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Seven decades of sports writing at the West Australian (1901-1971)

David R. Marsh
Edith Cowan University

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**SEVEN DECADES OF SPORTS WRITING AT THE *WEST AUSTRALIAN*
(1901-1971)**

**David Robert Marsh
Bachelor of Arts (Honours)**

**This thesis is presented in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor
of Philosophy**

Faculty of Communications and Creative Industries

Edith Cowan University

June 2005

USE OF THESIS

The Use of Thesis statement is not included in this version of the thesis.

ABSTRACT

For a country whose identity is much bound up with sport, little research has been done so far into sports journalism in Australia. This study traces the changes that have occurred in the reporting of sport in the *West Australian* between 1901 and 1971. This time span has been chosen to cover the period from Federation to the point when sport acquired its own section at the back of the newspaper and sports editor Ted Collingwood retired after 32 years in the job. In this seventy year period, January and July of every seventh year are taken as a sample to map out the developments in sports journalism. The months January and July have been chosen so as to capture both summer and winter sports. The newspaper's editions of these two months in the eleven periods were assessed both quantitatively and qualitatively. The quantitative study shows the amount of sport reporting, and the column space devoted to the various sports. It confirms that the amount of sports reporting has been on a steady increase ever since 1901, except for the war year 1943.

The qualitative analysis helps to determine the genre of the sports article and the changing ways of writing. It can be evidenced that sports writing expanded from initially only three types of reporting — news summary, match report and sports column — to eight distinct article genres. Some of these forms were developed in response to the advent of radio and later, television sports broadcasts. Sports writing, which at the outset could be described as lacklustre and bland, developed over time into a far more captivating and analytical narrative.

This thesis also looks at sport and at the media generally in Western Australia in that seventy year period. The sports popularly played are matched against the sports reported in the *West Australian*, and it can be seen that sports played and sports reported do not necessarily correspond.

Within the *West Australian*, the sports department and the sports editors and reporters are given special attention. A large number of interviews were conducted to establish as accurately as possible the number of sports writers and other contributors, and their pen names. It can be seen that the sports editor Ted Collingwood's preferences for professional and gambling sports had a significant influence on the way sports were reported. The thesis also addresses other major factors influencing sports reporting

between 1901 and 1971, such as the "tyranny of distance", the two world wars and technological change. The latter is found to be of greatest influence on the changes to sports writing, while the underlying intent of informing, entertaining and educating readers was refined more gradually.

DECLARATION

I certify that this thesis does not, to the best of my knowledge and belief:

- (i) incorporate without acknowledgment any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any institution of higher education.**
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I also grant permission for the Library at Edith Cowan University to make duplicate copies of my thesis as required.

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Second, I would like to acknowledge the contribution that a number of other people have played in enabling me to complete this project.

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GLOSSARY

AAP:	Australian Associated Press.
Agencies:	Main news agencies that supply news and data and distribute them to subscribers.
Anecdote:	A small story about someone, showing character, behaviour, or motivation.
Angle:	Main point stressed in a story, usually in the introduction.
AJA:	The Australian Journalists Association, now amalgamated with the Media, Entertainment and Arts Alliance.
Background:	Section of news or feature story carrying information which serves to contextualise main elements.
Body (of the article):	Copy following the introduction.
Brief:	Short news item (see 'Filler').
Broadsheet:	A page that is the full size of a rotary press plate. Usually applied to a paper's size (approximately 40cm by 60cm).
By-line:	The reporter's name printed above or below the story.
Cable:	Foreign news services.
Cadet:	Reporter in training.
Caption:	The descriptive wording beneath or beside a photograph.
Chief of staff:	Editorial executive responsible for assigning reporters to cover news stories.
Circulation:	The number of copies of a newspaper sold (averaged over a number of issues).
Column:	(a) A measure of width running the full length of a page. (b) A piece of regular, by-lined editorial matter that contains comment, opinion, gossip or related news snippets.
Columnist:	A journalist who writes a column.
Contact:	A news source who provides off-the-record information, background and news tips.
Contributor:	See 'Freelance'.
Copy:	All written material in manuscript form that will be considered for publication.

Correspondent:	Formerly any reporter, especially those working from a base outside the office. In this thesis, a correspondent is considered to be a reporter who is not on the <i>West Australian's</i> full-time staff.
Cover:	To attend a news event.
Dateline:	The name of a place from which a story is sent and the day (or dates) on which it is filed, placed at the start of a story from large regional centres, interstate or overseas.
Deadline:	Time by which a story must be filed or processed by sub-editors.
Edition:	A version of a newspaper printed at specific times of the day or night. Large newspapers may print several different editions.
Editor:	The chief editorial executive. The word is also often used to refer to people responsible for the content and production of separate sections of the paper; for example, news editor, business editor, features editor, sports editor.
Editorial:	To express a position or opinion on behalf of the publication.
Editorial content:	All printed matter in a paper that is not advertising; (b) See 'Leader'.
Exclusive:	A story not published in competing newspapers.
Feature:	A long article about a person, event, or an aspect of a major event, often having an emotional, personal, or humorous slant and written in an individual style. It is distinguished from hard news and is less restricted to the 24-hour clock than hard news.
Feature writer:	A journalist who writes mainly features, as distinct from news reporting.
File:	(a) To transmit copy to a newspaper either by telephone or computer link; (b) To hand in a story to the sub-editors.
Filler:	A brief news item.
Follow-up:	A story arising from aspects of, or reactions to, a story previously published.
Format:	The size, design, and appearance of a newspaper or section of a newspaper.
Freelance:	A non-staff journalist who may contribute to several papers and who often has special interests or expertise.
Ghost writer:	A person who writes material that will be published under the name of another person.

Hard news:	A longer article than the news summary category, it chronicles the important events in a community. It details the decisions and happenings that have impact on, or relevance to, people's lives.
Human interest:	Often referred as soft news and relates amusing, moving or unusual episodes, incidents or experiences in people's lives. Human interest stories do not have a definite format, and can be published in just a few paragraphs, or a full-page feature. They do not have a precise status in newspapers as they stand at the frontier between news and features.
Illustrations:	Line drawings or sketch used to illustrate an article instead of a photograph.
Interview:	Interviewing is the most common form of news-gathering tool designed to elicit additional information. Interviews generally take place with the central characters of a story following an announcement of a significant sports news story; and profile and human interest interviews aims to capture the thoughts of an individual.
Introduction:	The first sentence of a story.
Issue:	All editions of a paper printed on the same day.
Journalist:	(a) As a reporter, he or she compiles the information and writes an article for publication; (b) See Sub-Editor.
Layout:	(a) The way in which the contents of a page or pages are arranged in relation to one another, including the choice of types, their size and the placing of illustrating material; (b) The newspaper page designed in pencil by a sub-editor to indicate to the composing room staff where to place stories.
Lead:	(a) The main story in a newspaper, or in a section of a newspaper, such as the lead sports story; (b) A story's introduction.
Leader:	A newspaper's official view about, or opinion of, events or policies. Often called an editorial.
Masthead:	The newspaper's name at the top of the front page.
Match report:	A report of a sporting event. A match report includes the result of the game, or race. It can be either in the hard news format, or as a human interest article.
News angle:	That aspect of a news story chosen as the main focus or method of approach. The angle is often dictated by the reporter's and sports editor's perception of what is most likely to interest their readership.
News summary:	Short articles of factual reporting in the hard news category.
Newsprint:	Type of paper on which newspapers are printed.
Off-beat:	Unusual story often with a humorous twist.

Page lead:	The main story on a given page.
Piece:	A news story or a feature article.
Press conference:	An arranged meeting between people with information to impart to the media and representatives from a number of news organisations.
Press release:	Information about forthcoming events or announcements of media conferences sent by individuals, groups, companies or institutions to the media.
Profile:	An in-depth article about a person, usually based on an interview, but sometimes on interviews with friends, associates and competitors. Can be described as a biography, or character sketch of a person.
Quote:	(a) A direct quotation used in copy; (b) Quotation marks, or inverted commas, used to enclose direct quotations.
Reporter:	See 'Journalist'.
Round:	A particular area of activity covered by a specialist reporter, for example, football, cricket and horse racing in the sports department.
Source:	A person or document that provides information for publication.
Sports editor:	The person who controls the sports department, being responsible for the production and content of the sports section of the newspaper.
Story:	Any written editorial item.
Stringer:	Same as a freelance journalist.
Style:	The rules of a particular office in relation to spelling, punctuation, and layout.
Sub-edit:	To prepare copy for publication.
Sub-editor:	The journalist who prepares reporters' copy for publication. The sub-editor corrects grammar, spelling and facts if necessary, shortens or expands copy, rearranges it to read better, writes headlines.
Tabloid:	A page about half the size of a broadsheet.
Upper case:	Capital letters.
Wire service:	See 'Agencies'.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Seventeen years ago, Canada's Ben Johnson was the world's best-known sportsman. About three billion television viewers and 100,000 spectators at the Olympic stadium on a warm autumn afternoon watched Johnson raise his right hand above his head, index finger signalling his place as the world's fastest sprinter. It was the Seoul Olympic Games in 1988 — my first Olympics as a journalist — and the event was the men's 100 metres track and field final. In that moment, as he crossed the finishing line, Johnson stood for all the joys of human life — aspiration, achievement, glory and fulfilment. He clocked a world record time of 9.79 seconds, to comfortably beat defending Olympic champion and world record holder, Carl Lewis, of the United States. The world's media had focused on the looming clash between Johnson and Lewis since the Jamaican-born Canadian had beaten the American in the 100 metres final at the 1987 world track and field championships 14 months earlier in Rome. At that time, the men's 100 metres Olympic final was one of the world's most publicised sporting events. Those of us, the world's sports journalists who had travelled to Seoul, witnessed first-hand Johnson's explosion of power, his triumphant final two strides as he glanced to his right and realised that he was comprehensively beating his main rival, raising his finger in triumph.

And then to the press conference. Johnson did not come for two hours. We heard later that he was trying to avoid the conference, and that International Olympic Committee (IOC) and Canadian Olympic officials were trying to persuade him to speak to the world's press. Perhaps Johnson did not want to spoil his day of triumph. He knew the conference would be a great falling-off, because he lacked self-assurance, had a stutter and was inarticulate. Johnson eventually arrived at the conference room to face the international media, but told us very little, answering questions with two or three word replies. And that was it. Off we went to document the world's most prominent victory. However, a couple of days later, IOC officials announced that Johnson had tested positive to Stanozolol, an anabolic steroid. The 100 metres race then turned into a kind of modern morality play. Those who sought to praise him now sought to bury him.

It was the biggest scandal in Olympic history ("Montgomery also drops", 2003), and within hours, Johnson was on his way back to Canada.

The role of the sports journalist is to be prepared for all eventualities. I went to the Seoul Olympics as a sports journalist — to cover a sporting event for Perth's daily morning newspaper, the *West Australian*, and the city's afternoon newspaper, the *Daily News*. But this changed after the men's 100 metres final in the Seoul Sports Complex on the banks of the Han-gang River, in the early afternoon of 24 September 1988. My sports editor took me off my planned assignment at the Seoul Olympics — covering the action in a number of sports — to research, carry out interviews, and write thousands of words about Ben Johnson's background, and the history of drugs in sport. Many of the world's leading sports writers were similarly provided with a brief to be an investigative reporter for the next few days. Journalists who were assigned to report other sports, such as swimming, cycling, basketball and tennis, were reassigned to the "Ben Johnson story". As a result, many millions of words were published about the Ben Johnson positive drug test on front and back pages of newspapers around the world.

The Ben Johnson tale demonstrates the increasing importance of sports journalism in modern times. The role of the sports journalist is no longer restricted to recording winners and losers in sporting contests. The reporters are now responsible for documenting major world events and incidents to inform the public of the wider implications of sports news. The role of the sports journalist has evolved along with the increasing importance of international sport in society.

Life of a Sports Journalist

A sports journalist with the *West Australian* since March 1984, and a newspaper journalist for eight years before that, I have always been interested to learn more about the theoretical and historical side of sports journalism, since little of this area has yet been explored.

Writing and sport have always been two of my greatest joys. The life of sports journalists at major newspapers can mean the insides of aircrafts and hotels, the clatter of computer keys and the constant ringing of telephones in a large and vibrant newspaper office; weekends of liniment and stopwatches, missed putts and strained hamstrings. And, of course, the colour, the pulsating emotions, the excitement and the drama which set sport aside and make it the most wonderfully descriptive subject of all

to write about. No human quality is omitted. Any person with a penchant for the written word finds his or her chest thumping from the challenge and expectation and their hands itching for a keyboard at the very thought of an Olympic Games, a football grand final, a Wimbledon tennis championship, or a cricket Test match.

The aims of this study are to explore the role of sports journalists and the sporting department at the *West Australian* from 1901 to 1971. This time frame is prior to the era I have described above (1988), and significant to the shifting role of the sports media. The first seven decades of the twentieth century were a highly important period for the *West Australian's* sports coverage, because that era shaped and laid the foundation for modern day sports writing.

Sports Writing

The sportswriter has a demanding role primarily because he or she must interact with a variety of groups on a daily basis. The writer must be responsible to his employer, the athletes, the owners and sports promoters, as well as the public.

In recent years, it can be argued that the image and status of the print sports journalist has diminished to a degree because of the immediacy of radio, television and the Internet. Through these media, the public hears and sees at close hand the happenings and results of sporting competitions. The result is a double-edged sword for the sportswriter; the importance and significance of what he or she writes may now not be as vital to the public as it once was, and also the players and administrators give the sportswriter less time because they gain greater exposure through other media, especially television.

In earlier days, sports journalists seemed at times to act as cheer leaders for certain sports and competitors. However, in recent decades, the trend has been for journalists to become less awe-struck by sports heroes, and less of a pawn to the sports promoters. Sport is not viewed as sacrosanct, but as an activity that entertains, and for these reasons alone deserves coverage.

Sport is a subject about which many Australians are passionate and has become perhaps this nation's favourite topic of conversation. A large part of a sportswriter's job, although it is seldom acknowledged, is to present, as clearly as possible, the central characters and issues in what amounts to an ongoing national conversation about sport. Australia has a reputation throughout the world for being passionate with success in all

types of sport. We may not all play sport, but millions of us watch weekend sport on television. Sport means different things to different people: an addiction to many participants, a method of relaxation to some, to others a job. But there are few Australians who remain unaffected by sport, whether they play it or not. It offers a diversion from the daily routine for the many thousands who prefer either to watch or to read about what is happening in sport. Millions of people in Australia know more about the achievements, failures and private lives of athletes than they know about anyone else, except perhaps their family and friends. Even national politicians and entertainment celebrities are not covered on an intense daily basis, sometimes for decades. Athletes, coaches and their fans take it for granted.

For years, the mass media have given us the opportunity to observe the behaviour of sports stars in a core area of their lives. If you cannot talk sports — international, national, local or even neighbourhood sports — you may feel like a social outsider in many communities in this country. In an age that is changing in political, religious, artistic and cultural values, how can we feel united? What can we agree about? What can we discuss calmly, yet enthusiastically, with a sense of shared expertise and a glimpse of a shared ideal?

Sports have become one of the primary vehicles through which Australians are able and willing to discuss in their everyday life. Great athletes, without knowing it or wanting it, have been put in something akin to the position of mythic religious characters in other cultures in other times. For example, millions of Australian sports fans are aware of the feats of Australian Rules footballer Chris Judd, marathon runner Steve Moneghetti, swimmer Ian Thorpe and track and field athlete Cathy Freeman. Yet many could not name their local Member of Parliament.

Coverage of sport in Australian newspapers, as we know it, has developed during the twentieth century. Previously, there was sporadic coverage that announced sports and sometimes reported these events. There were no sporting pages, but coverage was spread irregularly throughout the pages. Sporting sections appeared in the twentieth century and have developed to a position of prominence in most daily and weekend newspapers.

Times have changed greatly in sports writing over the last three decades. The expansion of television has meant that the sportswriter can no longer rely simply on chronicling the facts. He or she must write with much greater flair and imagination to

captivate the reader and provide an interesting alternative to what will appear on the evening news.

Since the introduction of television in the 1950s sports journalism has — by necessity — dramatically changed. In the pre-television era, one of the primary functions of sports journalism was straight reportage, which took the form of (usually third person) description of sports events for a readership that had not witnessed them. More journalists cover the Olympic Games than any other sporting event, including the World Cup in soccer. Television has brought the Olympic Games to a far wider world audience. But the public still likes to read about what it sees on the television. The print media maintains interest in the Olympic Movement by the millions of words it devotes to it in the four year period between the Games. It is this dialogue with the public, through the medium of the print media, which keeps the interest alive in all Olympic matters, whereas Olympic news is not considered as prominently by electronic media during the inter-Olympic periods. During and after the Games, the written press can, and does, complete the picture to give a full and comprehensive survey of what happened at the Games. Print journalism is a more permanent form of the media. Readers still rely on newspapers for analytical and statistical records of sports events, something that radio and television will never be able to match. This is because television and radio do not allow the time frame to peruse and return to the statistics.

Unlike the broadcast media, which lives and dies with the images it broadcasts, the print media can afford itself the luxury of dropping everything to focus on a big story, such as the Ben Johnson case. This is one situation where, often, the delay till the deadline and delivery of the paper can be a great advantage to the print journalist. The broadcasters at the Olympics cannot drop everything to pursue a major story, they must keep producing images. While it is possible to dispatch staff to pursue a side issue, those images must continue, and while continuing they serve to distract from and diminish from the “major” story when it gets to air.

Major changes in technology have significantly changed the role of the sports journalist. As a comparison, during the 44 years between the two Olympic Games held in the southern hemisphere — Melbourne in 1956 and Sydney in 2000 — the *West Australian's* three reporters at the 1956 Olympics, Ted Collingwood, Geoff Christian and Jim Ross, arrived in Melbourne each with a typewriter and notebook. They typed their stories onto sheets of paper and gave them to a telex operator, who sent them to

Perth. However, if the telex operators had a backlog of copy, the local journalists would telephone their stories to a copytaker at the *West Australian*.

Journalists began using computers at the *West Australian* in 1983, though most reporters were still writing their copy on typewriters until the following year. My experience at the Seoul Olympics was significantly different from the Sydney Olympics in 2000. For example, I arrived in Seoul with a notebook, pen and a basic laptop computer with a coupler. Obtaining a direct line to Australia was nearly impossible from many of the venues I worked at — the main stadium, swimming, cycling, basketball, boxing, tennis, and the rowing. Every call had to go through the Seoul switchboard. Invariably, I would have to resend the stories, and often needed to phone the stories to my paper's copytakers in Perth. Consequently, I would be on the phone for between 20 and 40 minutes, dictating the story to the copytaker. In effect, a 500 word story would take up to an hour from the time I had finished writing to its appearance on the computer screen of my sports editor. With the improvement of technology, the same story took less than a minute to cover a considerably greater distance at last year's Athens Olympics. This was because Australian journalists from major news organisations at the Athens Games were equipped with a sophisticated computer, a mobile telephone, Internet access and considerable technical backup.

At a spectacle such as an Olympics, major stories often arrive at the expense of live footage. Directors are faced with the decision of cutting from the live action to deliver a "breaking story", thus running the risk of alienating that part of their audience that is more interested in what is happening live. It is every sports director's nightmare to cut from live footage only to have the deciding goal scored or a perfect "10". Newspapers are not faced with this problem. Whether the story is front, back or in the middle pages, it is fresh news to the reader. The convenience and accessibility of the newspaper is one of the major advantages newspapers have over television. The reader decides the order and pace at which they read and can be selective in what they read. Television, however, decides what you will watch. With normal programming, the viewer has the option of selecting another channel. But with Olympic broadcasting tightly controlled, you must watch what the broadcast network decides to show you or nothing at all.

The role of the print journalist at the Olympics or other international sporting events is not to only provide results and descriptions, but to go further than the

broadcast media. Sports journalism is becoming more and more like an academic exercise. Big questions need to be asked and answered. Data needs to be analysed rather than just presented. For instance, why did swimmer Petria Thomas win the Olympic title at Athens? How did she do it? What makes her faster than the other competitors? And at the end of it, the question that arguably is the most important of all when analysing and drawing conclusions: "So What?" What does it mean? For example, in Cathy Freeman's win in the women's 400 metres in Sydney four years earlier, simply providing a description of the race would have been superfluous for most Australians. Those who did not see it would have watched one of the dozen replays shown by Channel 7 over the next day or two. To remain valid, the print journalist needed to ask the big questions: what significance did her victory have for Australian society; what did it do for Aboriginal rights, and what did the men or women in the street say about the victory?

This is not to say that the broadcast media does not address these issues. But the broadcast media has shied away from the talking heads scenario and it takes time to provide background footage. In some circumstances, at this level, newspapers can have an advantage. While television can provide live coverage, newspapers can provide an in-depth cover story.

The print sports journalist has to be a researcher, a writer, an analyst and an informer. They will remain relevant as they continue to contribute messages that images alone cannot provide. It is true that a picture is worth a thousand words, but the television picture only paints the words related to the image. The print journalist needs to write the thousand words that the picture does not convey, and that the viewers cannot see for themselves.

This Study

This thesis is divided into nine chapters. This introductory section has provided a personal insight into the role of a sports journalist covering a major event and looks at the contemporary and historic roles of sports journalists. The following section, Chapter 2, provides a literature review of Australian sports journalism, and Australian and Western Australian sporting history. Chapter 3 is concerned with the methodology of this study. Chapter 4 examines various themes in Australian and Western Australian sport. Chapter 5 is devoted to a history of the media in Western Australia during the first seven decades of the twentieth century. In addition to newspapers, this section will

also look at radio and the brief history of television. Chapter 6 looks at the history of the *West Australian*. Chapter 7 introduces the *West Australian's* sports department and examines the role played by twelve of its most respected sports journalists in the coverage of sport in the State's main daily newspaper during the period under examination. Professional qualities of the journalists are discussed. Chapter 8 is devoted to findings and discussions of the changing styles of sports journalism in the *West Australian* between 1901 and 1971. Chapter 9 concludes the thesis by summarising the major findings and providing some suggestions for future work.

This research will provide an original contribution to the investigation of sports journalism at a major daily newspaper. It will add to the knowledge of how a sports department operates in a large Australian newspaper. It is important to study sports journalism, because sport and newspapers, like society, are institutions. It is also of importance to journalists, editors and academics, who will have access to reliable, authentic material reflecting exemplary newspaper sports practice. It will significantly contribute to the knowledge of sports journalism.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Australian Sport

Sport is arguably the most pervasive cultural force in Australian society. Australia's national heroes have, in the main, been connected with sport. The country can identify with track and field athlete Cathy Freeman more than to any politician; to swimmer Susie O'Neill rather than to an artist; to cricketer Adam Gilchrist more than to any businessman; to footballers of varying codes rather than to a poet; and even to a racehorse such as Phar Lap. Some observers have claimed that sport is a national "religion" or "obsession". For example, Jobling wrote in 1999 that over the last century, many visitors and observers from overseas have "commented that sport has had a predominant effect on the culture, value systems and forms of expression of Australians" (p. 251).

For most Australian sports, the period of their main development in the late nineteenth century coincided with the rapid expansion of the principal urban centres and the elaboration of strong suburban identities. This history confirms the overall worth of sport, its role in binding small communities together, its undeniable place in society, the effective manner with which it gives individuals release after a hard day's work in the fields or in the offices. Sport is a national institution of remarkable complexity and importance, which can be overshadowed by a single deed or in a moment of time other social institutions, such as politics, religion and economics (Stoddart, 1986, p. 4).

Sports historian Richard Cashman has produced many valuable texts on the role and prominence of sport in Australian society. In a recent publication, *Australian sport through time: The history of sport in Australia* (Cashman, 1997b), he takes a brief look at the origins of Australian sport and at the history of several sports. The subsequent 459 pages of the 511-page book provide an annual snapshot of sport from 1870 to 1996. Several short articles from the print media of each year are included, reporting some of the most important sporting events that featured Australians.

Two years earlier, Cashman's *Paradise of sport: The rise of organised sport in Australia* (1995), in a detailed social history of sport, examines the reasons why sport became so dominant in Australian society. Cashman, one of the nation's leading sports historians, describes Australia's prosperity after the gold-rushes which led to an elaborate sporting culture. He stresses that Australians cannot view modern sport as a new phenomenon, but rather an extension of pre-existing sporting and recreational practices that changed to suit different social, economic and political circumstances. Cashman disagrees with many intellectuals who claim that Australia's preoccupation with sport has been detrimental, contending that sport is central to the business of being Australian. In this, I hold Cashman's view.

Brian Stoddart, one of Australia's pioneer sports historians, argues that sport "has been and remains one of the nation's most prominent agencies" (1986, p. 3). He combines sports history in the narrower sense with a broad view of Australian sport as a social movement in *Saturday afternoon fever: Sport in the Australian culture* (1986). Stoddart specialises in the social and cultural aspects of sport in Australia. This is as much a collection of discrete essays as it is an integrated look at sport, identity and their interrelationship, with Stoddart producing careful, unique, and often colourful insights into the problematics of sport and identity. In his introduction, he explains that it is his intention to examine sport critically as an Australian institution, and that his work is neither a definitive history nor a sociological analysis (p. 9). While this is true, Stoddart achieves his intention by heightening awareness about some social aspects of Australian sport and how they affect the thinking of many Australians who may be unaware of their influence.

In an attempt to demonstrate that sport has always been part of Australian popular culture and to show the ways in which sport reflects and shapes Australian society, Vamplew and Stoddart edited an impressive collection of essays, *Sport in Australia: A Social History* (1994). With contributors from 14 of Australia's leading sports historians, the volume articulates themes in Australian sport, such as women in sport; indigenous, ethnic and international influences; participants and spectators; and regional differences within Australia. In his chapters on Australians in sport, Vamplew declares, "Sport was part of the cultural baggage brought out to Australia by the convicts, the free settlers and the accompanying administrative and military personnel, though initially the limited size of the community and the priority given to the establishment of a viable settlement delayed the commencement of organised sporting

activities" (Vamplew, 1994, p. 1). Vamplew briefly traces the contribution of Australian sport in a social and culture context.

Taking this further, Jim McKay's book *No pain, no gain? Sport and Australian culture* (1991) provides a broad-ranging and critical analysis of sport as part of Australian culture. It begins from the premise that sport is an important and integral part of social relations, both shaping and being shaped by relations of power. Sport is focused upon for the central role it plays in the maintenance of culture, values and social relations, particularly those of class, gender, race, nationality and ethnicity. Though the publication was specifically written as a text-book, it has general appeal.

Five editors, all members of the Australian Society for Sports History (ASSH) — Wray Vamplew, Katharine Moore, John O'Hara, Richard Cashman and Ian Jobling — combined to produce the *Oxford Companion to Australian Sport*. It was originally published in 1992, with a second edition in 1994 and a revised edition in 1997. This Australian "encyclopedia" is a welcome addition to the growing body of integrated historical source material on Australian sport. The book comprises more than 2,000 entries covering the entire range of sports. Apart from leading sportsmen and women, other bibliographical entries are devoted to leading umpires and referees, media personnel and sports administrators. For sports fans and historians alike, the biographical entries and accompanying statistics will be a valuable source, as it is a thoroughly absorbing collection.

Academics Douglas Booth and Colin Tatz critically analyse Australian sport in *One-eyed: A view of Australian sport* (2000). Their intention is to challenge readers by getting them to "question the emotions they invest in sport, why they approach it in the ways they do—to look beyond themselves, to try to understand the objectives, feelings and passions of others" (p. xvi). The title *One-Eyed* refers literally to an inability of many Australian sports fans to see another point of view because "one is partisan, intolerant and unreasonable" (Booth & Tatz, 2000, p. xvi). The authors suggests that sport is "an intrinsic part of the Australian landscape", and "an indelible part of the Australian home" (2000, p. 2). They point out that any Test match win against England, and the 1983 America's Cup, are good examples of sporting success, defining Australians' sense of self, identity and community. At the same time, they claim that sport divides Australians in all sorts of ways. These divides are based on economic class, social status, gender, race, place of residence, religion and ethnicity. Booth and

Tatz argue that sport has done very little to unite divergent groups, or encourage tolerance and diversity (p. 20). The authors claim that sport has been used by a variety of social groups, ranging from middle-class Protestants to women and Aborigines, to assert and affirm a sense of identity (p. 211), and sport has been the "principal means by which Australians have portrayed their way of life and beliefs and attitudes to the international community (p. 227). I believe these to be valid assessments.

Sports historians have traditionally attributed Australian sporting success in the 1950s and sixties to "favourable climate", "superior diet" and "natural sporting prowess", which gave Australians an advantage over Europeans "physically and emotionally devastated" by World War II. But Booth and Tatz attribute much of Australian sporting success to the role of coaches, including tennis' Harry Hopman, track and field's Percy Cerutti and Franz Stampfl, and swimming's Forbes Carlile (2000, pp. 138-139). It is interesting that Booth and Tatz have moved away from the norm in regards to an explanation of Australia's sporting success after the war. I believe their analysis has merit, considering the wide success of European athletes in track and field at the 1948 and 1952 Olympics. I also support the authors' belief in sport's relation self, identity and community. But I take issue with Booth and Tatz's contention that the Australian Institute of Sport (AIS), which was opened in Canberra in January 1981, was created to appease the domestic sports lobby after Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser had unsuccessfully pressured them to boycott the 1980 Moscow Olympic Games; and that it had "to restore Australia's international sports profile" (Booth & Tatz, 2000, p. 179). Evidence suggests that the establishment of the AIS was a response to Australia's poor performance at the 1976 Montreal Olympics (Jobling, 1999, pp. 265-266; Vamplew, 1994, p. 5; Rowe, 1991, p. 78; Stoddart, 1986, p. 69). In fact, initial plans for a sports institute in Australia were first proposed by Professor John Bloomfield in a report commissioned by the Whitlam Government in 1973 (Bloomfield, 2003, p. 55; Booth & Tatz, 2000, p. 174; Gordon, 1994, p. 339).

Few authors have explored the histories of indigenous athletes and sports, but in the last decade, Colin Tatz has produced the (to date) most comprehensive study of Aboriginal participation in sport. With publications such as *Black gold: The Aboriginal and Islander sports hall of fame* (Tatz & Tatz, 2000), *Black diamond: The Aboriginal and Islander sports hall of fame* (Tatz & Tatz, 1996), *Obstacle race: Aborigines in sport* (Tatz, 1995) and *Aborigines in sport* (Tatz, 1987), he has extensively examined the rich contribution Aborigines have made to Australian sport.

A number of valuable studies focus upon women in Australian sport. Marion Stell has produced an excellent examination of women's sport in her book *Half the race: A history of Australian women in sport* (1991). Stell traced the history of women in sport and the influences that determined the successes of the nation's elite female athletes. She also places women in sport in a social and intellectual context. Dennis Phillips' *Australian women at the Olympic Games* (1996) made a comprehensive study of the history of Australian women's Olympic competition, with the first Australian women to compete at an Olympics in Stockholm in 1912 — 16 years after the modern Olympics were first held at Athens.

The three sports seen to be most significant to Australians are cricket, horse racing and Australian Rules football. A large quantity of literature has been produced about each sport.

Many commentators claim that the Pura Cup, known as the Sheffield Shield until the 1999-2000 season, is the strongest domestic cricket competition in the world. Of the many hundreds of cricket books that have been published over the years, *The history of the Sheffield Shield* (Harte, 1987) is the most comprehensive examination of the national competition. However, the title is a misnomer, because the author covers every interstate cricket match that has been played in Australia, including the earliest matches between the colonies, the first taking place between Tasmania and Victoria at Launceston in 1851. The Sheffield Shield started with the match between South Australia and New South Wales in Adelaide in December 1892.

Two quality publications have been produced about Australia's major gambling sports, horse racing and harness racing — *They're racing! The complete story of Australian racing* (Hutchinson, 1999) and *The Australian harness horse: Silks and sulkeys revisited* (Agnew, 1997). The two books are concerned with the history of racing, but their aims are quite distinct. Hutchinson tells of the great horses of the period, as well as the prominent identities and the racecourses. Although he uses many anecdotes to evoke the flavour of the period and of racing with great sensitivity Hutchinson's work also extends much further. It is also an analytical history concerned with the change in the nature of the sport over time and with the differences in the sport from place to place. Max Agnew's history of harness racing also successfully achieves its aims, namely to document progress of the sport from when it was established by small businessmen, such as milkmen, butchers and bakers. Agnew developed his

publication from his 1977 book, *Australia's trotting heritage*, and it is a meticulous account of the sport's history. But he does not attempt to provide any real analysis of Australian harness racing, instead being content to be the story-teller; and he is competent in his self-appointed task. The book does evoke the essence of harness racing and it provides a compact source of information on many of the champion pacers over the last century.

Melbourne football journalists Russell Holmesby and Jim Main produced *The Encyclopedia of AFL Footballers* (2002). One of the most comprehensive Australian sports books published, the book lists every footballer who played in the Victorian Football League and Australian Football League since 1897. There is a profile of each player, including the clubs, and years and games played. One of the most thorough sporting history publications, *The clubs: The complete history of every club in the VFL/AFL* (Richards, 1998), traces the history of each of the 16 clubs which participate in the national football competition, and also the clubs which no longer exist.

Australia has the rare distinction of having competed at each of the 24 modern Summer Olympic Games. There is confusion over how many nations have contested all of the Olympic Games — because of a variation of numbers provided by the vast number of Olympic publications. The number of countries range from two to five. Australia and Greece are universally recognised as two of these nations. The 1992 book, *The Golden Book of the Olympic Games* listed Australia, France, Great Britain, Greece and Switzerland as the five nations to have competed at every Olympic Games (Kamper & Mallon, 1992, pp. 10-12). However, a decade later, in personal correspondence from one of the authors, Bill Mallon, then president of the International Society of Olympic Historians, cast doubt that Great Britain, Greece or Switzerland had actually contested each Games (W.J. Mallon, personal communication, July 29, 2002). Harry Gordon also claimed that Australia and Greece were the only nations to have competed at each Olympic Games (Gordon, 1994, pp. xxiv-xxv). Mallon and Gordon argue that the three track and field athletes who are listed as having represented Great Britain in 1904 were, in fact, Irish, who competed as individuals; an athlete who ran in the marathon for Switzerland at the 1908 and 1912 Olympics was a German who did not gain his Swiss citizenship until after the Games; and that the only member of the French team at the 1904 Games, a track and field athlete, represented the Chicago Athletic Association. Greenberg (1996, pp. 4-7) supports the theory that five nations contested every Olympics. However, those claiming that four nations had competed at each Olympics

include Andrews (1996, p. vii), while *The Olympics factbook* (1992, xvi), Vamplew et al. (1997, p. 319) and Dettre (1984, p. 7) insist that only three nations competed. Phillips (2000, p. 2) and Groves (2000, p. 6) support the suggestion that Australia and Greece are the only two countries with a perfect attendance record at the Games.

Western Australian Sport

The majority of works on Western Australian sport are uncritical histories and biographies. These publications do not delve into an analysis of the role of sport in the State as authors have done with the role of sport in Australia. There are a few exceptions, such as political scientist and historian Harry Phillips' *Tennis West: A history of the Western Australian Lawn Tennis Association from the 1890s to the 1990s* (1995). Tennis, one of the earliest of modern sports to be played by men and women, is regarded as both a healthy and a social activity. Phillips has provided a most comprehensive and detailed account of tennis in the State, although he acknowledges his focus is on the Western Australian Lawn Tennis Association (WALTA). Phillips has traced the history of one of the State's most significant sporting associations within a social, geographic, economic and political framework. The study of the sport is from its beginnings in the family homestead environment in the nineteenth century. About 200 quality and meaningful photographs enhance the publication, which are useful for exploring further the changing techniques and orthodoxies in games. The range of tennis pictures suggest how different the game was played early last century. The extensive bibliography and the appendices, including tables of WALTA office-bearers, results of major events, and rankings, all add to this outstanding record and analysis of the sport in Western Australia.

Perth academic and sports historian, Edwin Jaggard, has made a number of comprehensive studies into the history of surf lifesaving in Western Australia. In *A challenge answered* (1979), Jaggard wrote a brief history of the surf lifesaving movement in Western Australia, which was published to coincide with the 1979 Australian surf lifesaving championships in Perth, and the 150th anniversary of the State's foundation. Five years later, in *The premier club: Cottesloe Surf Life Saving Club* (1984), Jaggard explores the history of the State's most successful surf life saving club, from its formation in 1909 — only three years after the establishment of Australia's first surf life saving club at Bondi near Sydney (Galton, 1984, p. 12). Jaggard points out that there are present-day members (referring to the mid-1980s) who would argue that most attention in his book should be given to more recent years —

from the 1950s. However, "on the other hand, many of those who enjoyed their active days in the 1930s and forties claim that any history should not neglect past glories, the origins of traditions" (Jaggard, 1984, pp. ix-x). With the production of extensive historical material, Jaggard balanced the two viewpoints. In an article, *A jubilee celebration: The Australian surf championships, 1951* (1989), Jaggard examines the circumstances surrounding the first national surf lifesaving championships to be held in Perth. In a comprehensive study of the championships, which is a combination of a sporting and cultural event, the appearance of a team from Ceylon made the carnival the first surf lifesaving event in Australia to have an international aspect.

Jaggard and co-editor Jan Ryan produced *Perspectives on Sport and Society* in 1997. The journal, No. 18 in an annual series *Studies in Western Australian History*, examined the progress and various themes in Western Australian sport. Articles on Australian Rules football, golf, horse racing, Nyoongar children's sport, tennis, softball and soccer provided insights into the ways in which sport reflects important aspects of the Australian lifestyle.

Another local academic, Anthony Barker, conducted a thorough investigation of the Western Australian Cricket Association (WACA) in his book, *The WACA: An Australian cricket success story* (1998). He provides insights into the early days of the sport in mid-nineteenth century to the formation of the WACA in 1885. Baker also traced the development of the sport in the State, where Western Australia achieved infrequent success against visiting Eastern States and overseas teams during the first four decades of last century. Barker has a keen eye for detail and identified various political problems within the sport locally and nationally as a major reason the State was unsuccessful in being admitted to the Sheffield Shield until the 1947-48 season. He then traced Western Australia's progress to the position of the most powerful Australian cricket State, winning the Sheffield Shield nine times in 17 seasons from 1967-68 to 1983-84.

Perth sports journalists Geoff Christian, Jack Lee and Bob Messenger made the first major study of the history of Australian Rules football in the State with *The footballers: A history of football in Western Australia* (1985). They begin by describing the birth of football in the nineteenth century. The authors continue their historical examination into the twentieth century, noting the increasing strength of football as a local spectacle, briefly stalled by the interruption of World War I. Football quickly

recovered in the immediate post-War period and began to build an even greater following into the 1920s. Christian, Lee and Messenger (1985) document the improving political fortunes of the Western Australian National Football League (WANFL), in spite of a minor setback in 1942 when the loss of players to Australia's World War II effort resulted in under-18 competition, in place of the open competition, for three years. The authors charted in great detail the development of the sport from being purely an amateur past-time to slowly changing to a semi-professional sport during the late 1950s and sixties, and becoming fully professional in the 1980s. Though it was essentially an examination of the WANFL, the ruling body of Australian Rules football in the State, which changed its name to the Western Australian Football League (WAFL) in 1980, and is written by non-academics, the book was meticulously researched and written. In 1988, the book was updated with a name change, *The footballers: From 1885 to the West Coast Eagles*. Two chapters were added to the original publication, which covered the West Coast Eagles being the first non-Victorian team to join the Victorian Football League (later renamed the Australian Football League) in 1987. (Brisbane Bears, later named Brisbane Lions, joined the same year).

However, in 2004 Anthony Barker produced a greater insight into the history of football in the State, with *Behind the play . . . A history of football in Western Australia from 1868*. He notes that for fifteen years from 1868 rugby union appeared to be the favoured football sport among the colonists (2004, p. 3). However, interest in rugby union waned, while an emerging enthusiasm for Victorian football, as it was then called, forced a change of codes for the local population.

The WAFL, which attracted larger crowds than all other sports during the twentieth century, has generated the greatest number of books. A large number of biographies and autobiographies were written about some of the State's leading football players. Steve Hawke's *Polly Farmer: A biography* (1994) is the most comprehensively-written book on any local footballer. Hawke is a supporter of Geelong in the AFL, where Graham Farmer played with great distinction in the 1960s and established himself as one of the nation's top players. This well-researched work follows Farmer's life from his time in an orphanage in Perth throughout his entire football career. It is a book full of anecdotes and is unashamedly celebratory. Hawke explores Farmer's performances in major games in detail, particularly the 1961 Australian championships at Brisbane, when he played a significant role in Western

Australia winning the title for the first time in four decades. This book is an invaluable publication examining an aspect of local history in Australian Rules football.

There have been only a few serious attempts to write club histories of the WAFL. Three studies stand out as excellent publications — Jack Lee's *Celebrating 100 years of tradition* (1998), an examination of the history of the East Fremantle Football Club; Ken Spillman's two-volume *Diehards: The story of the Subiaco Football Club* (vol. 1, 1998; vol. 2, 2000); and Brian Atkinson's *West Perth Football Club 1885-1985* (1985). Each chapter in Lee's book is dedicated to a year from 1898 to 1997 and provides an overview of major issues each season. The book is illustrated with 180 photographs. Sports history researchers will find much to appeal, notably the attention to detail of the WAFL's most successful club. In volume one of Spillman's work, he examines the first 50 years of the Subiaco Football Club (SFC) from 1896. The material is presented in sixteen chapters, each focussing on one period of the club. The volume gives a very broad overview of the development of the SFC, and volume two, containing a similar number of chapters details the history of the club to the end of the century. Atkinson's book is a detailed investigation with sociological insights. As a participant observer who, at the time of publication, was vice-president of the West Perth Football Club, Atkinson provided insights into all aspects of the operation of the club. He utilised informal conversations, casual observations and formalised interviews, as well as participatory experience to gain his research data over several years. Atkinson sets the scene well and provides the reader with an understanding of the culture inside the club. A strength of the book is the statistics section, where he includes every result of the West Perth league team from its first game on 6 June 1885 to 25 August 1984.

Association Football, or soccer, is undoubtedly the most widely played and popular spectator sport in the world. Yet in Western Australia, it has remained a minor sport. There have been a few attempts to write of some aspects of soccer in the State, with Richard Kreider's *A soccer century: A chronicle of Western Australian soccer from 1896 to 1996* (1996) attempting to chart the history of the sport. While the book is valuable for those interested in the sport in a historical context, it falls down by not exploring any aspect of the sport in depth.

The Western Australian Soccer Football Association (WASFA) had controlled the sport in the State until 1960, when several clubs established a breakaway semi-professional league — the Western Australian Soccer Federation (WASF). An

examination of the reasons for the breakaway and a brief history of the last four decades of soccer of the twentieth century in the State were included in *Soccer West Australia 1960 to 2000* (Greenwood, 2000). The book was published by Perth Advertising Services, with the result a publication that had the appearance of an advertising supplement (104 advertisement in the 160-page publication) rather than an in-depth historical document. It would suit a reader who required brief profiles of a selected number of personalities in the sport, lists of premiership teams, fairest and best winners, and short histories of the individual clubs. In contrast, David Andrews and Aldo Guzzi's *Azzurri 1948-1998: 50 golden years* (1999) provided an excellent insight into the history of the Azzurri Soccer Club, one of Perth's most successful clubs, which was formed by Italian immigrants in 1948. The content of the 25 chapters is chronological, commencing with "The early settlers", focusing on the Italian immigration to Western Australia and finishing with "The Glory boys", highlighting the contribution of the club's players in National and State teams. The 14 months of intensive research are combined with Andrews' journalistic background (he was the soccer writer with the *West Australian* for 27 years). The actual writing of the book was completed by Andrews, who took the unusual step of writing in one-sentence paragraphs, similar to newspaper journalism. This was to help members of the Italian community, for most of whom English was not their first language (D. Andrews, personal communication, September 15, 2002). Though their focus is on a club, rather than the federation, Andrews and Guzzo have gone beyond Greenwood, who provided a superficial study of the sport, to give interesting and informative background on soccer.

Track and field in Western Australia has produced a number of Olympic and Commonwealth Games gold medallists. But there has yet to be a serious history of that sport. However, Dino Gava's *Personal Best: The history of the West Australian Marathon Club* (1997) is the best study of the sport to date. The book traces the history of the Western Australian Marathon Club (WAMC), which was established in the early 1970s, after a group of local distance runners became disenchanted with the organisation of the Western Australian Amateur Athletic Association (WAAAA). Gava provides a brief history of track and field in Western Australia, with the WAAAA being formed in 1905, only to be disbanded three years later, and reformed in 1928. The book has many commendable black and white photographs. The overall impression is of a well-written and researched book of excellent value, neatly divided into mainly

chronological segments of track and field in Western Australia, meticulously factual, and well-supported with eye-witness accounts and solid statistics.

The Royal Western Australian Bowling Association (RWABA) has been one of the largest sporting organisations throughout the twentieth century — in regards to membership numbers. The RWABA's archives committee was formed in 1988 with the task of producing a history of the Association to coincide with its Centenary in 1998. The project came to fruition when academic Gil McDonald et al. completed *Bowls West: A Centenary history of the Royal Western Australian Bowling Association 1898-1998* (1998). A comprehensive publication, the official centenary publication of the RWABA is certainly one of the best books detailing the history of any local sporting association published in Western Australia.

Horse racing is more than a national sport, "it is a cherished part of our cultural heritage" (Headon, 1988, p. 30). Horse racing became the most dominant sport in the colony, and its dominance has been perpetuated to the present day. Industries developed around the horse: the production of equipment such as saddles, whips, bits, spurs, brushes and combs; specialised studs for horses for export to India, for "roadsters", for draft horses, and for racehorses; the licensing of publicans at the course; and stables, paddocks and feed which were all associated with the racing industry. Horse-racing was the first organised sport in Western Australia, and by the turn of the twentieth century it was well established in Perth and on the Eastern Goldfields. There have been a limited number of historical publications about Western Australian horse racing, with most studies of the sport being included as sections in national publications such as *From go to whoa* (Pierce & Kirkwood, 1994), *A portrait of racing: Horseracing in Australia and New Zealand since 1970*. (Brassel, 1990), *Australian horse racing: A racegoer's companion to the Australian turf* (Pollard, 1988) and *The pictorial history of Australian horse racing* (Pollard, 1971).

However, there is an exception in Jenny Tomlinson's *Born winners, born losers: A history of thoroughbred breeding and racing in Western Australia since 1833* (1990). After a short introduction on the significance of horse racing globally, the book proceeds with an overview of racing in the Swan River colony (the first meeting was in 1833), to the formation of the Western Australian Turf Club in 1852. It is also an analytical history concerned with the change in the nature of the sport over time. This is the first history of racing which provides proper treatment of the sport in Western

Australia. Tomlinson contrasts the sophistication of racing in the late 1990s with the picnic atmosphere and general amateurism of the sport a century earlier. She also reminds us of the changing importance of some racing regions over time. This is illustrated when Blue Spec attracted local attention after winning the 1904 Kalgoorlie and Perth Cups. He was then taken by his owner Patrick Connolly to Victoria to prepare for the 1905 Melbourne Cup, with the result that Blue Spec became the only Western Australian-owned horse until Black Knight in 1984 to win Australia's top horse race. Tomlinson has expertly charted the history of thoroughbred racing in several districts in Western Australia. She also documents the growth of racing, how it changed from a sport based around a few carnivals each year, into an industry with at least metropolitan weekly meetings. Tomlinson's emphasis is on the sport and its social and political context, yet the figures of interest to the economic historian can also be found in the text. For example, in 1962, after one year of operation, the Totalisation Agency Board (TAB) turned over \$14.6 million from its 92 agencies (p. 91). Her book extends the limits of racing historiography, combining scholarship with a very readable publication.

