

Fuel For Thought

Staying in the race

Like most Australians I've been watching a fair bit of the Olympics coverage over the past week or so, and cheering on the exploits of our team, including Gladstone local Billy Ward's brave effort against a much more experienced boxer.

As a keen cyclist I've been particularly interested in the road and track cycling events and could watch that action around the clock. Still, the Olympics also has me watching sports I would never normally take much notice of – like rowing, canoeing, hockey and even badminton. Most of us have our favourite Olympic moments – Cathy Freeman's amazing win in Sydney springs to mind, or Ian Thorpe's come-from-behind effort in the relay.

For me, one of the best moments came in a Winter Games – and yes, I'm talking about that amazing race where skater Stephen Bradbury claimed gold after all his competitors crashed out on the final lap.

I loved everything about it – obviously the gold medal, but also Bradbury's look as he went past his rivals and on to gold and, even moreso, his modesty in victory.

But perhaps the best part of it all was Bradbury's post-race comment that instead of feeling guilty for the way he won the gold, he would proudly accept it – not for the effort in the race but for the years and years of sacrifice and injury which gave him the experience and fortitude to make it through to the final and have his chance at victory.

There's a saying – 'you have to be in it to win it' – and I suppose the Stephen Bradbury experience reflects that more than any other.

In some ways I relate that situation to QER's demonstration plant project. While our industry has a record of false starts, and we have our own challenges to overcome, we believe that learning from past mistakes and working hard to achieve best performance will keep us in the important race to responsibly develop an industry which can provide greater fuel security for Australia.

It might not be the Olympics, but for us it will be a gold medal performance.



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