional bodies to upgrade their facilities. Sports stars do not just happen: their dedication and commitment must be matched with facilities to develop skills to the highest possible level. The community on Eyre Peninsula is proud that Eyre Peninsula has produced another champion, and I congratulate Kerrin, his family and his community. This time, it is Streaky Bay that has been put on the world map in the sport of racing. I believe that it is possible to plan for the day when participants in the sport of horse racing recognise the advantage of Eyre Peninsula and base at least part of their operations there. The special people and the community spirit on Eyre Peninsula will ensure that we will continue to produce champions in all fields of endeavour, but particularly in sport, where we already have football, tennis, shooting, cricket and swimming champions, just to name a few.