Harness racing, more commonly referred to in Western Australia as trotting, was traditionally a night-sport in Perth, where the races were held under lights. Until greyhound racing started in Perth in 1974, trotting and horse racing were the only two sports where punters could legally gamble in Western Australia. Though the State has produced many outstanding pacers, there was a dearth of harness racing books until the 1990s. To celebrate 30 years since Mount Eden raced, the *Sunday Times* harness racing writer, Peter Sweeney, wrote *The mighty Mount Eden: The story of a legend* (Sweeney, 2001). The book is organised around the short career of the New Zealand-bred pacer and Sweeney clearly displays a real affinity with the sport he has documented. Sweeney's considerable journalistic ability and enthusiasm for his project shows. He uses anecdotes, to evoke the flavour of the period when Mount Eden was racing in the early 1970s, with great sensitivity.

Literature about disabled sports in Western Australia is scarce. The release of two recent titles — *Louise Sauvage: My story* (Sauvage, 2002) and *The fight in the dog* (Mather-Brown, 2002) — is indicative of the recent upsurge in interest in disabled sport during the last decade. Australia's continuing successes in disabled sport — in particular, track and field, swimming and cycling — should only increase the likelihood of the growth and expanded interest in this area of sport. Both publications were first-person accounts of the difficulties faced by the Western Australian pair of Bill Mather-

Brown and Louise Sauvage, who were crippled early in their lives and progressed to have successful sporting careers in international wheelchair sports. Both publications convey triumph over adversity and give an insight into the problems encountered by sportsmen and women who are affected by disabilities.

The Eastern Goldfields district of Western Australia, centred around Kalgoorlie-Boulder, was the most successful region outside the metropolitan area in regards to sporting successes during the first half of the twentieth century. Menzies miner Dave Strickland, father of Olympic champion Shirley de la Hunty, won the 1900 Stawell Gift; the Goldfields National Football League (GNFL) provided as many players to the WANFL in State teams as did the WANFL competition early in the twentieth century; six Kalgoorlie-Boulder players won the Sandover Medal, as the fairest and best players in the WANFL; many local players had successful careers in the VFL and AFL; and sportsmen and women from the region competed at the Olympic and Commonwealth Games. Professional running meetings in Kalgoorlie and Coolgardie during the first decade of last century regularly attracted some of the world's best sprinters and crowds of up to 20,000 attended. With this background, it is surprising how little of the history of Eastern Goldfields sport has been documented, apart from newspapers reports. But in 1993, *Goldfields Sport: A Century of Heroes, Heroines and Happenings* (Terrell, 1993) appeared to remedy the lack of literature on the region's sporting triumphs. Author John Terrell declared in the preface, "This book is not meant to be the definitive history of Goldfields sport" (p. 7). Terrell is right — the book is not a definitive history. It appears that the book was written more to entertain the locals rather than to take a serious look at the region's sporting history.

Andrew Rickett's biography of Kalgoorlie-born Walter Lindrum, one of the world's greatest professional billiards players, is an important publication, because it provides an insight into Australian and Western Australian sport between the two world wars (1982). The author examines Lindrum's career with great detail and clarity, where the sport's international administrators constantly changed the rules in an effort to combat his dominance (Cliff, 1999, p. 45; Fitzsimons, 1999, p. 95).

Western Australian Primary Sports Material

In 1978, two important documents were produced regarding the history of Western Australian sport — one charted the past and the other looked to the future. A report examined the history of the Western Australian branch of the National Fitness

Council (NFC), which was the forerunner to the Western Australian Sports Federation (WASF), while the other was an examination into what was required for the future development of the sport in the State.

The NFC was formed in 1939, after the Federal Government had recognised the urgency for an immediate and large scale physical fitness campaign in the early stages of World War II. In June 1941, Sir Frederick Stewart, the Minister for Health and Social Services, in moving the second reading of the Commonwealth National Fitness Bill, stressed the need for fit people in wartime, adding: "Whilst we are now pre-occupied with national fitness in order to survive, we must not forget the ultimate goal of fitness in order to enjoy life" (Gray, 1978, p. 8). Gray traced the development of the NFC, which underwent name changes until becoming the WASF in 1978. The WASF still exists and is the umbrella body for more than 100 Western Australian sporting organisations.

In 1978, an eight-member committee, representing the Community Recreation Council of Western Australia, under the chairmanship of Professor John Bloomfield, provided a report about the future development of sport in Western Australia to the State Government (Bloomfield, 1978). The rationale for the investigation was the fact that, despite European and North American countries rapidly developing sports systems for elite sport and for mass participation, Australia had made few changes and was steadily falling behind (Bloomfield, 1978, p. xiii). At the time of writing, Bloomfield noted that Australians had traditionally enjoyed sport, yet far less government money is spent per head of population on its promotion, organisation and coaching than in the majority of other countries in the Western world. This resulted in a steady downturn in Australians' international sporting performances since the late sixties (Bloomfield, 1978, p. xvii).

The committee made a number of recommendations, with the major suggestion being to establish a Western Australian Institute of Sport (WAIS), to support local athletes with financial and coaching assistance. The newly-elected Burke Labor State Government appointed a Sport Development Working Party to recommend a sports policy for Western Australia. The Government adopted the resulting Bloomfield Report (1983) and established Australia's second State-based Institute of Sport on 1 July 1984 (Bloomfield, 2003, p. 67).

In 1978, the Department for Youth, Sport and Recreation undertook a survey of memberships of State sporting bodies in the first sports census held in Western Australia. This census was repeated in 1981, 1984, 1990, 1993 and 1996. At the time of the 1996 census, there were 299,149 registered players in sports organisations in the Perth metropolitan area and 148,585 in country regions. In total memberships, which includes officials and non-competing personnel, 708,290 individuals were registered as members of sporting associations in Western Australia. This represented 40 per cent of the population. It compared to 628,000 registered members, corresponding to a ratio of 37 per cent of the population, at the 1993 census. In 1996, Australian Rules football had 50,779 members, more than any other sport. The other leading sports were hockey (37,016), netball (30,362), basketball (30,006), golf (29,236), indoor cricket (28,000), lawn bowls (26,976), tennis (24,819), soccer (19,121) and cricket (18,126).

Major primary sources in studying the history of Western Australian sport are the annual reports of the respective sporting associations. The annual reports can reveal considerable information as to that sporting organisation's history. There is a large variation as to the quality of information carried by these documents. All are required by law to provide a financial statement which has been verified by an auditor. However, it is up to the organisation as to what other information it records. For example, Bowls WA (formerly the Royal Western Australian Bowling Association) lists the number of members in each club for the previous five years, while the Badminton Association of Western Australia provides membership numbers for that season. Some associations do not publish their membership figures. In early 2005, there were 125 registered sporting associations and agencies with the WASF (R. Welch, personal communication, January 19, 2005).

Australian Sports Journalism

Introduction

Sport is important to Australians and, by extension, sports writing is also important. Given the enormous public interest in sport in this country during the last century, it is surprising how little has been published on sports journalism in Australia. The majority of the literature in the area of sports journalism has originated with United States researchers. There have been considerable writings about sports history, sports media, sports journalists and sporting events, but few studies in sports journalism in Australia. Greenwood (1966) claims that sporting heroes in Australia are idolised and

acclaimed in a way reserved overseas for pop singers and the monarchy (p. 135). He takes the argument further by saying that Australians' absorption in sport was important in providing a channel for the expression of national self-esteem. Though relatively weak and uninfluential in world affairs, Australians found that here was a field in which they could excel (p. 303). Newspapers and their sports journalists have played a major role in bringing the sporting news from around the world to Australians for nearly two centuries. This sub-chapter seeks to explore contemporary literature on Australian sports journalism. The concept of investigating this area, which has prevailed in our lives, stands alone as a significant component within the review of literature.

Sport has always been important to the print media. Since the nineteenth century, coverage of sports such as football, cricket, racing and rugby has been used by newspapers both to publicise events and to attract readers (Briggs & Copley, 1998, p. 367; Holt, 1990, pp. 306-326; Mason, 1988, pp. 46-59).

From the earliest days of settlement in Australia until the end of the First World War, newspapers were the principal public source of knowledge about sport and, from then, continued to be a major provider of sports news, though radio from the 1920s and television from the late 1950s have provided competition to the print media. Sports journalism has seen considerable changes throughout the last century. Today's sports writing strikes a balance between play-by-play reporting and an analysis of the contest. This is in contrast to the first half of the twentieth century when most of the sport reporting was a provision of factual information.

Today, sports coverage is central to many newspapers as they attempt to gain and hold readers in an increasingly competitive marketplace. While in the circulation battles among the popular press sport has always mattered, it has also become more important in recent times among the broadsheet press as traditionally working-class sports such as football have begun to attract an increasingly larger middle-class audience (Briggs & Copley, 1998, p. 367).

Nineteenth Century

Bell's Life in Sydney and Sporting Reviewer, modelled on a London journal of a similar name, was Australia's first sporting newspaper, being launched in 1845 and incorporated with the *Sunday Mail* in 1871. But it was the arrival of the *Referee* in Sydney in 1886 that reflected the growth "of the Australian preoccupation with sport"

(Cunneen, 1981, p. 162). The *Referee* was the nation's first newspaper to cover all major sports (Cashman, 1995, p. 170). Similar to the *West Australian* during the twentieth century, *Bell's Life* had concentrated on horse racing, reflecting the major sporting preoccupation in Sydney during the mid-nineteenth century, as Cunneen explains:

The founding of the *Referee* was a significant early sign of the role newspapers, and especially sporting journals, were to play in the burgeoning interest in and devotion to sport which began in the late decades of the nineteenth century. Its stated aims of elevating and recording sporting achievements were basic elements in the role of the press towards sport. (Cunneen, 1981, p. 164)

Cashman suggested that because of considerable interest in sport the *Referee* attracted quality writers, who were deeply committed to sport as a serious cultural enterprise (1995, pp. 170-171). Sports journalists in the late nineteenth century played a significant role in shaping sporting agendas and creating sporting heroes and heroines. William Francis Corbett, who was appointed a full-time journalist on the *Referee* in 1895, became an authoritative and popular sports writer over the next decades and helped in the creation of a "golden age" of Australian sport from the 1890s to 1920 (Cashman, 1995, p. 171).

Tradition of Sportswriting

For three years (1996—1998) the annual volume, *Carlton and United Breweries Best Australian Sports Writing & Photography*, was published, in an attempt to publicise some of Australia's best sports writing ("Carlton & United Breweries", 1996; "Carlton & United 1997", 1997; "Carlton & United 1998", 1998). A panel of judges selected the best published writing, the best unpublished writing and the best photograph, and in 1998 added the best Olympic writing to the categories. That publication being discontinued, another annual book, *The best Australian sports writing*, was introduced to the Australian sports books market four years later (Hutchinson, 2002; Hutchinson, 2003; Hutchinson, 2004). The result is a fine collection of sports writing.

Melbourne journalist Garry Linnell, writing the foreword to the *Carlton and United Breweries Best Australian Sports Writing & Photography 1996*, claimed that Australia had never had the rich tradition of sportswriting that can be found in some other countries, particularly in the United States of America, where the work of sports writers like Red Smith, Grantland Rice, Damon Runyon and Frank Deford is revered

and celebrated (Linnell, 1996, p. xii). Many critics support Linnell's stance, including Gideon Haigh, who claims that despite cricket's fecundity with books, few Australian writers have aspired to crafting cricket literature of the quality of leading English cricket writers, such as Sir Neville Cardus, R.C. Robertson-Glasgow, Alan Ross, Ronald Mason, E.W. Swanton, J.M. Kilburn and A.A. Thompson (Haigh, 1996, p. xii). Most of these were sports journalists working for newspapers, as well as writing books. Brian Matthews has reached a similar conclusion, claiming that Australians should accept that writing about sport can go far beyond mere reportage and scores, or "limp, ghost-written chronology-enslaved autobiography" (Matthews, 1998). But Matthews also makes the point that Australian sports journalists are generally restricted in opportunities due to a lack of space in newspapers, and in contrast to American sports writers, have "traditionally been chained to the treadmill of daily journalism . . ." He continues:

[F]or Australia is not that we lack the writers, but that the writers lack the outlets; and that is not a matter merely of publishing policy and pragmatism: it's cultural. (Matthews, 1998)

However, another Melbourne journalist, Garrie Hutchinson contradicts Linnell's finding. He says:

These sporting versions of the cultural cringe are a reminder of the uneasiness even practising journalists feel about what they do. Either we're just not as good as those Americans, or if we are individually good enough, we aren't allowed to show our wares because there aren't the magazines they have, and anyway, what sportswriters do isn't held in high enough esteem. . . . The trouble is that the critics of today can't remember the writers because they haven't had the opportunity to read it. (Hutchinson, 1998, p. 84)

Hutchinson accuses critics of Australian sportswriting of suffering from "a conceptual disdain for the strengths of Australian sportswriting, over the decades which lie in the work of daily journalists and special writers for newspapers, especially in the shorter forms such as columns and match reports, but also in work of biographers, club and season historians" (Hutchinson, 1998, p. 85). He argues that vast differences in the population of Australia and the United States, which has more than 240 million sports fans, have meant that Australians have had to create their own ways of writing about sport for a considerably smaller audience:

Fundamental to criticism of Australian writing about sport are isgivings about style. There is a yearning for a flowery, literary style and a discounting of yarning and story telling. Critics seem to draw a distinction between sports writing — all metaphor and adjective — which we don't do, and 'mere' journalism — which is supposed to be the scores, the story of the match — which we have too much of, and don't think much of. But it is an unhelpful distinction because there is much poetry, feeling, description, style and wit to be found in the narrow columns of newspapers as there is in the untrimmed acreage of *Sports Illustrated*. (Hutchinson, 1998, p. 85)

Hutchinson, who claimed that sports writing began with cricket in Australia, criticises Haigh (1996) for comparing the English cricket writers with Australian sports journalists. Hutchinson refers to English cricket writing as "fluffy" and American sports writing as "gothic", which "are not for us to write" (1998, p. 97). Though Hutchinson acknowledged that Swanton, Cardus and Robertson-Glasgow have admirable qualities as English writers, he said their stately and class-bound style was not the model for Australian writers. This nation's sports writers, he contends, have taken a different style — "an Australian road". Former Australian cricket journalists, such as Jack Fingleton, A.G. 'Johnny' Moyes, Keith Miller, R.S. Whittington and Richie Benaud all exhibited a direct story-telling style, a love of anecdote, devotion to fact, and a plain style of writing. Hutchinson noted there was some high quality Australian sports journalism, particularly in football and boxing, during the first half of the twentieth century. In his defence of Australian sports writing, Hutchinson, a Melbourne sports journalist, mistakenly tries to rate Australian sports writing at the high quality of the Americans. He concedes that Australian sports writing lost its way between the late 1940s to the 1970s. Though he was obviously referring to Melbourne newspapers, Hutchinson said this was because during that period there was little opportunity for sportswriting that went beyond match reports and news (Hutchinson, 1998, p. 94). He notes that the *Argus* folded in 1957 and the *Age*, Melbourne's daily broadsheet newspaper, had shown little interest in reporting Australian football during the 1950s and 1960s. This was in contrast to the *West Australian*, with football consuming more space in Perth's highest circulating newspaper than any sport except horse racing. A more thorough examination of the *West Australian's* coverage of sport will be presented later in this thesis.

Hutchinson's view of Australian sports writing was supported by David Headon, who edited a collection of works in the 765-page publication, titled *The best ever Australian sports writing: A 200 year collection* (2001). In the introduction, Headon declared that he had little trouble in obtaining sufficient quality writing for his book:

To begin with, I soon became aware that there was such extraordinary richness available to me, by Australians on Australian sport, that I did not have to call on the parcel of literature of non-Australians on Australian sport to bolster the collection. (2001, p. xiii)

It is obvious that Headon attempted to produce a publication to rival the David Halberstam-edited *The best American sports writing of the century* (1999). But the Australian work fell well-short of the American book. Headon's publication was of a similar size than the US volume (776 pages), but many internationally-acclaimed American journalists — including Frank Deford, Jim Murray, Tom Wolfe, Gay Talese, Grantland Rice, Red Smith, Ira Berkow, Ring Lardner, Jimmy Cannon, Hunter S. Thompson and Nonnan Mailer — provided highly-entertaining writing for the US publication.

By contrast, *The best ever Australian sports writing: A 200 year collection* lacked the consistent high quality. Headon printed articles from early in the nineteenth century. Ten pieces were published by correspondents known by the pen-name of "Anon", an abbreviation of Anonymous. They wrote on a range of subjects, including boxing, cricket and harness racing. Their writing was a mixture of clear and confusing. I pose the question why Anon's articles were used, other than to provide some history of sport in Australia from 1810 to 1895. Headon appeared to strive to include articles written by well-known people, rather than basing his selection on their journalistic ability. They include Australia's longest-serving Prime Minister, Sir Robert Menzies, and Don Bradman, widely considered as the world's best Test cricketer, who had articles included, which were not exceptionally-written. There were some very fine Australian sports journalists who contributed articles, including Ray Robinson, Garrie Hutchinson, Martin Flanagan, Roy Masters and Les Carlyon. But many of Australia's most respected sports writers, including Patrick Smith, Jeff Wells, Jacqueline Magnay, Caroline Wilson and Jim Webster were not considered worthy of inclusion. Respected sports historians Richard Cashman and Colin Tatz contributed insightful and analytical pieces, as did eminent historians Geoffrey Bolton and Geoffrey Blainey.

Writing in the *Weekend Australian Magazine* in 1980, academic Colin Tatz accused Australian newspapers of being too parochial in their reporting of sport. He claims the Australian media ignored important overseas sporting events, especially when there was not an Australian competing. He also noted that Australian newspapers ignored events which took place in other States. This contrasts to the British Press. Tatz

argues, "[John] Arlott's cream of British papers are generous: they report well, sport that is well-played wherever it occurs, even in the absence of British participation" (Tatz, 1980). He contends that Australian sports journalists do not provide an adequate analysis of sporting events:

Incredibly, most papers still believe we need straight storyline treatment of a game. But we all know the result, hearing or seeing it on the news, or from TV highlights, sports roundups, replays, repeat replays, slow-motion replays. We know who won, who scored, who got sent off. Yet the Sunday and Monday papers regale us with breathless, racy, hasty, ill-informed, clichéd, poorly-written, unproofed, newsy storyline stuff, as witness. (Tatz, 1980)

Of his impressions of the sports content in Australian newspapers, Tatz claimed that sports journalists treated the adult public as "barely literate, fully uncultured, uneducated, as a moronic mass". He adds:

My experience is different: adults respond in an adult way to an adult approach, as do children old enough to read. Sport, I plead, is more than a result, so very much more than a diary of kicks, volleys and maiden overs. (Tatz, 1980)

In his article, Tatz was widely critical of the sports section of newspapers. In 1980, he was correct in most of his criticisms, because I believe that Australian newspapers failed to adapt to the influence of television quickly and adequately. An examination of major capital newspapers during the 1970s and 1980s show that the Monday's papers, to a large extent, still provided descriptions of sporting events from the weekend, instead of analysing the contest. This is despite television having been firmly established and telecasting many major events live, while radio had been providing a similar service for several decades. However, this changed in the late 1980s when newspapers sports journalists at Australian newspapers improved their analytical skills in their coverage of events. In regards to Tatz's contention that Australia ignored overseas events when an Australian was not competing, and that Australian journalists often ignored events in other States, this is still largely the case, though there are now considerably more high-profile Australian sportsmen and women competing in overseas events than in 1980. Also, when Tatz wrote his article, there were no national leagues, with most sports restricted to holding annual Australian championships. Now, a large number of sports have national competitions, with the highest profile national competition being the Australian Football League (AFL), which changed its name from the Victorian Football League in 1990.

Tatz and fellow academic, Douglas Booth, take this argument further in their book, *One-eyed: A view of Australian sport*, by claiming that a lot of Australian sports journalism is "second rate" because it concentrates on trivia and fails to put sport in any sort of analytical context (Booth & Tatz, 2000, xii). They continue:

It strikes us that, unlike American writing, Australian literature and journalism on sport is essentially idolistic, jingoistic in many respects, celebratory for the most part, "limp, ghost-written, chronology-enslaved autobiography" in too many instances, and often exculpatory or "excusatory" in defeat. Most often it is narrative or revelatory, as in unfolding a story. But it often stops short of analysing the story and rarely takes the next step, which is to evaluate critically. (2000, p. xiii)

Agreeing with Linnell's (1996) assertion, Flanagan, in his book, *One of the crowd: A personal view of newspapers*, argues that until recently there was very little which could be classified as Australian sports literature. He wrote: "It was as if there was a social taboo which meant that sport, like the tradesmen's entrance, had to be kept out the back" (1990, p. 46). Stoddart also bemoans the fact that Australia does not have sporting literature of the quality of American sportswriter-turned-novelist Paul Gallico's celebrated 1938 published book, *Farewell to Sport* (1986, p. 5).

In his review of the 1993 published book, *Press Box: Red Smith's favourite Sports Stories*, Sydney sports journalist Jeff Wells analysed the standard of sports writing as:

I always thought American sportswriting was at least a furlong ahead of the field. The Poms were either too pompous at one end of the scale or too rabid at the other. We [Australians] were too hamstrung. The Kiwis wrote like they talked. The Europeans were over the top. But the Yanks – from Hemingway to Hunter S. Thompson – had built up a tradition in which their finest prose was reserved for the sports pages. Most of their newspapers are grey and self-important but even the smallest have sports columnists who can generate an argument or a laugh on most days. (Wells, 1993)

I support Linnell's contention that there is no rich tradition of sports journalism in Australia, compared to the United States. This is evident in the dearth of biographies and autobiographies of Australian sports journalists, while in contrast, there is a plethora of biographies and autobiographies of US sports writers. Sports journalism has been treated more seriously in North American newspapers, which contrast to their Australian counterparts. Sports writing in the United States press had a deeper tradition than in Australia. "Serious" writers such as Ernest Hemingway, Jack London, Thomas

Hauser and F. Scott Fitzgerald embraced sport as part of their creative landscape, while top sports writers such as Damon Runyon and Ring Lardner crossed over to literature. Before World War II, American sports writers were becoming celebrities, and serious writers of other genres were making regular forays into the sports pages. There are no similar observations in Australian newspapers.

Biographies

An examination of writings of Australian sports journalism limits biographies to women during the pioneering days of women's sports journalism in Australia. In 1994, Adelaide academic John Daly wrote *Feminae Ludens*, which looked at the career of Lois Quarrell, who was South Australia's first female sports journalist in the 1930s. Two years later, Sydney university lecturer Audrey Tate examined the life and career of Australia's first full-time sports journalist at a major newspaper, Pat Jarrett, in *Fair Comment*.

Though there has been a lack of biographies and autobiographies about Australian sports journalism, former *Sydney Morning Herald* sports journalist, Jim Webster, in 1986, wrote a first-person account of his quarter of a century in sports journalism in *It's a sporting life*. More recently, Les Carlyon, one of Australia's most respected racing writers, published his recollections in *Truegrit: Tales from 25 years on the turf* (1996). There were occasional short profiles of sports writers in newspapers, such as Jack Pollard, who wrote, edited or compiled 70 books after leaving full time sports journalism in the late 1950s (Derriman, 1988). Most of the examination of sporting journalists at major newspapers occurred in articles announcing their retirement. For example, in 1988 the retirements of Webster and Alan Clarkson from the *Sydney Morning Herald* were announced with a combined profile (MacDonald, 1988). The previous year, the *West Australian's* longest-serving Australian Rules football writer, Geoff Christian, was farewelled into retirement with a profile (Stocks, 1987).

Scholarly Literature

Sport is the biggest single speciality in mainstream news media, with a 1992 survey showing that 10.9 percent of journalists in the Australian media specialised in sport (Henningham, 1995). Rowe and Stevenson (1995), in their article *Negotiations & Mediations: Journalism, professional status and the making of the sports text*, draw attention to the fact that there is now quite a substantial scholarly literature which has

traced the development of the general field of sports media, with particular attention being paid to the relationship between mass media coverage of sport and its growing commercialisation and commodification. According to Rowe and Stevenson, there is little detailed knowledge and analysis of the institutional and professional concepts of sports journalism, a matter my thesis will address in a historical context.

In their book *Sport: Money, morality and the media*, Richard Cashman and Michael McKernan (1981) point out that detailed research on the treatment of sport in daily papers would throw further light on the role played by the newspaper press in elevating and recording "the people's pastimes, and its contribution to the growth of the Australian sporting passion" (pp. 174-175). A similar point is made by McClenaghan (1990) in the U.S. publication *Journalism Quarterly*, who states that "little has been documented in scholarly journals about the Fourth Estate's most widely read newspaper section by male readership — the sports page". Smith and Valeriotte (1986, p. 310) also support the claim that there has been little scholarly examination of sports journalism.

John Henningham wrote in the spring 1995 issue of *The ACHPER Healthy Lifestyle Journal* that "despite their high profile and extensive popular readership, sports journalists tend to be neglected in academic studies of journalists and journalism" (p. 13). He adds that the neglect of sports journalism within mainstream journalism literature is itself a reflection of the ghetto structure of sports departments in newspapers and broadcast media organisations. According to Stoddart (1986), it is difficult to sustain the argument that sports sections are fundamentally different from other departments. However, Henningham (1995) disagrees profoundly with him, saying that unlike most other editorial departments, sport is a specialist area which is quite separate from other sections (p. 13). I support Henningham's theory that the sports departments in major newspapers have their own identity. This is particularly true at the *West Australian*, where sports journalists write only sport.

In Rowe and Stevenson's *Negotiations & mediations: Journalism, professional status & the making of the sports text* (1995) and Rowe's *Sport, culture and the media: The Unruly Trinity* (1999) analysis, the views long held within newspaper journalism that sports reporting is less important and requires less skill than other forms of journalism are being challenged by a greater recognition that sport plays a pivotal role in determining the commercial success of many newspapers. One of the most frequently circulated pejorative descriptions of sports journalism (coined by the distinguished

American sportswriter Red Smith) holds that it is the *toy department* of the news media (Garrison & Salwen, 1989; Traub, 1991). This expression suggests, not only that the sports round is a playground for immature journalists, but also that other, more prestigious departments (presumably including politics, international news, business and courts) define the true mission of the newspaper.

Rowe, one of Australia's leading academic researchers in popular culture, sport, television and the print media, has written extensively about the media's coverage of sport in a cultural context. In his 1991 study of sports journalism, *'That misery of stringer's clichés': Sports writing*, Rowe examines the print media's sports reporting, which he points out receives considerably less academic attention than electronic media coverage of sport. Rowe argues:

[T]here is "an intimacy in the literary form that is seldom exhibited visually/aurally, particularly in that as written words are unmotivated signs there is a greater necessity for the reader to make an effort actively to decode them, rather than to be intentionally or unintentionally exposed to them. (Rowe, 1991, p. 78)

Rowe claims that most sports journalism is directed at a large, male, working-class readership which, it is believed, forms the natural constituency of sport. This target audience is linked with the notion of a sports community, which, although regarded as more socially diverse, is nonetheless characterized as fitting closely with the ethos of the "grass roots" sports fan (1991, p. 83). He argues that sports writing, which is an omnipresent popular cultural form, has largely failed to represent the complexity of forces which produce sport and its social meaning. Rowe is correct in his analysis, but I am not convinced that good sports journalism should interpret the relationship between sport and social connotation.

In *Journalism and Popular Culture* (Dahlgren & Sparks, 1992), a chapter was devoted to sports journalism, where Rowe considers the hierarchy of respectability within that genre of journalism. In an examination of mainly contemporary Australian and British sports journalism, Rowe sets out his parameters in the first paragraph, when he says, "In this chapter I look at sports journalism as a dimension of popular culture which seeks to serve its readership according to a set of self-formed professional principles and practices" (Rowe, 1992, p. 96). He argues that, as a popular form, sports journalism must engage with a large predominantly working-class and male readership and its assumed closeness to that low-status group leads to it being disparaged by

professional peers of other journalistic disciplines. Rowe argues that sports journalism's "location within large formal media organisations leads it to be in some sense alienated from its readership" (1992, p. 109). This implies that sports journalism has failed to become entirely popular, because it does not genuinely relate the activities of sport to the lives and concerns of the audiences. I take issue with Rowe's comments. To consider that sports fans are in the working-class category is a misrepresentation of the many thousands who attend sporting events throughout Australia every weekend and during the week. An example is horse racing, which attracts the wealthy, and men and women from high-prestige occupations such as stock brokers, doctors and lawyers, as well as those from humble surroundings. The various football codes, which early in the nineteenth century were considered largely working-man sports, now attract spectators of all areas of society. In regards to Rowe's contention that sports journalism has mainly a male readership, a decade after his study, about 80 per cent of male newspaper readers read the sports section of the *West Australian*, while nearly 50 per cent of women are consumers of the sports news (R. Mitchell, personal communication, May 18, 2005).

The closest a publication has gone to making an in-depth study of Australian print sports journalism is David Rowe's *Sport, culture and the media: The unruly trinity* (1999). He points out that sports journalists are among "the most visible of all contemporary writers" (1999, p. 36), yet he claims sports journalists do not have a standing in their profession which corresponds to the size of their readerships or of their salaries. This is disputed by senior editorial personnel who were employed by the *West Australian*. In this publication, Rowe considers how the media and sport has insinuated itself into contemporary everyday life, and how sport and media have made themselves indispensable.

Hargreaves (1986, p. 140) also contends that the status of sports journalists among their colleagues is low and they are the lowest-paid journalists. However, Garrison and Salwen (1989, p. 57) moved away from that statement by saying that during the previous two decades sports journalists had become more skilled and better educated. The analyses by Rowe (1999), Hargreaves (1986), and Garrison and Salwen (1989), in relation to status and salary, are out of step with the situation at the *West Australian*. The paper's sports journalists during the period of this study matched their colleagues in regards to status and salary (W.T.G. Richards, personal communication, November 27, 1998; K. Murray, personal communication, November 29, 1998).

Australia's only academic sports history journal, *Sporting Traditions*, which is the journal of the Australian Society for Sports History (ASSH), first published in 1984, presents a scholarly view of sport. Many of the papers published in the journal had been presented at the biannual ASSH conference, which is held annually in Australia or New Zealand. Most of the nation's leading authors of sports history publications contribute to *Sporting Traditions*. A strength of the periodical is the large number of book reviews of sporting history in this country, and occasionally it offers comment on Australian sports journalism.

Eitzen and Sage (1993), writing in *Sociology of North American Sport*, say that sports journalism controls access to the sports information that the public wants, and that sports journalists' stories and commentaries can influence the destinies of franchises and athletes. But, they say, in the world of journalism, sports work is not held in high esteem. I will argue the opposite view, because my research indicates the other sections of the *West Australian* significantly respected the sports department and its staff during the period under examination.

Newspaper Circulation

In their book, *More than a game: An unauthorised history of Australian Rules Football*, Rob Hess and Bob Stewart (1998) noted that a good football story was guaranteed to boost a newspaper's circulation. As Sydney sportswriter Ian Heads (1999) points out, the Melbourne newspapers realised that circulation increases coincided with the start of the football season. According to Laurie Knowle, Chief of Staff of Melbourne's *Sunday Herald Sun*, a football story with a good picture on the front page translates into 20,000 more copies sold (L. Knowle, personal communication, May 25, 2005).

Cashman (1995) took the argument further by saying the media have played a pivotal role in the rise of organised sport, creating the familiar images of sport and the moral universe in which sports operate. He claims they have helped to popularise sport, extend its influence in Australian society and create virtually a separate moral and cultural world, and that the sports pages are a recognisable and distinct area of Australian life. Goldlust (1987) has reached a similar conclusion, noting that the regular and detailed coverage of sporting events in the daily newspaper amplified an already broadening public interest in the major sporting competitions and consequently contributed towards providing such competitions with the cultural legitimacy that

further propelled sport into the mainstream of popular culture. Stoddart (1986) notes sport has been an important media vehicle for carrying particular social attitudes and that good sports writing can sell newspapers.

Arrival of Radio and Television

Until the 1930s, Australian newspapers as a whole had an enviable strength and influence. They were still the chief source of news and comment. The printed word in a serious newspaper or in a weekly still kept something of its nineteenth-century authority. Newspapers generally were only just beginning to regard broadcasting as a rival to them. Although radio services were already firmly established, they had not yet recruited a large reporting staff. The revolutionary prospect of television, with its worldwide and instant coverage of events, seemed only a dream or a nightmare to newspapermen. However, the impact of television on society — and sports reporting — was soon with us. In the 1950s, sports journalism, and what we now call the electronic media, was in one of its periods of rapid change, especially as it applied to the coverage of Australian Rules football in Melbourne, Hobart, Adelaide and Perth, and Rugby League in Sydney and Brisbane. While radio had not changed sportswriting much, television had a profound effect. Appetite for the written word had not diminished. But adding television to the media mix in the Eastern States in 1956 and Western Australia three years later did bring about substantial changes in the newspaper coverage of sport.

Rowe and Stevenson argue that over time the greater prominence of broadcast sport has improved the quality of print sports journalism (1995, p. 69). Newspapers had to cover more than scores and descriptions of the action (Coakley, 1998, p. 394; Garrison & Sabljak, 1985, p. 5; Andrews, 1987, p. 26; Rowe & Stevenson, 1995, p. 68; Snyder & Spreitzer, 1989, p. 255; McKay & Kirk, 1992, p. 10; Goldlust, 1987, p. 80). Their stories became more insightful and interpretative, the emphasis less on the results of competition and more on why these results occurred.

In tracing the contours of the television era of sports writing, in his 1998 book, *Sport in Society: Issues & Controversies*, Jay Coakley highlighted the changes regarding the print media's coverage of sport: "Since people now could see sports at home, sportswriters had to have stories that went beyond the action" (p. 394). Ray Sons, the *Chicago Sun-Times* sports editor (cited in Telander, 1984) said the reporters "had to tell the readers more about the players as personalities, delve more thoroughly into the reasons for strategies, be more critical of managers and coaches, and report more

thoroughly the behind-scenes manoeuvring and conflict" (p. 6). Bourgeois (1995, p. 195) observed that this type of coverage created serious tension in player-press relationships in North American sports, and some of the tensions still exist today. Coakley argues that when the sportswriter needed to come up with stories going beyond the action in sports, players discovered they had no privacy (1998, p. 394). No matter what they said or where they said it, their words could end up in print if a sportswriter was around. Koppett (1994) points out that this kept most athletes from saying the spontaneous things that made good material for reporters. The reporters, on the other hand, were under constant pressure to get good stories — to dig into the lives of the athletes their readers were watching on television. Though the above observations were largely based in the United States, they accurately describe the situation in the Australian media.

With the advent of television, whole sports events or their highlights became available to large audiences in a form that gave them a much stronger sense of "having-been-there" than could be accomplished by radio, print photography and text (Whannel, 1992). This greater "witness" to sports action put sharp pressure on print sports reporters to display greater care and accuracy in their accounts of games. Vamplew et al. (1997, p. 283) takes this observation further by saying that while newspapers made the public aware of sports stars, radio turned them into personalities, and television transformed them into celebrities.

Pascoe observed that, in 1980, newspaper commentary of Australian Rules football began to be analytical rather than descriptive (1995, pp. 159-160). This was because television took over the narrative function, with commentators telling viewers what they are seeing. Wenner supported the contention that newspapers are now required to provide the analysis, background information, and statistical data that the electronic media found difficult to provide (1989, p. 66). Garrison and Sabljak point out that journalists of the 1980s and 1990s provided more in-depth reporting in their communities, focusing on serious topics, such as sports injuries, gambling, regulation, and salaries (1985, p. 6). Heads supports this by saying that television has profoundly changed the way sport is written (1999), while Attwood is sceptical that Australian sports journalists are changing the way they cover events as quickly as the technology is changing:

There is a need for good descriptive writing about sport. But if writers only serve up what has already been seen on TV, people will stay tuned but stop reading. As TV tightens its stranglehold on sport, the challenge for writers is to provide new perspectives on an event or simply to go where the cameras cannot follow. (Attwood, 1992)

In their analyses of Australian sports journalism, there are contradictory claims as to the quality of the genre. I conclude this chapter by supporting the contention of Brian Stoddart (1986), Jeff Wells (1993), Garry Linnell (1996), and Booth and Tatz's (2000) contention that Australia has never had a rich tradition of sportswriting, compared to the United States. Taking this matter further, Australian sports journalism also pales into insignificance compared to the craft in Great Britain. The reasons for this are articulated in Brian Matthews' (1998) contention that sports journalists at Australian daily newspapers are not allowed the time and space to craft out consistent quality sports writing. Newspaper proprietors and editors can be held largely responsible, because in many instances the sports sections appear to be taken less seriously than other sections of the paper. The sports departments are often starved of resources, to enable their reporters a significant amount of freedom in covering major events. Many Australian sporting journalists were slow to embrace the role of television in the media landscape. Fortunately, in recent years this has changed, with the result of more in-depth reporting. It would not be overly critical to say that a large proportion of sports writing in this country relies on clichés and colloquial writing, and rarely criticises or questions those in authority, or Australia's sportsmen and women. This has resulted in fairly mundane writing. There are exceptions, such as Patrick Smith, Jeff Wells, Garry Linnell, Garrie Hutchinson, Jacqueline Magnay, Caroline Wilson and Martin Flanagan, who have the support of their sports editors in being permitted the time and editorial space to produce high quality sports writing.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

Coverage of sport in Australian newspapers developed during the twentieth century. Previously, there was sporadic attention that announced sports and sometimes reported these events. There were no sporting pages, but coverage was spread irregularly throughout the pages. Sporting sections appeared in the twentieth century and have developed to prominence in the overall paper. In a 1989 study, research showed that the sports page had "about five times as many readers as the average section of the newspaper" (Snyder & Spreitzer, 1989, p. 255). I want to demonstrate how and why sport has increased in coverage, and why newspapers depend on sport as a topic of news and rely on sport as a basis of circulation. I will examine the development of sports articles and their increasing percentage of reporting.

Period Under Examination

The period that I will examine is 1901 to 1971, because it covers Australia becoming a Federation on 1 January 1901, a time when sport was seen as a potentially unifying element, to when the sports section moved from the body of the *West Australian* to the back pages on 2 February 1971. Also, Ted Collingwood, the longest-serving sports editor at the paper, retired in April 1971 after more than 32 years leading the sports pages. This thesis will examine the changes in sports reporting during that period, tracing the shift from information to entertainment in sports journalism. The thesis will also explain the reasons for the modifications in the paper's coverage of sports, and the degree to which column space coincided with the popularity of various sports.

This examination of the development of sports writing in the *West Australian* will include the months of January and July in seven-yearly intervals — 1901, 1908, 1915 and so on. My reasoning for examining one month in mid-summer and another in mid-winter is that the most popular Australian team sports — cricket in summer and

football in winter — have distinct seasons. The examination will include a comparison of the changes in sports articles and the paper's increasing percentage of reporting.

Research Questions

The main research question guiding this study is as follows:

What changes have occurred in the reporting of sport in the *West Australian* over a period of 70 years?

The study, and especially the data-gathering process, was guided by the following nine questions:

- 1 How did the types of preferred sports articles change over time?
- 2 How did the writing style change over time?
- 3 What influence did the sports editors have on the paper's sports coverage?
- 4 What role did correspondents play in providing coverage of sport?
- 5 Did the writing styles and usage of language between the *West Australian's* full-time sports journalists differ from the paper's correspondents?
- 6 What impact did the introduction of radio and television have on the paper's reportage of sport?
- 7 What changes can be observed when the *West Australian* changed from broadsheet to tabloid in 1947?
- 8 What impact did both world wars have on the sports coverage in the *West Australian*?
- 9 Did the *West Australian* play a pivotal role in the rise of organised sport in the State?

The research will draw on a number of resources in order to establish some of the major developments which have occurred as the *West Australian's* sports writing and sports section evolved. This involves qualitative analysis and the collation of quantitative data.

This thesis is largely a historical approach, in that the focus of this study is about change to a major newspaper over time. Changes to the sports reporting in the *West Australian* will be measured by a variety of procedures. The paper's articles themselves will also present evidence of change. There is considerable value in mixing qualitative research with quantitative (Hest & Kahn, 1989, pp. 89-90; Strauss & Corbin, 1990, pp. 18-19). Quantitative research is strong at summarising large amounts of data and reaching generalisations based on statistical projections. On the other hand, qualitative research provides rich descriptive detail that sets quantitative results into a wider context. Frey et al. (1991) take this further by claiming that "quantitative observations provide a high level of measurement precision and statistical power, while qualitative observations provide greater depth of information about how people perceive events in the context of the actual situations in which they occur" (p. 99). More precisely, qualitative research has greater *validity*, because informants can put items on the agenda, researchers can probe, and the data is contextualised. Quantitative research, conversely, has greater *reliability*, because its more formalised procedures of data collection and analysis increase the likelihood of obtaining consistent data and consistent codings; and its findings have greater *representativeness*, because of the larger samples and the sometimes random techniques used to recruit them.

Qualitative methods can be used to uncover and understand what lies behind any phenomenon about which little is yet known. It can be used to gain novel and fresh slants on things about which quite a bit is already known. Also, qualitative methods can give the intricate details of phenomena that are difficult to convey with quantitative methods (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, p. 19). This is the case with interviews, but also is an important component of research from a content analysis of newspapers in this study. Through both methods of research, I intend to examine the changing language and subject matter during the seven decades of sports writing in the *West Australian*.

This study involves historical and textual analyses, as well as semi-structured interviews with former staff members of the *West Australian* to help establish key factors in development of the paper's sports department. Details of the interview process will be presented later in this chapter.

I selected an interpretive inquiry approach to use as the methodological basis of the research design to gain an understanding of the development of sports writing at the *West Australian*. Interpretive inquiry covers a range of sub-categories, including

participant observation, which is a theoretical framework for my methodology. My use of participant observation is a modification of the original theory. "Participant" is not used in its literal sense here. It means "data" found from the following sources:

- Interviews.
- Documents and articles: These included books that helped me gather historical information, and articles that I studied qualitatively.
- Observations and experiences of the structure of the sports department: Being an employee at the *West Australian* sports department since 1984 has helped me get access to documents and interviews.

Role of Libraries

Libraries were an important aspect of this study. I located National Fitness Council and Government reports in the Western Australian Ministry for Sport's library, which is situated on the upper level of Perry Lakes Stadium, the venue for the opening and closing ceremonies, and the track and field events, at the 1962 British Empire and Commonwealth Games. The Battye Library, an invaluable source in the history of newspapers, lists every newspaper published in Western Australia, with the date of the first issue to the date of the last issue for the non-current titles. That directory, and observation in recent years, enabled me to compile a list of specialist sport publications. Perth's four public universities — Edith Cowan, Curtin, Murdoch and the University of Western Australia — provided considerable study resources.

Historical Context

I have also had access to the *Unpublished History of The West Australian*, which was completed by a former cadet counsellor at the paper, O.K. (Bill) Battye in 1982. Sport was only rarely mentioned, but this text contains a comprehensive history of the management of the company until the 1960s. *House News*, the paper's in-house magazine, was published about ten times a year from 1952 and though the sports department and sports journalists received infrequent mentions, these publications were an invaluable source of material to enable a better understanding of the operations of the *West Australian* sports department to 1971. The *Quarterly Bulletin*, another in-house magazine, published four times a year during the 1960s, also provided information on the history of the company. However, sport was seldom mentioned in the latter publication.

Significant Sports and Sporting Events

Since the day of settlement in Western Australia, sport has been a part of the State's social life, though the games played in the early years were quite different from those played today. There have been claims that sport also played a role in the nation-building of a country which has a small population and is geographically isolated from the global centres of power. This thesis will examine the relationship between the *West Australian* and sport in the State. In addition to examining a number of texts, I spent time in the Western Australian Ministry for Sport's library, researching the development of sport in Western Australia, and also studied the records and archives of several State sporting associations.

Attention was given to some of the major sporting events reported in the *West Australian*, in an attempt to clarify certain assumptions that are carried to our current times from the early days of sports reporting, when little national fervour was expressed in the newspapers.

Attendance Figures

A lack of accurate records in sports organisations during the first half of the twentieth century limited the opportunity to ascertain attendance figures at many of the major sporting events in Perth. Western Australian National Football League (WANFL), later renamed the Western Australian Football League (WAFL), has a limited record of attendance figures, so the number of spectators at the matches were generally obtained from *Behind the play . . . A history of football in Western Australia from 1868* (Barker, 2004), and *The footballers: A history of football in Western Australia* (Christian, Lee and Messenger, 1985). Newspaper reports infrequently listed approximate attendance numbers. *The WACA: An Australian cricket success story* (Barker, 1998) and newspaper articles were the main sources for ascertaining attendance figures at major cricket games in Perth. In the two gambling sports of horse racing and trotting, most of the attendance figures were obtained from reports in the *West Australian*. Greyhounds became the State's third gambling sport in 1974, which was outside the timeframe of this study.

Ownership

Changes of ownership of the *West Australian* were comprehensively listed in the *Unpublished History of The West Australian* (Batty, 1982) and various feature articles

and souvenir issues of the paper. There was one souvenir issue for the 100th anniversary of the *West Australian* in 1933, another when the paper moved from Newspaper House (125 St Georges Terrace Perth) to the Forrest Centre (219 St Georges Terrace, Perth) in 1988, and also when it relocated to its present location at Osborne Park, eight kilometres north west of the city in 1998. *One hundred & sixty years of news from the West Australian* (Savvas & Gaylard, 1993) and *The Cyclopaedia of Western Australia* (Batty, 1912), both stored in the *West Australian's* library, provided a condensed examination of the paper's ownership. Owners of other major Western Australian newspapers were identified through various other sources (Murray, 1998; Dunn, 1997; Byers, 1993; Hay, 1983; Frost, 1983; "The Press of Western Australia", 1912).

Television and Radio Stations

An examination of the daily television and radio section in the *West Australian* ascertained the scheduling of sports programs throughout the seven decades under examination. Research in the *Broadcaster*, which was published every Saturday during the 1930s and '40s, included radio articles and schedules for the following seven days, and the *West Australian*, throughout the period established the launching dates of the three television and seven radio stations in Perth.

Changing Technologies

The newspaper is passing through an era of rapid and accelerating change from one technology to another, and the forces which are generating this transformation are traceable to social trends and technological opportunities. In the first half of the twentieth century, the teleprinter, the telephone and the telegraph all impacted on news-gathering in Australia. In the age of the telegraph early last century, sports news was generally abbreviated into two or three paragraphs, which were mainly statistical, because of the high costs of overseas cable messages. News agencies occupied a central position in the news supply business, and newspapers had to rely on their wire service for much of their information. From the 1850s, Reuters quickly developed into an imposing news organisation and was a news supplier for newspapers throughout the British Empire (Chalaby, 1998, p. 80). By the 1980s, the facsimile machine, and in the following decade, the Internet, started to have major impacts on news-gathering.

The social function of the newspaper is changing, as is the whole culture of journalism and the concepts of daily disseminated printed information. Electronic technology is bringing about these transitions and the newspaper is a crucial information

industry which has made substantial progress towards the new media technology. I examined Peter Putnis' pioneering work on the role of cable and wire services in transferring overseas news to Australia in late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (Putnis, 1999; Putnis, 1998; Putnis, 1997). This provided information as to the role cable news services played in disseminating items to Australian newspapers.

Royal Commission on Betting in Western Australia

The *West Australian* provided a substantial coverage of the controversy over the role of Starting Price (SP) bookmakers, and the subsequent Royal Commission on Betting in Western Australia during the 1950s and early 1960s. This, together with occasional journal articles and the official report of the Royal Commission, highlighted the role of the gambling sports of horse racing and trotting in society and the establishment of the Totalisator Agency Board (TAB).

Quantitative Procedure

To determine how much and what type of coverage sport has received in the *West Australian*, a content analysis was conducted of the newspaper. During this research, between February and November 1999, I had access to all issues of the *West Australian* in the paper's library. Copies of the newspaper for the period under examination are contained on microfilm. I photocopied the months of January and July in each of the 11 years under examination. Measuring the numbers of columns, and in total centimetres of editorial content, was the primary means of data collection. After measuring the entire editorial coverage in centimetres, in each issue of the paper in the months of January and July every seven years during the period that this thesis covers, I divided the articles into four sections — general news, sport, entertainment, and business and finance. In percentage terms, I then measured the entire editorial content for each of those four categories. This enabled me to observe the importance of each of the sections to the paper during different periods. The categories closely followed those chosen by Fairfax political journalist Michelle Grattan (1998) in her analysis of the editorial independence of Australian newspapers.

