



SAILING
26 July 1995

Mrs PENFOLD (Flinders): I am delighted to say that South Australia is going all the way to the top in terms of sailing competitions. One of the recurring visions of luxury living is relaxing on a yacht with sun, sea, sand and maybe surf in the background, especially around the coast of Eyre Peninsula and Kangaroo Island. This picture, which may be luxury elsewhere, is commonplace in my electorate of Flinders, especially in Port Lincoln. However, the notion of idleness plays little or no part in the picture that we have seen in our beautiful harbour in the past few months. A team of Port Lincoln teenagers has brought this picture to life with their win in the secondary schools sailing titles, which will see them represent Australia against New Zealand at the Bay of Islands next month.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Flinders has the call. She does not interject on the Deputy Leader.

Mrs PENFOLD: To achieve success in competition sailing requires application, perseverance, and plenty of hard work, all of which have been successfully put together by the high school sailing team. Often after school and every weekend they have been seen on our beautiful Boston Bay practising, and that practice has been rewarded. The team's wins this year began with the secondary school State sailing titles held in Port Lincoln in April and hosted by the Port Lincoln Yacht Club and St Joseph's School. The eight teams which competed in this tier were selected during regional titles held throughout the State. I am proud to say that four of those eight teams came from the electorate of Flinders. They were: the Port Lincoln High School team, the St Joseph's School team, and the Tumby Bay and Kangaroo Island teams. While the electorate of Flinders has the longest coastline of any South Australian electorate, I am proud that our small population provided half the competition against the rest of the State.

Competition sailing is in the form of team racing. Each school competes with a team of six sailing three identical yachts. The races last for about 15 minutes and rely on tactical ability, very quick reflexes and top team work. Following success in Port Lincoln, the team travelled to Tasmania in June where the national titles were decided on the Derwent in freezing conditions. The Port Lincoln team won the secondary schools teams national racing championships for 1995 against Victoria, New South Wales, Tasmania and Queensland in temperatures that fell to 5°C. It was the third time in four years that the Port Lincoln High School team had won the title. The team now goes to New Zealand to compete against Keri Keri Secondary School at the Bay of Islands next month.

Port Lincoln won the national championships in 1992 and 1994 and was the interdominion champion in 1992 also. Coach Steve Kemp said that little was known about the Keri Keri team; however, that team defeated last year's interdominion champions, the West Lakes Boys High School, which was triumphant over Port Lincoln on that occasion. Mr Kemp said that Port Lincoln was now a benchmark for secondary school teams racing in Australia, and he praised the students' mental toughness and fitness, which helped them to overcome the near freezing conditions on the Derwent.

The team members are: Fynn Mueller, Paul Buckland, Alastair Haldane, Tyson Leech, Aaron Matulich, Simon Growden and Luke Frears. The manager is Tiffany Evans and the coach is Steve Kemp. Steve is a sailor of renown as well as experience, having been a member of Australian challenges for the America's Cup. It is indeed commendable that he voluntarily shares his skill and enthusiasm for the sport, and I believe that he can take a measure of credit for the win of the high school sailing team.

The series is not confined to boys only. St Joseph's team had four girls— Marion Haldane, Paula Hicks, Kylie Egan and Emma Frazer—along with Damien Egan, Simon Turvey, Chay Haldane and Mark Egan to make up their team. In addition to the teams in the towns already mentioned, Constable John Hookings of Streaky Bay has begun a most exciting project in that town to instruct and train young people in sailing. He now has more than 20 young people involved, and the number keeps growing. The project is part of the Police Force's blue light crime prevention strategy to counter delinquency, violence and other anti-social behaviour while instilling positive values in those involved. It is pleasing to note that Constable Hookings' project was given a boost in its early stages with support from the Port Lincoln Yacht Club, tying it into the current success of teenage sailors from my electorate of Flinders.

Port Lincoln has produced many national champions over the years, some of whom have also competed internationally. The excellent sailing waters around Eyre Peninsula encourage participation in the sport from an early age. They are ideally suited to beginners who can stay in protected waters while also providing plenty of challenge for experienced yachtsmen who can venture out into seas feeling the full force of the Southern Ocean winds and swells. The annual Adelaide to Port Lincoln race braves the waters around the Althorpes at the bottom of Yorke Peninsula, an area which is noted for the roughness of the seas and the strength of the winds encountered there.

The race begins during the Lincoln Week regatta when races of various lengths test the skills of all teams. When Australia won the America's Cup in the 1980s, Port Lincoln was suggested as the ideal venue for the next series, which eventually went to Fremantle in Western Australia. This was unfortunate but it gives an indication of the standard of our waters for sailing: they are definitely world class. At the moment, we are not setting our sights quite as high as the America's Cup, just the interdominion secondary schools teams sailing championships at the Bay of Islands in August.

The cost of competing in competitions such as this is quite high for there is not only the matter of paying fares but also buying suitable equipment and being fitted out in a manner appropriate for those who are representing Australia as a nation. It is a credit to the people who support them— businesses, individual schools and other organisations and clubs, and of course the parents and families. We can be proud of this young team of sailors who are showing that South Australia is going all the way to the top in international sailing competition.

Motion carried.