



Clarity needed on QRL's TAB grab plan



THE Queensland Government surely should at least give a public statement on Queensland Racing Limited chairman Bob Bentley's model where he has a target to assume effective majority ownership of all TAB clubs.

Bentley, to his credit, has openly declared his plan.

But it's a tad rich when he controls the purse strings and therefore can starve any club of funds and then unashamedly point the finger if their balance sheet starts to look a bit pale.

The Gold Coast is a classic example of the use (or abuse) of the powers of the control body (QRL).

With more than 700 horses in training at the Coast, it is a critical hub in the production line of runners at TAB meetings in southeast Queensland.

A few years ago, QRL grabbed all the money directed

from UNITAB to the race clubs as part of the product agreement.

The betting commission income is now handed out by QRL. Part of the charter of the control body is to make sure training facilities are adequate, particularly at such an important centre as the Gold Coast.

It is incumbent on the QRL to support training facilities.

Some clubs are well run, some are not. But all are currently working in an unfair atmosphere.

The State Government should be open and accountable. If they support QRL's land grab, at least be honest enough and say it. Don't hide behind a shield of "it's nothing to do with us".

Racing Minister Peter Lawlor should put his stance on the table and explain his reasoning.

The LNP hierarchy seems to be waking from its slumber in

racing.

There were a lot of animated phone calls around key racing centres in recent days.

LLARRY Cassidy is delighted with the way things have worked out for him since transferring to Brisbane.

But Cassidy does feel the heat. He thought things were starting to cool down but was caught by the humid conditions at Doomben, especially since he did not bring his ice vest. For two days leading into the meeting Cassidy had only lemon water.

"It's the easiest I've done it to get to 53kg for months," a dripping Cassidy declared after the third race.

DOOMBEN winner Starzando now has been successful in three states.

The seven-year-old has 12 wins from 54 starts over distances from 1100m to 1800m.