Editorial Space

I then conducted an examination of the amount of editorial space allocated to each sport, which will indicate the paper's popular sports during the first seven decades of last century. I measured the editorial content for each sport, for each month, then

calculated both the total centimetres and an average percentage for each sport. In a further evaluation, I counted in centimetres the space allocated to fields for horse racing and harness racing, cricket scoreboards, and pre-game positioning and post-game results panels in Australian Rules football. Deducting the amount of non-text editorial space will place those four sports in context with all other sports in relation to the actual coverage in the text. I then constructed a graph, showing each sport in its relative importance to the paper for that month.

Means, or averages, are a useful way to summarise and present data. I will present means to summarise and present the data from this study. However, Bouma warns that while averages are useful they must be used and interpreted with caution (1993, p. 175). This applies to my study, where I compared two months — January and July — every seven years. There are annual major events at other times of the year, which resulted in a substantial increase in coverage for that period. For example, the Western Australian National Football League finals are held every September, and racing's Melbourne Cup early in November. But I argue that examination of sports coverage early in the year and six months later provides a more accurate assessment, because they are in the middle of the summer and winter seasons.

Local-National Breakdown

Concurrently, I compared the column lengths devoted to local, national and international sport, and then averaged the January and July figures to result in an average for each year. In this quantitative approach, the tables and graphs will be an important indicator as to the changing pattern of sports writing in the paper. They will show the fluctuation of the sports reported in each seven-year period. For example, they will illustrate if there were major differences in the sports coverage during the war years in contrast to other years, and the differences between the number of sports reported at the turn of the century compared to the early 1970s. The subsequent qualitative analysis of the articles will assist with the understanding of the changing aspects of sports news. I examined several hundred articles throughout the seven decades of this study.

Tables

Relevant tables may be used to summarise information to indicate the relationships between the different variables under consideration (Blaxter, Hughes and Tight, 1996, p. 227). An examination of charts and tables in relation to percentages in this study will give a clear indication of the importance of individual sports to the *West*

Australian at particular periods between 1901 and 1971. From its infancy early in the twentieth century, the *West Australian's* sports page has occupied an increasingly important position in relation to other news. I have also presented tables to show the percentage of coverage provided to every sport in the relevant months and years during the study. These will be supported by tables showing column space afforded to local sport, compared to the coverage of national and international events. In addition, a comparison will be made of the ratio of sports news to general news, business and finance, and entertainment. Line graphs are very useful for comparing trends, and summarising and interpreting data (Bouma, 1993, pp. 172-173). I have incorporated line graphs showing the percentage of reporting of the top sports in January and July in each of the seven-year periods during this study.

Qualitative Interviews

As a means of obtaining qualitative data, in-depth interviews were an appropriate means of research for this study as they provided a rich resource of issues relating to the history of the *West Australian*, the *West's* sporting department and the paper's sports journalists. This technique provides flexibility and enables the interviewer to probe particular issues recognised as being crucial to the study. An important benefit of the interview technique is that respondents can express their feelings, opinions and understandings of the *West Australian* in their own terms.

Qualitative interviewing allows the interviewees to respond in their own terminology, expressing their own individual perceptions and experiences. Interviewing provides "a chance for a short period of time to get inside another person's world" (Patton, 1990, p. 357). Blaxter, Hughes and Tight theorise that qualitative research tends to focus on exploring, in as much detail as possible, smaller numbers of instances or examples, which are seen as being interesting or illuminating, and aims to achieve "depth" rather than "breadth" (1996, p. 60). Brenner, Brown and Cantor observe that qualitative research is "based on theories of motivation written for the purpose of understanding the attitudes and behaviour of respondents" (1985, p. 117).

Turner and Meyer argue that interviews "provide opportunities to instantiate and enlighten our theories and empirical literature base as well as to inform theory and practice by giving us first-person accounts of the contexts we study" (2000, p. 77). The success of interviews largely depends on the skill and knowledge of the interviewer and the relationship between interviewer and interviewee is paramount to capturing the most

powerful meanings. The validity of interviews can also be dependent on the ability and desire interviewees have to communicate ideas, thoughts and feelings (Turner & Meyer, 2000). In addition, reliability of participants' recollections can be affected by the interviewees' desire to present themselves in a favourable manner. Turner and Meyer specifically report the main advantage of interviews is that "interviews illuminate the *why* and *how* behind the observed actions or self-reports, and they allow for constructs to be redefined by the participants and for the new perspective on theoretical concepts to emerge" (2000, p. 77).

The interviews were used to gain deeper understanding of the paper's sports department through the use of observation, the formulation of description and the search for patterns. These processes allowed me to gain an understanding of reality as perceived by the group under study. I interviewed 20 people individually between November 1998 and January 1999. These included eight former sports journalists at the paper, three former general reporters and one current journalist, five former sporting champions, and family members of three deceased sporting journalists.

The journalists were all employed at the *West Australian* for at least seven years during the period under examination. The sample group of interviewees of journalists for this research were selected because of their experience and expertise in the field of journalism. Emphasis was placed on exploring their perceptions of the transition process as the paper evolved. Their observations and experiences were deemed important as they served to mediate the impact of the new media environment on the *West Australian's* sports writing. The journalists' own definitions of the situation helped to determine the changing sports media landscape.

Three Olympic track and field gold medallists, the late Shirley de la Hunty, Herb Elliott and John Winter, and former Test cricketer Graham McKenzie, were interviewed to seek their views about nationalism in sport and on changes from amateur to professional sport in Australia. I also interviewed former Australian Rules football champion, John Todd, to ascertain his experience of being the paper's first sportsman to cover events in co-operation with a ghost writer.

I contacted each of the prospective subjects identified for inclusion in this study by telephone and outlined details of the purpose and significance of the study. Upon verbal agreement to participate, the subjects were sent a letter and an 'Introductory Information for Interview' explaining the research in detail. Each subject was asked to

complete and return an 'Informed Consent' form if they were prepared to continue as a participant. On receipt of the 'Form of Disclosure and Informed Consent' I telephoned the participant to arrange an interview.

Most interviews took place at the participant's home, though three, all of whom lived in the regional areas of Western Australia or interstate, were conducted by telephone. An audio-tape recording was taken at each interview and these were transcribed on an 'Interview Transcription Record'. I also completed an 'Interview Record' and an 'Interview Evaluation Sheet', to note my observations of the interviewees, and the environment and length of interviews. Data from each interview was kept in a separate file and stored on computer disk. In addition, a data comparison file between the participants was kept and its contents also stored on computer disk. A semi-structured interview with open-ended questions was conducted with the subjects to explore the range of reactions and experiences they had during their working lives as journalists at the *West Australian*. Some structuring was imposed to ensure that no areas relevant to the study were omitted (Donaghy, 1984) and to minimise bias and to establish consistency across the participants. The questions used at each interview were almost identical. I attempted to avoid questions that may have been leading. Throughout the interviews I provided informants with an opportunity to correct information that may have been unclearly expressed and to elaborate or explain points. In addition, they were able to return to points, reflect on them and elaborate if desired. The interviews with journalists, which ranged in duration from half an hour to 75 minutes, closed with a reminder about the possible scheduling of a follow-up interview and thanking the informants for their participation. Interviews with sports professionals took less time than the journalists — between 15 and 20 minutes. This was because there was less territory to explore with the athletes, with my focus being mainly on their experiences in regards to sporting national sentiment. By contrast, it was necessary to closely examine the journalists' experiences and knowledge of the *West Australian* over a greater period of time in a historical context. I recorded the progress of the interview process on a 'Subject Progress Record'.

After the transcription of each interview was completed, I read the transcript several times. Initially, I highlighted main interview questions and responses in consultation with my entries in a reflexive journal. I then highlighted meaningful words and phrases. In order to identify the experiences and observations of the interviewees, data was deductively analysed. Meaningful words and phrases were classified into

various categories. For example, the size of the sports department at various times during the period under examination was ascertained from the interview recollections, as were the preferences of the sports editors in their allocation of space for the respective sports. Some of the interviewees provided reasons for sport moving from being mainly information to more analytical and entertainment. During the process of classifying statements, I identified and noted relevant patterns and themes common among interview responses.

It was an important consideration of this research to ensure confidentiality for the participants. However, all interviewees willingly gave permission for their names to be used in this study and I offered them the opportunity to read the transcript. Only one interviewee has asked to view the transcription. I conducted a second interview with six of the participants — Griff Richards, Alf Dunn, Alan Newman, Pat Higgins, Kevin Murphy and Jack Lee — between 2000 and 2001. The reasons for another interview resulted from further research which had raised more questions that required examination.

Qualitative Textual Analysis

The analytical interpretation of the articles will give a clear indication of the changing language of sports writing and the gradual introduction of an increasing number of categories of sports journalism in the paper. The contrasting writing styles of the journalists will be under scrutiny, as will the changing style of the reporters who were employed at the paper over lengthy periods. The writing styles and usage of language between the *West Australian's* full-time sports writers and the correspondents will produce insights into the overall sports coverage. I compared the writing styles of sports editors Godfrey White and Ted Collingwood with their staff. This will be put into context in regards to contemporary Australian sports writing, which is largely uncritical, almost adulatory, acceptance of what transpires in the world of sports. The aim of good sports writing is to give the reader a sense of "having-been-there in the case of the majority who did not attend in person and, for those who were present or experienced it through the electronic media, and to provide an authoritative interpretation of what they had encountered" (Rowe, 1992, p. 100).

Several writers have referred to the sports department at newspapers as the *toy department*, meaning the sports journalists have only modest esteem, compared to other areas of journalism. This was examined in interviews to determine whether the sporting

section of the *West Australian* was conservative in its reporting, or if it questioned authority. During my research in the *West Australian*, I examined whether the sports journalists adopted forms of advocacy, or editorial journalism, instead of reportage. Also in the paper during the first seven decades of the twentieth century, I have explored the relationship between the sports writer and the reader, which gave an indication of the strength and influence the paper had in the sporting community.

Proceeding chronologically enabled me to look at the flow of information via the agencies (availability of agency material) and to measure the later influence of radio and television on the language of sports articles. The changing language of sports writing at the *West Australian* was examined, as sport slowly changed from pure information to be perceived as less news-based and more entertainment-based. The word or label "article" is used throughout the thesis to incorporate the various types of writing formats, such as sports news, features, editorials or columns.

I evaluated the articles by reading every by-lined sports article in the selected time frame and noting the major issues and writing style in each article. Sports journalists have "rather offensively been described as fans with typewriters, because they have far more in common with fans than 'real' journalists" (Kervin, 1997, p. 35). I examined the writings of the individual journalists to ascertain if their reporting was justifiably categorised just the writing of "fans". A comparison was made between the writing styles of full-time sports journalists at the paper and correspondents, most of whom were not paid and were usually connected with the sport that he or she reported. Because the sports staff was relatively small at the *West Australian* during the first seven decades of last century, the paper relied on a large team of correspondents. I have therefore also examined the role that these correspondents played in providing a coverage of the wide number of sports played in the State. Authorship was determined by the by-lines, with the usage of pen-names until the 1950s, accompanying the articles. An assessment of the writing styles of the journalists was undertaken in several periods during the 70 years. These include viewing changes under different editors of the *West Australian*, during both world wars and the Depression, when the paper transformed from a broadsheet to a tabloid in 1947, when news was first consistently published on the front page two years later, and following the introduction of television in 1959.

Also under examination will be the space allocated to the sports sections, their lay-out and presentations in the *West Australian*, the prominence of major sporting

events on the front page, and the treatment of the three types of geographic areas — local, Eastern States and overseas articles. Under consideration will be size of the articles, where they are placed in the paper, and whether they were given a local patriotic angle. Although in the twenty-first century local sports news tends to predominate in the *West Australian*, I will focus on whether there was a variation in its relative importance during the period of this study.

Under examination will also be how the changes in society between 1901 and 1971 were reflected in the reporting of sport in the *West Australian*. Examinations of text books, such as Tom Stannage's *A new history of Western Australia* (1983), were used to provide a solid background on societal changes in the State. An analysis of information provided in local sports history publications and a content analysis of local newspapers will further develop reasons for these changes.

I will also consider if the introduction of radio and television changed sports journalism at the paper. Radio was introduced to Western Australia quite early in the study period (1924), while television did not become established in Perth until the last decade. An examination of the changing language of articles and interviews of former staff members of the paper will further establish the progress of and reason for changes to sports writing in the paper.

On the basis of investigations and data analysis, these questions were used to assess the subjects' attitudes to the changing role of the sports department at the *West Australian* and the evolution of sports journalism at the paper. Major attention will also be devoted to the way individual journalists have influenced reporting in the paper. For example, Godfrey White and Ted Collingwood were the sports editors for a combined total of 63 years during the seven decades of this study. The *West Australian* underwent significant changes during their period of leading the sports department, especially from the 1920s. The influence of White and Collingwood on the content and presentation of the paper and its position in society will be examined.

Reliability, validity and ethical considerations of this examination will be presented in order to establish the study as a sound, well-grounded piece of research in the area of sports journalism at the *West Australian* during the first seven decades of the twentieth century. This study is a combination of a textual analysis and interviews, which will provide qualitative, and to a lesser extent, quantitative, research, in order to trace the changes of sports journalism over the period.

Sports writers rarely received by-lines under their own name until the 1950s. They generally had pen-names. Through the interviews of journalists and my wider reading of other newspaper histories, I investigate the reasons for the use of pen-names in preference to by-lines, and when and why pen-names were dropped.

Types of Articles

As we move into the twenty-first century, the language of sports journalism is gradually expanding to include a wide variety of writing styles and the very different writers that exist within the relatively narrow world of sports journalism. There are many different types of writers, experts, columnists and observers employed on a wide variety of publications performing an ever-expanding array of functions. Though sports journalists do not always write in one specific style, each group operates in its own way to impartially cover sport and to position sport in the cultural and social structure of society. The following types of reports are an adaptation of my experiences as a journalist at various publications during the last quarter of a century, and with an examination of White's (1996) and Masterton's (1998) categories:

Hard news: Hard news is the lifeblood of a newspaper. It chronicles the important events in a community, or sporting event or association. Nearly all back page sports stories have a hard news angle, being presented in the inverted pyramid style, with the important elements at the top and the least important at the bottom of the article.

Soft news: Concentrates on individuals, rather than institutions. Often associated with human interest stories.

Features: Any editorial matter that runs on pages rather than a news page. Australian newspaper features often cover longer articles that put several news events into context, investigations of social trends and profiles or extended interviews with newsmakers.

Backgrounder: A news feature that looks forwards and backwards, but is most relevant on the day of publication. It details the history or circumstances surrounding a news event that is to occur that day and is expected to spark a news story for the subsequent publication day. It trades upon the relevance and importance of that event.

Human interest: Human interest stories are among the most popular in the news media (Masterton, 1998). The development of this type of genre has allowed journalists to explore new territories by reporting aspects of personal and social life previously unrecorded in the press. Human interest stories, which can be a follow-up to either hard news or soft news stories, is often a “catch-all” tag to almost any feature story with a strong human element. This type of article also shows how people live or are reacting to their environments.

Commentary: Contains mostly an analysis of an event that requires an interpretation and sometimes a prediction. They are written by senior reporters who have specialist knowledge of their field.

Editorials: The view of the newspaper on an issue or incident.

Columns: Can be regular comment pieces and often are personal articles in which the views and idiosyncracies of the writer are the attraction.

Investigative: Can be defined as uncovering something hidden, which often involves an injustice or a violation of the law.

Match report: A report of a game or race capturing some of the flavour of the event. An account from a Saturday match should be written differently for a Sunday paper than a Monday publication. For example, the following day's report is a description of the game, while the Monday's report is an analysis of the event and sums up what the implications are.

Previews: The reporter constructs an article predicting the outcome of an event.

Analysis: An analysis of the sporting event, describing the strengths and weaknesses of the winning and losing teams.

Personality profiles: This type of writing can be described as a personality sketch, an exercise in the apt arrangement of the anecdote and an evaluation of character of the subject.

Review: A critique — either positive or negative — of a sporting book.

Statistical: Usually a small story that provides little else but a result of the match or race and statistics. For example, a brief cricket story may carry just the result, leading wicket-takers and the leading run-scorers.

The label "article" is used throughout this thesis. As the above list suggests, journalistic sports writing is not uniform and a range of styles, formats and modes of address exists.

Style of Articles

I compared the types of articles and the changing language employed in the writing during the period. A close examination of the articles during the first 70 years after Federation provided a context in which it was possible to measure the changes in sports journalism. The amount of space allocated to the sports articles and photographs, and their positioning on the page, determined the importance the *West Australian* placed upon that sport or event. This analysis of the text was undertaken in conjunction with the charts and tables which I had developed during the content analysis of the paper.

I included a colour scheme, by highlighting each article on the right hand side under the above categories. For example, human interest stories were allocated the colour blue, hard news items were orange, personality profiles were green, and so on. This pointed to the changing language of sports journalism at the *West Australian*. Then at the top of each by-lined article I also incorporated a colour coding. For instance, I marked sports editor Ted Collingwood's articles with the colour blue, his predecessor, Godfrey White, with red, senior sporting journalist Charlie Ammon with green, and so on. Many of the regular contributors who were not full-time employees of the paper were included with a colour. I did not know the names of several of the correspondents in this latter category, because they reported before World War II and were identified only by a pseudonym. Including correspondents in the analyses of articles in the paper gave a wide coverage of the changing language of sports writing.

Photographs

Photographs and other visual data can provide an excellent source for qualitative analysis (Archer, 1997; Ball & Smith, 1992; Gold, 1997; Harper, 1997). The pictures in newspapers lend insight into which aspects of the sports events were perceived as important and how the newspapers viewed them. Photographs can be analysed the same way as any other kind of document or archival material. Just as a tape recorder can aid

in recording data, film equipment can capture details that would otherwise be forgotten or go unnoticed. The increasing use of photographs over time will be taken into consideration. The first news picture was published in the *West Australian* in April 1907. Except for occasional single-column portraits from very limited stocks, and a few pictures of racehorses or sporting teams, the *West Australian* did not pay serious attention to pictorial news until the mid-1920s. The paper launched a regular pictorial section in January 1928 and I examined how this changed the content and construction of the articles.

Study Limitations

I have tried to establish as much factual background as possible about the staff in the sports department at the *West Australian* during the first seven decades of last century. However, because of the unavailability of most of the company staff records for the period under examination, it was difficult to ascertain the length of employment of several of the paper's leading sports writers. Since this thesis is the first of its kind to examine the sports writing at an Australian newspaper, it was difficult to obtain documented resource material because of the lack of any previous examination of a newspaper sport's department.

Some of the paper's most respected former sports journalists had died before I commenced this study. This prevented a closer examination and a deeper understanding of their careers and changes in the sports department. However, Ted Collingwood's daughter, Michaela Collingwood, gave me access to some of his private records, which recorded his starting date at the paper and of his promotion to sports editor. Charlie Ammon's son, Dick Ammon, gave permission for me to have access to his records and Irwin Powell's son, Michael Powell, provided me with background of his father.

Another limitation was caused by the progression of time, which has occasionally been responsible for problems with the memory of some of the participants. Occasionally information from the interviewees conflicted. In these instances, I usually obtained the correct information after further research. But on the few occasions that I was unable to ascertain the accuracy of statements, I did not include them in this study. The *West Australian* was also at fault in printing inaccurate information on a number of occasions, incorrectly listing the length of service as sports editors of Godfrey White ("Corinthian", 1951) and Ted Collingwood ("Sporting editor retires", 1971; McGrath, 1994; Aisbett, 1998). I was able to ascertain the accurate

lengths of service for both men by an examination of newspaper articles and personal correspondence provided by Collingwood's daughter.

CHAPTER 4

SPORT IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA

The primary aim of this chapter is to provide a critical historical introduction to a number of important themes in Western Australian sport, offering an overview of major developments. The themes have been chosen as ones that will shed light on the relationship between sport and Western Australian society, and that are crucial for us to engage with if we are to see contemporary sport as more than just a matter of performance.

Sport has been an integral part of Australian school and family life. Australian sports historians Reet and Maxwell Howell believe that Australians love their sport, and are passionate about a vast array of games. They said that "cricket, athletics, tennis, swimming, netball and all codes of football are played and followed with a passion, as are softball, soccer, basketball, vigoro, hockey, rowing, cycling, golf, boxing, motor car racing, and so on" (Howell & Howell, 1987, p. 2).

Those descriptions can also accurately describe Western Australians, whose passion for sport is reflected in the fact that sport has played a major role since the early days of settlement in the Swan River Colony. Though consisting of a small population base, the Western Australians' love of recreational activities has been the catalyst for the success of the State's sportsmen and women in national and international competition.

Outstanding athletes, such as billiards player Walter Lindrum, track and field athletes Shirley Strickland-de la Hunty, John Winter and Herb Elliott, cricketer Graham McKenzie and swimmer Lyn McClements, are but a few of the many Western Australians who have achieved international recognition. In addition, Western Australia took pride in hosting the 1962 British Empire and Commonwealth Games in Perth. At the end of the timespan of this study, Dennis Lillee and Rodney Marsh made their debuts for Australia and emerged to become household names in the sport of cricket. In domestic sport, Australian Rules footballers Graham Farmer, Barry Cable, and George Doig matched the best in the nation:

Sport played an important role in the nation-building process in Australia, which had a small population and was geographically isolated from the global centres of power (Marsh, 2001). Eminent Australian historians, such as Manning Clark and Geoffrey Blainey, have emphasised this link between sport and Australian nationalism. Clark described Australians as "sports lovers" (1987, p. 404), and Blainey, in his 2001 Boyer lectures, noted that Australia for so long has placed sporting champions high on its list of heroes, and sport has been a part of the rising nationalistic feeling. In particular, he said that to beat England at cricket was, in the nineteenth century, a sign to Australians that they were as worthy as the people from whom they were descended. He continued:

A victory over England, in a game that England saw as embodying its own virtues, was a victory and a half. As Australians felt embarrassed about the convict origins of their nation, sporting victories were doubly pleasing. Of course if Australians had proved feeble at sports, they would not have hailed sporting victories as nationally significant. But Australians, especially after the 1850s, excelled at sports. (Blainey, 2001)

While international sporting contests and a shared enjoyment of sports encouraged unity among Australians throughout the nineteenth century, a real sense of inter-colonial rivalry developed across Australia from the mid-1800s. There was a significant division between Western Australia and the Eastern States and this was largely caused by Western Australia's isolation from the rest of the continent. This, in turn, helped to nurture partisan affiliation among both competitors and supporters at inter-colony sporting events. Sport was therefore closely associated with and actually engendered notions of regional identity, even in such a young community.

Australia "directly inherited the British sports and games that had been slowly developing in the United Kingdom since the late 1960s" (Bloomfield, 2003, p. 14), and Western Australia's initial growth was directed by an aspirant "colonial gentry" whose values matched those of the British ruling classes (Stoddart, 1983, p. 654). During the two decades from 1885, when the population was 35,000, Western Australia rapidly transformed into a major State of 250,000 in 1905. The population widened from one composed of many British migrants before 1890 to one which included people born elsewhere in Australia, as well as from other countries. This growth resulted in an increasing number of systematically organised sporting organisations. In 1890, horse racing was conducted in the city most weeks and a restricted number of teams played in football and cricket fixtures. Cricket was played mainly among the small number of

government servants in the city, while football was concentrated in the fledgling industrial working-class (Stoddart, 1983, p. 655).

The gold rushes during the 1890s were responsible for considerable changes in Western Australian society, as Stoddart explains:

In the early 1890s frenetic social and economic growth reached the city after more than fifty years of measured development. This accelerated growth placed pressure on the values, conventions and structures established to that point. During the First World War, similarly, Perth faced many changes to its social beliefs and organisation, not all of which met with the approval of all sections of society. Then, the economic depression of the early 1930s challenged many established social views, and raised both prospects and fears of widespread change. Through all this, the role of organized sport in aiding or resisting social change was considerable in a number of these areas: social status, community identity, social values, social mobility, social organization as represented in the place of women, and the political value of sport. (1983, p. 653)

Since the settlement of Western Australia, sport has been a part of the State's social life, though the games played in the early years were quite different from those played today. There are many sporting events which have assumed an important place in the State's sporting and social history. Annual events include racing's Perth Cup, the Western Australian Trotting Cup and the Western Australian Football League's grand final. Every year throughout the twentieth century saw national championships taking place in Western Australia in a wide range of sports. Many international events were also held in Perth, including Davis Cup ties and visits from overseas cricket teams. Early in the century, the world's top professional sprinters attracted thousands of spectators to sports meetings in Kalgoorlie.

As the economy's growth steadied during the first three decades of the twentieth century, so did organised sport (Stoddart, 1983, p. 655).

Horseracing was a favourite pastime among the colony's early settlers. Indeed, it was the first organised sport in Western Australia. Though race meetings were held in the 1830s and 1840s, it was the formation of the prestigious Western Australian Turf Club (WATC) in 1852 which gave the sport impetus and profile. The WATC, which reigned supreme in Perth, is Australia's second oldest major racing club (Brassel, 1990, p. 190). Racing in Western Australia is spread over more than two million square kilometres, with courses from Kununurra in the north to Esperance in the south. In 1911, there were 87 racing clubs in the State. However, by 2004, there were only 41

clubs — the WATC, 10 provincial and 30 country clubs. The increasing costs of running the clubs, many of which would hold only a few meetings a year, forced a number of clubs to disband or to amalgamate with neighbouring clubs. Proprietary race meetings, staged by companies formed to generate a private profit rather than by public clubs, burgeoned in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. However, in 1917, the Western Australian Parliament gave the WATC control of all racing in the State (Pollard, 1988, p. 698).

The changing role of sport in conveying social values was implicit in the development of the State in the early decades of the twentieth century. While established values were maintained through the older sporting institutions, newer social groups frequently asserted changes to those values through sport.

Isolation, however, has been a major factor in Western Australian sport. The cost of sending State teams to the Eastern States for competition and training was much more expensive in the earlier part of the State's history than it is now. Cricket was an overriding example, with the participation of the Western Australian team in the Sheffield Shield, the nation's domestic interstate competition, being a point in case. Since early in the twentieth century, there were many calls from within the sport and the local media for Western Australia to be admitted into the competition.

When New South Wales visited Perth to play the State team in March 1907, the *West Australian* editorialist argued:

Everyone will wish that the match be played out under the fair and equable conditions of ground and weather that obtained on Saturday. So far the West Australians have done well: should they do even better, and defeat the strong side brought against them, they will have established an undeniable claim to consideration when all matters affecting the cricketing future of Australia are under review. ("Athletics and federation", 1907)

Improved performances by the WA team against visiting Eastern States teams in the late 1930s provided Western Australian Cricket Association (WACA) administrators with the hope that WA would be included in the national competition. However, World War II intervened, with a subsequent delay to the State team being included in the Sheffield Shield. This did not occur until the 1947-48 season.

There were also many claims that the Western Australian players had been unfairly overlooked in regards to Test selection. Despite the fact that WA won the

Sheffield Shield in its first season, though it played a restricted number of games, it was another eight years before a local player was selected for Australia. John Rutherford, from Merredin, 230 kilometres east of Perth, was the first Western Australian-based player selected in the Australian Test cricket team. He toured with the side to India and Pakistan in 1956, playing in only one Test. However, Ernie Bromley, who moved from Perth to play cricket in Melbourne, was selected in the Australian team in the 1932-33 season. Named as a Victorian, he played in one Test against the visiting English team and toured with the Australian team to England in 1934.

"Isolation" was a word with resonance in WA. During a match between Western Australia and New South Wales in 1907 in Perth, an editorial in the *West Australian* made this point clear:

Western Australia, of all the States, is the most isolated. She is furthest removed from the centre of government, while her needs and potentialities — with the exception, perhaps, of those having relation to mining — are the least recognised. . . . Perhaps the visitor was anticipating a little when he spoke of the possibility of annual cricket matches between New South Wales and Western Australia. It is certain, however, that the true spirit of Federation is often voiced much more accurately in the athletic [sporting] than it is in the political world. . . . The interest so far shown by the public has made it plain that the local authorities were more than justified in the resolute effort they made to get a team from New South Wales to visit this side of the continent during the present season. ("Athletics and Federation", 1907)

Due to its isolation, Western Australia seldom had the opportunity to host major international sporting events during the first half of the twentieth century. The first world championship held in Perth was the middleweight wrestling title on 8 March 1929 ("Miller retains title", 1929). But the most significant sporting occasion in the State was the British Empire and Commonwealth Games in 1962. In a spiteful contest to win Australia's nomination, Perth, which had strong financial support from the State Government and the Perth City Council, beat Adelaide as the Australian British Empire and Commonwealth Games Federation (ABECGF) nomination to host the VIIIth Games. Adelaide had unsuccessfully bid for the 1958 British Empire and Commonwealth Games. Its 1962 bid committee believed it should be selected by the ABECGF as this country's nomination, and that the Perth committee was late in submitting its application (Goldsmith, 1958, "S.A. chairman's bitter attack", 1958; "Howard takes calm view", 1958; "Rival cities present cases", 1958). Interstate rivalry had been entrenched since the nineteenth century when New South Wales and Victoria were

constantly in conflict over sporting issues. Later in 1958, the ABCEGF selected Perth to host the Games. The 1962 British Empire and Commonwealth Games can be described as a benchmark in Western Australian sport, because it launched the State into the international spotlight on a Commonwealth level. Over the next four decades, world championships and major international events held in Western Australia included badminton, baseball, boxing, cricket, cycling, golf, powerlifting, surfing, swimming, tennis, trotting and yachting.

The late 1940s to the early 1960s were the "golden era" of Western Australian track and field, with athletes from Western Australia winning all of its Olympic gold medals during this period. In addition, during this twelve-year period, a total of 18 WA track and field athletes were selected to represent Australia at the four Olympic Games, which is a greater number than during any other similar period since the first Modern Olympics were held in 1896 and the most recent Games in 2004.

Western Australia's track stars from the golden era, Herb Elliott and Shirley Strickland-de la Hunty, are still remembered as two of the world's greatest athletes in their respective events. To celebrate its 75th anniversary in 1987, the International Amateur Athletic Federation, renamed the International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF) in 2001, held a survey among 1,000 people throughout the world — which included IAAF council members, statisticians and leading track and field journalists and commentators. Elliott was selected the world's No. 1 competitor of all-time over one mile or 1,500 metres, and de la Hunty was ranked No. 5 in the women's sprint hurdles ("Elliott seen as greatest", 1987, p. 51).

De la Hunty became the most successful woman track and field athlete in Olympic history, with seven medals, including three gold, between 1948 and 1956. Human error prevented her from winning an eighth medal. In 1975, a re-examination of the photo finish of the women's 200 metres final at the 1948 London Olympics revealed that she had finished third, rather than in the fourth place she was given (Stell, 1991, p. 113). As Shirley Strickland, she competed at London in 1948, and at Helsinki four years later and competed under her married name of de la Hunty in Melbourne in 1956.

In 2000, the *West Australian* produced a two-part supplement, titled *Western Australia's 100 greatest sports stars*. A selection committee consisting of current and former sports journalists at the paper selected those they believed to be the State's best 100 sportsmen and women in history. It is interesting to note that eight of the top ten

either started their sporting careers, or completed their entire careers, during the period of this study. The top ten chosen were: 1. Herb Elliott (track and field); 2. Shirley de la Hunty (track and field); 3. Dennis Lillee (cricket); 4. Ric Charlesworth (hockey); 5. Graham Fanner (Australian Rules football); 6. Walter Lindrum (billiards); 7. John Winter (track and field); 8. Rodney Marsh (cricket); 9. Graham McKenzie (cricket); and 10. Luc Longley (basketball). The only two who began their sporting careers after 1971 were Charlesworth and Longley.

In the 1950s, Australian athletes enjoyed success despite limited assistance compared to Eastern Bloc nations. There was not the financial support from governments or sports institutes, and restrictive amateur rules prevented personal sponsorship. Furthermore, there was not the help in dietary matters available to contemporary sportsmen and women. For example, Herb Elliott was in the media's spotlight at that time for "living on nuts and raisins". In fact, he was on a balanced diet, but breakfast was a mixture of nuts, raisins and rolled oats, which today is commonly known as muesli. Although Elliott's training and diet regime was not fully understood or endorsed by any institution, it was still an advanced program by Australian standards for its time.

Australia's situation was vastly different from the Eastern Bloc countries, which after World War II had started to establish a system where total control was administered by State subsidy of their athletes and facilities. Australians did not receive government assistance with their sporting careers until the 1970s and the Australian Institute of Sport (AIS) opened on Australia Day, 26 January 1981. Now all Australian States have sports institutes, in conjunction with the AIS, providing assistance with finance, coaching and training facilities. Western Australian Institute of Sport (WAIS), which introduced elite training programs and offered sports scholarships, opened on 1 July 1984.

Western Australian sport found momentum with an influx of many visitors from interstate and overseas from the goldrush period in the late nineteenth century. WA, which faced many instances of State rivalry from the onset of Federation in a range of sports, produced world-class athletes, and hosted a limited number of international events. By 1971, WA had a high standing in Australian sport despite its isolation.

This chapter includes five sub-chapters describing various areas of Western Australian sport in a historical context: 4.1) *First and New Australians* examines the

contribution to sport from immigrants from the Eastern States and overseas, and from Aborigines; 4.2) *Social Stratification of Sport* looks at participation in Western Australian sport through class and social aspects of society; 4.3) *Amateurism and Professionalism* analyses how WA sport developed from an almost totally amateur endeavour at the turn of the twentieth century to professionalism seven decades later; 4.4) *Politics in Sport* traces the increase of government association with Western Australian sport; and 4.5) *Spectator Sports* examines the relationship between spectators and sporting events.

First and New Australians

The growth of organised sport "coincided with the greatest global mass movement of people in history" and the "diffusion of organised sport was a by-product of British global emigration and empire-building" (Mosely, 1997a, p. 3). A love of sport was part of the cultural baggage, leading to a spread of sport which increased in importance in the twentieth century. Mosely claims that because of its industrial and technological advantage from the eighteenth century, Britain became the world's leading sporting nation (1997b, p. 13). In British colonies such as Australia, sport was viewed as an important way of maintaining British culture.

From Australia's founding in 1788 to the end of the nineteenth century "the Irish formed the single largest minority group in Australia" (Mosely, 1997b, p. 25). From the middle of the nineteenth century, the Irish-born and their children were a significant part of the fabric of Australian life. On occasion, sporting victories were acclaimed as victories for the wider Irish-Australian community in the battle with the mainly Protestant British-Australian Establishment (Hughes, 1997, p. 75).

The gold rushes in Western Australia during the 1890s resulted in a larger, more diverse population. In addition to the British and Irish, immigrants came from the Eastern States, Europe, the US, Mexico and China. The economic history of Western Australia during the 1890s was dominated by discovery and exploitation of gold.

During eight years (1890-97) these discoveries and associated opportunities, attracted 106,862 net immigrants to a colony which in 1888 had a population of only 43,814. (Appleyard, 1983, p. 211)

Also, the Second World War stimulated many forms of immigration and displaced persons, refugees and immigrants from many European nations poured into

Australia (Mosely, 1997b, p. 34). After World War II, migration to Australia occurred on a more diverse scale than previously.

Although Australia actively recruited British migrants, offering financial assistance to move to the southern continent, it had to look to other countries for sufficient numbers, with most immigrants after World War II being non-English speaking people from Europe. Greece, Italy and Yugoslavia provided the largest numbers. Immigration has altered the Australian sporting landscape (Cashman, 1995, p. 163). Most of the European immigrants were totally unfamiliar with most of the mainstream sports in Australia — cricket, Australian Rules football, and the rugby codes.

The involvement of new immigrants in Western Australian sport most notably led to a major shift in the organisation of soccer. While soccer has a long tradition of catering to minority cultures — British-born, miners and factory workers — most of the local soccer players were Australian-born until 1940. From 1947, there were numerous attempts by Slav and Greek Macedonian soccer teams. However, many were short-lived or suffered fragmentation because of the ideological conflicts brought in from the old world (Doumanis, 1997, p. 66).

But from the 1950s there was a dramatic change of direction by the Western Australian Soccer Federation (WASF). There was considerable controversy with the introduction of ethnically-based soccer clubs. Soccer became identifiable with various migrant communities. There were many calls for all soccer clubs to become based on districts — similar to most other codes — rather than on ethnic communities. In Perth, violence associated with ethnic rivalry led to a ban on ethnic club names, replacing them with distant names in the early 1970s, but the motion was overturned after several years. However, the WASF then banned ethnic names at all levels of competition in 1992 (Mosely, 1997c, p. 170). There were moves to de-ethnicise soccer, to remove and reduce the importance of ethnic attachments and symbols. There was strong resistance from the ethnic clubs. That decade saw the formation of Athena, later known as West Perth Athena, and the Macedonian Greek team Olymiakos in Perth (Doumanis, 1997, p. 67).

Large Italian communities appeared in Western Australian gold mining towns, which were a major strength in the formation and consolidation of soccer in the regions. Richard Kreiger observes that during the 1950s and 1960s, Italians and Greeks formed

the backbone of spectator support for soccer throughout Australia (1996, p. 63), while in 1963, Italian fans helped set a record attendance of 3,340 for a club game in Perth (Mosely, 1997c, p. 158).

Boxing is another sport which appealed to many immigrant communities in the 1950s and 1960s. Because it exists on the fringe of respectability, boxing has lacked the credibility of other sports. It provided Italian-Australians with a sense of community in the 1950s and 1960s, but Italians abandoned this sport once they achieved financial success. "To be linked with a fringe sport, such as boxing, represented a social handicap" (Cashman, 1997a, p. 153).

In Australian Rules football, the depressed economy in the eastern colonies was responsible for thousands of Victorians moving to the Kalgoorlie goldfields. They "took the game [Australian Rules football] with them, and then on to Fremantle and Perth" (Pascoe, 1995, p. 59). Australian Rules football has recruited substantial numbers of players of immigrant background since the 1950s. They are accepted into the code, partly because they are strong in working-class suburbs (Cashman, 1997a, p. 152). However, Brasch contends that Australian Rules football's beginnings can be traced to Irish migrants, who were attracted to Victoria by the lure of gold in the 1840s (1971, p. 110). In Western Australia, players from ethnic backgrounds have made substantial contributions to the sport. Certain clubs, particularly West Perth and South Fremantle, have long included significant numbers of players with ethnic backgrounds. At West Perth, players of Italian ancestry have made important contributions and players of Slavic background have played for South Fremantle (Stewart, Hess & Dixon, 1997, p. 193).

Golf started in Western Australia during the gold rush period of the 1890s and the decade before World War I, prompted by the arrival of new settlers with golfing experience (White, 1997). Perth Golf Club opened in 1895. Between 1898 and 1905 several golf clubs started in country towns and the numbers of metropolitan clubs increased until the First World War. Because of the increasing popularity of the sport, the Western Australian Golf Association (WAGA) started in 1908 and the Western Australian Ladies' Golf Union (LGU) was formed by women from Fremantle, Perth and Cottesloe Clubs in 1914. Golf was almost non-existent during World War I and regained its popularity during the 1920s.

Hockey was Western Australia's most successful sport in terms of winning national titles in the twentieth century. The sport was first played in this State in 1902 and the Western Australian Hockey Association (WAHA) was formed in 1908. From the end of World War II to 1971, the State men's team won 14 of 26 Australian championships, while the women were more dominant, taking out the title 22 of 25 attempts. Local men's hockey benefited greatly from immigration. One of the best known families in Western Australian sporting history were the Pearce brothers. English-born public servant Cecil Pearce and his Irish-born wife, Gladys, raised their five children at Jubbulpore in India before emigrating to Perth in the late 1940s. Their sons Cecil, Melville, Eric, Gordon and Julian all represented Australia at Olympic Games in hockey. Eric played at four Olympics, while Gordon and Julian were triple Olympians. Eric's daughter, Colleen, represented Australia at the 1984 Olympic Games in Los Angeles.

Though immigrants played a leading role in the formation of several sports in Western Australia, another minority group, the Australian Aborigine, also made outstanding contributions to the State's sporting culture. Richard Caslunan has noted that Aborigines have participated more readily in sporting culture than in any other form of Australian culture (1995, p. 131). Though forming only one per cent of the population, Aborigines have consistently produced boxing champions and leading Australian Rules footballers. However, Aborigines have seldom been prominent in middle-class sports such as polo, yachting, golf, motor-racing and swimming. Aboriginal sporting achievement is exceptional, with Colin and Paul Tatz observing:

Sport is a mirror of many things. It reflects political, social, economic and legal systems. It also reflects the Aboriginal experience, especially since 1850. While playing fields are not places where people expect to find, or want to see, racial discrimination, sport is an important indicator of Australian racism. (Tatz & Tatz, 2000, p. 7; Tatz & Tatz, 1996, p. 1)

European settlers came to Australia with a sense of superiority born of Europe's ability to subjugate other people. From the outset, the Australian Aborigine was typecast as "a primitive" (Mosely, 1997b, p. 17). Paternalism and racism reached a high point at the turn of the century. Legislation was enacted in Western Australia in 1905, which interpreted "protection" in terms of strict apartheid (Mosely, 1997b, pp. 19-20) Its architect, Dr Walter Roth, a keen Social Darwinist, believed that separation of the races was the best method of preserving and protecting Aborigines. Roth argued that contact

with the stronger race (whites) would demoralise Aborigines (Mosely, 1997b, p. 20). Protection, as Colin Tatz has noted, became discrimination (Tatz, 1987, p. 14; Cashman, 1995, pp. 137-138). The effect of legislative restriction on Aborigines in sport was crippling. Access to amenities and facilities virtually disappeared. Few financial and administrative resources were provided. The sheer physical isolation of Aboriginal reserves, and the stringent bureaucracy that dictated Aboriginal movement outside them, imposed severe limits on opportunities which natural talent normally created (Mosely, 1997b, p. 20). No Aborigine has played Test cricket, yet the first Australian team to tour England was entirely Aboriginal (Harris, 1989, p. 11). That was in 1868, ten years before the first white side toured. This was rarely acknowledged in earlier texts, which usually stated the first Australian team to tour UK was in 1878.

Pedestrianism, now more commonly referred as professional running, was a convenient sport for Aborigines because it required few facilities and equipment costs were low. Social standing and limited education did not inhibit participation in this working-class sport. In the 1920s and 1930s, the Hayward brothers — Maley, Eric and Bill — won a number of country professional running events (Tatz, 1995, p. 100). Other Western Australian champion runners included Aborigines Archie Jones, Alec Yarran, Freddie Punch, Alf Eades, and brothers Cyril and Fred Collard, who won major professional races throughout the State. Many Aborigines were also attracted to boxing for similar reasons. Boxing attracted big money and seemed to offer the chance for Aborigines to get ahead financially and to be accepted in white society. The reality was that boxing, and sport in general, provided few with an escape from poverty. Boxing author and referee Ray Mitchell claims that there are more Aboriginal boxers per head of their population than among any other group in the world (Tatz & Tatz, 2000, p. 148).

There were many Aboriginal champions in Western Australian sport. The State's two best footballers during the first seven decades of the twentieth century were Aborigines — ruckman Graham Farmer and rover Barry Cable. Farmer, who transferred from East Perth to Geelong in the Victorian Football League (later to be renamed the Australian Football League) in 1962, went on to become one of the greatest players in Australian Rules football (Stewart, Hess and Dixon, 1997, p. 195; Tatz & Tatz, 2000, p. 118; Tatz & Tatz, 1996, p. 14; Harris, 1989, p. 75; Tatz, 1987, p. 71). Cable was regarded by many as the best rover in the sport (Tatz & Tatz, 1996, p. 32; Tatz & Tatz, 2000, p. 115).

Maley Hayward was the first Aboriginal player to break the colour bar in league football in Western Australia. Born in 1902 in Tambellup, Hayward played 18 games for Claremont in 1928. In 1937, he joined his brothers, Eric and Bill, in the South Fremantle league team. South Fremantle president, Clive Doig, had to obtain permits from the Chief Protector of Natives for the brothers to travel to Perth to play. Mayley Hayward, who played 18 games with South Fremantle, also won professional running races throughout the State. Between 1956 and 1964, three Aboriginal players won the Sandover Medal for being the fairest and best player in the Western Australian National Football League (WANFL) — East Perth's Farmer (1956), East Perth's Ted Kilmurray (1958), Farmer (1960) and Perth's Cable (1964).

In conclusion, Mosely et al. point out that sporting contributions from people from ethnic and Aboriginal backgrounds has been "understated and undervalued" by Australians (1997d, p. 292). I endorse this view, because sport in this State has prospered from the massive, and largely unrecognised, contributions of immigrants and Aborigines. They have made a large impact in a range of sports in Western Australia before 1971, including Australian Rules football, boxing, baseball and softball.

Social Stratification of Sport

The class character of sport extends beyond intrinsic aspects based on rules and assumptions governing conduct during play, to the attendant cultures of sports' social and organisational features (Polley, 1998, pp. 111-112). According to Polley, the marketability of sports and sports stars has been found to benefit more from class or image — related attributes rather than the basic elements of the games themselves.

Sports have increasingly come to be seen as signifiers of lifestyle linked to class and status. Participation in certain sports is often held as a mark of belonging within the social structure. The financial rewards of sporting achievements for the elite few have allowed access to enhanced social status. Commercial and media investment in a number of sports, combined with shifts in sportsmen's and women's economic and social self-perception, has facilitated a growth of a professional sporting culture (Polley, 1998, p. 114).

As a result, the elevation of sports people's standing in society, from merely paid athletes to specialists or careerists, has had a considerable impact on pre-industrial and industrial sports settings. For example, settings for professional sports people were

linked to land ownership and patronage in cricket, horseracing, and pedestrianism, and commercial and manufacturing interests in football.

The control of many sports organisations in Perth was inspired as much by social considerations as by the love of sport itself (Stoddart, 1983, p. 661). Sport offered a major opportunity for social groups to consolidate and extend their values, and this became increasingly important with the growing complexity of society.

There were many facilities available for working-class recreation in Western Australia. Rivers offered opportunities for swimming, while the new public baths which came into existence at the end of the nineteenth century offered a relatively cheap, safe and healthy environment for bathers. The local rivers also provided facilities for angling throughout the year. Hotels catered primarily for the recreation of the working man. Often located near racecourses, they encouraged gambling as much as drinking and provided various other recreations, such as billiards, quoits, darts, skittles and boxing contests. More importantly, however, hotels were often designated as meeting places for working men's sports committees, associations and clubs.

Many sports have remained stratified, with different social groups having different roles within them. The best example is probably horseracing, which has always "appealed to the upper-class owner, the middle-class trainer, and the working class habitué of the betting shop" (Vamplew, 1976, p. 12). Ross takes these observations further by saying:

A racecourse is a place of high hopes and cruel disappointments. It is, all the same, a genial place, shared briefly by millionaires and stable-boys, aristocrats and artisans, in which the great masters of their art — trainers and jockeys — rub shoulders with the unsuccessful, in which high fashion stalks amongst the poorest. (Ross, 1982, p. v)

With local, regional and national appeal, the racecourse in Western Australia was a significant component of the social and business life of most communities, and attracted a following from all sectors of society. Some, such as owners and punters, saw the horse race as a profitable venture, while others went merely for entertainment, to watch the event. There were those who used such meetings to display their affiliation with exclusive clubs within the boundaries of special enclosures and members' stands. Racegoers of other classes could mingle or disperse as they wished. The love of a horse,

and the desire to gamble on the outcome of a race, seemed to hold the popular imagination like few other pursuits.

By the turn of the twentieth century, horse racing was a major sporting passion for Western Australians, and special races did much to promote the sport. The Perth Cup, inaugurated in 1887, after being known as the Metropolitan Handicap from 1879, was the banner event of the social season. Local horses achieved limited success in the Eastern States in the early years of the sport in Western Australia, though New Zealand-bred Blue Spec in 1905 became the first WA-owned horse to win the Melbourne Cup, Australia's most prestigious horse race.

