

## BALAKLAVA CUP

Mr GRIFFITHS (Goyder—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (15:46): I want to take the opportunity to talk about a community in my electorate of which I am very proud, and that is Balaklava. Having had the opportunity to attend the Balaklava Cup last week—

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson: Who won?

Mr GRIFFITHS: I will get to that.

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson: And the track condition was what?

Mr GRIFFITHS: Dead. That is an interesting term to describe a track condition, but it was classified as dead.

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson interjecting:

Mr GRIFFITHS: I am not sure about that, Attorney. I want to focus on the positives of the day. It is a wonderful opportunity for people not just from the Adelaide Plains and the Balaklava community but from all over the state to come to a wonderful country race meeting. Balaklava did itself proud and demonstrated a wonderful degree of hospitality for the thousands of visitors who attended. From what I am advised, about 16,000 people went through the turnstiles and enjoyed a great day.

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson: There would have been more if it had been warmer.

Mr GRIFFITHS: True. It seemed that every bus in South Australia was available on the day to transport people to this wonderful event. On arriving, I jumped out of the car and walked into the race ground to see a line of about 70 marquees completely filling the straight, and I walked up and down twice to try to meet as many people as I could.

Ms Chapman interjecting:

Mr GRIFFITHS: The member for Bragg confirms that most come from her electorate.

Ms Chapman interjecting:

Mr GRIFFITHS: Yes. It was a wonderful day. About 50 buses were lined up side by side. Being very responsible, patrons take the opportunity to travel by bus instead of car and in that way can enjoy themselves during the day, have the occasional alcoholic drink and not have to worry about having any problems while driving home. Of course, many people do not drink, but the many people who attended seemed to enjoy themselves immensely.

This event is also a great opportunity for the local community not only to show pride in itself and to host 16,000 people but also to raise a lot of money for community groups. It was amazing to see the number of people from around the Balaklava area who worked behind the scenes, ensuring that the track was okay and that everything was clean. Hundreds were involved in the catering for many of the marquees placed along the track. These people provide high quality food, look after the drink supplies and, importantly, they make money that can go back into the local community.

I pay credit to the wonderful volunteers who are involved. It has been part of their way of life for many years. The age profile of the people who volunteer at the Balaklava Racing Club is quite broad. This not only reflects the community but shows that younger people are also becoming involved.

I pay tribute to Mr Wayne Henson, the chair of the Balaklava Racing Club Committee, and Mr Doug Hall, the current CEO, who in a previous life has also been the chair. They were wonderful hosts to their guests. I know that the member for Mawson has attended this event previously and enjoyed the hospitality provided in the committee rooms.

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson: I was there last year.

Mr GRIFFITHS: And the Attorney confirms that he was there for a while last year. I think that anyone who has been there appreciates the unique qualities that a country race meeting provides. Kangaroo Island also does very well when it hosts the Kangaroo Island Cup, but Balaklava holds a special place in South Australia's country racing program. I am aware that it holds the record for attendance, betting turnover and stake money. When you go into the betting ring, there is barely room to move because there is such a crowd.

The Attorney pointed out that if the weather had been a bit nicer the crowd might have been a bit larger and that is part of the reason, I suppose, that the betting ring was overly crowded. However, the

weather did not turn too many people away. I think those who were intending to go still did go. It became a little bit dark and blowy in the afternoon, which was challenging for some of the young ladies wearing not very much but, certainly, the gentleman who were there enjoyed the opportunity to mix socially with the girls and boys.

An honourable member interjecting:

Mr GRIFFITHS: No, never. It is hard to find fault, in any way, with it. Everyone who goes enjoys it and they understand that you go from the marquee to the track to watch the horses as they thunder past. Unfortunately, last Wednesday proved once again that I am a very poor judge of horse flesh because, even though I had three bets, I had no horses that placed so I had a negative return. However, it was really a wonderful opportunity for people to come together and a credit to the local community that hosts it.

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson interjecting:

Mr GRIFFITHS: Horse flesh, Attorney! I am a poor judge of horse flesh. It was a great chance for the community to be proud of itself and to build upon its history. Balaklava was established in 1850 or so and it has had a racing club since 1903. It has been the vision of many people and it has worked diligently since 1903 to establish the club as the pre-eminent regional racing club in South Australia. I take this opportunity to pay full tribute to their efforts.

Time expired.