

Holding the baby

MARITIME identity and honorary Queenslander Dr Terry O'Brien will today make a huge sacrifice.

The founder of a group called OMC International, which does large business around the state's ports, will be literally left holding the baby while his MD and son, Peter O'Brien, has the time of his life at the Melbourne Cup.

Terry has agreed to, wait for it, babysit Peter's two children, one of them a new-born baby, as his son jets across the Tasman to try to expand the group's technology.

What does it do? O'Brien is behind a port technology group called Dynamic Under Keel Clearance, which makes it easier for ships to ferry coal out of Queensland's ports.

They have just signed a deal with the port of Lisbon, Portugal, and are now in 19 international ports, including Weipa and Brisbane, the first system installed at Hay Point back in 1993.

Fighting fit

SPIED among Melbourne's well dressed at Cup time was none other than larger than life underworld figure and part-time corporate "fixer" Mick Gatto.

Your diarist spotted Gatto and his less than sartorially dressed members of the Carlton Crew lounging back on Burke Street outside the Spaghetti Tree eatery on the footsteps of Parliament House.

Diners heading to the iconic Waiters Club restaurant were surprised to see the man whose character loomed large in the notorious *Underbelly* series, chatting on his mobile phone seemingly without a care in the world.

A former heavyweight boxer and "negotiator" who went to Singapore to try to track down some of the Opes Prime missing millions is obviously not short of cash, wearing a fetching suit fashion types estimated cost at least \$5000.

In the current economic climate and given his fixer tag we reckon a few companies should perhaps seek his advice, notably BrisConnections, Hedley

Hotel Group, CEC and Macquarie Bank. Although tempted, we did not think it appropriate to ask Gatto if he had a tip for the Cup.

Big night out

TREVOR O'Hoy left Foster's a while back but the Australian hotel industry, including many Queenslanders, attended a stellar turnout last night to see him off.

The knees-up took place at the swish Windsor Hotel with many in the audience wondering what the

ON duty ... Dr Terry O'Brien is baby-sitting while his son's at the Cup.



future may hold for that famous Aussie beer brand, particularly in these harsh economic times.

Rising fast

REFUND chief Wayne Ormond was smiling yesterday and it had little to do with today's horse race in Melbourne.

Ormond, the chief of the Brisbane-based Refund Home Loans was named the 10th fastest growing firm out of 100 in the annual BRW list of companies on the rise.

Refund, with a turnover of more than \$10 million, 30 employees and 200 franchisees, is represented in every state in the country.

Last year, they managed 12th

on the list. Interestingly, only 27 companies that were on the list last year reappeared this year and in the finance and insurance sector there were only three — with Refund the only Queensland group.

Long ride

COULD the rapidly growing Brisbane-based engineering company OSD Pipelines be looking to set up a beachhead in Asia?

Long-distance cycling enthusiast, founder and CEO Brian O'Sullivan has a history of setting up OSD offices in places where he has conducted two-wheeled holidays, such as Calgary, Melbourne and Perth.

In fact O'Sullivan is clearing his head during the Christmas break by cycling 1200km from Bangkok to Hanoi.

Brian and OSD are beaver away in preparation for a potential IPO and some mergers and acquisitions in 2009. While his panniers will be filled with travel equipment, O'Sullivan is adding a tape measure and calculator just in case the need arises.

Mining gong

WARATAH Coal has had its ups and downs since bursting on to the resources scene with its ambitious \$5.3 billion Galilee Basin coalmine and infrastructure project in central Queensland.

Federal Environment Minister and former rock star Peter Garrett sent the company back to the drawing board when he rejected its proposal for a coal port on Shoalwater Bay. Then Queensland's richest man Clive Palmer launched a hostile takeover bid for the coal exploration and development company.

As Toronto Stock Exchange-listed Waratah prepares for Friday's dual listing on the Australian Securities Exchange, the company has been boosted by being named Queensland Explorer of the Year.

Waratah CEO Peter Lynch and company chairman Nick Mather accepted the mining industry gong from Department of Mines and Energy deputy director Stuart Booker during last's week's Mining 2008 conference in Brisbane.