Horse racing was the first institutionalised sport in Western Australia. Founded in 1852, the Western Australian Turf Club (WATC) was modelled on the Jockey Club in England and quickly became a major social organisation governed principally by "men of property and status" (Stoddart, 1983, p. 654). Its members were mostly from the colonial gentry who dominated politics, pastoralism and the social pages in the newspapers. Stoddart continues:

These men demonstrated how social, economic and political power came together in the Turf Club. If they were born in the colony, they came mostly from founding families whose values had shaped the society. If they were not from established colonial families, then they shared the colonial gentry's aspirations by identifying with its social and economic interests. They were frequently organised by marriage into tight social networks which gave the Turf Club an added air of exclusiveness. (Stoddart, 1983, p. 656)

The social monopoly of racing was so strong that it contributed directly to the appearance in Western Australia of another horse sport — trotting (later commonly known as pacing or harness racing). Trotting was fostered mainly by small to medium businessmen who emerged in the city in significant numbers in the late nineteenth century (Stoddart, 1983, p. 657). The sport quickly developed, though a poor crowd attended Western Australia's first trotting meeting at Belmont Park on 24 December 1910. The election of businessman James Brennan as president of the Western Australian Trotting Association (WATA) gave him the opportunity to put in place his belief that trotting under lights at night had a bright future. Undaunted by the knowledge that night trotting had been tried and had failed in Sydney in 1890 and in Brisbane in 1902, Brennan pressed on with his efforts to convince his committee that the move was worth trying. He and two other trotting stalwarts, J.F. Burkett and H. Hummerston, in

1913 took the gamble of becoming financial guarantors for the WATA to gain the finance needed to erect lighting at the Western Australian Cricket Association Ground. Trotting did not have a home in the early years and on 21 January 1914 a trotting meeting was held for the first time under lights in Western Australia. In only a short time, Perth became the first Australian city where trotting meetings began attracting larger crowds than horse racing (Agnew, 1977, p. 107; Agnew, 1997, p. 205). Agnew added:

Perth had become the 'Cinderella' centre of Australian trotting almost overnight. As insects are attracted to bright lights, so too was Perth able to attract visitors from the eastern states to see this dazzling spectacle in all its brilliance, with few even trying to disguise their admiration at what Brennan and his committee were accomplishing. If Perth with its limited population could achieve this, what then could be the result if Melbourne and Sydney, with their larger numbers of people and horses, were to follow this lead? (1977, p. 107)

At that time there was very little outdoor sport at night. Speedway racing under lights was still more than a decade away, with the first meeting held at Claremont Speedway at night taking place on 10 September 1927. It can be argued that Brennan had an excellent vision in regards to the popularity of outdoor sport under lights. Speedway meetings regularly attracted crowds of many thousands of spectators, and boxing and professional wrestling programs were infrequently held at outdoor venues, such as Subiaco Oval and Perry Lakes Stadium during the 1960s, under temporary lighting. However, most sports did not embrace the concept of regular night competitions until after this study period had concluded. Australian Rules football, soccer and cricket teams, all of which are involved in strong national competitions, now regularly play their matches under lights. There are a few compelling reasons why there was minimal night sport being played in Perth during the first seven decades of the twentieth century. A major factor was the lack of sporting facilities with sufficient lighting. The outdoor venues which had lighting of sufficient quality to permit regular competition from the 1920s to the 1970s were limited to Claremont Speedway, and the two trotting venues — Gloucester Park and Richmond Raceway. Trotting was always considered a night sport, while horse racing was viewed as a day sport. The logistics meant that it was financially possible to install lights for the trotting tracks, which were less than 800 metres in length, while race courses are more than twice the size. Sport was also generally viewed as a daytime activity, usually held on Saturday afternoons. In addition, most employees worked rigid daylight hours during that period, compared to

the flexible hours which are prevalent in the twenty first century. This meant that it was not possible for most of the working sports spectators to attend mid-week sport.

Brennan developed swamp-land across the road from the WACA Ground into a world-class harness racing facility called Brennan Park. The first meeting held was on 26 December 1929, with more than 17,000 spectators attending. For years the venue was considered next to Yonkers, New York, as the best half-mile track in the world (Agnew, 1997, p. 70). Its name was changed to Gloucester Park, in 1935, in honour of the Duke of Gloucester who married that year (Agnew, 1997, p. 209). Trotting employed standard-bred horses, which were less expensive to buy than racing thoroughbreds. Stoddart argues that trotting was one of the main avenues by which a growing social group expressed its identity and solidarity (1983, p. 658). In line with its progressive thinking, the WATA held the first Australian pacing championships in 1925 and the inaugural Interdominion trotting championships in 1936. To be awarded these events was recognition of Western Australian sport nationally and internationally. Trotting became firmly established in Western Australia in the time period being studied as a distinguishing characteristic of WA's sporting identity.

Australian Rules football first appeared in Perth in 1868 and the Western Australian Football Association (later changed to the Western Australian National Football League, and subsequently the Western Australian Football League) was established in 1885.

Australian Rules football's historic ties with the working classes have provided the focus for considerable analysis, particularly in relation to the debate over violence. As violence around football in Western Australia became increasingly perceived as a problem from late in the nineteenth century, so theories to explain it proliferated. The focus of one particular strand was on how many changes in football's culture served to alienate it from its historical heartlands of male, working-class support. These changes led to the assumption that the working class was violent and therefore it was a sport for the 'unruly' class. Though still in its relative infancy at the turn of the twentieth century, Australian Rules football developed over the next seven decades to become Western Australia's most popular sport, in relation to numbers of spectators at the games.

Boxing in Western Australia attracted participants and followers from the skilled, semi-skilled and unemployed working-class, with its strong links with violent

masculinity, community-based gymnasiums, and the prospect of a fortune for those who could succeed in the sport.

Australian cricket, often seen as a truly national sport because of the way in which players from different social classes traditionally played together, retained distinctions between amateurs and professionals until early last century. The historical roots of the distinctions were semantically underlined by the terminology of "gentlemen" and "players" respectively. Organised cricket was important in the consolidation of the colony's social groups' cultural values, particularly in socialising people who aspired to, rather than belonged to the original colonial gentry (Stoddart, 1983, p. 658). The Western Australian Cricket Association (WACA), which was formed in 1885, from its early days had as members some of Western Australia's most influential citizens. In many cases they were already connected to each other through professional and leisure interests and even by marriage (Barker, 1998, p. 23). Stoddart takes the aspects of cricket and class further by saying:

The tight social network demonstrated have established a conservative ruling group in Perth cricket, their values based on those of the social groups who dominated English clubs. Moreover, they placed as much if not greater importance upon sport as a vehicle for conveying social values as did their English counterparts. (1983, p. 659)

Of the early organised sports in Perth, tennis was clearly concerned with the social aspects of the game and its value in strengthening links between people of particular social categories (Phillips, 1995, p. 12; Stoddart, 1983, p. 660). Phillips also notes that "from uncertain beginnings tennis was to grow to become an important part of the Western Australian culture" (1995, p. 5). Tennis was an important social activity for the commercial-financial community and its service associates, with the Fremantle Tennis Club, formed early in 1895, being restricted to 30 members ("Tennis club at Fremantle", 1895).

The debate over sport in Western Australia offers a unique commentary, providing insights into the past patterns of leisure, social exclusivity and discrimination. With the settlement of Western Australia in the early-Victorian period, organised sport became a prominent feature in the lives of many of the colony's inhabitants. There are a number of possible explanations for sport's significant standing among the various social groups. Some people enjoyed the prospect of participating in what were considered healthy activities. For them, the pleasure given by an early morning gallop

over the Western Australian countryside or an afternoon sail along the Swan River was ample reason for involvement. Tied in with this hedonistic appreciation of sport was the keen desire to emulate British traditions. Certain sports were quite indicative of a determined effort to retain cultural ties. Cricket was the supreme example, though an activity such as hunting also reinforced the cultural dependency links with the Mother Country. Others in Western Australia used sport to highlight class differences. While it can be claimed that class lines were less rigidly drawn in the antipodes than they were back in Britain, distinctions did exist.

Membership of golf, lawn bowling and hunt clubs, the WATC and certain other sporting organisations and associations was quite purposely selective and was designed, through strict entrance procedures and criteria, to distinguish the social standing of those accepted. Other sports were more egalitarian. The racecourse, rowing regatta and athletics meetings were spectacles that every sector of society could attend. Although admission prices, on the occasions they were charged, segregated the crowds, the actual events were enjoyed by all. One other factor also ensured that sport provided, to a degree, a certain amount of opportunity, and that was the competitive element. In both large and small communities, athletes from various class backgrounds did compete, including Aborigines who were sometimes in a "stable" of runners headed by a boss or master. Local circumstances, such as isolation and a small number of participants, created this situation. However, there was at least one more reason for open competition, and that was the lure of prizes. Monetary rewards were available in boxing, sculling, horse racing and athletics, and were not unknown in a variety of other activities as well.

The role of women in organised sport presented an ongoing prospect of social change not being accepted universally (Stoddart, 1983, p. 669). Sport in Western Australia, as in the rest of Australia, was male-dominated for the first half of the twentieth century. Attempts by women to change that met with suspicion and resistance. In 1895, for example, Melbourne reports noted that women had taken up football. This was an "absurd" development, wrote a Perth commentator, which typified unwelcome social change eroding areas of male exclusiveness in all aspects of life (Stoddart, 1983, p. 669).

After the Second World War, women's sporting roles in Australia were heavily constrained by norms, which limited women in a number of ways. For example, women

were pushed into certain sports deemed appropriately feminine, essentially those emphasising aesthetics and grace over strength and speed. Some sports were deemed appropriate for both sexes, but were generally diluted to accommodate women's perceived weaknesses: lawn tennis, with its three-set tennis matches for women and five for men; women's hockey matches lasting for 60 minutes, men's for 70; and track and field athletics, with its limited range of events for women. Women were prevented from contesting longer distances and the heaviest throwing events. For instance, women were restricted to compete up to a maximum of 200 metres until the 1960 Olympic Games (except for an 800 metre race at the 1928 Olympics). But by the 1984 Olympics, women were competing in the marathon over 42.195 kilometres. Dyer suggests that this differentiation was based on the assumption that men's sports are the norm, with women seen as "immature or truncated men" (1982, p. 205). The general trend toward women's sport has been facilitated by the growth of an equal opportunities culture which, since the 1960s, has actively promoted the idea that women should have the same access as men to political, economic, social, and cultural activities. It is ironic that during the "golden era" of Australian sport, Australian women, including WA's Shirley Strickland-de la Hunty, led the way in international athletics.

During the period under examination, women's sport in Western Australia was very much the poorer sphere. For instance, in horse racing, a number of women had trained race horses, but the Western Australian Turf Club (WATC) rules would not permit them to register as a jockey.

In the early years of the twenty-first century, women now have access to more sports than they had a century earlier. Women are increasingly taken seriously in the previously male-dominated spheres of performance, journalism and administration, while men have more opportunities to use sport as a way of questioning rigid definitions of masculinity. The formation of women's rights groups in Australia and overseas during the late 1960s and early 1970s saw the development of women's sporting opportunities.

There was a wide variety of games played socially, and competitively, by Western Australians during the period of this study. With the exception of cricket, which was thought to be more socially inclusive, the sports in which earlier Western Australians participated were largely determined by class and social status. Sports which stood out as having the most social significance to Western Australians, such as

horse racing, had a traditional class distinction. Social stratification of sport in WA was influenced by gender as well as class, whereby a correlation existed between the opportunities offered to WA and Australian women in sport. Until the end of the study, there was little development noticed in class and gender distinctions; the changes accelerated after 1971.

Amateurism and Professionalism

The concept of amateurism developed in nineteenth-century England as a means of preventing the working classes from competing against the aristocracy (Wallechinsky, 2004, p. 30). The wealthy could take part in sports without worrying about having to make a living, and thus could pursue the ideal of amateurism. Everyone else had to give up training time in order to earn a living, or else take money for sports performances and become a professional, thus becoming ineligible for competitions such as the Olympics.

By the early 1970s it was regularly claimed that Australia was moving out of the amateur period and Australian sport was on the brink of professionalism, following the trail blazed by tennis and golf during the previous decade. However, the payment of individuals for their performances in sport has been a continuous feature of many Australian sports, from professional runners and boxers at the turn of the century to the full-time waged footballers and cricketers of the 1970s.

In late nineteenth century, Australian amateurism was linked to greater class segregation in sport. The rise of amateurism generated many debates during the twentieth century about the nature of sport in Western Australia. Definitions of appropriate behaviour for amateur and professional athletes were contested among the different codes. An important aspect in these deliberations was to define a correct attitude towards money and whether an amateur should be paid for expenses and compensated for any time lost from employment or because of injury. Amateurism and professionalism, which were complete opposites, constantly clashed in society. Questions were raised about the ethics of employing athletes to teach sports, and paying them to endorse products.

The influence of big money in Western Australian sport became noticeable in the 1890s and early in the twentieth century, most notably in professional boxing, cycling, horse racing and professional running (commonly called pedestrianism).

Successful boxers, athletes and jockeys were named "professionals" as a consequence of their employment status in competing for money. They were invariably sponsored by backers or trainers, allowing them to be "relatively free of the time any monetary constraints of regular work and hence were able to concentrate on refining their sporting skills and improving physical fitness" (Adair & Vamplew, 1997, p. 16). This was particularly important in professional sport because it was big business. The contestants competed for prize money and bookmakers officiated at the events, offering a range of betting services to the spectators. A problem with high stakes and big bets was that they often led to corruption. For example, in professional running there were numerous complaints of athletes competing under false names.

In colonial Australia, the politics of participation in sport focused on competing amateur versus professional sporting codes. The term "amateur" originated in Britain, where it had come into use during the second half of the nineteenth century as "a contradistinction to professionalism in sport" (Adair & Vamplew, 1997, p. 37).

At the time of World War I amateurism was the dominant sporting creed in Australia and remained so until the latter part of the twentieth century (Cashman, 1995, p. 70). Australian sport during most of the century was influenced by British class-based ideologies, with the impact on athletes, exemplified by former WA champion, the late Shirley de la Hunty:

In those strict days of amateurism, you weren't allowed to accept anything at all, not gifts, not money. I've always thought that had I been a dancer or a singer I could have made a living and still been popular. But because I had a skill that was under this Olympic blanket, I could only be popular if I didn't make any money of it. (S. B. de la Hunty, personal communication, August 2, 2001)

As the amateur rules prevented athletes from earning money from activities in any way related to sports, working-class athletes could not afford both to make a living and train for competition. Olympic rules about amateurism contributed to many controversies over the years.

In an attempt to differentiate between amateurs and professionals, rules and regulations were created. Although definitions of an amateur varied in different countries, and in various sports, one of the most universal definitions was that adopted for the 1896 Olympic Games, which emphasised that participation in sport should solely be for the love of it, and excluded anyone who had received any monetary or material

gain from sport. The Olympic Games were revived specifically to preserve the amateur ethos and to allow amateur athletes an opportunity to compete against equals. Throughout the period of this study, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) strongly defended amateurism in the world's elitist sporting competition. The autocratic IOC president from 1952 to 1972, Avery Brundage, was a fervent defender of amateurism. Brundage maintained that the high ideals of Olympism would be destroyed if athletes were allowed to profit from the sport. Brundage's Olympic ideals and beliefs stemmed back to French aristocrat, Baron Pierre de Coubertin, the man responsible for organizing the first Modern Olympic Games in Athens in 1896.

Expanded transportation and communications networks and technological innovations, coupled with accelerated urbanisation, gave rise to increased discretionary income and time. Certain sections of society, particularly the upper and middle classes, had the time and money to travel and participate in sport. However, the growth of spectator sport gave rise to a new profession — the professional sportsman, who could earn a living by attracting crowds to watch him compete. The development of sports and recreation events in Western Australia reflected technological and communication developments, and localism, which was a feature of that State's sport prior to Federation. It slowly gave rise to regionalism and then to national and international competitions.

Throughout Western Australia, and indeed Australia, professional boxing was popular from the early days of settlement. Though frequently condemned and considered a sport of the lower class, it was at the same time patronised by the upper class, who often produced the money for the contests. Many publicans also sponsored bouts, with boxing saloons being a feature at some hotels. Professional boxing continued into the twentieth century, when two forms of boxing were established: amateur, for the middle and upper classes; and professional, mainly for the lower classes.

The amateur-professional problem did not seem to be an issue in Western Australia in the early years of settlement. In most sports matches and contests prizes were given and monies won, and these were accepted by all competitors.

Amateurism was essentially a social classification, as these "amateur gentlemen" competed for and accepted prize money in horse racing, cycling, pedestrianism, cricket and sculling. In cricket, gentlemen could compete against workers and, if they won,

which they often did because of their greater skill, they would accept the rewards. Pedestrians, who appeared to be from the lower classes, were referred as "professionals", as they made their living from their prizes.

English sporting customs were dominant during the first 50 years of the colony. The cultural background of the settlers and later, the convicts, influenced the social habits and customs that evolved in Western Australia. As most were from the British Isles, more particularly from England, the play patterns that emerged were generally those of the home country. The predominance of sports such as horse running, cricket, rowing, sailing, shooting and pedestrianism, as well as hotel-related games and recreation activities such as billiards, darts, cards-playing and dancing, are evidence of this cultural infusion. Sports events were seen as social occasions, as periods of fun and relaxation when men and women could enjoy a break from the arduous and, at times, tedious nature of life in the new settlement. It is clear in the nineteenth century, in a sporting context, that women were encouraged to participate as spectators, but few avenues were available to them as active participants.

The sport patterns in the settlement reflected the society. First, as sport in Western Australia was in its formative and growing stages, so too was the colony itself. Second, with respect to social organisations, the class structure and societal moves were manifested in the various sports. The recreational activities served as social integrative forces, as such occasions brought people together and allowed them to interact with each other. In these formative years, recreational and sport activities had particular social value for the pleasure and enjoyment that accrued for participants and spectators alike:

Australia probably became the first country in the world to give a high emphasis to spectator sports. British sports such as horse-racing, football, cricket, boxing rowing — and later golf and lawn tennis — migrated with ease to Australia. North of England migrants who stepped ashore were astonished that in a land of so few people such huge crowds could be found at racecourses and football grounds. Even in the bush. Sport seemed to fascinate people. Villages with fifty people might have a racecourse. (Blainey, 1994, pp. 109-110)

Although the sports pursued in Western Australia were primarily of British origin they were not adopted totally, and some of them were modified because of the harsh climatic and environmental conditions. In hunting, for example, the fox, rabbit and hare were not native to Australia, and were therefore introduced. Cricket matches,

also, were occasionally modified — with single-wicket and one-against-one matches — because at times there were not enough players or equipment, or because many of the players lacked the requisite skills. The rules governing horse racing were sometimes modified to adapt to local conditions. Racing was imported to Australia from England, and it still preserves many English traditions, especially in the names of major events. Western Australian racing has the Derby, Oaks and St Leger for three-year-old horses.

Concurrent with organisational developments in sports was the emergence, and clear differentiation, of amateur and professional sports. Professionalism materialised in virtually all sports that had mass appeal, such as boxing, foot-racing, rowing, cricket and cycling. Money prizes, of variant amounts, from a few shillings to several hundred pounds, were offered at most sports competitions. Gambling, and the placing of bets, had become an integral component of the Western Australian sports scene. Australians seemed to have an incredible proclivity for gambling. Incessant gambling, accusations of “running stiff” and cheating, and an apparent decline in standards of “sportsmanship” and fair play, were all factors which enhanced the amateur sport movement. Gambling was used to draw a clear distinction between amateurism and professionalism:

Amateur sport was good, wholesome and worthwhile, it imbued its participants with the traits of fair play, modesty in victory, dignity in defeat and sportsmanship — all the essential elements in the development of character. On the other hand, professional sport was primitive, unworthy, and dangerous, as it was associated with gambling, and was open to cheating, bribery and corruption. The professional, motivated by financial reward alone, could not hope to aspire to the ideals of the amateur. (Moore & Phillips, 1990, p. 62)

The gold rushes of the 1890s dramatically increased the interest in spectator sports in the colony. With more leisure, people had the time to attend sporting contests and with more prosperity they had money with which to bet. Gambling was part of many of the professional sports.

The financial rewards of sporting achievement for the elite few have allowed access to enhanced social status. However, it can be argued that professionalism in “amateur” sports began more than a decade before the 1970s. Certainly, advertising at sporting events in the late 1960s was in its infancy. During the 1970s, with sponsorship of competitions, the use of sports professionals to endorse products, the emergence of business-orientated sports managers, the specific marketing of sports related goods and services, and an increasing reliance upon associated broadcasting fees, organised sport

became firmly and undeniably linked to the wider economic setting. These developments helped to influence shifts in the culture of professional sportsmen and women. Professionalism became something sports people boasted of, rather than concealing or apologising for. As a result, commerce became impossible to avoid in virtually any observation of organised sport. This became clear in 1977 when cricket, which had fought a staunch battle against professionalism and commercial exploitation, was reorganised on professional and commercial lines. This was due to the split in international cricket when a number of players were poached by Australian media magnate Kerry Packer for his alternative World Series Cricket. This historical development resulted in cricket, which is closely linked with Australian culture, moving away from traditional British amateur values to commercial interests, and therefore enabling its players to make a comfortable living from the sport.

World Series Cricket was created by Kerry Packer when his financially attractive proposal, to obtain exclusive rights in Australia to televise international cricket, was rejected by the Australian Cricket Board. Recruiting the best local and overseas players as full-time professionals, he revolutionised the game by popularising night cricket as a revival to the official competition. Fast bowler Graham McKenzie, Western Australia's first regular Test player, recalled that in the early 1960s, players received £2/2/0 each day in Sheffield Shield matches at the WACA Ground. The base rate was the same for away games, though there were additional small allowances for dry cleaning and meals:

The payments increased a little in the late 1960s and early seventies. I can remember earning about \$300 for the eight games of the Sheffield Shield competition in 1973-74, which was my last season for WA. (G.D. McKenzie, personal communication, August 31, 2002)

On the Test arena, Australian players received \$220 a Test match played in Australia in the mid-1960s. It was increased to about \$300 a Test match in the early 1970s:

The payments were a little higher for overseas cricket tours. I received \$3,000 for a five month tour of India and South Africa in the early 1970s. This all changed when Kerry Packer came on the scene. Until then, the players received only a couple of percentage of the gate receipts. (G.D. McKenzie, personal communication, August 31, 2002)

This figure pales into insignificance to the financial rewards available for domestic players early in the twenty first century. For example, Australian players in the national Pura Cup competition (changing from the Sheffield Shield in 1999) were paid according to their negotiated contract of between \$32,500 and \$90,000 for the 2004-2005 season. In addition, they earned \$3,200 for each Pura Cup match and \$1,100 for every one day game they played (J. Townsend, personal communication, June 10, 2004).

To illustrate the considerably different attitudes towards Australia's leading cricketers by the sport's authorities, Australian Cricket Board's (ACB) contracted players received a minimum \$140,000 retainer, while the established players received in excess of \$400,000 a year (J. Townsend, personal communication, June 10, 2004). In addition, the player could more than double that amount with match payments and endorsements. In the 2004-2005 season, Australian players received \$12,100 a Test against New Zealand and Pakistan and \$4,850 for each international one-day match.

During the period under view, Swan Districts was the youngest team in the Western Australian National Football League (WANFL), being admitted in 1934. In August 1937, its committee offered their players direct match fees for the first time (De Garis, 1997). The committee resolved to pay the players ten shillings each for every match they played, plus a bonus of £1 if the team qualified for the final four. Swan Districts finished third after the qualifying fixtures in 1937 and 1938, losing the first semi-final both seasons. Player payments stopped just after the outbreak of World War II and the WANFL reverted to an underage competition. After the war, when the league had returned to a senior competition, the WANFL outlawed clubs paying their players. When the League relaxed its rules in the early 1950s to allow direct payments to players as well as provident fund payments, Swan Districts paid its players on an incentive basis: £1 per player for each winning match in 1954 and 1955, increasing to £2 in 1956 (De Garis, 1997, p. 71). In 1960, each player received a flat rate of £3 a match, plus £5 per winning match. Footballers began to establish a more professional footing in the 1960s and helped to clarify to the most successful players that they were marketable careerists with greater opportunities for earning than the previous generations of players had been. These changes set the context for the shift in occupational culture of the most successful footballers in the late 1960s. The changes were also linked to the rise in transfer fees during this period, in which players were able increasingly to negotiate

personal terms and signing-on fees, rather than accept a standard fee. Player payments had increased by 1971 and through the 1970s, transfer fees grew at an enormous rate.

In 1968, Perth won its third successive WANFL premiership. Each of its players earned a \$1,000 incentive offered by president Cliff Houghton at the start of the season (Christian, Lee & Messenger, 1985, p. 95). In addition, the Perth players were paid \$22 a winning game and \$6 a losing game. Because of a lack of monetary remuneration in Western Australia, many of Western Australia's best footballers transferred to the stronger and more financially lucrative Victorian Football League (VFL). During the 1970s, WANFL club winning and losing payments increased dramatically, mainly because of increased number of club sponsors and increased League dividends. In 1969, Swan Districts paid its players a total of \$1,796; by 1974 this had increased sharply to \$23,375 and by 1980 to \$130,292 ("Swan Districts Football Club", 1973). Despite a large number of WANFL players receiving match payments in the 1950s and 1960s, they still had full-time employment. The professional footballer did not become common until the late 1980s.

With professionalism becoming prevalent in Western Australian sport from the late 1960s, the potential profit it represented — for competitors, gambling spectators and for administrators with a shrewd business acumen — made competitive sport a popular form of entertainment. Sport largely changed from a recreational to a business activity, necessitating considerable changes in social attitudes towards sport. While no other sports had such dramatic and public discussions of professionalism in the 1960s, tennis significantly shifted its restrictions on professionals, allowing top players increased access to earnings commensurate with their entertainment value. But this did not greatly affect tennis in Western Australia, because that State, apart from Margaret Court late in that decade, did not possess any world-class players.

Boxing and other professional sports in Western Australia offered considerable financial rewards, as well as public notoriety, to the successful men who played for money rather than for purely the love of the game. Professional running was extremely popular early in the twentieth century. It provided opportunities for working-class men with athletic talent to pursue a livelihood in sport. Amateur athletics was non-existent in Western Australia early in the last century. Dave Strickland, a miner from Menzies in the Eastern Goldfields, was the first Western Australian to win the Stawell Gift, Australia's most prestigious professional foot race, when he was successful in 1900.

Strickland, whose daughter Shirley Strickland was one of the world's leading athletes in the 1950s, started from a handicap of 10 yards in the 130 yards race (changed to 120 metres in 1973) and won by three yards.

Percy Mason describes the popularity of professional running in the State early last century:

In Western Australia, professional foot-running boomed at one stage: mining towns talked of little else but match races and Gifts. Kalgoorlie was the centre of attraction. Champions like Arthur Postle and Jack Donaldson loved to run and win in the West. (Mason, 1985, p. 156)

After the first decade of the twentieth century, professional running in Western Australia failed to attract such large crowds, because the world's best professional runners, when visiting Australia, generally restricted their competition to the Eastern States. Again, the isolation of WA was a factor. During the 1920s there were regular professional running meetings in country towns, though these did not generally attract quality runners from outside the State. Austin Robertson, a champion Australian Rules footballer in Perth and a successful player with South Melbourne in the VFL, won the world professional sprint championship, held in Victoria, in 1930 and 1933. Later he was involved in an unsuccessful attempt to revive professional running in Western Australia in the 1970s (Mason, 1985, p. 156).

The Western Australian Amateur Athletic Association (WAAAA) was formed in 1905, but the popularity of professional running in Western Australia made it difficult for an amateur section of the sport to survive. This caused the WAAAA to disband three years later. However, a group of enthusiasts reformed the WAAAA in 1928 and the Western Australian Women's Amateur Athletics Association (WAWAAA) was formed nine years later. The two bodies merged in 1979 under the name of the Athletics Association of Western Australia (AAWA), which was the parent body for amateur athletics in the State, and changing its name to Athletics in 1997.

A number of professional running meetings were conducted in country towns in the Eastern Goldfields and wheatbelt areas of the State during the 1950s. But a dwindling numbers of competitors then caused the sport to disappear for nearly two decades. Australia's success at the 1952 and 1956 Olympic Games provided amateur athletics with a boost, and Perth's staging of the 1962 British Empire and Commonwealth Games added to this revival of amateurism. This, in turn, caused the

demise of professional running. In addition to the unsuccessful efforts to revive the sport in Perth in the 1970s, separate attempts were made to establish professional running in Kalgoorlie in the Eastern Goldfields, 600 kilometres east of Perth, and Goldsworthy in the Pilbara, 1,600 kilometres north of Perth, during the same period. However, those organisations folded within two years.

The attraction of amateur sport lay in the possibility of representing Australia at the Olympic Games or the Empire Games (later named the Commonwealth Games). Track and field athletics remained hostile to professionalism beyond many other sports. Athletics in Australia was one of the last major sports whose governing body sought to isolate the sport from commercial pressures which encouraged it to go professional. As Australian athletics had been structurally tied to the Olympic Games as one of its major showcases, notions of amateurism were allowed to thrive long after other sports had rejected them. In the early 1970s, successful athletes were becoming increasingly aware of their earning potential, and their training needs necessitated full-time commitment in order for them to compete in an increasingly professionalised world arena. At the time the United States of America made use of college scholarships, the Soviet Union exploited conscription to maintain effectively full-time athletes, and East Germany had established sporting institutes where athletes were paid to train and compete.

A major reason for the difficulties faced by professional running in Western Australia was the administrative control of amateur athletics. To be eligible to compete at an Olympic or Commonwealth Games, the athlete had to be a member of the WAAAA or the WAWAAA. Their parent body was the Australian Amateur Athletic Union, which was a member of the Australian Olympic Federation (later changed to the Australian Olympic Committee) and the Australian Commonwealth Games Federation. With Australia's geography, there were a lack of opportunities for this country's professional athletes to compete internationally. For example, to compete in the Powderhall Gift, Scotland's equivalent of Australia's Stawell Gift, the professional athlete would not receive Government help similar to amateur athletes travelling in an Australian team. Most professional athletes would not win sufficient prize money to cover their travelling and accommodation costs. Australia, a conservative country which in the past has not responded well to change, was one of the last countries to hang on to amateurism. Until the early 1970s there was a social stigma about being a professional in sport. In addition, amateur athletics controlled the sport in schools throughout Western Australia, something that the professional side of the sport could not achieve.

In the late 1920s, billiards player Walter Lindrum became one of Western Australia's first full-time international professional sportsman. Lindrum was the first Western Australian to win a world championship in any sport. After becoming a professional billiards player at the age of 14, the Kalgoorlie-born Lindrum became the greatest billiards player in the world, with the sport's authorities needing to change the rules to curb his domination of the game (Cliff, 1999, p. 45; Vamplew et al., 1994, p. 259; Blanch, 1988, p. 40; Heads & Lester, 1988, p. 201; Stoddart, 1986, p. 23). On the other hand, Bob Marshall, like Lindrum, was born in Kalgoorlie, decided not to turn professional. Though he did not receive the same international status as Lindrum, Marshall won four world amateur snooker titles.

The view came to be held that if an athlete could be paid to win, he or she could also be paid to lose. Reinforcing this belief that professionalism led to corruption was the attitude that sport was essentially recreation and so to receive payment for taking part was inappropriate. Western Australian amateur athletes had beaten the best in several sports between the late 1940s and 1960s. They included Olympic champions, athletes John Winter, Herb Elliott and Shirley Strickland-de la Hunty, swimmers Kevin O'Halloran, David Dickson and John Ryan, and Lindrum and Marshall. Yet old attitudes die hard. Many of this country's "amateur" sports stars received illegal "under-the-counter" payments to compete in Australia and overseas. The International Amateur Athletic Federation (IAAF) rules, which were adopted in Australia, were extremely restrictive. For example, the ability of sportsmen and women to cash in on their knowledge and expertise was sometimes curbed, most notably in journalism. In track and field in the 1950s, Western Australian javelin champion Bernie Ceccins started a three decade part-time career as the *West Australian's* and the Australian Broadcasting Commission's (later renamed the Australian Broadcasting Corporation) track and field correspondent. Shortly after starting to report for the media, officials from the WAAAA informed him that by writing for the paper for monetary gain he breached the amateur rules. Ceccins was given an ultimatum: retire from athletics or stop writing for the newspaper. Ceccins, who later became one of the world's leading statisticians in track and field, decided to continue in journalism.

In 1967, a 17-year-old club athlete in Perth was warned by the WAAAA not to participate in a 16 kilometre walkathon to raise funds for the local Police and Citizens Youth Club, because he was breaking the amateur rules. Several years later the same athlete was banned for life from amateur competition twice in the same year: for

training alongside a professional runner, and for umpiring Australian Rules football, where he received payments of up to \$3.60 a game. The supposed life bans, the official punishment, were lifted in 1981 with the relaxation of amateur rules in Australia. The prejudice also prevented a professional athlete in one sport from competing as an amateur in another sport.

The twentieth century turned full circle in regards to amateurism. There were numerous amateur sports in the 1900s, but it was the professional sports of Australian Rules football, horse racing and professional running which attracted the major public interest and most spectators. But after World War I, though Australian Rules football and the gambling sports of horse racing and trotting established themselves as an important part of Australian culture, it was the Olympic amateur ideals, as espoused by Baron Pierre de Coubertin in the late nineteenth century, which became prominent in Western Australian sport. Amateur rules were highly restrictive for sportsmen and women, preventing them from earning income from sporting activities — whether it was by competing or training with professionals, accept expenses, or even working as a sports journalist. But in the early 1970s amateurism was beginning to seem archaic, inefficient and reactionary. It was brought down by elitism and hypocrisy. Whereas earlier generations of sports officials and administrators had largely admired and accepted amateurism, the generation in power in the 1970s seemed to accept its demise.

Politics in Sport

One of the most common clichés associated with sport is that sport and politics should not mix. However, what is clear for the last two decades of this study is that the relationship between sport and politics is close. Governments — local, State and Federal — are increasingly being requested to provide greater support for sporting bodies, in the form of grants to finance travel for State teams, to assist with amenities, or to build new facilities. Sports sociologist Jay Coakley argues that the idea that sports and politics can be kept separate is naïve:

Sports do not exist in cultural vacuums. They are integral parts of the social world. As parts of that world, they are influenced by social, political and economic forces. Sports do not exist apart from the people who create, organise, and play them. The lives of these people and their relationships with one another are connected at least partially to issues of power and control. Therefore, politics becomes a part of sports just because politics is a part of people's lives. It is unavoidable. (Coakley, 1998, p. 433)

The period since the 1980s has seen a considerable growth in the relationship between politics and sport in Western Australia, the role of government in sport, and the way that sport is organised. However, during the period of this study, it was rare for governments to provide a large financial commitment towards sport. An early exception was pledges of support from all levels of government to Perth's successful bid to host the 1962 British Empire and Commonwealth Games. The Federal Government offered to loan the Western Australian Government £865,000 to build the Games village. The Perth City Council, with the aid of Federal and State government grants, contributed funds to build the £1 million Perry Lakes Stadium, which hosted the opening and closing ceremonies, and the track and field, and the £700,000 Beatty Park Aquatic Centre, which hosted the swimming and diving events (Edmonds & Willmott, 1962, pp. 10-13; Edmonds, 1962, p. 9). The bid for the 1962 Games was one of the most controversial sporting events during this study. In 1956, the Australian British Empire and Commonwealth Games Association (ABECGA) voted thirteen to three to nominate Adelaide, over Perth, as Australia's nomination to host the 1962 Games. However, the WA branch of the ABECGA lobbied members of the ABECGA to reverse the decision, and in 1958, the committee selected Perth in a secret ballot nine to seven. The British Empire and Commonwealth Games Federation (BECGF) subsequently selected Perth to host the 1962 Games (Bartlett, 1999, p. 46).

During the first half of the twentieth century Australian governments generally believed that sports organisations should run themselves by raising their own funds and developing their own talent (Cashman, 1995, p. 118). The Federal Government provided minimal assistance to sport before 1972 ("Report to the Minister", 1985, p. 20). This was for limited funding for Australian Olympic and Commonwealth Games teams, financing the Australian surf life-saving movement, and funding teams competing in the Asian region as part of the Department of Foreign Affairs international relations program. The Australian government's involvement in the financing of Australia's Olympic team began early in the twentieth century. This reinforced the perceived importance that amateur international sporting events, such as the Olympics, had in fostering a sense of national pride:

During the 1920s governments began to provide a small amount of funding for major events such as the Olympics, but the amounts were token and reinforced the assumption that the bulk of the finance should be raised by the sports themselves. In 1923 the federal government made a grant of £3,000 to the AOC

[Australian Olympic Committee] for the 1924 Games, but it was conditional on the AOC raising £10,000 through public subscription. (Cashman, 1995, p. 118)

However, in the pre-1972 period, the Federal Government placed greater emphasis on national fitness rather than providing assistance to elite sport. The widely accepted amateur ethic provided no role for direct government involvement. Governments only intervened directly in the more professional sports where the issue of gambling required regulation and presented the opportunity for expanding State revenue.

Sport and recreation in Western Australia became more formalised with the Commonwealth Government contributing towards the establishment of the National Fitness Council of Western Australia (NFC) early in 1939. Prime Minister Joe Lyons requested each State Minister for Health to establish State councils for physical fitness. The Commonwealth Government provided £1,000 annually for five years to each State to establish a NFC ("National Fitness Council", 1940). In the NFC's 1960 annual report, a brief history of the body stated:

Taking as its mandate the encouragement of community recreation and physical fitness, and given urgency by the outbreak of World War 2, the W.A. Council, after preliminary work on a wide scale with the general civilian community through beach and Esplanade daily keep fit classes, and with special "out of hours" attention to the recreational and physical needs of the large numbers of munition workers, soon came to realise that its best work could be done if it concentrated on the health and fitness of the youth and young adult section of the population. ("National Fitness Council", 1960)

The University of Western Australia was also allocated £1,500 annually for the establishments of lectureships or for scholarships. The inaugural NFC president was Alexander Panton, the Western Australian Minister for Health. The organisation was responsible for co-ordinating boys' clubs, youth hostels, social studies, dental care and nutrition, physical training, recreation and sports, and youth welfare. It introduced and popularised camps for young people as training in outdoor adventure and community living. In 1940, the Commonwealth Government made available another £500 for the purpose of training teachers and leaders in physical education of a standard lower than that of a university diploma. In addition, £50 was provided annually to each State to meet the travelling expenses for officials to attend interstate conferences. The National Fitness Council drew on Britain's valuation of fitness in the nineteenth century (Vamplew, 1994, p. 7; Crotty, 2000, p. 11), as this extract explains:

Taking the lead from the British Government's pattern in the development of a youth plan on democratic lines, Western Australia has developed its national fitness policy to cover the fields of youth welfare generally, and physically and recreational training with particular emphasis on the provision of satisfactory community facilities. ("National Fitness Council", 1945)

The National Fitness Council Act (WA) was enacted into Parliament in 1945 ("National Fitness Council", 1945). The director of the new council was to be the Superintendent of Physical Education in the Education Department. The Act added to the Commonwealth Act's provisions with a clause making the Western Australian body "generally to be the instrument through which the Government of the State could co-operate with the voluntary youth organisation in the development of a youth service." The Amateur Sporting Federation was a committee to the NFC from 1939 until changing its name to Associated Sporting Committee in 1950. The NFC increased its permanent staff from four in 1942 to 13 in 1967. In 1950, the NFC co-ordinated the activities for many of the State's sporting organisations, such as regular monthly meetings, the introduction of school leavers to healthy leisure recreation, and numerous coaching courses. The number of amateur sporting bodies increased from 23 in 1950, to 37 in 1957 and 58 in 1967. The NFC changed its name to the Community Recreational Council in 1973 and became the Department for Sport and Recreation in 1978.

The fact that sports are important parts of people's lives, and that sports can also be the scene for problems, often leads to government regulations and controls. Government involvement generally includes supporting sport programs and facilities — local, State or federal governments. The rules, policies, and funding priorities set by government officials and agencies reflect the political struggles between groups within society. For example, when funds are allocated to elite sport programs and the development and training of elite athletes, fewer funds are available for general-participation programs.

Successive Western Australian governments' attitudes towards sport were also ambivalent or negative. In 1983, Keith Wilson became Western Australia's first Minister with a portfolio directly related to sport. Labor Premier Brian Burke appointed Wilson as Minister for Sport and Recreation on 25 February 1983, and Wilson held the position for 22 months. Prior to Wilson's appointment, various governments appointed Ministers with a responsibility for recreation, though they were generally linked with other major areas. For instance, Thomas Evans served the John Tonkin Labor government as Minister for Education and Recreation for 11 months from 6 July 1972.

He was the first Minister for Recreation. The title "Recreation" covered a wide-ranging area, such as the arts and general community recreation facilities.

Physical training for youth was mentioned on several occasions in the Federal Parliament as early as 1936 (Gray, 1978, p. 4). The Western Australian Physical Fitness Council was provisionally formed on 14 April 1939, and was formed as an incorporated body on 26 September 1939. The council was established primarily to organise community programs to improve physical fitness (Gray, 1978, p. 34). Its first undertaking was the organisation of fitness classes for the public. It formed fitness groups as rapidly as leaders could be recruited. By 1941, 80 fitness classes were reported to be operating in the metropolitan area and in the larger country towns ("National Fitness Council", 1941). It can be argued that the Second World War was largely responsible for the enthusiasm for fitness programs. However, this eagerness dissipated at the end of the war, as Gray points out:

Towards the end of the war, much of the enthusiasm for keep fit classes, including those introduced for employees in factories, and lunch hour groups on the Esplanade, lost impetus and no specific mention is made of the fitness programme in the annual report for 1945. (Gray, 1978, p. 34)

After the war, the council re-assessed its operations and shifted its emphasis from physical fitness to youth services and recreation. However, the fitness component continued in a number of indirect ways. The leader training courses provided considerable emphasis on fitness activities in the hope that these would be continued in the voluntary youth clubs. Through its close association with the Education Department of Western Australia, the council indirectly influenced and encouraged the inclusion of physical fitness activities in the physical education programs in schools and colleges throughout the State. This policy continued until the mid-1960s, when a revival of interest resulted from repeated warnings from the medical profession of the health hazards associated with lack of exercise. It was initiated by the Commonwealth National Fitness Council and launched by Prime Minister Holt. In a national television broadcast, he encouraged all Australians to "strive for improved standards of fitness" (Gray, 1978, p. 35). In Western Australia, the campaign was supervised by a committee consisting of prominent citizens, with the Premier David Brand as patron.

Government involvement in sport at that time consisted of minimal funding and development of fitness councils and departments within parliament. The priority was to

ensure health of the nation and, within the State, of Western Australian people. The strong push from the City of Perth to secure the Australian bid rights for the 1962 British Empire and Commonwealth Games suggests that government intervention was prompted by a desire for national or State prestige.

Spectator Sports

Australian Rules football and horse racing were the sports which regularly attracted the greatest number of spectators during the first seven decades of the twentieth century. Yet they had major differences in regards to spectators versus participants. Football, a sport invented in Victoria in the nineteenth century, was a mass participation sport. There were no official figures available about the membership of Australian sporting bodies, but Australian Rules football was played throughout the communities and schools in the major capital cities and most towns throughout Western Australia, South Australia, Victoria and Tasmania. Participants did not need special licenses or qualifications. All they needed to be eligible to play in an official football competition was to be a member of a club. The situation was vastly different in horse racing. The Western Australian Turf Club (WATC) had a restricted number of memberships. Similarly, there were a small number of participants in racing. The jockeys, who needed to be licensed, had to endure a tough training program, and trainers, who also required a license, needed owners prepared to invest money into placing a horse in his or her care.

The official recording of Western Australian National Football League (WANFL) attendances started in 1931. According to Western Australian Football League statistician, Dave Clement, attendance numbers were not considered important before then, as WANFL officials were only concerned with gate receipts (D. Clement, personal communication, August 14, 1998). Numbers of spectators were impossible to calculate, because of the different charges for adults, pensioners and children. Barker (2004, p. 107) contends that football remained "unchallenged as the people's game" and football attendances in the WANFL grew after World War II, with a figure of 600,000 being topped for the first time in 1959 when 701,691 attended the 21 qualifying rounds and the four finals. This was well in excess of the 589,264 in 1957. The first occasion that saw more than 30,000 spectators attend the four league games was on 25 April 1959, when 30,187 turned out to break the previous record of 28,048, set on 7 June 1958.

The peak years for football attendances in the WANFL were during the 1960s. Perth had a higher proportional attendance per head of population at the football than Melbourne and Adelaide in the 1960s (Whimpress, 1994, p. 33). During this decade, Eastern States coaches and players made a big impact on the game in this State. The major pre-season appointments in 1960 were West Perth's decision to name former Footscray star Arthur Oliver as coach; South Fremantle's replacement of 21-year-old captain-coach John Todd with former Footscray and Victorian centre-half-back Marty McDonnell as coach; the return of Steve Marsh as coach of East Fremantle; and the appearance of Bob Miller as coach of Perth. With Oliver at West Perth came Melbourne champion Don Williams and Essendon star John Towner, two players who were to have a considerable effect on the team's football during the year. These appointments helped boost spectator interest in the matches. Because the Victorian Football League (VFL) was generally considered superior to the sport in other States, the appointments of Victorians in the WANFL was designed to improve the "credibility" of the sport in Western Australia. As a result, in 1960, attendances increased dramatically to 753,866 — representing a huge increase of 168,963 in two seasons. The 1961 season was one of the most significant in Western Australian football history. It was a year that the WA team won the Australian championship carnival, 40 years after its only previous win, and Swan Districts, the youngest team in the WANFL, won its first premiership. Spectators at games were a record 779,596. The opening fixtures of the 1964 season resulted in 42,338 spectators attending; the first time more than 40,000 fans had watched four games on the same day and had exceeded the previous best total by 3,941.

For only the second time more than 50,000 spectators attended a football game in Western Australia, with 50,975 attending the 1971 WAFL grand final at Subiaco Oval, where Graham Farnner coached West Perth to a comprehensive 43-point win against East Perth. During the time span of this study, a record 51,385 watched the 1969 grand final between the same two teams, with Farmer having led West Perth to the premiership — this time by 73 points. Farmer's reputation as one of Australia's greatest footballers was a significant reason for record crowds at WAFL games after his return from the VFL in 1968, having spent seven seasons playing with Geelong. Farmer is credited with development of the handball as a highly-skilled offensive aspect of the Australian football (Vamplew et al., 1994, p. 158). His appearances attracted larger crowds to WAFL matches than previously, making the sport more popular in Western Australia. Farmer's stint in Victoria was another case of the VFL nurturing local talent.

Professionalism did not begin to become noticeable in Australian Rules football until the 1960s. Players were loyal to clubs, which gained most of their revenue from attendances and memberships (Whimpress, 1994, p. 36). The period when professionalism really began to increase, however, was in the 1970s. The Claremont Football Club paid large amounts of money to recruit prominent players from the Eastern States as the means of gaining premiership success, and a wage-cost explosion began which was difficult to control until the Western Australian Football League (WAFL) introduced salary caps in the late 1980s. Player payments at all clubs then increased considerably and players became more aware of their bargaining power.

By contrast with football, Australia's greatest annual spectator event is the Melbourne Cup, which is held at the Flemington Racecourse in Melbourne on the first Tuesday of every November. It is popularly believed that it is the only sporting event that "stops Australia". Sittings of Federal Parliament have been suspended so the politicians can either listen to the Melbourne Cup on the radio or watch it on television. Western Australia's major horse race is the Perth Cup, traditionally held on New Year's Day. If 1 January was a Sunday the race would then be held the following day. Similar to the Melbourne Cup, the Perth Cup, which regularly attracted some of the nation's top horses, was run over two miles. Though the Perth Cup did not have the national attraction of the Melbourne Cup until World War II it rivalled, and in some years even surpassed, the attendances at the Western Australian National Football League (WANFL) grand final.

Horse racing, until 1910 was Western Australia's only official gambling sport, regularly attracting large numbers of spectators. Crowds of between 15,000 and 20,000 attended the Perth Cup and Railway Stakes meetings during the 1920s and 1930s. The number of spectators remained similar after the war and increased steadily during the 1960s.

