



Fearnley, Mr Kurt

Dawes, Ms Christie

90 Second Constituency Statement

House of Representatives

18 August 2011

Sharon Grierson MP

Ms GRIERSON (Newcastle) (13:52): I am extremely proud to inform the House that two Novocastrians—the mighty Kurt Fearnley and the wonderful Christie Dawes—won the inaugural male and female wheelchair elite category in last Sunday's Sun-Herald City to Surf.

This was the first time in the 40-year history of the event that elite wheelchair athletes competed. You can imagine how pleased Newcastle is that two Novocastrians triumphed.

Most of us able-bodied people do wonder with amazement at the feat of completing the 14-kilometre course on foot, but the thought of attempting this course in a wheelchair is quite daunting and amazing.

Kurt's athletic exploits nationally and internationally and his tireless work as an advocate for the disabled are well known.

Christie is also an athlete of distinction. She is an outstanding community role model.

Christie competed in her first Paralympics in Atlanta in 1996, where she was named Young Paralympian of the Year. She subsequently represented Australia in the Sydney, Athens and Beijing Paralympics.

I congratulate both Kurt and Christie warmly on their awe-inspiring achievements. Their commitment, dedication and courage serve as a proud example to all Australians.