



Nat speaks out 'Deal ranks poorly'

By LOUISE THROWER

THE National Party has "sold out" its rank and file and should not blindly expect members to help the Liberals win Hume, says one of its branch leaders.

Chairman of the Burrinjuck Nationals, Yass-based James Harker-Mortlock, has launched a scathing criticism of the party hierarchy. It followed last week's decision not to run a candidate in Hume against the Liberals' Angus Taylor.

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The deal will see the Nats take a greater share of public funding (\$1.2 million) over the next three elections.

Mr Harker-Mortlock said Hume's National Party supporters deserved the opportunity to have a candidate at the next federal election.

"It is sad that this is not to be the case," he said.

"...I think the party across the state is in stunned amazement at the decision. Not running in Hume is equivalent of the Libs not running in North Sydney."

Mr Harker-Mortlock was going to offer himself for pre-selection.

He believed members, including 700 across 12 branches in Hume, felt sold out by the decision and a "big slab" of the state's rank and file had no idea of future direction.

"The decision does not sit well with members, and you really have to ask what is the party's long-term strategy in terms of southern NSW," he told the *Post*.

"The only seat which they're intending run in is Riverina. It's a bit hard to determine what they want members to do but they shouldn't naively think we'll continue with the same enthusiastic support in the past."

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Saintly sister nursing era ends

By LOUISE THROWER

AT one time, Sisters of St John of God ran every facet of their hospital in Goulburn.

Their numbers fluctuated from eight who arrived in the city in 1916 to about 17 in the 1950s and then four by 1995.

Then by 2004 there were two.

The last Sister of St John of God will leave Goulburn in coming weeks, ending nearly 100 years of health care in the city.

Sr Eileen Regan is saddened by the prospect, but she's also a realist.

"We knew it was coming and that we'd eventually be transferred," she told the *Post*.

Sr Eileen is moving back to Western Australia, where she completed much of her early nursing work. Much of the order is also based in that state.

Her departure comes after that of Sr Boniface Scully several weeks ago.

Like many of her order, she devoted almost a lifetime of service, in this case 55 years to running and working in the former St John of God Hospital's kitchen.

Though retiring soon after the facility's transfer to the Greater Southern Area Health Service (GSAHS) in 2004, and its renaming as the Bourke Street Health Service, she's very much a part of "the family."

Staff and management bade her a warm farewell at an afternoon tea last month.

The Service's senior nurse manager John Gale paid tribute to the Sisters' role over many years.

"It's a remarkable contribution and part of the spirit of Goulburn," he told the *Post*.

"I think that's a part of what Goulburn is and we miss and love them a great deal."

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LIFE OF DEVOTION: Sr Eileen Regan's departure from Goulburn to Perth next week will end a long era of the Sisters of St John of God's presence in Goulburn. The pastoral care worker says she has many happy memories of her time.

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