Trotting emerged as Western Australia's second gambling sport, after horse racing, in 1910. But its popularity did not improve significantly until the sport was held at night under lights four years later. A lack of infrastructure meant that night sport was limited during the first two decades of last century. Trotting reaped the benefits by regularly attracting large crowds to its meetings under lights at the WACA Ground. However, in 1929, the Western Australian Trotting Association (WATA) moved to its new home, Brennan Park, later named Gloucester Park, where the WATA is still

located. With the best facilities in Australia, WA trotting rapidly grew in popularity, in regards to spectators, to rival racing as the dominant code. Pacing had eclipsed trotting as the preferred gait for races, and the term "harness racing" has generally superseded "trotting" as the name of the sport in Australia (Vamplew, 1994, p. 202).

In the 1920s, speedway racing and professional wrestling became popular night entertainment. Lights were erected at the Claremont Speedway in its first season. As many as 20,000 people crammed the speedway weekly to watch the racing, where many of Australia's leading riders, and competitors from the United States and Great Britain, periodically raced the local riders. Local speedway fans had a sporting hero in Perth rider Sig Schlam, who was extremely competitive against visiting riders. Schlam went to England to race and by the time he returned to Perth for the 1928-29 season he was one of the best riders in the world (Stoddart, 1983, p. 668). However, early in the 1930-31 season he died, at the age of 24, in a race crash. Despite this tragedy, the sport continued to attract large numbers of spectators until the outbreak of World War II.

Cricket, the first team sport played in Australia, comes closest to being the national game (Cashman, 1994, p. 58). However, Western Australian was excluded from most early national cricket competitions because of its isolation. Therefore, the response by local cricket fans to teams who did travel to Perth from interstate or overseas was exceptional. It was usually visiting international teams and players who attracted the greatest numbers. Crowds of between 5,000 and 6,000 regularly attended the first days of matches against the MCC and the Australian XI in the 1920s. In proportion to a Perth population of just over 200,000, such crowds were the equivalent of the 35,000 to 40,000 spectators present at the matches of the late 1990s (Barker, 1998, p. 77). However, during the 1930s the crowds were generally limited to about 2,000, except for the few occasions when the world's greatest player, Don Bradman, was in action. On those occasions, the number of spectators increased "five or even tenfold" (Barker, 1998, p. 93). Because Western Australia was not a part of the Sheffield Shield competition until the 1947-48 season, first-class cricket matches in Perth were an irregular occurrence.

The build-up to a match between England, which was captained by Douglas Jardine, and an Australian XI team, that included Bradman and five Western Australian players, at the start of the 1932-33 season, was unprecedented. A record weekday crowd of 10,947 attended the opening day on Friday and 12,000 crowded into the WACA

Ground on the Saturday. England was on its way by ship to the Eastern States for a Test series against Australia, in what later was to be known as the "Bodyline" series. Jardine, who arrived in Perth as a hero, left Australia as a villain after directing his fast bowlers to bowl short-pitched directed at the body of the batsman, with the field placed predominantly on the leg-side during the series. Jardine is said to have conceived it as the only method by which the prodigious run-scorer Bradman could be contained (Vamplew, 1994, p. 70).

The size of crowds at the WACA Ground fluctuated after World War II. Even after Western Australia won the Shield in its inaugural season, the crowds at local matches rarely reached the level of the 1930s. After a long battle to secure Test status, Perth was awarded the second Test of England's 1970-71 tour of Australia. In the biggest sporting occasion in Western Australia since the British Empire and Commonwealth Games eight years earlier (Brayshaw, 1979, p. 50), 15,000 spectators watched the opening day's play and the total attendance over the five days was 84,142. This level of spectator interest compared favourably with horse racing and trotting, though it was below that achieved by the WANFL.

Soccer increased in popularity in Western Australia during the 1950s and 1960s. In 1958, 12,140 spectators watched a match between Western Australia and Blackpool, with Stanley Matthews, one of England's greatest players, the major attraction. The following year, Italian fans helped post a record attendance of 3,340 for a club game in Perth (Mosely & Murray, 1994, p. 223). Soccer's growth was watched with anxiety by some Australians who thought the game might take over from their own (Mosely & Murray, 1994, p. 224). However, it would be unfair to judge the popularity of a sport by attendances at big games or events. The local first grade soccer matches seldom attracted more than several hundred spectators, which paled in comparison with Australian Rules football, racing and trotting.

Amateur athletics failed to consistently attract the large crowds of professional running in Western Australia during the first decade of last century. The only time that amateur athletics drew so much attention during the period under review was during the 1962 British Empire and Commonwealth Games in Perth, due to the prestige of the occasion. In addition, track and field is the cornerstone of all Olympic and Commonwealth Games.

At the start of radio sporting transmissions in Western Australia, the initial reaction from officials controlling sports such as football and horse racing was to protect their "gate" from the threat of "free" entertainment at home. They placed obstacles in the way of broadcasters to prevent the transmission of the matches or races. However, the broadcasters convinced the sporting authorities that their broadcasting would not diminish the attendances but would, in fact, create greater interest in the sports, which would increase the number of spectators.

During the Depression of the 1930s, sports such as Australian Rules football, boxing and wrestling became fixed at the lower end of the social scale. For their participants such sports were a way for them to survive financially during the economic deprivation. For the spectators, such activities provided relatively cheap entertainment. However, at the same time, sports patronised by the elite gained a further stamp of exclusion. The Western Australian Turf Club (WATC) actually raised its race-day entry prices at a time when attendances were falling.

Its stated aim was to exclude from the course those who could not afford to bet in such straitened times (the lower orders); but it looked suspiciously like a manoeuvre to purify the social image of race day. (Stoddart, 1986, p. 38)

World Championship Wrestling (WCW) matches were regularly held in Perth in summer months during the 1950s and 1960s. Its programs usually took place at Subiaco Oval, before moving to Perry Lakes Stadium after the 1962 British Empire and Commonwealth Games. Wrestlers such as Dominic Denucci, Cowboy Bob Ellis, Bulldog Bob Brown, Mark Lewin, Ray Stevens, Mario Milano, Killer Karl Cox, Killer Kowalski and Skull Murphy attracted strong followings around the world. With regular one hour programs on Channel 7, "World Championship Wrestling", held lunchtime on Sundays, Western Australians strongly supported the local promotions. Spectators numbering between 8,000 and 10,000 regularly supported the programs. There is evidence to support the many claims that the bouts were choreographed, with the results decided between the competitors and the promoters before the start of the bouts (Cornick, B., 2002; J. Ross, personal communication, December 3, 1998; Hart, 2001; MacArthur, 1998; Pallo, 1985, p. 8; Hallows, 1976, p. 128). Jim Ross, a former sports editor of the *West Australian*, is in no doubt that the WCW bouts were fixed:

When the promoters started to hold World Wrestling Championship programs at Perry Lakes Stadium, the local residents were up in arms, because of the bright lights from the stadium and the noise from the crowd. They were very unhappy

that Perth City Council had given the promoters permission to stage the bouts. So the council told the promoters that the lights must be turned out by 10.25 p.m. The bouts were obviously fixed. The promoters had to have the programs over by 10.15 p.m. It can be 10.14 p.m. and we'd [journalists] say it will be over in one minute, and fair enough, right on 10.15 there would be the winning pin. Why we [*West Australian*] covered it, I don't know. Ted Collingwood loved professional sports, and this was a professional sport. They [the wrestlers] were more like entertainers than sportsmen. (J. Ross, personal communication, December 3, 1998)

Ross said it was not clear why WCW was so popular. There were many in the community who doubted that it was an authentic sport, but the promoters had little difficulty in attracting capacity crowds. It can be argued that the novelty of seeing men often taller than two metres and weighing more than 200 kilograms leaping off the top rope, sending their opponents into an "acroplane" spin and using their strength in a body slam helped many in the crowd to live out their fantasies. Also, in the majority of bouts the opponents came from one of two camps — the "goodies" and the "baddies". Going to the wrestling to "let off steam" for many was a relaxing evening. So, in a paradox, despite the sport having a reputation for suspicion of corruption, match-fixing and the subservience to the commercial interest, sports editor Ted Collingwood permitted significant space to provide coverage of the programs. Collingwood, in contrast to most sports administrators and officials, favoured professional sports ahead of their amateur counterparts. He was also in favour of providing what his readership wanted. Because of the many thousands of spectators at the local wrestling programs, he dedicated significant space to the events.

It is clear that Australian Rules football and horse racing were the two sports that dominated during the period studied in regard to the significant numbers of spectators they drew. Other sports, such as cricket, soccer, speedway, motor racing and World Championship Wrestling were also popular among Western Australian sporting crowds, but these events did not occur as frequently as football matches or racing meetings. They also did not feature as many local interests as the WANFL or the floodlit trotting nights could offer. While the diversity of Western Australians' sporting interests has grown, these dominant sports continue to draw a large portion of local spectators.

CHAPTER 5

THE MEDIA IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA 1901 – 1971

In 1901, print was the only medium in Western Australia and the daily newspapers sold on Perth's streets were the *West Australian*, the *Daily News* and the *Morning Herald*. The *Sunday Times* was Perth's only Sunday newspaper. Radio started in 1924, with the establishment of 6WF. The second radio station (6ML) began transmission in 1930. This number had increased to six by 1938. From the 1940s to the early 1960s radio was the dominant means of mass communication in the State. Television began in Western Australia in 1959, when TVW Channel Seven went to air. Seven months later, the Australian Broadcasting Commission's Channel Two commenced transmission and STW Channel Nine in 1965. By the end of the period under review, the press was still an important means of communication, but it was television that had become the mass medium. The rate of technological development between 1901 and 1971 points to a fundamental shift in the relationships between the media and the listener/viewer/consumer. For instance, in the 1930s the ABC, the government broadcaster, held the monopoly in electronic broadcasting. But in 1971 there was a plethora of choice in sound and vision. In sheer numbers — of radio and television services — the picture in the early 1970s was very different from the picture in the 1930s.

Until the 1920s, the generic term of the media was 'the press', itself disguising the variety of print outlets — daily or weekly general newspapers, general or specific magazines, specialist or general sports publications, foreign or domestic — serving a variety of social groups. For example, Stoddart argues that 'quality' verses 'yellow' journalism was really about catering for either the social elite or mass audiences (Stoddart, 1986, p. 84).

It has been pointed out by Sir Paul Hasluck, a journalist in Western Australia before entering parliament, being promoted to Cabinet Minister and later becoming Australia's Governor-General, that during the 1920s, parliament, the church, the

university and the press enjoyed eminence and influence in Western Australia of a kind that may be difficult for a younger generation to appreciate:

The morning newspaper in those days had a standing in the life of the community rather different from the role of the media today. The morning paper was also part of a settled order. Its editor was one of the establishment. . . . The main news was in the middle pages and not on the front page. Headlines were modest labels to describe the subject matter below them. It would be considered a very old-fashioned paper today, but it was honoured as an institution on roughly the same level as those other main pillars of the community — the parliament, the church and the university. (Hasluck, 1977, p. 10)

This chapter will explore the developments of the different areas of the news media during the first seven decades of last century — newspapers, radio and television. Television news, which started in Western Australia in 1959, did not win its power easily. Broadcast news had, from its earliest days of radio more than three decades earlier, a hard struggle to assert itself against the dominant medium of the time, the press. The most important development which television brought to journalism was the use of the motion picture to record and convey daily events. Newscasting and the power of personality in presenting the news were the elements which first attracted public attention to television. Radio and the print media did not achieve this aim. However, the print media had its own strengths, which television could not match. Newspapers provided greater in-depth analysis of news stories and radio provided more live coverage of major news events, until television was able to utilise satellite transmission several years later. The immediacy of radio in reporting major news events had advantages over television in Western Australia until the early 1970s.

The Press in Western Australia

Newspapers have played a vital role in the history of Western Australia almost from the time the first settlers landed in the colony. Frost noted that “not only did newspapers provide a summary of events of the day and the comings and goings of people, but they also provided medium of expression for the man in the street, even though in the beginning it was only on a weekly basis” (1983, p. 77). In 1829, the Swan River Colony, where Perth now stands, was settled as an independent colony without the labour of convicts. However, a widespread shortage of labour emerged in the late 1840s, which was responsible for Western Australia officially being constituted a penal settlement in 1850 (Statham, 1983, p. 209). These changes helped the development of the press in the colony.

On 5 January 1833, the *Perth Gazette and Western Australian Journal* made its first appearance under the editorship of Charles Macfaul. This paper was the progenitor of the *West Australian*. A more comprehensive examination of the *West Australian* will be provided in chapter six.

Edward Stirling published the *Inquirer* as a weekly sheet in 1840 and the *Inquirer* became known for its strict impartiality and fairness of comment under the guiding control of Stirling. The *Inquirer* changed to the *Inquirer and Commercial News* in 1855, and was incorporated with the *Daily News* in 1901. The *Daily News* was strongly opposed at that time by the only morning paper published in the colony — the *West Australian* — and a majority of the Legislature (Battye, 1912, p. 585).

Until 1901, the *Daily News* had been published every afternoon except on Wednesdays which was the day the *Inquirer* was produced. The *Daily News*, in 1882, became Western Australia's first daily newspaper — three years earlier than the *West Australian*. In 1894, Horace Stirling retired from the *Daily News* as editor and Arthur Lovekin was appointed editor and managing director of that paper. Lovekin, who arrived in Western Australia from Queensland in 1886, became one of the most influential journalists in the State.

Lovekin acquired sole ownership of the *Daily News* in 1916. In 1926, he sold the *Daily News* to News Limited, of Adelaide. However, after battling through some of the worst years of the 1930s financial slump, the new proprietors sold out in 1935, to Perth Newspapers, a subsidiary of Western Australian Newspapers (WAN). By 1937, the afternoon newspaper's circulation again exceeded 20,000 and built up rapidly to double its figures by 1942. These were again doubled by 1949. When the Melbourne-based Herald and Weekly Times took over WAN in 1969, the circulation of the *West Australian* was about 200,980 and the *Daily News* at 108,131 ("The romantic story", 1972).

Sport played an important role in the *Daily News*, with the sporting section consisting of several pages at the back of the paper. However, coverage of sport in the *Daily News* was less than in the *West Australian*. This was because the *West Australian* consisted of more pages, due to its greater advertising content. But the *Daily News'* treatment of sport was vastly different from its morning rival. As most local sport was played on weekends, the *Sunday Times* could include coverage of the Saturday's action and the *West Australian* provided a comprehensive wrap of the weekend's sporting

results on Monday morning. From 1955, the *Daily News* had a Saturday afternoon paper, *Weekend Mail* (changing to the *Weekend News* in 1960). With these opposition newspapers publishing the news first, the *Daily News*' sporting staff was left with little alternative than to report differently. The paper did this by regularly profiling prominent local sportsmen and women, employing columnists to talk about sporting items and controversies, and discussing background issues regarding ramifications for clubs and players following their matches at the weekend. During the week, the *Daily News* spent considerable amounts of space predicting the outcome of the following weekend's sporting competitions. However, there were occasions when the *Daily News* beat all of its rivals to the news. For example, Sheffield Shield cricket games usually started at the WACA Ground on Friday and continued until Tuesday. The Australian domestic competition matches were played on four days, with a rest day on Sundays until the 1970-71 season, when the games were scheduled to finish on Mondays. Though the *Weekend News* had a late edition to include stories and results of the Western Australian National Football League (WANFL) games on Saturdays, the *Daily News* did not cover the matches when they were played on Mondays. The *Daily News* deadlines for the final edition on public holidays remained at 2.30 p.m., while the league football matches finished at 5 p.m. This was because the *Daily News* operated to a strict budget and could not financially afford to publish a later issue to include a football roundup. However, on public holidays, the *Daily News* generally published a front page football news story. A strong front page football story could increase the paper's circulation between 1,500 and 2,000 (I. Hummerston, personal communication, July 12, 2004).

In 1896 the *Morning Herald* was launched as a daily paper in direct opposition to the *West Australian* (Frost, 1983, p. 86). Battye argues that the advent of the *Morning Herald*, which had no relationship to the paper of the same name in the 1880s, was directly responsible for a general all-round improvement in journalism in the colony (1912, p. 586). Arthur Lovekin, who was the paper's editor, used his paper to voice his opposition to Federation. In 1901, Lovekin opposed the political views of his directors, so he resigned, to be asked to again take over management of the paper 18 months later (Frost, 1983, p. 86). The paper attacked the Government of the day — that of Sir John Forrest. In 1905, the *Morning Herald* was purchased by the Roman Catholic Church and it was conducted in accordance with church principles. This included refusing to publish horse racing results, which Frost argued was one of the reasons for its decline of circulation (1983, p. 86).

In 1905 it [*Morning Herald*] was sold to J. Dreyer, nominee of Mathew Gibney, the Roman Catholic Bishop of Perth. An inexplicable decision to abandon racing information — a decision afterwards reversed, but too late — hastened the end of the ailing newspaper. ("The romantic story", 1972)

Though the *Morning Herald* was relatively short-lived, it was a vigorous journalistic and business enterprise for its first five years. After 1901 it began to lose ground financially. The editorial in the *Morning Herald* on 6 July 1905 stated:

In future all items of news dealing with horse-racing and betting operations will be excluded from our columns. Odds, turf quotations, and other horse racing matter, which has absorbed columns of our space daily, will under the new order of things be absolutely barred from our columns. A similar veto will be exercised on betting advertisements. For sport in the true sense of the term, we shall continue to give generous space. Cricket, golf, football, tennis, bowls, and other manly games will receive every encouragement. ("Sports and pastimes", 1905)

The staff was notified on a Friday afternoon that from the next morning the paper would not contain any more racing news. This was a newspaper which catered for a population with probably a larger percentage of racing enthusiasts than any community of its size in the world. And there was a special irony in it for the reason that, because of its accuracy and the comprehensive coverage of its sporting news, the *Morning Herald*, two weeks earlier, had been made the official organ of the Tattersal's Club. Bishop Dreyer's reign was short and three months later the racing news was restored. But the paper never recovered its lost ground. Following is the editorial in the *Morning Herald* on 7 October 1905, announcing the reinstatement of racing news:

Monday's issue of "The Herald" will inaugurate a return to the publication of items of interest of sporting intelligence which for the past few months have been excluded from our columns. The step has not yet been taken without giving the subject the most careful consideration. Experience has shown that it is the function of a secular daily newspaper to cater for all classes of the community by publishing information upon all matters of public interest which reflect the every-day life of the community — in fact, to borrow the appropriate motto of an influential morning newspaper, of New York, "all the news that's fit to print." In the interval which has elapsed since the suspension of our usual budget of racing news, the strongest representations have been made to us to remove the ban by hundreds of valued and loyal subscribers who have been faithful in their allegiance to "The Morning Herald" because of its characteristic candor and outspokenness upon all the prominent questions of the day, yet who felt seriously inconvenienced, as they tell us, when compelled to seek in other quarters for information upon certain topics which were excluded from our sporting columns. ("The Morning Herald", 1905)

The last issue of the *Morning Herald* was published on 16 January 1909. Its demise was an example of the enormous importance of sport to the prosperity and survival of newspapers. Sport had become a highly visible part of Western Australian culture. A significant part of this culture were gambling sports such as horse racing. Coverage of horse racing became an increasingly significant part of the *West Australian* by the turn of the twentieth century. The *West Australian* took advantage of the *Morning Herald's* reluctance to cover racing. Griff Richards, who started his employment at the *West Australian* as a cadet journalist in 1927 before becoming its editor 30 years later, a position he held until his retirement in 1972, said the demise of the *Morning Herald* had encouraged the *West Australian's* management to give more prominence to racing (W.T.G. Richards, personal communication, November 27, 1998).

The *Sunday Times*, first published on 19 December 1897, was Perth's first Sunday newspaper. It was published by Frederick Charles Burleigh Vosper, a radical journalist from the Eastern Goldfields. After becoming editor of the *Coolgardie Miner* and entering politics, winning the North-East Coolgardie seat, Vosper transferred to Perth, married, and with some of his wife's money, started the *Sunday Times* (Frost, 1983, p. 87). Under his editorship, the *Sunday Times* became the foremost satirical magazine of the colony. From an inauspicious beginning, the *Sunday Times* "ragged against authority with an energy that was almost palpable" (Dunn, 1997, p. 12). It attacked a bewildering variety of organisations and people ranging from Queen Victoria and her ministers through the governments of the colonies to city and town councils and roads boards. Dunn (1997, p. 12) continues:

All were seen, from the editorial chair, to be self-seeking relics of some feudal system which had been transplanted with in-built inefficiency and corruption from the discredited and remote British Isles. In the broadest sense, exposing corruption in any commercial or political activity became an obsession that dominated Frederick Vosper's thinking, speeches and writing both in Parliament and in his business life.

Early last century, newspaper editors and journalists spoke with many different voices, espousing often quite radical points of view to wider, more socially diverse audiences. The journalism of the *West Australian* was by now rather staid, compared with the lively, challenging approach of the *Sunday Times*. The journalism in the working-class *Sunday Times* was outspoken and direct, castigating powerful and wealthy colonists, and ridiculing their extravagant social and political pretensions. Historian Professor Geoffrey Bolton points out that although Charles Harper and

Winthrop Hackett continued to throw the weighty influence of the *West Australian* behind the dignity of Parliament, the *Morning Herald* and the *Daily News* grew increasingly critical (Bolton, 1991, p. 477). Vosper's *Sunday Times* was sub-titled "A Journal for the People" and it was savage in its attacks on public figures, its fiercest barrage being aimed at C.Y. O'Connor and the Goldfields Water Scheme (Davidson, 1985, p. 107).

Despite having a small sports staff the *Sunday Times* produced a large sporting section in each week's issue, the paper relied heavily on correspondents. This was because the paper required only a small staff. The *Sunday Times* employed a sports editor and racing writer from early in the twentieth century. After World War II, the paper's full-time sports staff increased to three, with the addition of a football writer. With four games played in the Western Australian National Football League (WANFL) on most Saturday's throughout the winter months, the paper's football writer would cover the most important game. Correspondents, often former footballers, would cover the other games, filing their stories to the newspaper's copytakers immediately after the game. As in the *West Australian*, football in winter and cricket in summer, and horse racing all the year round, were the dominant sports in the *Sunday Times*. The paper also provided strong coverage of a wide range of sports, including trotting, hockey, lawn bowls, tennis, golf, yachting and other aquatic sports.

Hay argues that by the turn of the century the journalistic pre-eminence of the *Sunday Times* seemed beyond dispute (1983, p. 612), adding: "Perhaps ironically, their only competitor was the *Western Mail*, established in 1885 by the conservative *West Australian* as "a first class weekly paper"" (1983, p. 612). Frederick Vosper died early in 1901 at the age of 31. Following his death, James McCallum Smith and Alfred Reid acquired the *Sunday Times* and for the next decade the *Sun* in Kalgoorlie and the *Sunday Times* became very closely connected, exchanging staff and sharing stories.

During the 1930s, MacCallum Smith, one of the most prominent people in the push for Western Australia to secede from the Commonwealth, decided to sell but with condition that the new owners would not be allowed to editorialise against secession for a year ("Four who shaped", 1997). John Joseph Simons and Victor Courtney, the managing director and editor of the *Mirror and Call*, two of Perth's weekly newspapers, accepted the condition and purchased the *Sunday Times* in 1935. Simons and Courtney

led the paper through a period of tumultuous events when wartime caused the rationing of newsprint.

The *Sunday Times* was forced to change its typographical layout during World War II because of restricted newsprint supplies. The strong type which had headlined news items in the first few months of the war was replaced by smaller lettering which enabled more items to be printed and allowed for some interpretation of the news. In June 1940, primarily to conserve non-sterling exchange, the Federal Government ordered that any newsprint in store was to be "frozen" except when ships failed to arrive (King, 1995, p. 111). Senator McLeay, Minister for Customs, said the rationing should reduce newspaper consumption in Australia by 54,000 tons a year and save more than one million pounds of non-sterling exchange. The Government restricted the number of pages a newspaper could use in a week and also the size of the pages. Newspapers were ordered to reduce the number of pages.

Rupert Murdoch bought sufficient shares in Western Press Limited, parent company of the *Sunday Times*, to begin a takeover that would lead him, at the age of 23 in 1954, to become the fourth owner of Perth's Sunday newspaper (Dunn, 1997, p. 156). The *Sunday Times* is now the media asset held longest by Murdoch.

The following table shows circulation of the major Western Australian newspapers during the period under examination. Only newspapers which were continually published until 1971 were included. Official circulation figures were not available until the establishment of the Audit Bureau of Circulations in 1931 and the first figures the following year. The following table includes circulation figures at each of the seven years under review, starting in 1936:

Table 1
Circulation of Western Australia's major newspapers

Year	Pop. of W.A.	West. Aust.	Daily News	Sunday Times
1936	451,557	69,527	19,453	25,870
1943	481,479	85,883	48,983	47,684
1950	572,649	114,501	79,390	83,505
1957	695,234	145,644	91,773	118,921
1964	789,917	175,124	100,082	139,639
1971	1,030,469	217,899	120,491	198,613

Specialist Sports Publications

Coverage of sport in Australian newspapers, as we know it, developed during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Previously, there was sporadic attention in newspapers that included sports results and articles. There were no specific sports pages, and coverage was spread irregularly throughout the paper. Sporting sections appeared early last century and gained prominence in the overall paper. Research in 1989 showed that the sports pages had about five times as many readers as the average section of the newspaper (Snyder & Spreitzer, 1989, p. 255).

The first specialist sporting newspaper published in Western Australia was *Bell's Life in Western Australia*, which had a brief life in 1896 (an unpublished list of WA newspapers are available at Batty Library). The following year, a bright and racy journal appeared in Fremantle. It was a purely sporting paper and was titled the *Umpire*. Three members of the literary staff in the Fremantle office at the *West Australian* — Thomas Quinn, Charles Frost and Henry Williams — were responsible for its publication (Frost, 1983, p. 84). The paper gave a detailed account of many sports, especially horse racing, football, cricket, cycling and athletics. The *Umpire* was absorbed into the *Morning Herald* in January 1903. A lack of capital was responsible for the *Umpire's* short existence (Frost, 1983, p. 84).

The *Western Australian Sporting Judge and Wheel Man* was published for four weeks in mid-1898 and three years later the *West Australian Sportsman* was published for 18 months. The *Sportsman* was the next sporting publication, appearing in 1903. This paper was published in Perth, but also had a Kalgoortie edition. Because of a large male population in the Eastern Goldfields early last century, there was an enormous interest in sport. The Goldfields National Football League (GNFL) was considered to be as strong as the Perth-based WANFL, horse racing attracted many of the State's best horses and jockeys to major races, and leading overseas and interstate athletes regularly contested professional running meetings throughout the goldfields. The decision to locally publish an edition of the *Sportsman* was intended to cater for the considerable interest in sport. However, the publication lasted for only 15 months.

Sporting Life followed in 1905, but folded in less than two years. It was another eight years before the State's next sporting newspaper, with the *W.A. Sportsman* lasting for four years. Victor Courtney, who joined the *Sunday Times* as a young journalist in 1911, seven years later bought the *W.A. Sportsman* for 25 pounds. The name was

changed to the *Call and W.A. Sportsman* when it first appeared in 1920. The paper provided critical comment on the sports cover. But when the *Sunday Times*' director McCallum Smith heard Courtney was running the sporting paper, he told him to make his choice, and Courtney left the *Sunday Times* (Davidson, 1985, p. 107). This sporting newspaper continued until it was incorporated into the *Mirror* newspaper in 1953, though it had several name changes — the *Call* (1920-1927), the *Call News-Pictorial* (1927-1931), the *New Call* (1931-1934), the *New Call and Bailey's Weekly* (1934-1940), the *Call and Bailey's Weekly* (1940-1945) and the *Call* (1945-1953).

The *W.A. Sporting Record* had a brief life in 1932, but the *West Australian Sporting Weekly* was launched the following year and continued until 1951. *Sports News* had a life span of 11 weeks in 1953. A decade later, West Australian Newspapers launched a new sporting weekly, the *Punter*, which ran under that name until April 1964 when it became *Sports Review*, being published until it was incorporated into the *Daily News* in 1977. A declining circulation forced the demise of the *Sports Review*. Though in the early years it reported a wide range of sports, its coverage focused mainly on horse racing and football during the mid-1970s. *Sports Action* appeared in local news agencies for 17 months in 1970-71. Western Australia's first specialist Australian Rules football newspaper, *Westside Football*, was published from 1979 to 1996, before changing its name to *Westside Sport*. However, a lack of advertising support caused the paper to cease publication in November 1997. The most recent publications, *Western Australian Truth Sport* (2003), *Sports Forum* (2003) and *PerthSport Magazine* (2004) had only brief existences, while *Westside Football*, with the same masthead as the previous publication, but different ownership, started publishing in 2004.

Only three specialist sports newspapers — the *Call* and the publication under subsequent name changes, the *Sports Review* (which started as the *Punter*), and *Westside Football*, which became *Westside Sport* — lasted for more than a decade. Most specialised sports publications folded in less than two years. This indicates that the specialist sporting publications had too narrow a focus, where the public wanted a balanced news coverage — general news, business and finance, entertainment, and sport. Though sports are a popular pastime for Western Australians, this has not translated into support for newspapers focusing only on sport. The following list of sporting newspapers published in Western Australia is indicative of the hard times that most of the publications experienced since the *Bell's Life in Western Australia* emerged as the State's first specialist sporting newspaper 109 years ago:

Table 2
Specialist Sports Newspapers Published in Western Australia

Title	Dates	Published
Bell's Life in Western Australia	1896 — 1896	Perth
The Sportsman *	1896 — 1896	Perth
The Umpire	1897 — 1903	Fremantle
West Australian Sporting Judge and Wheel Man	1898 — 1898	Perth
West Australian Sportsman	1901 — 1902	Kalgoorlie
The Sportsman	1903 — 1904	Perth
Sporting Life	1905 — 1906	Perth (Kalgoorlie edition also published)
W.A. Sportsman	1914 — 1918	Perth
The Call & W.A. Sportsman **	1920 — 1920	Perth
The Call **	1920 — 1927	Perth
The Call News-Pictorial **	1927 — 1931	Perth
The New Call **	1931 — 1934	Perth
W.A. Sporting Record	1932 — 1932	Perth
West Australian Sporting Weekly	1933 — 1951	Perth
The New Call and Bailey's Weekly **		
The Call and Bailey's Weekly **	1934 — 1940	Perth
The Call **	1940 — 1945	Perth
	1945 — 1953	Perth
The Sporting Guide	1946 — 1947	Perth
Sports News	1953 — 1953	Perth
Punter	1963 — 1964	Perth
Sports Review ***	1964 — 1977	Perth
Sports Action	1970 — 1971	Perth
Westside Football	1979 — 1996	Perth
Westside Sport ****	1996 — 1997	Perth
Western Australian Truth Sport	2003 — 2003	Perth
Sports Forum	2003 — 2003	Esperance
PerthSport Magazine	2004 — 2004	Perth
Westside Football *****	2004 —	Perth

* Originally the *Bell's Life in Western Australia*

** Originally the *W.A. Sportsman*

*** Originally the *Punter*

**** Originally *Westside Football*

***** Not associated with *Westside Football* which folded in 1996

Radio

Overseas developments in radio technology were keenly monitored in Australia during the first two decades of the twentieth century, and local engineers played an important part in the testing and improvement of long-distance transmissions (Henningham, 1999, p. 280). Henningham noted that a series of ad hoc decisions during the 1920s set the pattern for broadcasting policy, with influence from North America

and Britain determining the development of a 'dual' system comprising both commercial and public broadcasting. Structure of news on radio began as virtually what was in that day's newspaper, with Henningham stating:

The broadcasting of news stirred up fierce opposition from powerful newspaper interests as a result of which it was an undeveloped resource for the first two decades of radio. Such news as there was consisted generally of readings from the daily's newspapers. World War II caused a major reappraisal of radio's potential as an instant information medium, and limitations on news broadcasting were abolished. The ABC's independent news service did not, however, begin until 1946. (1999, p. 282)

Radio's beginnings in Australia in 1923 are seen as coinciding with "a new sense of division" in society arising from opposition to attempts to introduce conscription during the war and post-war radicalisation of labour (Farrell, 1981, p. 28). Academic and former Australian Broadcasting Commission (ABC) reporter Neville Petersen points out that, from the beginning, the social purpose of radio in Australia was defined very narrowly (1993, p. 23). It was thought that radio would end the isolation of the farmer and help to end the drift of the rural population to the cities. With the rural population able to hear major events in the city, isolated life would become more attractive to younger people and new settlers, and "would bring weather and market information needed for farmers' wellbeing":

As radio stations began broadcasting in 1923, their capacity to 'amuse' became an important yardstick for approval. It was seen also that by providing 'amusement', radio stations would provide farmers with access to pleasures available to city dwellers but normally denied to them. (Petersen, 1993, p. 23)

In 1923, the Australian government instituted licence fees for listeners to the experimental privately owned stations which were already operating. Class "A" stations were subsidised and Class "B" stations were able to sell advertising without restriction. Perth's first radio station, 6WF (named after the company Westralian Farmers Limited), began broadcasting on 4 June 1924. Its opening programs, which continued for three hours from 7 p.m., consisted of news, music, market and bedtime stories. The Australian Broadcasting Company, an independent media organisation which owned top-rating 2LO in Melbourne, took over the station on 1 September 1929. A Royal Commission had been set up in 1927 to examine the quality of radio programs throughout Australia. As a result of its recommendations, all "A" stations were put under the control of the Post Office, which was also responsible for their technical

services (Blain, 1977, p. 166). A contract was let for three years to the Australian Broadcasting Company to provide programs. Its chairman, Stuart Doyle, was also chairman of Greater Union Theatres.

The ABC, set up by the Federal Government in 1932, was required to act "in the interests of the community" in the development of "suitable programs". The station's broadcasting hours were 10 a.m. to 11 a.m., 12.30 p.m. to 2 p.m., 3 to 4 p.m., and 7 to 10.30 p.m. A news service of one hundred words was broadcast by an arrangement with Reuters and the Australian Associated Press. The *West Australian* gave the station permission to use in brief any items of local news, provided that it was not broadcast before 12.30 p.m. each day (Coxon, 1939, pp. 20-21). The *Daily News* also provided a late local news service, although cables appearing in the evening's *Daily News* could not be broadcast before 12.30 p.m. the following day. By late 1932, the ABC had regular program relays between Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne and Adelaide and in 1933, the ABC's Adelaide to Perth relay link was completed (Fraser & Atkinson, 1997, p. 526).

In December 1932, the *West Australian* obtained a licence for a commercial radio station, despite a difficult trading year. Musgroves Limited had operated the State's first commercial radio station, 6ML, since March 1930. West Australian Newspapers (WAN) and Musgroves joined in a separate company, W.A. Broadcasters Limited, to operate 6ML and the new station, 6IX, which came on air on 27 November 1933. Radio station 6PR began broadcasting on 14 October 1931. With three commercial stations broadcasting — 6IX, 6ML and 6PR, as well as the Australian Broadcasting Commission's 6WF, WAN launched a weekly magazine, the *Broadcaster*, on 7 April 1934. The publication was devoted to radio programs, news of the stations' activities, general articles about radio, technical information, and fiction articles and serials. The last issue of the *Broadcaster* was published on 15 January 1955 when it was incorporated into the *Weekend Mail*. 6WF was named Perth National from 1932 until the second ABC station, 6WN, came on air in 1938.

In the early 1930s the idea of an independent radio news service had yet to be conceived. The ABC arranged with the local newspapers in all capital cities to read five minutes of news direct from the paper at intervals throughout the day (Blain, 1977, p. 16). The ABC started its independent news service in 1946 (p. 58). The WAN news bureau began its commercial radio news service in September 1959, when station 6IX

decided to broadcast its own news bulletins ("W.A.N. news bureau", 1961, p. 3). It was the first regular news service through commercial broadcasting in Western Australia. In July 1961, the WAN news bureau extended its radio news service to two more commercial stations — 6PR and 6KY. Eight bulletins a day were provided to the three stations, with the service beginning daily at 4 a.m. and finishing at midnight. The early bulletins were picked up by the morning announcers on their way to work and the remainder were sent by a fast delivery service. Staff shortages during World War II were responsible for 6ML closing down in 1943, though WAN and Musgroves still operated 6IX. However, in 1962 Musgroves sold its interests in 6IX to WAN.

W.A. Broadcasters, a wholly owned subsidiary of West Australian Newspapers, and operator of radio station 6IX, and the WAN controlling interest in TVW Seven were sold in mid-1970 ("WAN sells 6IX", 1970, p. 13). Both sales were made necessary under the ownership provisions of the Broadcasting and Television Act after the takeover of WAN by the Herald and Weekly Times. The Australian Broadcasting Control Board approved the WAN plan to dispose of its 600,000 share controlling interest in TVW and then sell 6IX to TVW.

Stoddart (1986, p. 92) contends that radio's impact upon Australian social life remains underrated, particularly in sport where the new medium quickly established new ways of life. He says: "Listening to race results in the pub, for example, became a Saturday ritual in every Australian city and country town." Sport played an important role in radio broadcasting from its early days. Former ABC broadcaster Ellis Blain, in his book *Life with Aunty: 40 years with the ABC*, suggests this was because sport was generally a low-cost program to produce (1977, p. 48). Blain insists that horse racing is the most popular part of the ABC's sporting coverage (p. 42), adding that sport is the ultimate field for the professional broadcaster. Sport broadcasts helped to sell radios and licences and cost little to put on (Inglis, 1983, p. 9). In 1948, Keith Gollan, Western Australia's most experienced racing commentator, wrote that when race broadcasting was first mooted in this State 20 years earlier it was not viewed with favour by the racing clubs (p. 10). But Westralian Farmers', who then conducted the State's only radio station, overcame the objections and events were first broadcast from Headquarters (later named Ascot Racecourse) in October 1928. Race club officials had the opinion that descriptions of races broadcast from the courses would tend to encourage people to listen rather than attend the meetings. Many restrictions were placed on the broadcasting. Gollan, who was the chief racing writer for the *Daily News*,

was the ABC's racing commentator from 1928 to 1965. In the early days, only the last four races on each Perth course were broadcast and there was no broadcasting from country meetings. None of the courses were equipped with loud speakers until 1934 ("Keith Gollan tells", 1948, p. 36; Gollan, 1948, pp. 10-11). The occupants of the Press box were the only people on each course who heard the race descriptions until the installation of loudspeakers. Gollan, an experienced amateur jockey, would often ride in the opening race, usually a hurdle, change and be back in the Press box in time to take up his broadcasting later in the program (Gollan, 1948, p. 36; Gilmour, 1948, p. 49). Some sporting bodies needed to be convinced that the prospects of hearing an event described on the wireless did not affect the attendances at the event. Sports journalist and broadcaster Ted Collingwood argued that broadcasting did not decrease attendances, although it created atmosphere for the sports fan listening to the event at his home. Collingwood, a regular radio commentator at boxing tournaments during the 1930s, declared:

No, I don't think that broadcasting has ever affected attendances, and, as a matter of fact, it is safe to assert that radio has assisted, rather than retarded, the progress of companies which promote big bouts. (1934)

The problems associated with broadcasting race meetings from the course in the early years was not restricted to Western Australia. For many years in the Eastern States, pioneer race-callers "worked from trees and temporary platforms outside the tracks and incurred the wrath of race clubs who used every trick in the book in their attempts to block the caller's view" (Cairns, 1994, p. 17). Matthews (2003) observed that in the 1930s, the Victorian Racing Club attempted to ban race-calling from Flemington Racecourse. As a result, Eric Welch, one of Australia's best race commentators, broadcast from a nearby hotel on Scotchman's Hill (Matthews, 2003, p. 114).

6IX began broadcasting local races, with Collingwood, one of the State's top newspaper journalists and later to be sports editor of the *West Australian* for a record 32 years, being the station's first sports commentator. Interest in horse racing by Perth's radio stations reached a peak during the 1950s, with 6IX (commentator Doug Gilmour), 6PR (Doug Chatfield) and 6KY (Lionel Lewis) joining the ABC (Keith Gollan, alternating between 6WF and 6WN) in calling the Perth races from the three metropolitan courses — Ascot, Belmont Park and Helena Vale. Until 1953, the ABC was the only network broadcasting races from Melbourne and Sydney. Station 6PR

started to provide a complete racing coverage of Eastern States race meetings in February 1953. Stations 6LX and 6KY started their Eastern States coverage the following year. Five Perth stations broadcast Australia's top horse race, the Melbourne Cup, in 1959 — 6WN, 6PR, 6PM, 6KY and 6LX. The only station which did not cover the Melbourne Cup that year was 6WF, the sister station of 6WN. The ABC also provided a commentary of the English Derby and Grand National Steeple, on relay from the BBC, most years from the late 1930s. Trotting, the other legal gambling sport in Western Australia, attracted little interest from the commercial stations until the late 1950s. The ABC broadcast the Perth trotting meetings exclusively from 1935.

Administrators in charge of the most popular sporting events held out for fees, and by 1934 the ABC had exclusive rights to broadcast almost all important horse races in return for payments, of which the highest was £500 a year to the Victoria Racing Club. Commercial competitors, however, described the races without permission or fee, from a house or tree outside the course (Inglis, 1983, p. 36; Goldlust, 1987, p. 74).

The ABC reduced its coverage of sport during the last three years of World War II. This followed discussions between Prime Minister John Curtin and the ABC board of management, as Inglis points out: "The Prime Minister was also responsible for a drastic reduction in sporting broadcasts: they were curtailed at his request early in 1942" (Inglis, 1983, p. 99). However, the ABC in Western Australia still regularly broadcast local sporting events and Perth racing meetings, which were held every second Saturday, during the war years.

Entertainment was a large part of Australian horse racing commentary. During the 1960s and early seventies, the ABC, through 6WF, and commercial station 6LX, broadcast the local and Eastern States racing. Radio 6LX had the services of two outstanding racing commentators, Bert Bryant in Melbourne and Ken Howard in Sydney, while the ABC also had two excellent race callers, Joe Brown in Melbourne and Geoff Mahoney in Sydney. Bryant was noted for his call of the 1970 Queen Elizabeth Stakes at Flemington Racecourse in Melbourne. It had only two horses — Big Philou and Rain Lover — recognised as Australia's two best stayers at the time. A part of Bryant's call:

There's not going to be any change in the order, I wouldn't think, for at least five furlongs. So about the best we can tell you at this stage is that it's a glorious day in Melbourne. It's a balmy seventy two, the track's perfect and we're

watching one of the best two-horse races, as far as big names are concerned. For many a long day. Well, that's got rid of about two furlongs — let's go over to the mile. (Stoddart, 1986, p. 97)

By the time Big Philou had beaten Rain Lover the listeners knew that jockey Roy Higgins had a week-old daughter, that fellow-jockey Pat Hyland had won money on the birth by backing against a boy, and if Bryant called a two-horse finish incorrectly he would have to give up the profession and "go back to work". He was earning more than \$50,000 a year at his "non-work". Stoddart argues that by the peak of radio's electronic monopoly, in the mid-1950s, the broadcasting drive was more towards creating an audience than a sophisticated, critical, inquiring commentary service (1986, p. 97).

The first short-wave broadcasts were made between England and Australia in 1927, but engineers could not send voices reliably enough across the world for the broadcasting of cricket. Technical limitations sometimes inhibited direct live coverage. In the 1930s, listeners in Perth sat up until the early hours of the morning to listen to Test cricket scores broadcast by cable on 6WF by a commentator talking as if he was at the ground. This led some listeners to believe the description was coming by wireless from England (Inglis, 1983, p. 37; Goldlust, 1987, p. 73). However, after each over in the Test match between England and Australia, a cable was sent from the ground to Sydney, then telephoned through to the ABC. For example:

CROWD TENSE THIRTYTWO MINUTES LEFT O'REILLY LEYLAND
BLOCKED BLOCKED BOWLER BLOCKED BLOCKED BLOCKED
FIELDSMEN LIKE TERRIERS ROUND RAT HOLES. (Inglis, 1983, p. 37)

A team in the studio turned those messages into notes for the commentator. They made up-to-date maps of field placings, and posted the scores on a board similar to the one at the Sydney Cricket Ground and commentators Charles Moses and Mel Morris relayed this information as if they were calling the match from the ground. They drew on their imagination to describe the moments as they occurred, such as England's Maurice Leyland defending grimly against Australian Bill O'Reilly's spin bowling as the hands of the clock on the pavilion at Trent Bridge crept towards six o'clock. A sound-effects man added crowd noise from gramophone records, and the commentator made the sound of bat against ball by tapping a pencil on a piece of hollow wood. Inglis claims that sometimes the flow of cables was interrupted by the traffic on the line, and it was then that the commentator really had to use his wits, sending a bowler off to change

his boots, having lunch papers blow on to the pitch, or as a last resort "making it rain" (Inglis, 1983, p. 37). Former cricketers were also employed to give expert interpretational intervals. Though the listeners were told before play began that the commentary was not really coming from England — the word used was 'reconstructed', and later 'synthetic' to describe the studio descriptions — people still laid bets about whether it was. Blain (1977, p. 40) argues that the commentator at these synthetic broadcasts needed the "most fertile imagination". Inglis believes that synthetic cricket, which started during the Australian cricket team's tour of England in 1934, was the ABC's most original and probably its most popular enterprise. Improved reception of short-wave, and some use of radio-telephone links, enabled descriptions of many overseas events to be relayed in the mid-1930s.

Bernard Kerr, a former ABC director of sporting broadcasts, claims that the synthetic Test descriptions of the Australian tour of England in 1934 were responsible for a significant increase in radio licences.

Sales of radio receiver parts from which people built their own valve but mainly crystal sets broke all records, and it was then reported that electric light plants had to meet unusually heavy demands. The A.B.C. created Test Match fever and it swept the Continent. (Maxwell, 1994, pp. 135-136)

Australian Rules football received strong coverage on the ABC from the early 1930s, though the commercial stations showed little interest in appointing their own commentators at Western Australian National Football League games for nearly two decades. Football commentators regularly had to broadcast under sub-standard conditions for several years. For instance, because the conditions at the East Fremantle Oval were not suitable for broadcasting, in 1953, 6KY football commentators Geoff Manion and Jack Casserly covered a match from a car parked on the edge of the boundary ("Football commentators broadcast", 1953, p. 4). The commentary box was a platform-seat arrangement with a waist-high railing around its perimeter. It offered no shelter from the wind or rain. Attached to one end of the railing (just over one metre from where they were to broadcast) were two public-address speakers. During the game these speakers were used at various intervals to broadcast messages. The echo from the speakers and the noise from the surrounding spectators practically ruined the broadcasts. In the same season, the ABC, 6PM and 6KY paid an annual fee of about £200 to broadcast football. New broadcasting boxes were opened at Bassendean and Leederville Ovals in 1954. 6IX did not cover Australian Rules football until 1954. However, in

1952 it provided Western Australia's first radio coverage of local soccer games ("Soccer games", 1952, p. 25). It is unclear why 6IX chose to broadcast soccer before Australian Rules football, though the *West Australian's* sports journalist for three decades from 1950, Alan Newman, believes the large crowds attracted to major soccer matches in Perth would transform into many thousands of listeners. But after two seasons of covering local soccer matches, the 6IX management believed it would be more advantageous to the station to broadcast Australian Rules football (A. Newman, personal communication, October 26, 2001).

Western Australian radio listeners heard their first Olympic Games in 1936, when the Games were staged in Berlin. The ABC's Perth National broadcast between one hour and one and a quarter hours at 1.30 p.m. each day of the Games, and half an hour from 9.30 p.m. Descriptions of the events were provided by Harry Hay, who represented Australia in swimming at the 1920 Olympic Games at Antwerp, Belgium. The ABC provided two hours of daily coverage at the next Olympic Games in London in 1948. The ABC relied on the BBC, which reported Australian performances so inadequately that the ABC's Federal sporting supervisor Bernard Kerr was sent to Helsinki for the 1952 Olympics (Inglis, 1983, p. 178). He was helped by a pioneer sporting commentator, Charles Moses, who travelled to Helsinki while in Europe on other business. At the 1952 Games, the ABC provided four broadcasts each day, each of fifteen minutes (6.10 a.m., 7 a.m., 4 p.m. and 10.45 p.m.). In addition, the opening and closing ceremonies were broadcast live. The coverage included a combination of relayed broadcasts from the BBC and Helsinki Radio.

The 1956 Olympic Games were held in the southern hemisphere for the first time in 1956, at Melbourne. With the introduction of television in Perth still three years away, the ABC's 6WF provided a comprehensive coverage, with descriptions and results throughout the afternoons and evenings on each day of the 16-day competition. Melbourne Organising Committee (MOC) relied on a strong radio coverage, because of its dispute concerning the transmission rights. The refusal of international television networks and cinema newsreel companies to pay royalties for showing Olympic news film on a delayed basis resulted in a wide-ranging boycott of the Melbourne Games by these organisations (Wenn, 1993, p. 39).

Commercial stations 6PM and 6PR provided a regular results service. 6WF was the only Perth radio station not giving coverage of the 1960 Olympic Games in Rome.

For the first time at an Olympic Games, Perth's six metropolitan radio stations were involved in the coverage of the 1964 Tokyo Olympics. The ABC (alternating between 6WF and 6WN) broadcast between two and five hours a day. This included live and recorded descriptions. The commercial stations provided several reports each day, with 6PR including direct descriptions of major events. All of Perth's six radio stations were again involved in the coverage of the 1968 Mexico City Olympic Games. However, radio 6IX was the only station to broadcast live descriptions. 6PM and 6PR provided several summaries of events throughout the day, while the ABC (alternating between 6WF and 6WN) and 6KY restricted their coverage to a daily 30 minute summary, which consisted of results and replays of important finals. This was due to the high cost of sending commentary teams to Mexico, and it was expensive to receive a complete coverage from a relay station.

Next to the Olympic Games, the international sporting event creating most interest for Australians was the Commonwealth Games, also held every four years. The event had name changes, being known as the British Empire Games when they were first held in Hamilton, Canada, in 1930. They were changed to the British Empire and Commonwealth Games in 1954, British Commonwealth Games in 1966 and to the present name in 1978. The 1938 Games, held in Sydney, were the first Empire Games broadcast in Western Australia. Perth National broadcast the opening ceremony and provided a comprehensive coverage during the seven days of competition. The ABC also dominated the coverage of the next Games — in 1950 in Auckland — and the 1954 Games in Vancouver. The 1954 coverage included special reports from the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) and the BBC. The CBC reports were prepared specially for Australian listeners. They included interviews with athletes, description of events, results and summaries. 6WF provided coverage, relayed from the BBC, of the 1958 Empire Games in Cardiff, while 6PR, the only commercial station involved in the coverage, provided highlights of the action. Perth hosted the 1962 Games, with the ABC (6WF and 6WN), 6PR and 6IX giving an extensive coverage of the biggest sporting event held in Australia since the 1956 Melbourne Olympic Games. However, because of the increasing costs, these were the last Commonwealth Games to receive extensive radio coverage during the period under review. Commercial radio stations restricted coverage to reports in their scheduled news services at the 1966 (Kingston) and 1970 (Edinburgh) Games. The ABC provided one hour a day in 1966, but four years later restricted its cover to reports in scheduled news and sporting sessions.

Perth radio stations provided coverage of a wide number of local sports. 6ML was a sporting pioneer among the commercial stations during the 1930s and until it closed in 1943, with its descriptions of many sporting events, including wrestling and boxing at the Luxor Theatre in the north of the city every Friday night for several years. ABC radio regularly broadcast international tennis matches played in Perth from the mid-1930s and in 1935 6WF provided the first broadcast of any sporting event from a boat on the Swan River in its coverage of the annual Head of the River schools rowing race for public schools. The ABC covered the Head of the River every year for the next four decades. Other sports which received irregular coverage by the various radio stations included track and field, cycling, hockey, lacrosse, rifle shooting, the two rugby codes (league and union), surfing, swimming and yachting.

Table 3
Establishment of Perth Radio Stations

Station	Period
6WF (public broadcaster)	Since 4 June 1924
6ML (commercial)	19 March 1930 to 30 May 1943
6PR (commercial)	Since 14 October 1931
6IX (commercial)	Since 27 November 1933
6PM (commercial)	Since 1 July 1937
6WN (public broadcaster)	Since 12 October 1938
6KY (commercial)	Since October 1941

Television

In 1989, the *West Australian* looked back to the start of television in Western Australia 30 years earlier as a revolution:

The people gathered on the streets. Thousands of people with chairs, blankets, and provisions grouped in front of shop windows. What they saw was the future. It was to change forever the entire basis of our social interaction. It changed our conversation, our habits, our food and even our furniture. ("The day television arrived", 1989)

Andrews (1987, p. 27) notes the immediacy of television has brought sports to us with an effectiveness no other medium can match. He continues:

Although television has all the journalistic depth of the town crier, it does get there with the news first. It has crowded print writers into a corner to the point that, particularly in the coverage of national sports, reporters frequently have to cover not the game, but the televised pictures of the game. When a reporter gets beaten on a story, he looks for an angle. (Andrews, 1987, p. 30)

With the advent of television, whole sports events or their highlights became available to large audiences in a form that gave them a much stronger sense of "having-been-there" than could be accomplished by radio, print photography and text (Whannel, 1992). This greater "witness" to sports action put sharp pressure on print sports reporters to display greater care and accuracy in their accounts of games.

Television was introduced to the Eastern States of Australia in 1956 after a Royal Commission established by the Menzies Federal Government ("The Parliament of the Commonwealth", 1954). An estimated number of between 50,000 and 70,000 viewers watched the launching of television into Western Australia on Friday, 16 October 1959 ("Thousands see TV's", 1959). WA had become the second last State in Australia to receive television — 16 days before TVT Seven started broadcasting in Tasmania. After six weeks of transmission tests, TVW Seven was the pioneer in Western Australian television, providing five hours of programs on its opening night. The national broadcaster, Australian Broadcasting Commission's (ABC) ABW Two, made its Western Australian television debut on 7 May 1960.

Sports fans were well catered for by ABW Two from its first week. The station introduced four weekly sports programs:

1. *Sportsview*: Four hours of filmed, recorded and live sport from 1.30 to 5.30 every Saturday afternoon. Each program was built around a main event covered by an outside broadcast van;
2. *Sports Review*: A 12 minute summary of Saturday sport at 7.18 each Saturday evening. This included photo-finish results of the local horse race meeting;
3. *Sports Cavalcade*: Each Wednesday night this 15 minute program went to air at 9.30. It was compiled from film highlights of major sporting events; and
4. *Sport Spotlight*: A five minute preview of the following weekend's sporting events, at 6.55 p.m. Fridays.

The third television station, STW Nine, commenced transmission in Western Australia on 12 June 1965. Its first sports program — a one hour replay of Victorian Football League matches from the previous weekend — started at 10 p.m. and was presented by the station two days after the games had been played. Stoddart claims that, at first, television had little structural impact upon media coverage of Australian sport (1986, p. 99). It created an alternative to radio coverage, but its use was rather limited because the equipment available allowed little flexibility.

By the mid-1960s the ABC was showing twice as much sport as its commercial rivals (Inglis, 1983, p. 203). In 1966, cricket and tennis were being seen in all states except Western Australia, due to a lack of technology. However, the ABC made significant advances in engineering which created national audiences for many sporting events. A microwave link between Western Australia and the Eastern States in 1970 enabled viewers in Perth to watch the Melbourne Cup as it was run, and the English cricket tour of 1970-71 was seen live in all states. Ten matches were shown for up to six hours a day, and for the first time producers used two cameras, one at each end, so the batsman could always be shown facing the viewer.

Garrison and Sabljak support the theory that the major development affecting sportswriting was the introduction of television (1985, p. 5). They said as both national and local sports telecasting grew, sportswriters were again forced to adapt. Their stories became more insightful and interpretative, the emphasis less on the results of competition and more on *why* these results occurred. Writers continued to provide newspaper readers with *who, what, when, why and where*, as well as *how*, but in smaller proportions.

The introduction of television in the Eastern States in 1956 meant that New South Wales and Victoria were able to watch the Melbourne Olympic Games. Because of the prohibitive cost of television sets, most televisions were hired from electrical stores, and thousands of people watched the telecasts of the Olympics from shop windows. But, because Western Australia did not receive television until 1959, Perth had to wait until the next Olympics before participating in the world's top sporting event via television. At the 1960 Olympic Games in Rome, the ABC and the commercial stations relied on films from the American CBS network shown about a week after the event and carrying a commentary which concentrated on the fortunes of American competitors. Inglis points out that the anger among Australian viewers when

the commentator calling the final 1,500 metres dwelt not on the victor, Australian Herb Elliott, but the American struggling for a place, induced the ABC and the commercial stations to send their own combined television team to the next Olympic Games at Tokyo in 1964 (1983, p. 203). They assembled a film each day to be flown home, copied on videotape and rushed to each state in time to be shown the next evening. TVW Seven screened a one-hour program of highlights each evening and ABW Two provided between 45 and 50 minutes of video-taped highlights. However, by the 1968 Olympic Games in Mexico City, advances in telecommunication were reducing the advantage radio enjoyed over television in covering distant sporting contests (Inglis, 1983, p. 286). A half-hour summary of each day's events was recorded and put on an aeroplane to Australia. ABW Two showed the film early the next afternoon and repeated late at night; TVW Seven had a 30-minute report in the early evening; and STW Nine, in its first Olympic coverage in Western Australia, screened a ten-minute summary during its evening news.

Using a zoom lens and a single camera, TVW Seven employed its outside broadcast unit to telecast live the arrival of the Duke of Edinburgh at Perth Airport late in the afternoon of 21 November 1962. The following day, TVW Seven and Perth's other television station, ABW Two, telecast the British Empire and Commonwealth Games opening ceremony, lasting five hours. The two stations then provided between six and eight hours coverage on most days of the Games. It is interesting to note that the local radio stations, 6WN and regionals and all commercial stations, utilised proven sporting commentators — including Bert Bryant, Noel Bailey, Oliver Drake-Brockman, Noel Bailey and Ron Casey. This was in contrast to the television coverage, where most of the commentators were former well-known sportsmen or other personalities, such as former athletes Herb Elliott, Gordon Pirie, John Winter, Percy Cerutti, Austin Robertson, Kevan Gosper and Harry Gallagher. This is still the situation in the twenty-first century, where a large number of personnel in the television commentary teams are former players; while in radio there are a greater number of trained commentators. A compelling reason is the fact that radio sports calling requires greater commentary skills than its television counterparts (Lane, 2004).

Western Australia lagged behind the Eastern States in regards to technology in television, according to Arthur Povah, a former State manager for the ABC. The immediacy of radio was not overcome for more than a decade after the visual medium made its debut in Western Australia. For example, live radio reports of the assassination

of US President John F. Kennedy in 1963 kept a world-wide audience aware of developments, and the *West Australian* and *Daily News* carried saturation coverage the next day. Yet, it took nearly two days before Western Australian television stations had pictures of the dramatic scenes. Films had to be flown from the US to Australia. Former State manager of the ABC, Arthur Povah, explains:

The eastern states stations were getting live overseas telecasts from 1964. Yet it was nearly another decade before Western Australian television stations were able to pick up live telecasts, until the microwave link became available from Sydney. Special arrangements had to be made to obtain a link from a US satellite. An example was when man first walked on the moon in 1969. The local television stations had to make special arrangements with the satellite tracking station in Carnarvon [810 kilometres north of Perth]. There were very few special arrangements, because of the enormous cost. Due to cable links to the eastern states, the immediacy of radio was years ahead of television. (A. Povah, personal communication, January 17, 2002)

By the early 1970s, football television coverage was improving, with the three channels — ABW Two, TVW Seven and STW Nine — screening programs from Thursday to Sunday. The style of media coverage stimulated considerable interest and made "stars" out of the best players. During this period, the Western Australian National Football League (WANFL) enjoyed positive public interest, with limited scrutiny of the league's and clubs' administrators, in contrast to contemporary football reporting.

Therefore, until 1971, radio was still the most important provider of current information in Western Australia. Local television coverage of sport quickly gained momentum, but interstate and overseas coverage was limited until after the time frame studied.

Table 4
The Arrival of Television in Western Australia

Station	Date Commenced
TVW Channel 7 (commercial)	16 October 1959
ABW Channel 2 (public broadcaster)	7 May 1960
STW Channel 9 (commercial)	12 June 1965

CHAPTER 6

THE WEST AUSTRALIAN

The intention of this chapter is to present a brief history of the newspaper and to look at the role of the sports department in the overall function of the *West Australian*. The *West Australian* is not a specific sports newspaper; its life started as the *Perth Gazette and Western Australian Journal* in 1833, where early reporting was basically for the privileged classes in the early years of the Swan River Colony. Sport played only a minor role in Western Australian society in those days and the structure of the *West Australian* developed to accommodate sport as it grew in significance, where sport was beginning to command greater space and recognition. Throughout its history the *West Australian* mirrored changes of other States' newspapers in format, style, appearance and ownership. By providing a broader picture of the *West Australian*, this chapter will set the context for exploration of the changes over a seventy year period of sports reporting in Western Australia. It is necessary to understand the role that the sports section plays in a major State newspaper. Sports pages of the *West Australian* do not exist in isolation and cannot subsist in their entirety. Sports coverage is an integral part of the paper, alongside general news, business and entertainment stories. The following chapter will examine whether changes to sports writing in the *West Australian* reflected the shifting nature of changes in the overall editorial management of the paper.

The *West Australian* — Its History

The *West Australian* is the second oldest surviving newspaper in Australia, starting under the name of the *Perth Gazette and Western Australian Journal* on 5 January 1833, two years after the *Sydney Morning Herald* was established (Fraser & Atkinson, 1997, pp. 514-515). The *West Australian* is now the fifth-highest circulating weekday daily newspaper in Australia — behind the *Herald-Sun* in Melbourne, the *Telegraph Mirror* and *Sydney Morning Herald* in Sydney, and the *Courier-Mail* in Brisbane — and has the nation's second-highest circulation on Saturdays.

Charles Macfaul, the first publisher of the *West Australian*, has been called the 'father of journalism in Western Australia' (Uren, 1948, p. 151). He arrived with his

wife and daughter in Western Australia on 24 August 1830 on the ship "Edward Lombe". Macfaull selected 113 acres of land near Fremantle with the intention of starting a vineyard, but this proved to be an unsuccessful venture. Despite having no previous publishing experience, following his vineyard failure, early in 1831, Macfaull began to publish a handwritten manuscript newspaper in partnership with William Kernot Shenton, under the title of the *Western Australian Chronicle and Perth Gazette*. Nine issues of this paper were published. Then after the arrival of the first printing press, Macfaull and Shenton published the *Fremantle Observer, Perth Gazette and Western Australian Journal*, which appeared weekly for two months from 25 April 1831. An official postal service was established in Perth in April 1832, and the government awarded Macfaull the contract as the colony's first official Postmaster. He held the position, in addition to his newspaper interests, until 1840.

Late in 1832 Macfaull imported a Stanhope printing press, and on 5 January 1833 he printed the first issue of the *Perth Gazette and Western Australian Journal*. The first copy was printed as a four-page demy sheet. Because of the colony's isolation, coverage of news in 1833 was strictly limited and the paper cost one shilling. The first issue contained two columns of "latest English news" — up to 13 August of the previous year. This was reprinted from the *Cape Advertiser*, which had been reprinted from English newspapers and from the *Sydney Gazette* (Battye, 1982). Five of the four-page paper's total of 12 columns were devoted to court reports, some of them a month old. The second issue of the paper was published on 12 January 1833. The State Government used the *Perth Gazette and Western Australian Journal* as a Government Gazette and paid Macfaull for the service (Uren, 1948, p. 154). Under Macfaull's editorship, the *Perth Gazette and Western Australian Journal* was more stuffy than its rivals and was viewed as a mouthpiece of the Government. In the seven years after the founding of the colony, eight different newspapers were published, but the *Perth Gazette and Western Australian Journal* was the only paper to survive. Uren (1948, p. 151) claims that this was largely because it was a quasi-official journal, acting as a Government gazette as well as a newspaper. Macfaull produced the newspaper as a weekly for several years until his death in 1846. It was continued by his wife, Elizabeth, and subsequently by Arthur Shenton in 1847. The following year, the paper changed its name to the *Perth Gazette and Independent Journal of Politics and News*. In 1846, the population of Western Australia was 4,547, which limited the newspaper's circulation. In 1863 the paper, still a weekly, changed its name to the *West Australian Times*, and

the following year changed to *Perth Gazette and West Australian Times*, by which name it was known for ten years.

Where the paper was first located is a mystery, but it is believed to have been housed in a small building near the Perth Causeway (Lague, 1988). Under new ownership, the office was shifted to a new site at the north-east corner of St Georges Terrace and Adelaide Terrace, Perth (Lague, 1988; Malan, 1998). But it outgrew its second home, and on 21 May 1852 moved to a more central site in St Georges Terrace, where it remained for more than 20 years.

In 1848, Arthur Shenton became the paper's editor, a position he occupied for 23 years, until his death in 1871. The paper became an important political influence and Shenton was a supporter of moves which saw a modified form of representative government starting in 1870 (Barker, 1989). In 1870, Shenton was briefly imprisoned for contempt of court. Richards (1989) claims that Shenton was gaoled for a "gross and scandalous libel" on Chief Justice Archibald Burt, who tried the case himself, being the only judge. Shenton's successor, William Henry Hullock, quickly made his mark with "slashing" editorials, erudite special articles and a satirical column on public figures and current events (Richards, 1989, p. 2). But his calls for a representative government and an Australian Federation put him off-side with the business and professional community. As a result, a conservative syndicate of prominent settlers bought the paper in 1874 and renamed it the *Western Australian Times*, and it was produced bi-weekly, appearing Tuesday and Friday. The proprietors included Edward Stone, later knighted and appointed Chief Justice and Lieutenant-Governor; George Shenton, a cousin of Arthur Shenton; Septimus Burt, KC; Maitland Brown; and Charles Crowther.

Late in 1874, William Henry Hullock was appointed editor, and five years later, the paper was purchased by Charles Harper who paid £1,100 cash for the plant, stock-in-trade and furniture (Battye, 1982). Harper appointed Sir Thomas Cockburn-Campbell his partner and managing editor. Harper received £300 a year as managing editor, and the net proceeds were divided equally with Cockburn-Campbell. Under the new management, the title of the journal was changed to its present name, the *West Australian*, in 1879. Battye (1982) attributes much of the paper's success to the influence of Cockburn-Campbell, the managing editor and part-owner from 1879 to 1897. Sir Winthrop Hackett, a barrister by profession, joined Charles Harper in partnership of the *West Australian* in 1883 and had high aspirations for the paper:

Of unbounded energy and endowed with the keenest insight, Mr Hackett, who entertained the most sanguine hopes of the future of the State, determined to elevate the *West Australian* to the proud position of similar metropolitan papers in the other States. What the *Argus* and the *Age* are to Victoria, and the *Sydney Morning Herald* is to New South Wales, he determined the *West Australian* should be to the State of his adoption. (Battye, 1912, p. 580)

The *West Australian* became a tri-weekly in October 1883 and a daily on 1 January 1885. The *West Australian* was a strong advocate for the freedom of the press and it became the leading advocate in the struggle for responsible government. (Battye, 1912, p. 581). The paper increased in size to eight pages containing 48 columns on 1 July 1891.

Winthrop Hackett, the force behind the *West Australian* for nearly three decades after becoming editor in 1887, was an Irishman and the son of the Rev. John Hackett, a clergyman of the Church of England. He was educated at Trinity College, Dublin, from which he graduated as an M.A. in the early 1870s. Called to the Irish Bar in 1874, he practised law for a time in Dublin before travelling to Australia. Arriving in Sydney, he was admitted as a barrister. After a short period, he moved to Melbourne and, from 1876 to 1882, was the sub-warden of Melbourne University's Trinity College. He moved to Western Australia late in 1882 and early the following year decided to pursue the profession of journalism. At the same time he was admitted as a member of the Western Australian Bar. In 1902, the degree of LL.D. was conferred upon Hackett by his Alma Mater, Trinity College, Dublin; and in 1911 he was given a knighthood (Battye, 1912, p. 583). The following year, Hackett was unanimously appointed Chancellor of the University of Western Australia.

In July 1896, the *West Australian* became a limited liability company under the name of the West Australian Newspaper Company Limited. Three years later came the first big technological change in the Western Australian newspaper industry with the introduction of the linotype machine (Frost, 1983, p. 81). Prior to this, all newsprint in the State was hand-set, a very slow and labour intensive job. The hand-setting was carried out by an army of compositors. The introduction of the linotype machine made the compositor almost redundant and consequently several hundred compositors were left out of work. In 1901, further linotype machines were installed, together with a three-decker Foster machine transported from Preston, England, which was capable of printing three copies at once. This machine had a capacity of 24,000 copies per hour.

Frost added: "It must have seemed a startling achievement after the fifty copies per hour credited to the little Ruthven press in 1831" (1983, p. 81).

The *West Australian* was neutral in its coverage of the campaign to decide whether Australia should become a Federation, until eight days before the 31 July 1900 referendum (Batty, 1982). It then strongly supported the nation becoming a Federation. However, its main rivals, the *Morning Herald* and the *Inquirer*, campaigned strongly against Federation (Batty, 1982). After Western Australians had accepted Federation by 44,800 votes to 19,691, the *West Australian's* editorial on 1 August spoke of the "truly magnificent majority which has been obtained."

The first photograph published in the *West Australian* was of Italian-born Modesto Vareschetti on 3 April 1907 ("The rescued miner", 1907). Floods had trapped him underground for seven days in a Coolgardie mine during which time workmate Frank "Diver" Hughes made regular dives to Vareschetti with food and medication. The drama created widespread national interest and Hughes was eventually awarded a bravery medal. The picture of Vareschetti in hospital was a scoop, probably taken on a glass plate camera using magnesium flash powder for light. Former journalist at the *West Australian*, Denis Lingane, suggests that the photographer probably coated the glass with emulsion under a black cloth in his hotel room (1989).

In 1912, Charles Harper died and Winthrop Hackett became the sole owner and editor of the *West Australian* until his death on 19 February 1916. Alfred Langler then became editor and trustee of the Hackett estate. Langler sold the *West Australian* for £625,000 to West Australian Newspapers Limited (WAN), a company formed for the purpose and registered on 27 September 1926. Langler was knighted in 1927, the same year that Charles Patrick Smith came from the Melbourne *Argus* to become managing editor. Smith served throughout the Depression and the second World War until 1951 when James Macartney took over. Macartney was editor of the *Daily News* which WAN bought in 1935, and continued to run as a separate paper; and became managing director in 1962 until his retirement at the age of fifty seven in 1969 — the year the Melbourne-based *Herald and Weekly Times* (HWT) took over WAN. Sir Paul Hasluck observed that the *West Australian* in the 1920s was "conservative in style, serious in manner, responsible in outlook, the *West Australian* was an established institution, highly respected" (Hasluck, 1977, p. 102). Hasluck was a journalist at the paper for thirteen

years from 1929, before becoming a politician. He was Australia's Governor-General from 1969 to 1974.

Battye (1982) points out that there was little joy in running a newspaper during the Depression. Nearly all the news, overseas and domestic, "was bad — bad enough to stand on its own feet as drama without any journalistic aids". Perhaps this was the unconscious rationale behind the type of presentation that led Professor Geoffrey Bolton to write 40 years later: "[T]hroughout the Depression the deadpan mandarin style of reportage favoured by the *West Australian* must have done a lot to take the sting out of even the most stirring clashes of the period . . ." (Bolton, 1972, pp. 57-58). During the Depression, the *West Australian* was politically the most influential of the metropolitan newspapers. The other Perth papers, the *Daily News* and the *Mirror*, were more concerned with 'human interest' stories about cases of individual hardship (Uren, 1948, p. 167).

In 1933, the paper's one hundredth year, the *West Australian* moved into its fifth home — Newspaper House — and remained there until 1988. The opening of Newspaper House was celebrated with the publication on 5 January 1933 of a centenary issue of the *West Australian* — a 72-page broadsheet, the biggest paper printed up to that time. On the occasion of the move, the *West Australian* reported:

It is a far cry from Charles Macfaull's first small house to the huge edifice into which the *West Australian* has just moved. But it is to the credit of those who produced the *West Australian* in its early days that, cramped and ill-served as they must have been, they brought out a comprehensive budget of news, brightly written and clearly printed, throughout the early, struggling days of the Colony's existence. . . . If perchance he allowed his pen to rest and his glance to stray to the nearest window, he would see his own garden and beyond that a badly-made road or virgin bush. If he listened, he could hear his good wife going about her household tasks. When he wearied of his labours, he had only to walk a few steps to his own bed-chamber. Besides containing the appurtenances of printing and the editorial offices of the newspaper, the building which first housed the *West Australian* was the home of its editor and his wife. ("Former offices", 1933)

Newspaper House, which cost £175,412, was a major development from one hundred years earlier when a small single-story dwelling housed the *Perth Gazette and West Australian Journal* (Richards, 1989). The *West Australian* did not hide its excitement about moving into its new premises at 125 St Georges Terrace in 1933, issuing the following message:

In this huge building which will house at peak periods over 330 persons, provision has been made for every emergency. So successfully has the work of erecting and equipping the building been carried out by the architects, the contractors and firms associated with them, that Perth has now one of the most up-to-date offices in the world. ("A modern newspaper", 1933)

Lague (1988) observes that daily newspapers operate in an endless race against time and labour. This was a prime consideration when Newspaper House was designed. The building was designed in modern classic style by architects Hobbs, Forbes and Partners, who were considered among the best architects in Western Australia. Their building received many public accolades and two major architectural awards. Newspaper House was described in 1935 as "an architectural gem", when the Royal Institute of British Architects awarded the architects its Street Architecture Medal for the best facade of a building constructed in the three years to 31 December 1934 (Richards, 1989). The building, on one hectare of land in the centre of Perth's business district, originally consisted of four storeys. Two more storeys were added later. The basement was used to store paper, the motor for the presses and for the engineers' and electricians' workshops. The ground floor was mainly used to house the presses for the printing of the paper. The mezzanine floor contained dining rooms, change rooms, the photography and photo-engraving departments. The first floor contained the advertising department. The clerical offices, composing room and the editorial department also operated from the first floor for some years, until the journalistic operation moved to the second floor.

There were serious fears of a Japanese air attack during World War II, so West Australian Newspapers moved one of its presses to a site in Guildford Road, Maylands, 10 kilometres east of the city, so the paper could continue to be published if Newspaper House was bombed (Malan, 1998; Richards, 1989). That never happened, but much later there was a moment of considerable anxiety at Newspaper House in October 1968, when an earthquake measuring 6.9 on the Richter scale flattened the small wheatbelt town of Meckering, one hundred and thirty kilometres east of Perth, and caused some damage in the metropolitan area. The event occurred on a public holiday, and the newspaper office was one of the few city buildings containing a large number of people. Some structural damage occurred, but there were no injuries.

Herbert James Lambert was employed in 1920 as a leader writer and became editor in 1929. He was born and educated in South Australia and worked on a small country newspaper in that State for a few years, before moving to Perth in 1899.

Lambert joined the *Morning Herald*, which was the *West Australian's* main opposition, as a journalist, until the Herald folded a decade later. He then purchased the *Swan Express*, a weekly which was published at Midland Junction, twenty kilometres east of Perth. Later he joined the *West Australian*. He was succeeded by Ernest de Burgh in 1946, who was at the helm for ten years. By the time Griff Richards replaced de Burgh as editor-in-chief in 1956 he had already done a great deal, as news editor, to tighten both language and presentation in the *West Australian*. Long words, indirect writing and pomposity were eradicated. Headings without active verbs had little chance of passing the chief sub-editor (Battye, 1982). As news editor, Richards changed the old, flowery style of writing to a crisp, simple style, and he got rid of ornate type faces.

Battye (1982) states that writers who, before the war, had been used to a fairly generous share of space in the broadsheet newspaper, were suddenly forced to adopt a more terse style when the paper changed to tabloid on 29 December 1947. Sentences became short, direct and tight. Instead of using carefully-observed detail to give colour to reports and articles, journalists had to leave out everything that could be spared without causing distortion or confusion. Richards joined as a cadet journalist in late 1926, rose to chief political reporter in 1932, news editor in 1951, and took over from the retiring de Burgh as the editor-in-chief five years later ("Former West editor", 1972). As the paper's chief sub-editor, Richards was instrumental in changing the *West Australian* to a tabloid in December 1947 (Aisbett, 1998). He shifted births, deaths and marriages from the front page to the back, replacing them with the top news stories, which were moved from the middle. Richards remained as editor-in-chief until his retirement in 1972. The sixteen years Richards served as editor-in-chief saw unprecedented development in Western Australia, due to the mining of iron ore and other natural resources, especially in the Pilbara. As editor, Richards made sweeping change to the role which traditionally involved responsibility only for editorials, feature articles and letters to the editor. With managing director James Macartney's support, Richards took control of the entire newspaper.

Richards also ended an editorial policy, first set by Hackett, that it was the paper's duty to help government. And he changed the West's attitude towards the trade union movement and Labor party, which had feuded with his predecessor, Ernest de Burgh. (Aisbett, 1998)

Griff Richards claims that many older readers protested when the *West Australian* introduced comic strips in 1955, although it was the last daily newspaper in

Australia to run them. In a memo warning to staff to watch the language used, Macartney noted: "We have had the saddening spectacle of 'bum'" (Richards, 1989).

The *West Australian* became a tabloid newspaper because of a world-wide newsprint crisis. The paper's board reluctantly agreed to the change in format. However, it opposed front-page news and said the tabloid should appear as a miniature broadsheet with small advertisements on the front and back. Richards observed:

The result looked squashed-up, made worse by space-savers, but the board said it was only until enough newsprint was again available. It never changed because we found a tabloid was what the public wanted. (1989)

The newspaper has remained a tabloid, except for the broadsheet insert the *Big Weekend* in the Saturday edition from 24 December 1988 to 18 May 2002. This was replaced by *Weekend Extra*, a tabloid, which has been published as an insert in Saturday's the *West Australian* since 25 May 2002. The report at the 1948 WAN annual meeting stated that 70 per cent of the company's newsprint must be obtained for the long-term future from Canada and be paid for in American dollars (Uren, 1948, p. 13). Effective from 1 January 1948, the most severe cut of approximately fifty seven per cent on pre-war consumption of newsprint was imposed. Drastic steps had to be taken to meet the emergency:

Our papers were remodelled, and the circulation of all of them were pegged, so that the meagre ration of newsprint could be used for the greatest benefit to readers and advertisers. The important part that newspaper advertising plays in the business life of the community can only be appreciated when it has to be rationed, but the greatest menace to democracy in the curtailment of newspapers is the fact that it is impossible to give the full service of news so vital in these times of international, political and domestic complications. (Uren, 1948, p. 13)

Initially, the new paper was made to look as much like the old one as possible — advertisements of births, deaths and marriages remained on the front page, and readers had to penetrate well into the paper to find the leader, cable and cable turnover pages. Front-page news appeared for the first time on 10 December 1949 — to the great displeasure of Herbert James Lambert, who had declared during his editorship that the paper would have news on the front page "over my dead body" (Uren, 1948, p. 13).

The newspaper board allowed front page news under strict conditions: moderate headings, no streamers and only one picture, no more than three columns wide. Any variation needed boardroom approval, but in practice the clock could not be stopped for

the board to be consulted. Therefore, the conditions were soon forgotten. The problem of getting classified advertisements off the back page was not overcome until 1971. The advertisements were replaced by the sport section. The Royal Coat of Arms was removed from the *West Australian's* masthead in 1966, with Richards arguing that using the Royal Arms gave a false impression of official patronage, saying: "The Garter Principal King of Arms at the College of Arms in London told us it would be better in every way to discontinue their usage, which was clearly absurd and misleading" (1989). In seeking perfection in language and presentation, Richards did more to modernise the *West Australian* than any previous editor (Battye, 1982).

James Macartney, managing editor from 1951-1969, had a number of political quarrels. In the 1950s, Bert Hawke's Labor Government withdrew official advertising and instructed its Ministers not to talk to the *West Australian*; and later in his career, Macartney assailed both the Governor and the conservative Premier over a point of protocol. This was the strongest of all manifestations of Macartney, who had earlier banned capitals from terms such as Parliament House and Minister for Works — and then quietly allowed normal practices to creep back. Battye (1982) adds that Macartney is best remembered, though, for his hatred of pomposity, cant, humbug, hypocrisy and the mindless preservation of irrelevant traditions.

On 30 September 1969 the HWT in Melbourne took over WAN. Because of ownership restrictions put in place through the Broadcasting and Television Act, the local company had to shed its radio and television interests in 1970. In April 1970, WAN purchased the *Kalgoorlie Miner*, which had been published since September 1895 in Kalgoorlie, 600 kilometres east of Perth. The *Kalgoorlie Miner* is still owned by West Australian Newspapers, the parent company of the *West Australian*.

The *West Australian*, one of Australia's oldest daily newspapers, had only six editors during the period of this study — John Winthrop Hackett, Alfred Langler, Charles Patrick Smith, Herbert James Lambert, Ernest de Burgh and Griff Richards. The paper went through various significant changes, including the shift from broadsheet to tabloid in 1947. News moved to the front page two years later and sport changed from the middle of the paper to the back in 1971. From Federation in 1901 to 1971, ownership of the *West Australian* fluctuated between West Australian Newspapers and Herald and Weekly Times. HWT has since yielded control to Robert Homes à Court

(1987), Alan Bond's Bell's Group (1988), returned to WAN in 1992 and floated on the stock exchange as a public company.

Table 5
People who have shaped the West Australian

Name	Position	Dates
Charles Macfaull	Owner-Editor	1833—1846
Elizabeth Macfaull	Owner-Editor	1846—1848
Arthur Shenton	Owner-Editor	1848—1871
William Henry Hullock	Owner-Editor	1874—1879
Thomas Cockburn-Campbell	Managing Editor and Part Owner	1879—1897
John Wintrop Hackett	Editor Sole Owner	1887—1916 1913—1916
Alfred Langler	Editor and governing director	1915—1927
Charles Patrick Smith	Managing editor	1927—1951
Herbert James Lambert	Editor	1929—1946
Ernest de Burgh	Editor-in-chief	1946—1956
James Edward Macartney	Managing editor and managing director	1951—1969
Griff Richards	Editor-in-chief	1956—1972

The Audience

On 18 May 1885, after the *West Australian* had become a daily, the *Daily News* announced that its guaranteed circulation was 1,000 — double that of any other newspaper ("The romantic story", 1972). A year later, it claimed a daily circulation of 1,600. However, the proprietors of the *West Australian* refused to enter a wrangle by making a counter-claim. The *Daily News* then directly challenged the *West Australian* to disclose its circulation figures and offered £100 to charity if its claim to a higher circulation could be upset. The *West Australian's* reply was that it treated the "frantic ravings, as they deserve — with utter contempt." The *West Australian's* in-house magazine, *Newspaper House News*, observed the Stirlings, the proprietors of the *Daily News*, brought out a morning paper, the *Morning Herald*, in 1896. This meant that the *West Australian* faced a strong challenge, and continued to maintain its discreet silence about circulation. The *Morning Herald* had better machines and superior production methods than the *West*, and appealed to the radical-thinking diggers who had begun swarming to the goldfields ("The West Australian", 1956). It was not until the demise of

the *Morning Herald* in 1909 that the first dependable circulation information appeared concerning the *West Australian*. The figure in 1909 stood at 42,000 in a State with a population of 265,675.

With an unchallenged position in the morning newspaper field, the *West Australian* gained further ground. The 50,000 mark was reached in 1915, a year before the death of the then proprietor, Sir Winthrop Hackett, who had entered the venture as a partner in 1883. In the latter years of World War I, however, sales declined because of newsprint rationing and distribution difficulties. When the price increased from a penny to twopence as a result of the early post-war inflation in 1920, buyer resistance caused a further drop of nearly 5,000 a day in circulation. The 50,000 mark was not passed again until 1923. The *West Australian* had a circulation of about 60,000 in 1926 when it was sold to a public company. The *Western Mail*, the *West Australian's* country weekly, had a circulation of about 20,000. The new regime attempted to boost the *Western Mail's* circulation with a metropolitan edition. However, the effort to appeal to a Perth readership was abandoned in the 1950s when the paper was named the *Countryman*.

At the advent of the economic depression at the end of the 1920s the circulation of the *West Australian* had increased to more than 63,000 ("The romantic story", 1972). However, in common with other business enterprises, the paper suffered financial setbacks, and for a number of years circulation showed only a small increase, particularly in the Depression era.

People in the depression were as hungry as ever for news — perhaps even more so — but many could not afford the daily "tuppence". These joined the long lines of people who read the papers after they had been posted up outside the old office next to the Palace Hotel. ("The romantic story", 1972)

With the inception of the Audit Bureau of Circulations in 1932, the *West Australian's* circulation has been considerably greater than any of its competitors. However, it was not until 1947 that the paper's circulation exceeded 100,000. Twenty two years later, its circulation reached 200,000 for the first time.

The *Daily News* was similarly affected by World War I, the prosperity of the 1920s and the Depression in the 1930s. At the end of World War I, its circulation was about 20,000, but when the price of the paper was increased from a penny to twopence in 1920 the result "was nothing less than a disaster" ("The romantic story", 1972). Though the *West Australian* lost only a tenth of its circulation when its price was

similarly raised, the *Daily News*' circulation dropped to 5,000 — only a quarter of what it had been.

This can be traced to the fact that the *West Australian* presented a professionally processed combination of news, sport, human interest stories, and political commentary. This proved more appealing than the *Daily News*, which largely catered to workers who read it on their way home while travelling on public transport. Generally, articles in the *West Australian* contained more depth in its reporting than the afternoon paper. The presentation of the morning paper was a value-free discriminator and explainer. In contrast, the *Daily News* employed "racy" headlines and visual images. As shown by the circulation table in chapter five (table 1), the *Daily News* recovered somewhat until World War II, but though its circulation continued to grow, it lost ground to the *West Australian* in each of the seven year periods.

The *West Australian* and the TAB

From mid-1929 onwards, the police and the Western Australian Turf Club (WATC) jointly organised a campaign to eliminate illegal off-course betting. The general argument was that gambling off the course, away from the horses meant the activity was not a legitimate sport; and that illegal gambling attracted inappropriate social groups and so impeded general economic recovery (Stoddart, 1983, p. 666).

However, for decades illegal bookmaking was extensive throughout the State. Prior to 1942, it was largely a matter of illegal shop betting in hotels and barber shops, with police efforts at enforcement being frustrated by the inadequacy of the then existing law ("1959 Western Australian report", 1959, p. 19). In 1942, the law was amended to grant the police additional powers to help curb the illegal betting shops. The law required punters to attend the race or trotting meetings to gamble on the races. Racegoers at the course had the choice of betting with bookmakers or on the course tote. A small number of unlicensed operators, known as Starting Price (SP) bookmakers, handled large sums of money in illegal off-course betting, setting up in hotels or in well-equipped rooms containing telephones. However, as a response to the Royal Commission in 1948, the Betting Control Act 1954 was passed, requiring all bookmakers to be licensed. The Act provided for a Betting Control Board with authority to license on-course and off-course bookmakers, and to register off-course betting shops, where licensed bookmakers could operate.

The *West Australian's* former chief racing writer, Alf Dunn, and the paper's editor at the time, Griff Richards, are adamant that the influence of the *West Australian* was largely responsible for the State Government instigating a Royal Commission into betting, and subsequently the abolition of off-course SP betting shops. In the late 1950s, there was considerable public debate, led by the *West Australian*, about off-course betting. In many editorials and news stories in early 1959, the *West Australian* argued that bookmakers in betting shops could easily evade much of their taxation responsibility and that Government-control of off-course betting would provide a percentage of profits to the racing industry. The *West Australian* was particularly critical of State Labor Premier, Bert Hawke, who was reluctant to hold an inquiry into the racing industry. The paper's editorial on 22 January 1959 asked:

Why then does he [Hawke] refuse to recognise that the major cause of the accelerating decay of the racing business has been the counter-attraction of the legalised betting shops? Why is he so reluctant to raise the ridiculously low tax on off-course betting so that it should help more to support the racing on which it preys? Mr Hawke is still maintaining the Government's policy of spoon-feeding a tight, greedy and unscrupulous licensed body of S.P. bookies. ("Premier still stalling", 1959)

Racing historian Charlie Fox called the *West Australian* "the anti-SP crusader" (Fox, 1990, pp. 57-67). Fox claims the paper was the "chief publicist for the anti-SP cause" and gave the Turf Club and social reformers free use of its columns. However, he did not give reasons as to why the *West Australian* was a strong opponent of SP betting because of sports editor Ted Collingwood and Richards' influence. Rather, it went deeper. Fox said the *West Australian* used its power over the public imagination to define SP betting and the SP punters as seedy, disreputable, irresponsible and anti-social. According to the *West Australian*, those who could afford to go to the races could afford to bet, while those who could not attend the races should not and could not afford to bet. Fox added:

For most of its life the *West Australian* had represented the interests of the colonial governing elite and conservative politics. Between the wars, although owned in Victoria, it was controlled from the small ruling class from which the W.A.T.C. [Western Australian Turf Club] committee men came. Its arguments, therefore, were those of the Turf Club, although it too, used the language of social reform. It also expressed great indignation that the government had not suppressed, indeed had considered legalising S.P. betting and attacked the police for bringing the laws they were supposed to enforce into disrepute. (Fox, 1990, pp. 57-67)

The Conservative Liberal Party promised to investigate SP betting if it won Government on 21 March 1959 ("Need for inquiry", 1959). Following a change of Government, the David Brand-led Liberal Government called a Royal Commission into betting. It appointed Sir George Ligertwood, a former South Australian Supreme Court judge, to head the inquiry. The *West Australian* provided a comprehensive daily coverage of the Royal Commission hearings.

The Royal Commission found that the betting shops had an adverse effect on the racing industry and would be likely in time to bring it to a standstill. This was caused by a loss of revenue by the race clubs from a commensurate decline in racecourse attendances. Sixty witnesses gave evidence during the 13-week hearing, which ended on 16 October 1959 (Collingwood, 1959). The Royal Commission recommended the abolition of all betting shops and the establishment of an off-course totalisator scheme ("1959 Western Australian report", 1959; "Bets report urges", 1960).

Alf Dunn said the *West Australian*, under the leadership of its sports editor, Ted Collingwood, took a leading role in the establishment of the Totalisator Agency Board, or TAB (A. Dunn, personal communication, October 26, 1999). Dunn said his paper "campaign[ed] long and hard during the 1950s for the elimination of SP bookmakers". He attributed this largely to Collingwood's strong interest in horse racing. Dunn pointed out that racing was in a poor financial position and with the decreasing attendances, the future of the sport was in jeopardy. According to Griff Richards, the *West Australian* had an extremely strong influence on the State Government holding a Royal Commission into betting and the subsequent establishment of the TAB (W.T.G. Richards, personal communication, January 21, 2000).

Western Australia was the second State to establish the TAB. The TAB opened in Western Australia on 18 March 1961, seven days after Australia's first TAB shops started operating at a meeting at Flemington Racecourse in Victoria (Pollard, 1988, p. 607).

The influence of the *West Australian* on the State's politicians in the 1950s and early sixties dramatically changed the gambling laws. The *West Australian* indirectly greatly benefited from the change of laws controlling gambling in Western Australia. Sports editor Ted Collingwood, a racing fan, was adamant that the racing and trotting bodies should benefit from the taxation obtained from the legal betting in the TAB. However, the expansion of horse race meetings throughout the nation to seven days a

week resulted in expanding form guides in the newspapers. Eventually, this led to the *West Australian* producing *Tab Form* in 1997. It is published three days a week and is a financial joint venture between West Australian Newspapers and the TAB.

CHAPTER 7

THE SPORTS DEPARTMENT OF THE *WEST AUSTRALIAN*

In the spring 1995 issue of *The ACHPER Healthy Lifestyle Journal*, University of Queensland journalism Professor John Henningham observes that newspaper sports departments are "their own little empires, with a sports editor, sub-editors and reporters, all of whom handle nothing but sport". Unlike most other editorial departments, "sport is a specialist area quite separate from other sections" (Henningham, 1995, p. 13). Most young journalists in the early stages of their careers move to different sections of a newspaper to gain experience in a variety of areas. For example, they may cover local government, State or Federal parliament, religion, business and finance, rural affairs, transport, industrial relations, entertainment, police rounds, courts and ethnic relations. Sport is not included in this cycle because, according to Henningham, the sports journalist is seen as outside the mainstream:

Mainstream journalists regard sports journalists with a mixture of envy and superiority. They envy the lifestyle of sports journalists, whom they see as spending their weekends in box seats at top sporting matches and drinking with the sporting heroes of the day. The stories sports reporters write are widely read and enjoyed with many readers, especially men, discarding all but the sports pages. On the other hand, mainstream journalists regard sports journalism as not quite the real thing. (1995, p. 13)

This holds true in the *West Australian*. The paper has had its own sports writers since early in the twentieth century. However, the sports department, which is separate from other sections of the paper, did not start to evolve until after World War II. Previously, sports stories were given to the paper's chief of staff, who then assigned them, together with stories from other news sections of the paper, to the sub-editors.

The sports staff consisted of three in 1922. This doubled to six sports writers in 1936 and reached a peak of sixteen in 1971. Until the 1930s, the sports writers did not have their own sub-editors. All sports stories were reviewed by a pool of sub-editors who were responsible for all areas of the paper. Until World War II, Sheffield Shield

and Test cricket match reports were seldom included in the sports section. Instead, cricket was placed in the general news.

The paper's first two sports editors were Godfrey White and Ted Collingwood. Between them they held the position for 63 years. However, because of the limited amount of literature relating to the paper's sports department early in the twentieth century, it is unclear whether White was the first sports editor. Griff Richards (W.T.G. Richards, personal communication, November 27, 1998) and Alf Dunn (A. Dunn, personal communication, November 27, 1998) both believe he was the first sports editor. There are limited staff records contained at the *West Australian* for most of the period under examination, because when the *West Australian* was acquired in 1987 by Robert Holmes à Court, many of the company's records disappeared. However, data could be established by identifying by-lines, reading articles in the company's in-house publication, *Newspaper House News*, and by conducting personal communication with former and present journalists of the *West Australian*. *Newspaper House News*, first published in April 1954, occasionally featured articles about previous sports staff, which were found to be useful in this study. The following section will provide profiles of White and Collingwood and their impact on the *West Australian's* sport coverage.

Sports Editors

Godfrey White

South Australian Godfrey White, born in 1875, left the *Adelaide Register* in August 1905 and joined the *West Australian* the following month. Though the exact nature of his task remains uncertain, he was recruited as a "trouble-shooter" (Battye, 1982, ch. 11, p. 13). The paper's managing-editor Winthrop Hackett was "disturbed by tales of rascality that could damage the credibility of the newspaper" (Collingwood, 1973, p. 12). Collingwood added: "He [White] was soon seen as an unrelenting opponent of transgressions that reflected on the integrity of the press". White became the paper's sports editor in 1907 and wrote horse racing under the pen-name "Brooklyn" throughout his sports journalism career at the paper. He retired in 1938, but returned to the *West Australian* as the acting sports editor during World War II. Griff Richards, who joined the paper in 1927 and was editor from 1956 to 1972, described White as "a big fellow, not fat, but solidly built, tall, had grey hair and wore grey suits and had a judicial appearance" (W.T.G. Richards, personal communication, November 27, 1998). Richards said that White, who was widely respected in racing circles for his accuracy

and objectiveness, had considerable influence in the Western Australian sporting scene, particularly horse racing. White's accuracy was so respected that the Western Australian Turf Club administrators took the *West Australian's* prices as the official starting prices. For many years, White wrote a daily column, "Turf Notes and Chat". This section included local racing news and racing information from the Eastern States and overseas. Following are the lead sentences from White's coverage of the 1936 Perth Cup. In this example, he employed some flowery language, combined with basic factual information:

Weeks of careful preparation and expectation, a few minutes of surging excitement, the roar of acclamation, and the Perth Cup of 1936 becomes a distinguished entry in the records of the most notable event in the State's racing calendar. Outrunning all the most fancied candidates and all the proved stayers, the three-year-old Picaro flashed out of the ruck at the distance and, galloped up the straight stride for stride with another outsider, Staunch, held on to win. Another three-year-old, Yaringa, filled third place. It was a victory for young thoroughbreds. Although disappointed at the defeat of the favourites the crowd was not slow to appreciate the merit of the performances of the placed horses. ("The Perth Cup", 1936)

Ted Collingwood, who succeeded White, said that White had provided respectability to early sports writing in the paper (Collingwood, 1973). This was because White had covered horse racing for many years and never compromised himself by betting on the outcome of races (Birtwistle, 1971). However, White inadvertently became embroiled in controversy following the 1906 Sydney Cup, won by Noreen, at a time when illegal starting price bookmakers were a major problem for the sport of horse racing. The *West Australian* published the wrong starting times for the Sydney Cup meeting. This gave anyone who knew of the error time to get the result telegraphed from Randwick Racecourse to Perth's Ascot Racecourse before the time, as published in the *West Australian*, had expired. An urgent telegram with the one word "Noreen" was received at Ascot by a well-known racing man. Perth bookmakers were betting on the Sydney Cup as well as local races at the course, and when the telegram arrived, three men backed Noreen to win a substantial amount of money. It was subsequently discovered Noreen had been backed after she had won. Three men were arrested. One was cleared at a police court hearing and the other two were committed for trial in the criminal Court, where they were acquitted. Godfrey White, as sports editor and racing writer, gave evidence at the trial and took the responsibility for having made the mistake. He said he had received and published the starting times for all races run at Randwick on the Saturday, but those for the Easter Monday meeting, at which the

cup was run, had not been received. Thinking the Saturday times would also apply to the Monday, he published them as correct. This was a consequence of the *West Australian*, and its sports editor, being so authoritative and unquestioned in its decision, which was a reflection on the nature of that era. Forty four years later, a book entitled *Racing Romance* was published in London. The author said: "Godfrey White, the sporting editor, was arrested in company with the person who had made most of the bets (on Noreen)" (Collingwood, 1973, p. 14). White took legal action, and in the public notices column of the *West Australian* in 1951, the publishers of the book apologised for what they called a "most unfortunate case of mistaken identity". White died in December 1951 at the age of 76. In his obituary, Ted Collingwood said that under White's leadership, the *West Australian's* sports pages became as informative as any newspaper in Australia ("Corinthian", 1951).

Ted Collingwood

Horace Edward Collingwood, later to be known as Ted, was the paper's second sports editor. He was born at Ballarat, Victoria, on 26 April 1906. His family moved to Perth when he was a young boy. In 1922, at the age of sixteen, Collingwood joined the *West Australian* as a junior advertising clerk. Collingwood, who had a keen interest in sport, was a promising amateur boxer before turning professional, under the name of Young Collingwood, winning 13 of his 15 bouts until he retired in 1924. His final bout was a tough contest, in which he lost on points, on a Friday night at White City Stadium in Perth. Collingwood had to work at the front desk the next morning. The company's business manager, Henry Gregg, told him that if he did not give up boxing, he would have to look for another job (Marsh, 1986). Collingwood then retired from boxing, convinced that a career at the *West Australian* promised a better future. A year later, Collingwood accepted an offer as a cadet sports journalist. Apart from when he travelled overseas in 1932 and three years during World War II, Collingwood remained in the sports department until he retired on 30 April 1971, four days after his sixty fifth birthday. He died at the age of 88 on 18 August 1994.

Collingwood began his career in journalism as the number two horse racing writer to the sports editor Godfrey White. Horse racing remained Collingwood's favourite sport throughout his journalistic career, though he had a strong interest in boxing, which he occasionally covered for the *West Australian*, and trotting. His passion for the gambling sports of horse racing and trotting were reinforced in a letter he wrote to West Australian Newspapers' (WAN) managing director Keith Mattingley in June

1985, saying he was "dismayed at the frequent segregation of racing away from the back page and the tendency to play it down, even at a time when racing is more entrenched than in the past 150 years" (T. Collingwood, personal letter to K. Mattingley, June 13, 1985). Collingwood claimed "a definite bias has developed against racing by a section of sports staff who prefer to push for their own favourite sports and won't realise racing/trotting are the backbone of the sports pages all year." Collingwood pointed out that the demise of the *Morning Herald* early in the century was caused by that paper refusing to publish horse racing news or results. Collingwood continued:

. . . three important races were run on Saturday, May 25 — the Helena Vale and Roma Cups and Belmont Guineas, each with stakes ranging from \$30,000 to \$35,000 — and did not rate one line on the back page on the Monday's *West*. These three important local events could not be dismissed because they had been run on Saturday any more than Saturday's football and disregard for them could only be described as discriminatory. This didn't please racing owners any more than did the over burden of cricket — which has not missed a day on the back page all year.

During his career, Collingwood reported on 16 Melbourne Cups. Collingwood wrote under the pen-name of "Corinthian", a famous London boxing club in the early twentieth century ("For him", 1971), until the *West Australian* dispensed with most pen-names in the 1950s. He was promoted to sports editor on 24 January 1939, starting in his new role five days later.

Collingwood, who was appointed an accredited war correspondent with the Australian Military Forces in May 1942, became the *West Australian's* official war correspondent. The paper's managing editor, Charles Patrick Smith, appointed Collingwood as its naval and aviation reporter to travel to the north of Western Australia on the trail of the military. However, Collingwood had to take his holidays while he was on duty. After seven weeks without any word from Collingwood, Smith became anxious for his safety and consulted the Defence Department about sending out a search party. But Collingwood reached Broome and sent word that he was stranded because the air service had been withdrawn. A second attempt to contact the *West Australian* failed due to military suspicion:

At one of his stopping places, Port Hedland, he tried to let the *West Australian* know where he was, but when he lodged a telegram the officer in charge was so impressed with the need for keeping information from the enemy that he struck out the place of origin and replaced it with "Delete". (Richards, n.d., p. 67)

He hitched lifts from town to town in trucks moving southwards and eventually arrived at Meekatharra. He waited there for three days for a train, which brought him home on 5 January 1943, after an absence of nine weeks. Collingwood travelled to Darwin in 1943, where he served in the Public Relations Field Unit with the Australian Army, returning to Perth the following year.

In the mid-1950s, Collingwood wrote less, instead concentrating mainly on his administrative duties. Shortly after Griff Richards became the paper's editor in 1956, he convinced Collingwood to use his writing ability and sporting knowledge to write a weekly sports column. Collingwood, who had then become sports editor, accepted the advice and his columns "Sport in the West" were filled with the witty and vivid prose synonymous with such sports reporting greats as Damon Runyon and Paul Gallico ("Ted Collingwood retires", 1971; McGrath, 1994). Irving Rudd, the director of public relations of the New York City Off-Track Betting Corporation, wrote to Collingwood after he retired, comparing him with Runyon and Gallico, two of America's greatest sports writers. Rudd added: "In my opinion, you would have been actually as great on any American newspaper at any time" (I. Rudd, personal letter to T. Collingwood, August 11, 1971).

Collingwood strongly supported professional over amateur sports. This contrasts with the way sport was viewed internationally at the time. Until the 1970s, sport was generally perceived to be largely an amateur pastime. But Collingwood allocated more space to professional foot running (often referred to as pedestrianism) than amateur athletics. Also, professional boxing received considerably more coverage than amateur boxing, and in the late 1960s open (professional) tennis received more coverage than the amateurs. Griff Richards added that Collingwood "held the view that professional sports were things that mattered. He gave them most space and he didn't think much of amateur sports" (W.T.G. Richards, personal communication, November 27, 1998).

Despite his preference for professional sports, Collingwood covered five Olympic Games — Los Angeles (1932), Melbourne (1956), Rome (1960), Tokyo (1964) and Mexico City (1968). No other Western Australian journalist has covered as many Olympic Games. The lengths Collingwood went to in order to attend these Games suggests that he had an underlying fondness for amateur sports — at an elite level, at least. There is mystery surrounding the circumstances of Collingwood's departure to Los Angeles on a freight ship from Fremantle in 1932. His daughter Michaela thinks he

may have stowed away on the ship (M. Collingwood, personal communication, May 15, 1999). Collingwood arrived at the Yangtse River in China at the start of the Sino—Japanese war. He then briefly became a war correspondent with the *Shanghai Times*, while he continued to write articles for the *West Australian* and the *New Zealand Referee*. After only three and a half months at the *Shanghai Times*, Collingwood left China to cover the 1932 Olympic Games in Los Angeles. On his departure from China, the *Shanghai Times* editor expressed his appreciation to Collingwood in the following letter:

As you are leaving for America tomorrow, I want to thank you, both for myself and for "The Shanghai Times", for the admirable manner in which you have helped us during the last three and a half months. Newspaper work has been particularly strenuous in Shanghai during that time and you joined us when we were much in need of reliable help. The manner in which you have cheerfully worked long hours, covered important aspects of the situation here, and turned in carefully-gathered and well-written stories has been much appreciated. Especially I would like to add written compliments to the verbal ones I gave at the time concerning the bomb outrage at Hongkew Park when Japanese forces were parading to celebrate the Emperor's birthday. Your eye-witness account was the best in town and characteristic of the general thoroughness of all your work. (A. Morley, personal letter to T. Collingwood, June 9, 1932)

After the Los Angeles Olympic Games, Collingwood returned to the *West Australian* to resume his sports journalism career. Collingwood did not receive any by-lines during the Olympic Games. He contributed one story a day to the *West Australian*, which was published with the general coverage from the overseas wire services. This contrasted with his coverage of the 1956 Olympic Games. In Melbourne, he covered many of the major track and field, boxing and swimming events. He also wrote the leading story in the paper most days. While en route to the 1960 Olympic Games in Rome, Collingwood reported on the South African cricket tour of Great Britain. He also covered the world heavyweight boxing title bout in New York, when American Floyd Patterson knocked out Sweden's Ingemar Johansson in the fifth round to become the first man to regain a world heavyweight title. Throughout his career, Collingwood covered many other major international events, including the British Open golf championships, the Wimbledon tennis championships, the Davis Cup, the America's Cup in yachting, and the 1962 British Empire and Commonwealth Games. While Collingwood was covering sporting events interstate and overseas during the 1950s and 1960s, Alan Newman edited the sports section.

Collingwood was presented with life membership of the Western Australian Racing Writers' Association in February 1984. Alf Dunn remembers that Collingwood would not tolerate mistakes by his racing journalists, because of the large amount of money invested in the industry (A. Dunn, personal communication, October 26, 2000). Keith Murray, a former senior general journalist at the *West Australian*, observed that Collingwood was "a very forceful character" and would not tolerate any sub-editors changing the stories on the sports pages without his consent (K. Murray, personal communication, November 29, 1998). Griff Richards said that Collingwood developed into an all-round writer, because his writing reflected his way of life, and his relationships with the people about whom he wrote:

He used to have all the sports characters coming to his place and he enjoyed having a drink with them. As a result, he not only reported on what happened on the sports field, he knew all the background. So what he wrote was very authentic and he also had a very colourful style of writing. That's one thing I liked about his column — he wasn't writing from what was rumoured, but he wrote from actual experience, for all sorts of sportsmen and all sorts of sports. (W.T.G. Richards, personal communication, November 27, 1998)

In his role as sports editor, Collingwood associated with a wider range of people from a greater variety of sports than his staff members, who generally mixed only with personnel from the sports they covered. For instance, when an interstate or overseas sporting team or a champion sportsman or woman visited Perth, the sports editor, along with the reporter responsible for covering that sport, would invariably be invited to any functions. Collingwood would generally accept, which meant he had the opportunity of meeting people across the sporting spectrum. It is evident that Collingwood's keen involvement and dedication to various sports contributed greatly to his illustrious career as a sports editor at the *West Australian*.

Table 6**Full-Time Sports Staff Numbers****(When the journalist was known only by a pen-name, that name is in brackets)**

Year	Number	Staff
1901	0	
1908	1	Godfrey White ("Brooklyn") — horse racing, sports editor
1915	1	Godfrey White ("Brooklyn") — horse racing, sports editor
1922	3	Clarrie Hart ("Camoola") — trotting Irwin Powell ("Smash") — general sport Godfrey White ("Brooklyn") — horse racing, sports editor
1929	4	Ted Collingwood ("Corinthian") — horse racing Clarrie Hart ("Camoola") — trotting Irwin Powell ("Smash") — tennis Godfrey White ("Brooklyn") — horse racing, sports editor
1936	6	Charlie Ammon ("Follower") — cricket, football Ted Collingwood ("Corinthian") — horse racing Clarrie Hart ("Camoola") — trotting William "Buzz" Kennedy ("Rambler") — general sport Irwin Powell ("Smash") — tennis Godfrey White ("Brooklyn") — horse racing, sports editor
1943	4	Syd Cusack ("Levuka") — trotting and sub-editor Kevin Murphy (Philock") — horse racing, trotting Irwin Powell ("Smash") — general sport Godfrey White ("Brooklyn") — horse racing, acting sports ed.
1950	8	Charlie Ammon ("Follower") — cricket, football Ted Collingwood ("Corinthian") — horse racing, sports editor Alf Dunn ("Melfort") — horse racing Wally Foreman ("Forward") — cricket, football, yachting Jack Lee ("Lexington") — trotting Kevin Murphy ("Philock") — horse racing Alan Newman ("Chelsea") — athletics, soccer Irwin Powell ("Smash") — tennis, general sport
1957	12	Charlie Ammon — cricket, football Ken Casellas ("Tennessee")* — football, trotting Neville Catchpole ("Chatham") — horse racing Geoff Christian — athletics, football Ted Collingwood — sports editor Wally Foreman — football, golf, lawn bowls, yachting Alf Dunn — horse racing Pat Higgins — golf, women's sport Jack Lee — cricket, trotting Kevin Murphy ("Philock") — horse racing Alan Newman — cricket, football, tennis Irwin Powell — tennis and sub-editor

* Wrote under own name when covering football

Table 6 (cont.)**Full-Time Sports Staff Numbers**

(When the journalist was known only by a pen-name, that name is in brackets)

Year	Number	Staff
1964	15	Charlie Ammon — general sport and sub-editor Ken Casellas — football, trotting, general sport Neville Catchpole — horse racing Geoff Christian — football Ted Collingwood — sports editor and columnist Alf Dunn — horse racing Wally Foreman — football, yachting Pat Gowans — trotting Alex Green — trotting Jack Lee — cricket Kevin Murphy ("Philock") — horse racing Alan Newman — deputy sports editor and general sport Irwin Powell — lawn bowls and sub-editor Tony Preston — tennis, general sport and sub-editor Jim Ross — general sport and sub-editor
1971	16	Charlie Ammon — football and sub-editor Dale Brakey — football, tennis, general sport Geoff Christian — football Ted Collingwood — sports columnist, sports editor (to 30 April) Gino de Mori — football, horse racing, trotting Alf Dunn — horse racing Ray Eastwood — sports editor (from 1 May) Barry Fanner — horse racing Pat Gowans — trotting Alex Green — trotting Jack Lee — cricket John McGrath — trotting Kevin Murphy ("Philock") — horse racing Alan Newman — associate sports editor and general sport Irwin Powell — lawn bowls and sub-editor Jim Ross — general sport and sub-editor

Note:

In comparison, the *West Australian's* sports department numbered 40 journalists in 2005, twelve of whom work on *TAB Form*, introduced in 1997. *TAB Form*, published three days a week, includes a comprehensive coverage of horse racing, trotting and greyhound racing.

Major Sports Writers

This sub-chapter will briefly examine the careers of the *West Australian's* nine major sports writers during the first seven decades of the twentieth century. Longevity is the main criterion this study has employed to determine those to be included here as a "major" writer. The following writers, in alphabetical order, were major contributors to

the paper's sports coverage during the seven decades of this study: Charlie Ammon, Ken Casellas, Geoff Christian, Alf Dunn, Wally Foreman, Jack Lee, Kevin Murphy, Alan Newman and Irwin Powell.

Charlie Ammon

Charlie Ammon was a very unusual sports journalist at a major newspaper — he never learnt to use a typewriter. His son, Dr. Richard Ammon, said that his father would write many of his articles long-hand at home, and take his material to the *West Australian* to be processed for publication. This recollection was supported by former colleagues Ken Casellas (K. Casellas, personal communication, October 29, 2000), Alan Newman (A. Newman, personal communication, December 4, 1998) and Alf Dunn (A. Dunn, personal communication, November 27, 1998).

Ammon, who was born in 1911, joined the *West Australian* in December 1927, after a successful junior sporting and academic career at Perth Boys' and Hale Schools. He specialised in covering football and cricket and, under the pen-name of "Follower", established himself as one of Australia's leading writers on these sports. He also wrote some horse racing and trotting articles during the 1930s. In 1932, Ammon became the paper's first full-time cricket writer. Ammon was an extremely conscientious writer who had an excellent command of the language and turn of phrase (A. Dunn, personal communication, November 27, 1998; A. Newman, personal communication, December 4, 1998).

After spending three years overseas during World War II — in the Middle-East, Papua New Guinea and Borneo — Ammon returned to the *West Australian* as a sports journalist in 1945. However, he suffered bouts of ill health, which forced him to relinquish his roles as chief football writer in 1951 and cricket writer in 1954. He continued as a football writer until 1971 and wrote occasional cricket stories, though he spent most of the summer months on the sporting sub-editor's desk. Ammon always wore a suit and hat to sporting events and his journalistic talent was recognised by editors in newspapers in Melbourne and Sydney. Ammon was offered employment by Eastern States newspapers, but did not want to uproot his family from Perth (D. Ammon, personal communication, October 29, 2000).

Griff Richards believes that Ammon was the best sports writer at the *West Australian* during the twentieth century (W.T.G. Richards, personal communication,

November 27, 1998). Richards said that Ammon would constantly check for accuracy in his story and would "polish" his stories until they were at such a standard that the sub-editors seldom needed to change a word. Ammon became features editor in 1971 and retired the following year. He died at the age of 63 in 1974.

Ken Casellas

Ken Casellas joined the *West Australian* as a cadet journalist in 1954. Casellas wrote under two pen-names. He used the pseudonym "Wingman" when covering football until the middle of 1956 and "Tennessee" while writing trotting stories until 1958. A wingman is a specific player in a team playing Australian Rules football and Tennessee Sky, a Western Australian horse, won the 1954 Interdominion Championship final in Adelaide. The Interdominion Championship is the major trotting series, held annually for horses in Australia and New Zealand. Casellas left the paper in 1959 to spend two years in London, where he worked as a correspondent for Sydney's *Daily Mirror* and covered a number of sporting events, including two Wimbledon tennis championships, and two English Derbies and Commonwealth boxing title bouts. He also travelled to Rome to cover the 1960 Olympic Games for the *Daily Mirror* and Adelaide's *News*. Casellas covered all track and field and swimming events and some boxing at the Olympics. This included Australian Herb Elliott's runaway victory in world record time in the 1,500 metres.

Casellas rejoined the *West Australian* in 1961 and developed into one of Australia's most respected sports journalists. He became one of the *West Australian's* leading football writers and a prominent trotting writer. Casellas was the *West Australian's* chief trotting writer from 1956 to 1959 and from 1961 to 1964. For several years from 1958, he was a trotting commentator for Perth radio stations. He was host of the *Spotlight on Trotting* segment on Channel 7's *Sunday World of Sport* program for four years in the early 1960s and was the commentator for Channel 9's live television coverage of the 1974 Interdominion Trotting Championships. Casellas also worked for various media organisations as a trotting form analyst. He was a regular football commentator and analyst on ABC radio and television.

In 1972, Casellas succeeded Jack Lee as the newspaper's cricket writer, a position he held until his retirement in 1999. During that time he covered 120 Test matches throughout Australia, South Africa and England. He made five overseas tours and covered 220 Sheffield Shield matches, the Australian domestic four-day cricket

competition. Casellas was named the Western Australian Sports Writer of the Year a record four times. He won the national award for trotting writing in 1989 and 1993 and a national award for cricket writing in 1993. In 1999, Casellas became the only Western Australian to be inducted into the Melbourne Cricket Ground's Media Hall of Fame ("High honour", 1999).

Casellas was a colourful writer who had wit and considerable ability to turn a phrase. His sporting descriptions regularly contained analytical comment, Casellas was always looking for an unusual angle to events he was covering, with his stories often containing a human interest element.

Geoff Christian

In February 1952, at the age of 18, Geoff Christian joined the *West Australian* as a cadet journalist. The following year, though still in the general editorial department, he covered his first league football match and Christian developed into Western Australia's most authoritative and respected football writer. He joined the sports department in 1954 and was appointed the paper's chief football writer three years later. Christian was interested in football from an early age and Ted Collingwood groomed him to take over as the paper's chief football writer (A. Newman, personal communication, December 4, 1998).

Christian's service at the paper was broken in 1960 when he reversed his role as a football writer to become physical fitness adviser with the West Perth Football Club in the Western Australian National Football League (WANFL). Christian was one of the State's most promising athletes and in 1955 held the Western Australian 100 yards and 220 yards titles. He finished fourth in the 220 yards at the Australian track and field championships in Melbourne. The championships were also the Australian selection trials for the 1956 Olympic Games, which were held later in Melbourne. Though he missed selection for the Australian Olympic team, Christian travelled to Melbourne to cover the Games for the *West Australian*. He was one of three journalists from the paper to attend the Games. Ted Collingwood, as the sports editor, took the leading role and wrote the major stories. However, Christian's articles on track and field and cycling were given prominence in the paper. The third member of the *West Australian* team, Jim Ross, who took a minor role, won the prize as the paper's leading cadet journalist that year.

Christian again served as the paper's chief football writer from 1961 until he retired at the age of 53 in 1987. He also covered the 1984 Olympic Games in Los Angeles, and three Commonwealth Games — 1962 in Perth, 1982 in Brisbane and 1986 in Edinburgh. Christian died at the age of 64 in 1998.

Alf Dunn

In 1934, Alf Dunn gained a journalist cadetship at the *West Australian* at the age of nineteen. A year later he was appointed editor of the *Western Mail*, a farming newspaper which was published by *West Australian Newspapers* in Perth. Dunn joined the *West Australian's* sporting department in April 1937 and a week later attended his first horse-racing meeting, which was held at Helena Valley, twenty-two kilometres east of Perth. Dunn attended nearly every metropolitan race meeting in Perth until he retired in January 1980. Also, for many years he covered major country race meetings for the *West Australian*. Dunn wrote a weekly racing column which was published in the *West Australian* for eight years after he retired.

Though he lived close to racing stables near Fremantle, Dunn initially wanted to be an Australian Rules football writer. Charlie Ammon, the *West Australian's* chief football writer, did not believe that Dunn had sufficient experience to join the football team of Ammon, Gordon Lee and two correspondents. However, Dunn covered some minor Australian Rules games in 1935 and 1936. The following year, Godfrey White asked Dunn if he was interested in writing horse racing:

I knew a lot of jockeys and trainers, because where I lived, we were surrounded by racing stables. I was pleased to become one of the paper's racing writers, but I didn't realise I would be there so long. I covered six Melbourne Cups and had two sints as chief racing writer. So I had a good career. (A. Dunn, personal communication, November 27, 1998)

Dunn's service at the *West Australian* was interrupted for four years during World War II. He left the paper in 1941 and returned in 1945. After being based in Moora, one hundred and seventy two kilometres north of Perth, for eight months with the Australian Army, he transferred to the army's public relations division as an official war correspondent in Darwin for two years, and to New Britain (now Papua New Guinea), for eighteen months before returning home at the end of the war. After World War II, Dunn was appointed racing commentator with Radio 6IX, where he called races for five years, and continued his work for the *West Australian*. He was also the on-course commentator for racing meetings at Helena Vale in the early 1950s.

Dunn wrote under the pen-name of "Melfort" until the early-1950s. Melfort was a former champion racehorse in England. Dunn was the *West Australian's* chief racing writer from 1952 to 1958 and from 1965 to 1969. He was the number two racing writer to Ted Collingwood from 1939 to 1951 and number two to Neville Catchpole between 1958 and 1965. He died in July 2005 at the age of 90.

Wally Foreman

Wally Foreman, who was born in Perth in 1901, was offered a scholarship to complete his schooling at the prestigious Perth Modern School. However, he decided to leave school at the age of sixteen and worked as a jackaroo at sheep and cattle stations in the north of Western Australia for two years. He returned to Perth and gained a position as a junior clerk with the Western Australian Government. In 1922, he was unsuccessful in his application to become a journalist at the *West Australian*, because he could not write short hand at a satisfactory speed ("Wally Foreman retires", 1966). During the depression years in the early 1930s he moved to Katanning, three hundred kilometres south-east of Perth, and gained employment at the local picture theatre. After returning to the city, Foreman worked in his father's general store in Fremantle, until moving to Kalgoorlie in 1939 as the manager for the Cadbury's Confectionary Company.

Foreman returned to Perth and joined the *West Australian* as a general and parliamentary reporter in 1941. He joined the *Western Mail* as sporting editor, then became a sports journalist at the *West Australian* in 1949. Writing under the pen-name of "Forward" until 1954, Foreman was a member of the paper's football reporting team. He was also the paper's yachting reporter and wrote occasional cricket articles until retiring in 1968. He died in 1980 at the age of 79.

Present-day ABC sports commentator Wally Foreman is no relation to Wally Foreman, who wrote for the *West Australian* during the period under investigation.

Jack Lee

Jack Lee, born in 1907, began writing for his church magazine at the age of eleven, though he did not enter journalism until 31 years later. Despite this late start in the profession, Lee established himself as one of Western Australia's best sports journalists. Lee was extremely good at English and had a passion for writing. He attended one of Perth's leading public schools, Guilford Grammar School, on

scholarship. Lee later studied English at the University of Western Australia. While attending university, he worked as a casual reporter and covered weekend sport for the *West Australian*. Despite being offered employment as a cadet journalist at the *Sunday Times* in Perth in 1926, he accepted an offer of employment as a ledger keeper at the Fremantle Harbour Trust (now Fremantle Port Authority), which had offered him a salary of nearly three times his newspaper offer. Though he wanted to become a full-time sports journalist, the economic circumstances of his family were responsible for him accepting the higher paid position. While he worked for the Fremantle Harbour Trust, Lee contributed sporting articles to the *West Australian* and the *Sunday Times*.

Lee joined the *West Australian* as a general sports reporter in 1949. He became the paper's trotting writer two years later and wrote under the pen-name of "Lexington". Lee, who lived near trotting stables in Fremantle, had a keen interest in the sport. Lee told sports editor Ted Collingwood that he would like to cover the trotting. This was allowed, because of the sports department's small staff in the 1950s, and it was not unusual for sports writers at the *West Australian* to cover a major sport a short time after joining the paper. In contrast to most of the other racing or trotting writers, who chose their pen-name after a champion horse, Collingwood allocated Lee the name of "Legion" while he was a freelance contributor. But Collingwood insisted Lee select another pen-name when he joined the sport department's full-time staff. Not knowing which name to choose, Lee stuck a pin in a map of the trotting region in the United States and it landed on Lexington, a city in Kentucky.

Lee, who remained the paper's trotting writer for eight years, then became the paper's chief cricket writer in 1957. A former prominent schoolboy cricketer, Lee had the ambition to cover Australia's major summer sport for the paper. With Charlie Ammon's continuing bouts of illness and Alan Newman, the cricket writer for the previous three years, spending time as acting sports editor during Ted Collingwood's absences from the office, Lee was appointed the paper's cricket writer in 1957. Lee had the reputation for speed, accuracy and versatility. This was never more evident than his coverage of the famous tied Test cricket match between Australia and the West Indies in Brisbane in December 1960. Lee filed his story to the *West Australian*, and the paper's representative in Melbourne, Bill Ford, gave the story to the *Age* newspaper, which published it in its first edition. The *Age* reporter's story did not reach the paper until later in the evening.

Lee's efficiency was essential for Friday night's trotting meetings, because the deadline for the first edition was shortly after the finish of the main race. Because of the tight deadline for the country edition, Lee would prepare an introductory story with information on the six most fancied candidates. Knowing that he had the bulk of the story written about whichever of the six that won, all he had to do to complete the article was to describe the race in a few paragraphs. A colleague would call the numbers to Lee each time the horses passed the winning post. Within five minutes of the finish of the race, Lee was on the telephone dictating his story to a copy taker. Lee retired from the *West Australian* in 1972 and died in 2002 at the age of 94.

Kevin Murphy

Kevin Murphy was the only sports journalist at the *West Australian* to continue writing under a pen-name after 1958. He was known as "Philock" throughout his career at the paper, from 1938 to his retirement in 1984. Murphy, who accepted sports editor Ted Collingwood's advice to remain as "Philock", said:

Ted Collingwood suggested that I continue using my pen-name, because no-one would know who I was if I wrote under my own name. Many of my friends did not know my name and referred to me as "Philock". (K. Murphy, personal communication, November 27, 1998)

Murphy was a casual employee, who worked when required by the sports editor, until being promoted to the permanent staff in 1951. He continued to cover track work on a part-time basis for nine years after he officially retired. He was responsible for reporting the early morning track work at the city's race courses throughout his career at the paper. This required him to rise at 3.45 a.m. in summer, and 5 a.m. in winter, six days a week. Murphy took over the round from his father, Bill, a local racehorse trainer who worked for the paper part-time for two decades. Bill Murphy always wrote anonymously. Kevin Murphy "was known Australia-wide for his exceptional ability to recognise horses" and "he had the reputation for predicting which horses could win when resuming from spells or at their first starts" (Manning, 2005).

Kevin Murphy did not serve in World War II. He joined the Australian Army at the age of 17, but was discharged after three months, after injuring a leg in a traffic accident (K. Murphy, personal communication, November 17, 1998). In addition to being one of the paper's racing writers, he was the paper's main trotting reporter during the war. This resulted in Murphy working for about 12 hours most Saturdays. He would

arrive at Headquarters Racecourse (later to be named Ascot) at midday for the races, then catch a bus to Gloucester Park near the city for the trotting meeting. Murphy would also regularly travel to country race meetings at Pinjarra, York, Northam and Toodyay. As those centres lie within an hour's drive from Perth, Murphy would return to the office to write his stories for the first two years. There was no early edition, so the *West Australian* had a late deadline. But the paper published a country edition, which had early deadlines, after World War II. Murphy then would file his stories to a copytaker. But for Saturday metropolitan racing and trotting meetings, Murphy would arrive in the office on Sunday morning to write his articles. He died in February 2005 at the age of 85.

Alan Newman

Alan Newman, born in Perth in 1923, lived in Witchcliffe in the south-west of Western Australia, until aged eleven. His parents had migrated from England to Australia under the Group Settlement scheme in 1922. Newman travelled with his parents when they returned to England in 1934. After completing his schooling in London, Newman joined the British Army in 1942 and was based in the Royal Signal Corps. He was discharged from the Army in 1947, and after working for two years at the Central Telegraph Office, he returned to Western Australia in 1949. Newman, who originally had no aspirations to become a journalist, gained employment as a telegraphic printer at the *West Australian*. He wrote a few sports articles and, early in 1950, accepted sports editor Ted Collingwood's offer to join his department as a sports journalist. As Newman had a strong knowledge of overseas soccer, Collingwood wanted to employ him to explain the British soccer system to the paper's readers.

Newman was also the *West Australian's* chief Australian Rules football writer from 1952 to 1957. He was the only sports journalist on the paper to have three pen-names. He wrote under the name of "Chelsea" when he covered soccer. Chelsea was Newman's favourite team in the Football Association in England. He used the pseudonym of "Lynward" when he covered the trotting and "Griffin" when he covered other sports. He wrote under his own name from 1954. Lynward was a former champion trotter and Newman had followed its career. However, Newman selected "Griffin" out of defiance of the traditional use of pen-names. He explained:

In the 1950s I believed it was silly for us to continue to use pen-names. I couldn't see why we were not allowed to use our own names when we wrote stories. I was frustrated that we were not allowed to write under our name, so I picked "Griffin", who was a Greek monster, as I was so disappointed. I didn't give a stuff. (A. Newman, personal communication, December 4, 1998)

Newman covered a range of sports until he returned to England for eighteen months in 1961. He worked as a sports sub-editor at the *Daily Mail* and *Daily Sketch* in Fleet Street, London. After returning to Perth in September 1962 he rejoined the sports department and covered the British Empire and Commonwealth Games (renamed the Commonwealth Games in 1978), which were held in Perth two months later. He reported cricket, Australian football, soccer, athletics, golf, tennis, hockey, horse racing and harness racing before becoming the paper's chief sports sub-editor in 1964, which effectively made him the deputy sports editor. This versatility was not unusual at the *West Australian*. Due to limited numbers of staff, all sports journalists, except the racing writers, were expected to understand many sports and, at times, were required to write about a sport outside their perceived area of expertise. Newman was appointed associate sports editor on 1 April 1971, but was disappointed when he was overlooked as sports editor when Collingwood retired at the end of the month (A. Newman, personal communication, December 4, 1998). Instead, the paper's pictorial editor, Ray Eastwood, was given the position.

In 1972, Newman became the second journalist (after Collingwood) from the *West Australian* to cover an overseas Olympic Games. He was one of five writers assigned to cover the Munich Olympics for the Melbourne *Herald* and associated newspapers in the Herald and Weekly Times group, including Perth daily newspapers the *West Australian* and *Daily News*. Newman became sports editor in 1979, before leaving the following year to accept a role as senior sports columnist at the recently-established *Western Mail* (no association to the *Western Mail* that started in 1885 and subsequently was changed to the *Countryman* in 1954). Newman died in 2002 at the age of 78.

Irwin Powell

Irwin Powell spent most of his 48-year employment at the *West Australian* in the sports department. He joined the paper in mid-1916 as a reporter and general sub-editor. Two years later he became a sports journalist and sub-editor. The *West Australian* did

not appoint any specialist sport sub-editors until the late 1930s, so Powell would usually be rostered on the general sub-editor's desk, mainly to handle sports copy.

A former tennis player, he started writing tennis under the pen-name of "Smash" in 1927. Powell was the paper's specialist tennis writer until 1958, writing under his own name from 1956. He then remained a sports sub-editor until transferring to the general sub-editing desk in 1961. Early in his career he covered several other sports and during World War II, in addition to his sports sub-editing duties, Powell covered trotting.

Powell began writing about lawn bowls in 1963 and wrote a regular bowls column, "Gossip from the Greens". He retired from the *West Australian* in 1964, but continued covering bowls until 1974. He died at the age of 75 in 1976.

The Use of Pen-Names

Sports writers rarely received by-lines under their own name until the 1950s. They generally had pen-names. As mentioned earlier, the *West Australian's* longest-serving sports editor Ted Collingwood wrote under name of "Corinthian", which was the name of a London boxing club. Collingwood's pen-name was an exception, because all of the other racing writers at the paper wrote under the pseudonym of a former champion racehorse. For example, Neville Catchpole used the name "Chatham" and Kevin Murphy wrote under the pen-name of "Philock" until 1984. Aside for "Philock", all of the paper's other sporting pen-names had disappeared by the late 1950s.

The *West Australian's* writers of other sports usually had a name synonymous with characteristics with those sports. For example, the paper's tennis writers also wrote under the pen-names of "Deuce", "Net", "Set", "Server" and "Rubber". The golf writer early last century was "All Square", then "Hazard" for several years from 1928 and "Putter" in the 1950s. A boxing writer (not Collingwood) was named "Gong", and the football writers were "Rover", "Forward", "Follower", "Centremen", "Half-Back", "Pressbox", "Pivot", "Free Kick" and "Onlooker", which are terms associated with the Australian game. The soccer writers included "Penalty", "Half-Back" and "Spot-Kick" and former State baseball representative, Don Callaghan, covered that sport under the nom de plume of "Short Stop". Other correspondents included "Wicket" and "Long On" (cricket), "Crawl" (swimming), "Bow" (rowing), "Radiator" (motoring), "Look Out" and "Reelman" (surf lifesaving), "Short Jack" (lawn bowls), "Hooker" (rugby union),

and "Spinnaker" (yachting). Gordon Lee, who was a sports writer at the paper for periods during two decades from 1930, had a keen interest in ancient Greek sport. He covered various sports for the paper under the pen-name of "Spartan", a term associated with the earliest form of sport.

The history of pen-names in the *West Australian* extends back to the 1840s. The reason for use of pseudonyms is unclear. There is also uncertainty over the reasons pen-names were replaced by the journalists' given names. Griff Richards said the paper took responsibility for everything it published until the 1950s, but Richards, when he was news editor, believed the journalists should take responsibility for what they wrote and "not hide behind a pen-name" (W.T.G. Richards, personal communication, November 27, 1998). This view was supported by former senior journalist at the *West Australian*, Keith Murray, a journalist at the paper for a decade from 1948. Murray said that Jim Macartney, who became the *West Australian's* managing editor in 1951, was a staunch supporter of the freedom of the press, believing that journalists should stand by their stories (K. Murray, personal communication, November 29, 1998). However, Alan Newman believes pen-names were used because editors did not want their reporters becoming "egotistical" after seeing their names in print (A. Newman, personal communication, December 4, 1998). But Frank Platell, a full-time journalist at the paper from 1941 to 1991, says the non-de-plumes were changed to the journalists' names to encourage more personality into the writing (F. Platell, personal communication, November 29, 1998). Jim Ross, a sports journalist at the paper from 1954 to 1995 (and sports editor from 1981 to 1988), said pen-names were changed because the *West Australian* was moving into a modern era (J. Ross, personal communication, December 3, 1998).

Female Sports Staff

The *West Australian* has employed only three women sports journalists in its long history. Pat Higgins was the first, and the only woman on staff, to write sport during the period of this study. She started at the newspaper in 1954, moving into sports writing two years later, where she remained until leaving the newspaper in January 1963. Higgins, a Western Australian junior golf champion, gained a degree in English and History at the University of Western Australia in 1953. She wanted to become a sports journalist and met the *West Australian's* sports editor Ted Collingwood at a party in 1953. Collingwood said he would endeavour to get her a journalist cadetship at the paper's next intake of cadet journalists (P. Higgins, personal communication, December

21, 1998). While Higgins was holidaying on her family farm near Northampton, four hundred kilometres north of Perth, she received a telegram from Collingwood advising her to return to Perth for an interview. Higgins was then hired and spent the first two years reporting general news and writing a weekly women's sports column, which was published in the women's pages.

Higgins joined the sports department in 1956, and wrote general sport, in addition to covering golf and Country Week hockey in winter, and tennis and swimming in the summer. She also continued writing her weekly women's sport column and in 1958 began writing a weekly golf column, "Fairway Views". Higgins, who had a keen interest in horses, would regularly travel to metropolitan race meetings, and race meetings at nearby towns of Northam, York and Pinjarra, to help her senior racing colleagues collate the results. She also went to major trotting meetings to compile and dictate the results to a copy taker for publication in next day's paper. Her father, Jack Higgins, was a prominent race horse trainer until he died in 1985. Higgins continued to compete in golf tournaments and was a member of the Western Australian State team to compete at the National championships from 1953 to 1959. She retired from active golf in 1960 because the paper's sports department was going to be short-staffed during the Rome Olympic Games, and the Australian golf championships were to be held at the same time.

Higgins spent most of her last two years at the paper on the sports department's sub-editor's desk. Her last major sporting assignment was to cover the swimming competition at the 1962 British Empire and Commonwealth Games in Perth from 22 November to 1 December 1962. Higgins left sports journalism to complete her Diploma of Education at the Claremont Teachers' College, then converted it to a Bachelor of Education at the University of Western Australia. She started high school teaching in 1964, with her last educational appointment being in the English department at Cannington Senior High School, in a south-eastern Perth suburb, from 1975 to 1988. She retired as the school's senior mistress of English. Higgins said her main reason for leaving journalism was she believed that sports journalism was not an ideal occupation for a woman to become old in (P. Higgins, personal communication, December 21, 1998). Higgins said she believed it was easier teaching with increasing age than being a journalist which "wasn't for an old woman". Higgins had also purchased a one hundred and twenty hectare hobby farm which she bought in 1960 near the Harvey Estuary, ninety kilometres south of Perth. Higgins mentioned two other reasons for leaving

sports journalism. First, she was required to work at weekends, when most of the sport was played, and the teaching profession would allow her to spend more time on her farm; and second, she was disillusioned at the standard of English by school leavers and believed she could make a major contribution to education of the youth.

After Higgins left the *West Australian*, it took another 26 years before the next woman sports journalist was appointed at the paper. Higgins believes the reason for a lack of women sports journalists is that women generally were not interested in joining the sports department after entering the profession. Higgins says she was treated well by her male colleagues and her position in the sports department helped raise the profile of women's sport in the paper. In contrast to interviews of a few contemporary Australian women sports journalists (Jeffery, 1999), Higgins believed that she quickly gained credibility in what is seen as a male domain:

I didn't have any problems in gaining credibility among the readers or my male colleagues. Golf was my main round and they [the public] knew that I knew what I was talking about. I was given many serious topics in other sports to do. For example, I interviewed the champion swimmers John and Ilsa Konrads when they came here to train. Top athletics coach Percy Cerutti came to Perth and Ted Collingwood said to me, "take him down to the swimming." Percy was a character and waded wildly to the crowd. But Ted also had a sense of humour. Another time, he sent me to interview a giant wrestler, who had just arrived. It was Ted's idea of a joke. But he always ran the stories when I returned from these jobs. (P. Higgins, personal communication, December 21, 1998)

However, in Nicole Jeffery's article, Queensland sociologist Karen Nelson found that readers regarded female sports writers as far less credible than their male colleagues. The *Age's* Caroline Wilson and the *Sydney Morning Herald's* Jacquelin Magnay, two of Australia's top sports writers, said they had experienced difficulties early in their careers in establishing credibility as sports journalists.

News Agencies Used

In 1909 the Australian Senate conducted a Select Committee of Enquiry on Press Cable Services to Australia (Putnis, 1998). At that time there was a single press cable service supplying international news to Australian and New Zealand. The focus of the enquiry was an investigation of whether this service, conducted jointly by the Australian Press Association (APA) and Reuters Telegram Company (RTC), operated as an unfair monopoly to the disadvantage of sections of the press and hence the public; and, if so, what legal or policy intervention the Government might make to break such a

monopoly. The main finding of the Enquiry in its majority report, was that there was indeed 'a complete monopoly', which ensured that there was only one source of supply in Australia of press cables from the outside world. Furthermore, the agreement between the APA and RTC under which the service operated, was a 'drastic character' and 'obnoxious' in that it effectively proscribed services to any new newspaper and prevented subscribers to the service from accepting cable news from any other source. The APA had the exclusive right to sell the Reuters-derived service it had obtained and packaged in London to existing metropolitan newspapers in Australia who were not members of the Association. In 1909, subscribing newspapers were the *Star* and the *Sunday Times* (Sydney), the *Herald and Weekly Times* (Melbourne), the *Courier*, the *Daily Mail*, the *Telegraph* and the *Sun* (Brisbane), and the *West Australian* (Perth).

Until World War II, Australian Associated Press despatched news to the *West Australian* in the form of press telegrams. Overseas news items arrived by cables. However, Griff Richards pointed out that this was not suitable, because many of the messages, including punctuation, were abbreviated, which made the items difficult to read (W.T.G. Richards, November 27, 1998). This required the paper's sub-editors to complete considerable research in a wide variety of reference books while subbing many stories. After World War II, AAP introduced teleprinter machines, which enabled a faster and more reliable service.

The Role of the Correspondent

Because the sports staff was relatively small at the *West Australian* during the period from 1901 to 1971, the paper relied on outside correspondents for most sports. Some were casual reporters who were paid for their efforts, but most were supporters or officials of the individual sports and association officials who provided the information as a service to its members. The correspondents in the latter category did not receive financial remuneration. Many of the correspondents wrote the articles, though others provided only results to the *West Australian*.

Before the 1930s, the paper relied on non-staff members to cover the Australian Rules football matches. Correspondents were still heavily relied on to help coverage of Western Australian National Football League (WANFL) matches for two decades from the early 1930s. Charlie Ammon was the paper's only full-time football writer during this period, though another staff member, Gordon Lee, also did some football writing during the 1930s and 1940s.

One of the *West Australian's* best-known correspondents early last century was E.O.G. (Edward) Shann, who covered golf under the pseudonym "T' Box" in the 1920s. He was professor of history and economics at the University of Western Australia from 1913 to 1934, but had a passion for playing golf. David Warren, an amateur player, who was a general reporter at the paper, covered golf as a contributor from 1968 to 1974.

Former prominent athlete Bernie Cecins covered track and field athletics for the *West Australian* for twenty five years from 1960. Cecins retired from competition shortly after winning the Western Australian javelin championship in 1952. In Cecins' obituary, sports editor Jim Ross wrote: "Bernie's vast knowledge and love of athletics was reflected in his balanced and incisive reports on the subject for the *West Australian* for 25 years" (Ross, 1986). Cecins, a member of the Association of Track and Field Statisticians, was also an athletics commentator for the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) for thirty years. He was the longest-serving track and field writer in the paper's history.

Soccer was covered by members of the local clubs until 1950. After Alan Newman joined the full-time staff in 1950, he reported the sport until the following year. Frank Miller, a bank officer and a soccer administrator, then covered the local soccer under the pseudonym of "Spot-Kick" from 1951 to 1961. David Andrews, the *West Australian's* chief librarian, took over in 1961, holding the position until 1990.

Sportsmen and Women as Sports Journalists

Henningham claims that sports journalists are often sportsmen and women, and that "their primary qualification for employment is expertise in sport. They can hardly be seen as equivalent to journalists who have received a full training in mainstream journalism" (1995). I agree with Henningham's observation, though there are exceptions. For instance, Roy Masters and Peter Fitzsimons, of the *Sydney Morning Herald*, who were successful rugby league players, have developed into two of that paper's most respected sports writers. Most sports journalists at major Australian newspapers have not played sport at a high level. For instance, none of the 40 members (reporters and sub-editors) of the *West Australian's* sports department (in 2005) gained their positions because of their sporting performances. They all received training at the paper, or another newspaper, before moving to the sports section.

The employment of sportsmen as journalists to cover sporting events for Australian metropolitan newspapers has been a continuing controversy for more than half a century. Apart from rare exceptions, the sportsman or woman required a staff journalist to write their article to publishing standard. Smith (1976, p. 20) identified a trend toward former athletes becoming sports journalists in North America, which in every case resulted in a negative reaction from the full-time employees of the sports department. This was also the case on the Australian east coast, where journalists, who were supported by the Australian Journalists' Association's executive, were critical of the moves to employ part-time former sportsmen and appoint a full-time journalist to ghost write their copy ("Federal council condemns", 1950). However, the situation was different at the *West Australian*, when track and field coach Percy Cerutti in the late 1950s and golfer Graham Marsh in the 1960s occasionally contributed a column to the sports pages; and retired athlete Herb Elliott wrote a daily column for the paper during the 1962 British Empire and Commonwealth Games. There was no negative reaction from the paper's sports writers when former champion footballer John Todd was employed on a stringer's salary to cover a weekly game in the Western Australian National Football League (WANFL) for several years in the 1960s (A. Dunn, personal communication, November 27, 1998; A. Newman, personal communication, December 4, 1998; J. Lee, personal communication, October 26, 1999).

Former *Daily News* sports journalist, Brian Paddick, is adamant that the introduction of elite sportsmen, such as John Todd in the early 1960s, to cover sporting events in the *West Australian*, and whose work then had to be re-written by a staff "ghost writer" was detrimental to the standard of sports journalism in Western Australia. Paddick adds:

You can't produce a [Henry] Blofeld or a [Ian] Wooldridge [leading English sports writers] that way, any more than you can from re-writing agency copy. Newspapers fail to realise some of their own people will provoke more comment than the alleged 'experts'. (cited in Messenger, 1988)

Todd covered WANFL matches for the *West Australian* for six seasons between 1962 and 1971. He was the first sportsman appointed to regularly cover sport for the paper as a "name" player. He would attend an allocated football match on a Saturday afternoon and take his notes to the *West Australian's* office at 10 o'clock on the Sunday morning, to meet the paper's chief football writer, Geoff Christian. Todd would describe the match to Christian, who would type the story under Todd's by-line. "Geoff

was able to put my reports in words much better than I could" (J. Todd, personal communication, May 28, 2002).

Paddick makes a valid point in identifying the increasing trend of newspapers employing current or recently retired elite sportsmen and women to provide their opinion and "inside knowledge" on the happenings in their sport. There is little likelihood that coaches and club officials would give information in regards to team selection, injury updates, salary negotiations and controversial incidents which are deemed to be "in-house", if there was a likelihood that this information would be published. Also, these current or former sports stars would be unlikely to critically analyse the performances or actions of close current or former team-mates. Paddick's inference that a newspaper's staff member would provide more relevant information for the paper's readers than that provided by a ghosted writer has merit.

Melbourne newspapers had published "ghosted" copy many years before the *West Australian*. In 1950, sports journalists at the *Argus* and *Sun News-Pictorial* were dismayed at the number of footballers and former players employed by the papers to cover Victorian Football League (VFL) matches, though the reports were written by staff writers who did not receive any acknowledgement. The Federal Council of the Australian Journalists Association (AJA) condemned the practice ("Federal Council condemns", 1950), as mentioned below:

The *Argus* and *Sun News-Pictorial*, each published on April 15, a panel of names of football "experts" engaged to write reports for them during the season. No mention was made then of the fact that the writing would have to be done in collaboration with, and, perhaps, completely by, staff journalists. The public was led to believe that the footballers and retired footballers engaged by these newspapers would write the reports themselves.

The Federal Council of the AJA met in Melbourne on 19 April 1950, three days before the start of the VFL season, to discuss the Melbourne paper's use of "ghost" writing. The AJA viewed this practice as a threat to the employment of professional journalists. The Federal Council then issued the following policy on "ghosting":

Federal Council condemns the practice of newspapers engaging footballers, cricketers, jockeys, tennis players and other sporting identities to write sporting reports or commentaries under the guise of journalists. This is objectionable, not only because it tends to deprive professional journalists of their livelihood, but also because it is often deceitful. In many cases, journalists have to be assigned to write and/or prepare the material for publication because the publicised

'expert' is incapable of doing it himself. Newspapers are, in fact, merely 'buying' the names of these sportsmen and denying journalists the credit of their essential part in producing, or supervising preparation of, the report or commentary. This is deliberate misrepresentation and unfair to the public as well as to journalists. . . . This Association is staunchly opposed to non-journalists being engaged by newspapers to do the work of journalists. ("Federal Council condemns", 1950)

Though the Melbourne newspapers continued to publish ghosted articles, the AJA ruling had an effect. The Melbourne *Herald*, when publishing its preview of the league football matches by champion Essendon goal-kicker John Coleman, added the by-line, "as told to R.A. Hobbs". The *Sun News-Pictorial* and the *Argus* also gave credit to their staff writers who ghosted the main sports articles.

CHAPTER 8

SPORTS WRITING IN THE *WEST AUSTRALIAN*

The purpose of this study is to provide an examination of sports writing in the *West Australian* during the first seven decades of the twentieth century. The initial reports on findings from the studies of the newspaper in January and July every seven years in this chapter will be followed by a discussion on percentages and other data that have also been obtained from those studies. This was achieved by a content analysis of the paper's sports articles and interviews. The presentation of this data is illustrated by graphs. The breakdown of local, national and international sporting coverage will be discussed and an analysis in the various areas of sport will be provided and put into an overall context. As sports journalism adjusts to shifting relations and standards involving sports and society, changing journalistic style of sports coverage will be discussed as the *West Australian* moves from the basic reportage of results early last century to a greater critical and analytical coverage of sporting events in the 1970s.

The growing emergence of women in sports journalism, as indeed the appearance of female sporting stars, such as track and field athlete Shirley Strickland-de la Hunty and tennis champion Margaret Court, which contributed to the expanded coverage of women's sports, will be examined. This chapter will endeavour to find out if the reporting of women in the *West Australian* followed any particular societal pattern in Western Australia.

This chapter will address the role of the sports editors in shaping the way the sports news was covered and presented in the *West Australian*. The influences of the sports editors will be illustrated with examples and explanations of how they contributed to the development and refinement of sports journalism. The impact of radio's coverage of sport and the development of television's coverage of sporting events will be looked at. Though television was still in its infancy during the last decade of this study, the emergence of that medium and the way television embraced sport was steadily developing. An examination will also be conducted between the coverage of

sporting events provided by part-time contributors, in comparison to the reportage of the newspaper's full-time journalists.

Changes in sports writing were dictated by three different forces — the changes in the sports department under different editors, the improved technology in news gathering and transmission, and changes in sport over the seven decade period. At the beginning of the twentieth century there was limited structure for sports journalism in the *West Australian*. All sports were covered by part-time correspondents, most of whom were enthusiasts of the sport they covered. The writers contributed the articles to the paper's editorial team, who processed them for publication.

On the whole, the sports reporting in the paper during the first half of last century can be characterised as factual, dull and unimaginative. The reporters appeared to feel a sense of duty to write glowing reports about the organisation's activities. This was condoned by the paper's editorial management, who, it appears, rarely changed a word. Many of the correspondents introduced their articles with a report on the weather and numbers of spectators, with the results of the events seemingly of secondary importance. They showed an unwillingness to venture outside the confines of what their association's authorities wanted — reporting the positive aspects of the event, rather than negative or controversial incidents.

Factual reporting was the most frequently used approach to the treatment of sports in the *West Australian*. The sports columns were filled almost totally with play-by-play accounts. This contrasts considerably with contemporary sports writing, which regularly feature first-person stories by footballers as they suffer through pre-season training camps; detailed coverage of litigation; injuries to prominent athletes; comprehensive finance reports in major sports; and descriptive accounts of major sporting contests. In modern sports writing, there is also an extensive analysis and interpretation of sporting events, with new approaches in journalism gradually demanding more scepticism of and accountability, by sports people and events. This was seldom evident in the early decades of this study.

The *West Australian* had five significant milestones between 1901 and 1971:

1. Godfrey White is believed to have become the paper's first sports editor in 1907;

2. A world-wide newsprint shortage was responsible for the *West Australian* changing its format from broadsheet to tabloid in December 1947. It has remained a tabloid ever since;
3. News was printed on the front page for the first time in December 1949, except for six days from 11-17 August 1945, at the end of World War II;
4. The paper's sports section moved from the middle to the back of the paper on 1 February 1971. The *West Australian* followed the trend of metropolitan newspapers in the Eastern States to place the sports section in the back of the paper;
5. After a record 32 years as the paper's sports editor, Ted Collingwood retired on 30 April 1971.

What began with the appointment of the first sports editor in 1907 had developed, by 1971, into a sports department of 15 men. This is still small compared to 2005, with 40 reporters and sub-editors. There have been ten sports editors since Collingwood's retirement (until 2005), all of whom operated in a non-writing capacity. Sports writers today have the additional responsibilities to comment, as well as report, on their specialist rounds.

Types of Articles

In observing the frequency with which the various types of articles occurred, shifts in reporting and writing sport can be detected over the seventy year period. In the following, the sports writing at the *West Australian* will be examined by categorising it into different types of articles.

- 1) **News summary:** Short sports articles of factual reporting in the hard news category, and a short item about a sporting event.
- 2) **Hard news:** Sport news articles that are longer than the news summary category, and which chronicle the important sporting events of the day.
- 3) **Match report:** A report of a sporting event which could be a match, a game, a race or another type of contest. It can be either in the hard news format, or in a feature style.

- 4) **Feature:** A long article about a person, a sporting event, or an aspect of a major event, often having an emotional, personal, or humorous slant and written in an individual style. It is distinguished from hard news and is less restricted to the 24-hour clock than hard news.
- 5) **Interview:** Interviewing is the most common form of news-gathering tool designed to elicit additional information. Interviews generally take place with the central characters of a story following an announcement of a significant sports news story; and human interest interviews aims to capture the thoughts of an individual.
- 6) **Column:** A piece of regular by-lined editorial matter that contains comment, opinion, gossip or related sports news snippets.
- 7) **Commentary:** Also can be titled an editorial or a comment piece, which explains the newspaper's attitude to a particular sports event. Written by a senior member of the newspaper's editorial staff, it provides a commentary and an analysis of a major sports event.
- 8) **Profile:** An in-depth article about a person, usually based on an interview, but sometimes on interviews with friends, associates and competitors. Can be described as a biography, or character sketch of a person.

Following are the types of articles and the years they appeared in the *West Australian's* sports pages:

Table 7
Types of Articles

Type of Articles	1901	1908	1915	1922	1929	1936	1943	1950	1957	1964	1971
News summary	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Hard news			/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Match report	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Feature									/	/	/
Interview									/	/	/
Column	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Commentary									/	/	/
Profile						/					/

At the turn of last century, the *West Australian*, like other dailies, had no dedicated sports pages. Sport was spread throughout the paper. Local sport was generally placed on the same page, some days in the early pages, though usually in the middle of the paper. The reporting in 1901 generally fell into three categories of articles — news summary, match reports and columns. Match reports, in the definition used here, include horse races, trots, and tennis and other games. The news summary category, the most frequently used type of article, consisted of regular horse racing snippets from the Eastern States. These were accompanied by daily columns under the title of "Notes and Chat", which provided several small racing news items, while coverage of the other sports were printed as match reports.

Factual reporting was the most frequently used way of reporting sports in the *West Australian*. The match reports were filled almost totally with play-by-play accounts, less on the entertainment aspect which is widespread in sports articles now, unless it was a local event or written by a special correspondent. The following example was a report of the action during the first quarter of the Western Australian Football Association match between North Fremantle and South Fremantle on 29 June 1901:

The ball had not been in play long before their forwards were busy, and the first goal came from a kick out of the ruck by Bates. The Norths then made the scores even. Pearce being responsible. The red and whites attacked several times and twice the two flags were raised, the goals coming from Leeder and Newman. Norths scored three behinds, and Souths also obtained a minor before the bell rang for the change. ("North Fremantle v South Fremantle", 1901)

Or a typical news summary of an interstate event read:

Melbourne, July 16: The Pirate King, who was recently purchased by Mr. J. Gove, has for the time being gone into J. Cripp's stable at Flemington. It has not yet been decided whether the horse will remain here for the Melbourne Cup or forfeit his engagement in that race to go to India. ("The Pirate King", 1901)

Early in the twentieth century there was limited structure for sports journalism in the *West Australian*. All sports were covered by part-time correspondents, who prepared articles for publication. It is apparent in most of the printed stories that the sub-editors paid little attention to detail. Evidently, the articles were generally not changed to give them more clarity. There were times when the reporter failed to record the result of a football match.

The placing in the paper of local match reports was determined by the sport. Coverage of football, for example, was straight reportage, with the news of the matches often buried inside the articles. The football writers, all untrained casual reporters and not conforming to any particular style, would generally lead their articles with observations about the weather or the size of the crowd. Here is an introduction to an article in the *West Australian* on Monday, 29 July 1901:

Fine weather favoured the matches under the auspices of the Western Australian Football Association which were played on Saturday. Owing perhaps to the big football bill provided by the goldfielders' visit during the week, or perhaps from a feeling that the Duke having departed it was time to take a rest, or from an impression that another test match was to be played, there was not a particularly large attendance at either of the matches played. Further, the players seemed in many cases to be apathetic and the play was hardly as dashing as might have been expected. ("The Australian game", 1901)

On special occasions, like the Perth Cup, Western Australia's major horse race, traditionally held on New Year's Day, the report became particularly colourful. Here is a quote from the 1901 article:

There, yesterday, was gathered as gay a crowd as could possibly be imagined, a crowd as beautifully dressed as that which is to be found at Flemington when the Melbourne Cup is run, a crowd which became worked up into a perfect frenzy of excitement as the horses measured strides in a supreme struggle for supremacy, and a crowd which, between races, taxed its collective brain in the endeavour to select the animal likely to first catch the judge's eye, and thus swell the pockets of those who were fortunate enough to back it! ("Western Australian Turf Club", 1901)

However, the races themselves were reported in a more factual manner:

Flintlock, an iron grey aged son of Carbine, the champion of Australian turf champions, won the Cup by three good lengths, in game fashion, a win full of merit, and one on which all concerned in the ownership, training and riding of the horse can be warmly congratulated. ("The racing", 1901)

Most overseas news items were kept short, because of the prohibitive cost of the overseas cable news services, where newspapers paid for the articles per word. For example, the America's Cup is one of the world's premier yachting events. In the following item placed on the overseas cable page, the *West Australian* announced an English yacht would challenge for the cup. This short article fits into the news summary category:

Sir Thomas Lipton's yacht *Shamrock II*, which is to contest the America Cup, has sailed for the United States. The voyage will, it is expected, take 17 days. ("The America Cup", 1901)

This meant that all overseas news fell into the news summary category, and only local sports were given match reports or columns.

1908

Similarly to seven years earlier, coverage of sports in 1908 was mostly restricted to the news summaries, column and match reports. Match reports began to predominate, which resulted from an expanded coverage of local sport, particularly Australian Rules football and tennis in winter, and pennant cricket matches in summer. By now, local sport was contained in a "sports section" in each day's issue of the *West Australian*, sharing the page with other local news. However, international sporting items were still placed on the overseas cable pages. Test matches and interstate cricket reports were also kept separate from the general sports section and printed on a general news page. For example, on 1 January, a report of the cricket match between New South Wales and Victoria consisted of half a column and was situated alongside general news.

Similarly to much of the sports writing at the start of the century, cricket reporting usually began with the weather and the condition of the pitch, and sometimes the attendance. This was followed by individual performances, which were usually confined to the bottom half of the stories. Here are, for instance, the leading two sentences of an article on 1 January 1908, of an interstate match at the Melbourne Cricket Ground in which New South Wales beat Victoria:

The match between Victoria and New South Wales was concluded to-day, the latter team winning by eight wickets and two runs. The weather was gloriously fine and the wicket fast and sure. ("Inter-State cricket", 1908)

Two days later, the introduction to the report of the second Test match between Australia and England in Melbourne emphasised attendance and gate takings:

When the second test match was continued to-day the attendance numbered 18,227, and £901 1s. 6d. was the amount taken at the gates. The Australians closed their first innings for 266—a very moderate score all things considered, and one that was kept within bounds by some first-rate bowling for the greater part of the afternoon. ("International cricket", 1908a)

Horse racing reports, however, followed a different pattern. The sports editor and racing writer Godfrey White, appointed in 1907, was generally factual and to the point in his coverage of the sport. His writing style could even be likened to a public relations official of the Western Australian Turf Club, as evident in the introduction to the following article:

Racegoers will be catered for by the Helena Vale club to-day — the fixture being the January meeting. Although the fields are not large, it is anticipated that a good afternoon's racing will be provided, and no doubt the meeting will be well patronised. The first race is timed to start at 2.10 p.m. and the last at 5.5 p.m.. Special trains will leave Perth at 12.40, 12.55 and 1.8, and an ordinary train will leave at 1.15 p.m., stopping at all stations to Midland Junction, and special thence to the course. Return trains will leave immediately after the last race. ("Brooklyn", 1908)

Though the sports writing in the *West Australian* was still rather bland, the collation of sporting articles was more structured than seven years earlier. This can be largely traced to the appointment of the paper's first sports editor the previous year. News in 1908 remained the same in definition and in the style of presentation and production, though contemporary journalists could argue that the news writing style had not adopted the inverted pyramid style — with the most important information in the leading paragraphs and the rest of the story in a generally descending order of importance. However, the reporters early in the twentieth century could also claim that their style of writing was along the inverted pyramid system for the times — except that the weather or gate takings were given greatest news values. The first decade of the twentieth century was nearly two decades before the establishment of radio and half a century before television. This meant that in 1908, newspapers had no competition in relaying its messages and it was not necessary to change its style of reporting until after the arrival of the different forms of electronic media.

1915

The writing styles had changed very little in 1915, with news summary items, a mixture of short and long match reports, and a daily racing column being the articles most in evidence. Match reports were the form of article most frequently used. The longer reports were restricted to horse racing, football and cricket, while other sports received articles between one and six paragraphs.

For the first time, sports articles occasionally appeared in hard news form. In 1915, the second year of World War I, it is also evident that the international conflict

was in the minds of the *West Australian* and sporting club officials, as this rifle shooting report shows. The sport was clearly linked to the defence of Australia in times of war:

Until this catastrophic war it was not realised by the public at large what a noble and useful work was being performed by the small number of patriots who, Saturday after Saturday, had for four years been learning and practising shooting and the use of arms so that they might be ready to defend their country should the occasion arise. Australians have not yet been called upon to defend their homes up to the present, but the reverberation of the guns in Europe and elsewhere has aroused the British spirit in every citizen, and those who, for various reasons, find it impossible to go to the front are anxious to train themselves in the art of war. The rifle clubs provide the only means by which these men can obtain this training. ("Ballistus", 1915)

This article is representative of many published that year in that it reports less on the shooting competition itself, but is used as a vehicle to remind people of the contribution of rifle shooting to the war effort. Though rifle shooting articles were generally placed in the sports section, it appears that the paper's editor had decided to act in the patriotic duty by expanding its coverage of the sport, and in the process, encouraging more of its readers to take up rifle shooting.

1922

Match reports continued to be the dominant genre of sports articles in the *West Australian* in 1922. The writing style was still basically factual, where Godfrey White's writing, though prolific, seldom went beyond facts and figures. However, there were occasions where he became more colourful. He began the review of the 1922 Perth Cup in a similar style to an author writing a thriller novel, with a sprinkling of poetry, turning his piece towards a feature article:

Three or four minutes in which a score of horses and men were locked in a desperate struggle for supremacy, culminating in a few moments of tense, nerve-wracking excitement, and another Perth Cup passed into history. Into that brief span were concentrated months of energy, of preparation and careful training; upon the pace and endurance of the horses, the skill and dexterity of the riders, depended the hopes and fears of thousands. Was the result worth all the expenditure of effort? The sternly practical, those unimaginative people who believe that the whole sum of human existence can be expressed in mathematical formulae, will answer unhesitatingly in the negative. But we live

. . . . in thoughts, not breaths;

In feelings, not in figures on a dial;

We should count time by heart throbs.

And in those few tense seconds when the gallant horses responded to their riders' call for a last supreme effort, when the sharp crack of the jockeys' whips falling upon reeking flanks was drowned in a tumultuous roar acclaiming Earl of Seafield the victor, the 16,000 people who witnessed the great race really lived. It need not be pretended that there was anything essentially ennobling in the emotions which swayed the multitude, yet the stimulus of those few moments of exhilaration to the sluggish current of everyday life was not wholly valueless. Desire for personal gain may have been predominant in the majority of the crowd, but when the hazard which was cheerfully taken resolved itself into the certainty of loss, the loss was as cheerfully borne. ("Perth Cup", 1922)

The winner of the race was named near the end of the article. This is in contrast to contemporary sports writing, where Earl of Seafield would be named as the winner of the Perth Cup in the opening paragraph.

Cricket writing was very detailed in 1922, yet at the same time was simple and uncomplicated. Here is an example from an account of an interstate cricket match between New South Wales and South Australia in Sydney, which was written as a straight forward match report:

South Australia won the toss and batted on a fast wicket. V. Richardson and Smith were the opening batsmen. Scott bowled from the Paddington end, and the first wicket fell for none, Richardson had been content to let Scott's off howling go by, but he touched the sixth ball and was caught behind. The over was a maiden. Wall was bowling from the southern end and Smith gave an easy chance off his first ball to Hendry in the slips, but the catch was dropped. Only seven runs had been scored when Smith's wicket fell. He was always in trouble with Scott, and in attempting to play this bowler he touched a rising off ball into Hendry's hands at slip. ("Interstate cricket", 1922)

This kind of reporting foreshadowed the radio cricket commentary that was to come to Perth in 1932.

The *West Australian* still relied on members of a large number of sporting associations to provide coverage of its events. Many of these officials were well-known citizens in their community. Most of the writing was amateurish and contained glowing reports about the organisation and officialdom of the various events. Here is an example of a first person account of the annual Swim Through Perth, held by the Western Australian Amateur Swimming Association:

The big race last Saturday was without doubt one of the most successful yet conducted and I am sure that swimmers will agree with me that the alteration of the course was an improvement on the old one. The fact that 40 finished out of 57 starters is in itself proof that the change was a good one. The race on

Saturday reflects great credit on the committee and officials, as the management was excellent even down to the smallest detail. Financially the event was a big success and secretary Tom Jones must indeed, be a pleased man to meet with such success in his first term of office. ("Crawl", 1922)

The length of articles in the coverage from the Eastern States had not changed since the turn of the century. The articles were generally short, and dominated by horse racing and cricket reports. However, though the Sheffield Shield cricket competition did not include Western Australia, interstate cricket articles were generally longer than the coverage of other sports. There was a comprehensive coverage of Eastern States horse racing meetings in the shape of fields and form guide on the day of the race meetings, and full details the following day. Similarly, international coverage of sporting events remained the same as during the previous two decades. London was the most regular overseas dateline, though articles also arrived in Australia by the Reuters international news service from New York and Paris. The articles on international sport generally consisted of only one paragraph, with up to four sentences. Horse racing, cricket, billiards, boxing and cricket were the main sports reported, though there was occasional coverage of golf, tennis, swimming and pedestrianism (professional running). Occasionally, larger overseas sports reports were published in the *West Australian*. These included Test cricket matches and the annual Wimbledon tennis championships.

1929

By 1929, radio was making a gradual impact on the Western Australian social and sporting life. With this new medium also providing the public with sporting information, newspapers needed to change their delivery of sports news to combat this challenge to the monopoly that the print media had previously enjoyed. However, some forms of writing in the paper embraced the necessary changes earlier than others. Sport was one of them, especially its football and cricket reporting.

A considerably increased space for sports news ensured the articles were generally longer and provided more information. Even so, the same three categories of articles — news summary, match reports and racing columns — dominated the coverage. However, sports articles in the hard news category started to make an impact in the paper during the late 1920s. Following is an example:

Melbourne, July 1 — The team representing the Victorian Football League left Melbourne by train this afternoon for Perth, where they will meet the West Australians on Saturday. They will practice for two hours at Kalgoorlie on the

way to Perth. The team will play a match in Adelaide on July 13. L. Dwyer, the brilliant North Melbourne center man, is absent from the team. The selectors were notified at the last minute that he was unable to go. ("Departure of Victorian team", 1929)

Godfrey White, in his third decade as the paper's sports editor, still wrote in a matter-of-fact style, looking at the weather and spectators — all the same, White tried to give the Western Australian Turf Club as much exposure as possible. In contrast to contemporary sports reporting, White's writing would be considered as dull, though this was quite acceptable in the first few decades of the twentieth century. Following are two examples from the same article on 2 July 1929:

The Northam Club will hold a meeting to-morrow. Thirty-eight horses have so far been booked to leave for the meeting, and if the weather is at all favourable, the country outing should be an enjoyable one.

...

Black Duchess is one of the horses freely talked about for the Caulfield Cup and the Magpie mare, if all is going well with her, must certainly be seriously considered. In the last Caulfield Cup she carried 7.10 and split Maple (8.7) and Gothic (9.7). It was rather unfortunate for her owner that prior to the race her preparation had been interrupted. ("Brooklyn", 1929)

Apart from comprehensive coverage, consisting of three columns daily, of the English cricket tour of Australia during the summer, the sports coverage from the Eastern States continued to be short articles of a variety of sports — mainly horse racing, swimming, track and field athletics, polo and wrestling. The overseas coverage generally consisted of short articles sent from London, New York, Paris, Toronto and cricket reports from Cape Town in South Africa. Soccer, tennis, billiards and golf frequently were published on the overseas cable page.

1936

With Charlie Ammon joining the *West Australian's* sports department in the early 1930s, the texts of Australian Rules football and cricket writing developed further. He was the paper's first football and cricket writer to analyse and interpret games. It was necessary to become more analytical when reporting the games, because sports supporters could now listen to the matches on radio. The football coverage in the paper consisted of match reports and hard news locally, and news summary items from the Eastern States. Following Western Australia's 18-point win against South Australia in their annual interstate match at Subiaco Oval on 18 July 1939, Ammon noted:

In combination, Western Australia was far superior and its players were usually too fast. The South Australians, feeling, perhaps, the strain of travel, were sluggish, and most marked, their kicking was poor. Honours were fairly even across the centre and Western Australia owed its success to the skill and strength of its followers, the solid and often brilliant work of its defenders and the co-ordination among the forwards, all combining to give the team the necessary balance. ("Western Australia wins", 1936)

Hard news sports articles were regularly published in the paper during this period. In the language of sports writing during this period a more cumbersome style frequently prevailed, with many sentences and paragraphs extremely long, as this 81-word soccer lead sentence shows:

Strong indignation was expressed by the members of the board of control of the West Australian Soccer Football Association at its meeting on Tuesday night at the action of the secretary of the South Australian Soccer Association who advised the board that, as no reply had been received from Western Australia regarding the sending of a West Australian team to compete in the forthcoming centenary soccer carnival at Adelaide, the programme for the carnival would be drawn without including Western Australia. ("No W.A. team", 1936)

Coverage of interstate and overseas sporting events in 1936 had changed little from the previous periods of this study. But an exception was the Olympic Games, which were held in Berlin, Germany. The *West Australian* provided its best coverage of an Olympics, to date. Each day during the Games, from 1-16 August, the paper dedicated about half of a broadsheet page to the competition. The first two columns contained a lead story describing the highlights from the swimming or track and field competitions, traditionally the two main sports at the Olympic Games. The next two columns were dedicated to a variety of small articles from other aspects of the Games. The coverage was despatched to Australia by Reuters and distributed around the country by Australian Associated Press (AAP), which had been established the previous year.

1943

World War II caused the cancellation of most international sport. Nearly all of the sports coverage in the *West Australian* was restricted to local events, which had also decreased in numbers, with most young able-bodied men being away at war. Due to a lack of space because of a newsprint shortage and the comprehensive coverage of the war, most of the articles during the war fell under the news summary category. However, reports of local horse racing and trotting meetings, though shorter than they were previously, were printed as match reports. The importance the paper placed on the

gambling sports, among the few diversions of the war years, ensured that those two sports were given more space than any other sporting activities during the war.

The writing style of Godfrey White had not changed over the years, and the introduction of his race preview in his daily column reported no more than the facts, even including details of the public transport:

It is expected that racegoers will be provided with some good racing at the Goodwood Club's meeting today. A number of the candidates have been showing promising form and several who have not raced for a time have done so well on the track that they are likely to extend the horses with more recent form. . . . The usual train service will be provided, the last train being timed to leave the Perth station at 1.48. ("Goodwood meeting", 1943)

While today the train or bus timetables would not be included in previews of sporting events, these types of details during the first half of last century were considered a vital service to the newspaper's readership. Because of petrol rationing during the war and the fact that the ownership of motor vehicles was beyond the reach of most, there was a strong reliance on public transport — trains, buses and trams.

1950

In 1950, the sports section of the *West Australian* continued to be dominated by the four categories of sports reportage that had featured in the paper for much of the first half of the century — hard news, match report, news summary and columns (exclusively devoted to horse racing).

However, the *West Australian* saw its most decisive changes in the immediate post-war years. After becoming a tabloid in 1947 and beginning to publish news on the front page two years later, the sports section also became more organised. A new sports editor, Ted Collingwood, had been appointed in 1939, returning to the paper full time in 1945. His philosophy was that a newspaper, in addition to reporting the news, had a duty to educate the public. Occasionally, Collingwood specifically appointed an "expert" in the field to explain aspects of the sport which were not familiar to many Australians. An example was Alan Newman, who was employed as a general sports reporter. Because of his soccer background in England, he was given a special brief to explain to the paper's readers how the British football system worked. Collingwood believed that few Australians understood the British soccer organisation. Newman "jumped at the chance" to write about his favourite sport (A. Newman, personal

communication, December 4, 1998). These explanatory pieces were a departure from the hard news type of article that had previously featured in the paper, though they were forerunners to the type of articles which became commonplace during the last two decades of the twentieth century.

In the early 1950s, match reports usually became more descriptive with an in-depth examination of issues behind the scenes. An example was the 1950 Perth Cup review, which provided considerable background about the winning horse and its connections:

A former jockey who works as an assistant linesman with the Fremantle Tramways Board and every morning rides his one and only horse on the beach, or in the bush, won the Perth Cup at headquarters on Saturday with that horse, Beau Vasse. Then he took home the handsome gold trophy and will receive two-thirds of the prize-money of the richest Perth Cup on record.

He is owner-trainer F.W. Banks who stables his horse at J. Egan's Randwick stables at Hamilton Hill, and at which is also quartered Leofred, the horse who, with blood on his cut foreleg, just failed to get up in the last stride and was beaten a short head by Beau Vasse in the Cup.

To complete the chain of coincidences, Leofred is trained by A.G. Smith, who served his rider's apprenticeship with P.F. Foley at Fremantle, a stable in which Banks also served the remainder of his apprenticeship after the death of his first master, Leen McNally. ("Corinthian", 1950)

In an extension of the style of match reports, the narrative life of football reports was further developed by the 1950s. Now imaginative journalists created far more evocative match descriptions for the *West Australian*. In his lead paragraphs following a round of matches on July 8, under his nom de plume of "Follower", Charlie Ammon wrote:

Happier than at any previous stage of the season, West Perth supporters left the W.A.C.A. ground feeling that the good times had returned. They had revelled in the spectacle of a rejuvenated West Perth side playing so strongly in the last quarter as to make Perth look a second-rate side and then listened anxiously to a broadcast description of the last few minutes of play at Fremantle, learning, to their relief, that East Fremantle had lost.

... There was nothing haphazard about West Perth's last quarter effort. At all points on the field it was faster and more purposeful than Perth and superiority in key positions enabled it to attack along the quickest and shortest route, straight down the centre. Perth's vaunted lines of defence faltered and then collapsed. ("Follower", 1950)

The *West Australian* continued to cater for the gambling public with lengthy racing columns, which reported snippets of news at the many stables throughout the metropolitan area. Small news items, in the news summary category, were also a daily addition to the sports section.

Interstate sports news was, increasingly, readily available. After the war, the Australian Associated Press (AAP) had established offices in all major Eastern States capital cities. Most datelines in the paper were either Melbourne or Sydney, though some sports articles were dispatched from Adelaide and Brisbane. A major change in the paper was the increase in numbers and lengthier horse racing articles from the Eastern States, though there were still only a limited number of other sports which received coverage from the Eastern States, mainly cricket, football, yachting and tennis. Most international sports stories were dispatched by Reuters from London, New York and Paris. The paper's major international coverage was Test cricket and English soccer, while the British Open golf tournament and Wimbledon tennis championships were also accorded significant space.

1957

The writing style in the *West Australian* underwent dramatic changes after Griff Richards was promoted from chief sub-editor to the paper's news editor in 1951. Much of the writing in the paper previously was in a ponderous style. Articles consisted of long words, big sentences and lengthy paragraphs. Richards rewrote the style book, partially necessitated by the paper's change from broadsheet to tabloid. He explained in the introduction that he wanted small words and short sentences, short paragraphs, and clear and concise writing. In this new streamlined approach, the style of writing sports articles changed, too. Paragraphs then consisted of one sentence, or sometimes two short sentences, so the journalism became clear and concise. An example of the first four paragraphs of Alf Dunn's hard news article:

A majority of owners, trainers, bookmakers and racing men are in favour of changing the date of the annual carnival from Christmas to early in the spring.

The general opinion is that the W.A.T.C. committee should make a change to bring the carnival dates closer to those of the big meetings in the Eastern States.

Racing people who were questioned yesterday agreed that it was usually too hot at Christmas time for a big annual carnival.

Those who favour a change had various opinions as to when the carnival should be held. (Dunn, 1957)

Another change was placing quotes earlier in the articles. This led to another type of article — the interview. This category of reporting provided the reader with greater familiarity with sporting personalities. The interview gradually became a highly visible category of sports news article. This change can be traced to the influence of radio coverage of sporting events.

Feature articles also started to make an impact during the mid-1950s. That decade became the Golden Age of Sports due to the many quality performances by Australian athletes in a wide number of sports, and it can be argued that the 1950s provided Australian sport the greatest collection of stars that sport in this country has known. The sports stars became household names as the sportswriters conveyed more than the game to their readers. The sports heroes made good copy. Collectively, the paper's sports reporters portrayed the players' performances on the field by emphasising their personality. The *West Australian* responded to public demand and it can be argued that this, in turn, shaped the public's perception. In the years before television, few fans were able to see the top sportsmen and woman. Most Western Australians came to know these sports stars through the images created by the sportswriters. An example is the following extract from a hockey article:

The fastest man in the men's A1 grade hockey competition is a title that Phil Myssonski, the University right winger, has earned.

Myssonski, an A grade sprinter for Old Haleians during the athletic season and winner of the 100yds sprint for hockey players during the recent C.B.C. field day, was the best player for University on Saturday when the side was beaten by Perth.

Although he was opposed by Denis Kemp, the Perth left half and W.A. Olympic player, Myssonski frequently put his team into attack with fast runs down the wing.

A bank clerk during the day, the 25-year-old Myssonski attends lectures at the University every night. He has done three years part-time for an Arts course.

He has played hockey for two years for University and before that played for Perth in the A1 grade side for five years. He was in the State colts team that went to Brisbane in 1951. ("The fastest man", 1957)

The number of sports columns in the paper increased from one to five weekly. There were two racing columnists, while football and golf columns were also introduced to the sports section. At the insistence of editor Griff Richards, sports editor Ted Collingwood started a weekly general sports column, which continued until he

retired in 1971. Collingwood's column consisted of between one and four items in a double-column piece on the main sports page. His items generally focused on a mixture of editorials, examining major sporting issues locally, nationally or internationally. For instance, the controversial decision of the International Olympic Committee to award the 1968 Olympics to Mexico City was the focus of Collingwood's 800-word article on 2 April 1966:

When Australian world record-breaker Ron Clarke and U.S. champion miler Jim Grelle said in Perth this week that they might not even try to win selection for the Mexico City Olympics, because of altitude problems, they added to the growing weight of an avalanche of condemnation.

After all, athletes attempting distances beyond 800 metres and unaccustomed to conditions in this city in the sky, have been known to finish with an honest stagger, a lurch to equal that of any tourist after one night out on tequila.

In fact, at Mexico City's 1955 Pan-American Games only seven track records were set, one a world record for 400 metres by a U.S. athlete who was one of the last to know about it. He was carried off on a stretcher. (Collingwood, 1966)

Match reports continued to play an important role in the sports pages, though at times there was more of an emphasis on the nationality of competitors than previously. An example was the paper's coverage of the 1957 British open golf championship, as this introduction shows:

The Australians, Peter Thomson and Bruce Crampton, are placed well enough to win the British open golf championship. After the second round yesterday, Crampton was third, two strokes behind the leader, Eric Brown, with Thomson another stroke away. ("Australians well-placed", 1957)

But after South African Bobby Locke had won the title by three shots from Thomson, the *West Australian* restricted its story to one paragraph and the leading scores. The above story was a match report, while the final result was presented as a news summary item:

Bobby Locke, of South Africa, won the British open golf championship on Friday for the fourth time, his aggregate of 279 equalling his own 72-hole record for the event. ("Locke wins", 1957)

The above two examples demonstrate that Perth, as a small city on a world scale, was still largely concerned with localism. The *West Australian* reflected that attitude in much of its reporting. Coverage of international sport in the paper remained similar to the percentage of seven years earlier. However, most of the international sporting stories

published included Australian participation. This indicated that the sports editorial management assumed that the local population was not interested in overseas sporting competitions unless it included Australians.

Cricket continued to be the dominant overseas sport for the *West Australian's* readers. In a change to the paper's editorial desk, an Australian slant was given, where possible, to the international articles. An example was the strong Australian presence highlighted at the British Open in golf and the Wimbledon tennis tournament, both played mid-year. Most articles were dispatched to Australia by Reuters, though occasionally a Special Cable Service sent boxing articles from the US. AAP provided coverage from its Sydney office to the *West Australian*, with most of the Eastern States sports news being either horse racing or cricket.

Match reports took on a new dimension, adding a greater focus on individual performances. The following example presents clear images in assessing cricketer Ken Meuleman in an interstate match:

A masterly display of batting by Ken Meuleman, who defied the South Australian bowlers for nearly eight hours in making 234 not out, nearly swung the Sheffield Shield match in Western Australia's favour at the W.A.C.A. Ground yesterday.

Thanks to Meuleman, who received magnificent support from the tail-end batsmen, W.A. made a fighting recovery to finish with 412 in its first innings after having lost five for 97.

South Australia finished the day 57 runs ahead with nine wickets in hand in its second innings.

When play resumed yesterday, W.A. was faced with a formidable task in avoiding a defeat by an innings.

But during the day a big change came over the game and at stumps the W.A. players still had hopes of pulling the match out of the fire even though a big effort would be required from the bowlers before lunch today. (Newman, 1957)

1964

The *West Australian* started to be more critical in its sport reporting from the late 1950s, especially in cricket, where the paper assumed its role as a public inquirer and regularly challenged officialdom. Western Australia was the youngest State in the domestic competition, the Sheffield Shield. Frequently, there were controversies over the selection of Australian Test teams. Here the paper takes a critical look at the claims

of Australian opener Bill Lawry, who is also a team selector, in the side for the third Test against England:

The continued failure of Australian opening batsman Bill Lawry has placed fellow-selectors Bob Simpson and Brian Booth in an embarrassing position. Will they ask him to step down from the side for the third Test, starting at Headingley on Thursday? ("Lawry's failures", 1964)

This new critical style of reporting was employed in a range of article categories — hard news, match reports, interviews, and commentary pieces. News summary articles continued to be included in the sports section, though they were restricted as fillers. The main difference between 1957 and 1964 in respect to Eastern States and overseas sporting items was the increase in the size of many of the articles. This resulted from the rapidly increasing space allocated to the paper's sports section. Reuters and AAP had a close relationship in dispatched overseas sporting items, while AAP was solely responsible for national items arriving at the paper's office in Perth.

In an extension of its critical reporting, the *West Australian* introduced a hard-edged commentary aspect to the sports pages. A controversy over the selection of the Australian team for the 1964 Olympic Games had begun in the media. The Australian Olympic Federation (AOF) had chartered two planes to transport the team to Tokyo. However, some sporting organisations wanted to charter a third plane to take officials to the Games. Most executive members of the AOF wanted a team of about 160, which included officials. The executive believed the team should be based on quality, and not quantity. However, some sports opposed a small team being selected. In a critical examination of the issue, the paper condemned moves for a larger team with stinging criticism levelled at sectional officials and under-performing athletes:

Mounting criticism of Australia's Olympic wagon trains, with the no-hopers overwhelming the potential medal winners, led to Edgar Tanner's no-blazer-picnic statement on the Tokyo Olympic Games.

But his appeal on behalf of the Olympic federation of which he is secretary, that Australia's team this year should be restricted to blue-ribbon hopes will be heard only as a cry from a baby's crib when the time comes to pick the team.

Delegates of all Olympic sports and State councils, not the executive, will do the choosing. Sectional interests and ambitions will emerge. The greater the number of competitors picked, the greater the number of officials.

Strap-hanging on the Tokyo charabane is likely to be as great as in 1960, when there was excess baggage on the road to Rome. The team included competitors

interested less in the training grind than in the ancient ruins. (Collingwood, 1964)

This is in stark contrast to the gushy, inoffensive writing of earlier decades.

1971

Television made only minimal impact on sports reporting in the *West Australian* in 1964, because the medium had been in Western Australia for only five years and there was very little live sport. However, by 1971, the medium was making a significant difference to how sport was being reported in the paper. The immediacy of television meant newspaper journalists needed to analyse the sports action in print. These analytical pieces were more prevalent in the paper's three major sports of horse racing, cricket and football. For instance, Jack Lee left his readers in no doubt as to his opinions about the reasons for Subiaco's 28-point win against Swan Districts on 10 July 1971:

The misguided use of champion rover Bill Walker at the centre and of champion centreman Peter Manning as a rover was the main factor in Swan Districts' defeat by Subiaco at Bassendean Oval on Saturday.

Other contributing causes to Subiaco's victory were a winning ruck led by Ron Bayens, good play in attack by an enterprising and aggressive ruckman-forward in Mike Malone and a slight superiority in football know-how.

Walker, opposed to a veteran centreman in Cam Blakemore (who knew all the angles), repeatedly was caught out of position in the third quarter and Subiaco were able to set up a winning lead.

Malone, on the ball and in a forward pocket, was too lively for a succession of marksmen and had 12 scoring shots. His tally of 6.6 was a massive contributor to victory. (Lee, 1971)

The early 1970s was a defining time in sports journalism at the *West Australian*. A few years before the introduction of colour television in Australia, the paper followed the trend of metropolitan newspapers in the Eastern States to place the sports section at the back of the paper, and an increasing amount of editorial space, in turn, enabled the inclusion of a greater number of articles. All eight categories of articles — news summary, hard news, match report, feature, interview, column, commentary, and profile — were published. The coverage was dominated by hard news, which encompassed a wide range of sports from overseas, the Eastern States and locally. The expanded sports section between Tuesday and Saturday was dominated by hard news. This included the preparation of athletes and horses for their forthcoming sporting contests, injuries to footballers, the transfer of sportsmen in the various sporting codes, tribunal decisions,

and issues affecting clubs and associations. The sports section in Monday's paper was almost exclusively devoted to match reports from the events held the previous weekend. In a transformation of sports reporting in the *West Australian*, publication of profiles of sportsmen, especially in the major team sports of Australian Rules football and cricket, became frequent in the paper.

The *West Australian* increased its critical reporting of sports news. Many of these articles focused on some controversy. Those with emotional and physical conflict were often placed in a more prominent position than equivalent stories without some element of conflict. For instance, in January 1971, leading the sports section for several days was a racing controversy involving jockey John Miller, who was suspended by the stewards for two months. Miller had ridden La Trice first past the post in the Railway Stakes on 28 December, but lost the race on protest for causing interference to the Frank Treen-ridden Kilrickle. The only Eastern States racing story on 2 January was a report about the suspension of two jockeys in Melbourne. There were other items stirring controversy in racing and, later in the month, several articles approached the cricket Test series between Australia and England in the same manner. The day after England won the fourth Test in Sydney, three articles condemning the Australian performance were published on the main sports page. Then, before the start of the fifth Test in Melbourne the following week, both captains criticised the quality of the practice pitches, and during the game the Australian media condemned England for being "butter fingers" and "slow batting", reporting that the players were jeered by the spectators, who were also clapping cans.

Conflict played a different role in July with the anti-apartheid demonstrations which greeted the South African rugby union tour of the Eastern States. Because of the violence, which had attracted international attention, the paper's editor, Griff Richards, decided that the controversy should be placed in the forward general news pages, which included being the lead story on the front page for three days in a fortnight.

Other stories during July included a controversial incident involving English fast bowler John Snow, suspensions of jockeys, several of the best professional tennis players being suspended by an international organisation, and a Perth soccer player being suspended for life for assaulting a referee during a match.

There is no evidence that the paper's reporters attempted to secure exclusive sports stories at this time, as this aspect of sports journalism did not become prevalent

until the 1980s. However, from the mid-1960s, the sports journalists began to have a closer working relationship with the sportsmen and women. An example was the paper's golf writer from 1968 to 1974, David Warren. Previous golf writers seldom mixed with the competitors, but Warren, though he did not have a solid background in the sport, would mix with the players during tournaments and socially afterwards. This was calculated to give Warren a better understanding of the competitors and to gain the players' respect (D. Warren, personal communication, April 14, 2004). Other sports changed similarly, with reporters providing closer insights into the events and athletes. The paper's chief football writer, Geoff Christian, from the mid-1960s formed a close relationship with players, officials and spectators. This enabled Christian to confidently predict the selection of teams for important matches with considerable accuracy. For instance, on 6 July 1971, Christian wrote that the State's top full forward Austin Robertson would be overlooked for the interstate match against Victoria later in the month (Christian, 1971). Christian, who received the tip-off from one of the State selectors, was correct. This close relationship between key people in the sport and the *West Australian's* sports writers was uncommon a decade earlier.

The *West Australian* received most of its overseas sports news from Reuters and AAP, though occasional copy was received from a Special Cable Service. The length of sports stories involving Australians increased considerably. For instance, there were regular back page articles about the 1971 Wimbledon tennis championships. Though Wimbledon had been strongly reported in the paper for several decades, the coverage in 1971 exceeded all previous championships. This can be attributed to a historic tournament, which included two Australian women playing in the women's final for the first time. Evonne Goolagong-Cawley beat Perth-based Margaret Court to become the first Aboriginal woman to win the world's most prestigious tennis tournament. With John Newcombe's success against American Stan Smith in the men's final, Australia, for only the third time, won the men's and women's titles in the same year.

In 1969, the Melbourne-based Herald and Weekly Times assumed ownership of the *West Australian*. This resulted in the distribution of national news to the paper. The Herald and Weekly Times dispatched news from Melbourne, while the *Sydney Morning Herald* (Sydney), *Courier-Mail* (Brisbane) and the *Advertiser* (Adelaide) also provided the *West Australian* with news coverage from those States. The *West Australian* also continued to subscribe to AAP for additional coverage. Its association with Herald and Weekly Times did not result in an increase of articles from the Eastern States.

Changes in Journalistic Style

This study addresses sports print journalism, which currently receives considerably less academic attention than electronic media coverage of sport. At the turn of last century, sports reporting was basically non-narrative; that is, although the brief accounts of important matches and other sporting contests embedded the events within simple narratives (the crowning of the champion, victory and defeat, brawn versus pluck), the descriptions of the games themselves approached narrative only in broadly charting the ebb and flow of the action. This style of reporting, which was basically unskilled writing, remained virtually the same until after World War II. Most of the reports published in the paper, with the majority being provided by non-journalistic contributors, were dull and lifeless. There were exceptions, written by full-time staff members, exemplified in the usage of flowery language occasionally during reportage of boxing and wrestling bouts, and the coverage of racing's Perth Cup. During the 1930s, there were occasional in-depth descriptions of football and cricket matches, though these were restricted to the Monday reports following the weekend's matches.

The introduction of radio to Western Australia in the 1920s made little difference, except for the inclusion of the interview, to how sport was reported in the *West Australian*. This was in contrast with the beginning of television more than three decades later. The early racing commentaries in the late 1920s, and Test cricket descriptions and short football reports on radio in the early to mid-thirties did not change the style of reporting the sports in the paper.

Most of the writing in the paper was uncritical, almost adulatory, acceptance of what took place in the world of sports. There was a reluctance of the journalists to report beyond the results of the sporting contests. Positive reporting took precedence over negative aspects of the events. An overriding reason for this was that most of the reporters were unpaid correspondents from the sporting organisations they were covering. They were not prepared to annoy the sport's administrators. Even the *West Australian's* full time journalists were reluctant to report negative aspects of sport. This was the period before television's increasingly comprehensive sports coverage, which forced newspaper reporters to go beyond bare-bone statistics and play-by-play reporting. Most of the sports writing before World War II consisted of match reports and hard news items.

Changing to a tabloid in 1947 was a defining period for sports journalism at the *West Australian*. The sports section was becoming more structured in the late 1940s and early fifties. Writing styles in the paper's sports pages evolved during the second half of the twentieth century. The most incisive difference between the first five decades of last century and the second half of the century was the style of language used in writing the articles. The unwieldy and cumbersome style, characterised by big sentences and lengthy paragraphs, which frequently prevailed, was gradually replaced by clearer and concise writing.

During the mid-1950s, features and personality profiles began to appear in the sports pages, as a means to lure the reader beyond the score and into deeper analysis of sports. Features and profiles, often described as human interest articles, are an excellent vehicle for explaining the *whys* and *hows* of sports and for informing and entertaining. The *West Australian's* sports writers' human interest articles were used not to simply illuminate a single personality but, rather, to shine light into the corners of a wider story.

Sport has always been important to the media. Since the nineteenth century, coverage of sports such as football, cricket, racing and rugby has been used by newspapers both to publicise events and to attract readers (Briggs & Copley, 1998, p. 367; Holt, 1990, pp. 306-326; Mason, 1988, pp. 46-59). Today, sports coverage is central to many newspapers as they attempt to gain and hold readers in an increasingly competitive marketplace. While in the circulation battles among the popular press sport has always mattered, it has also become more important in recent times among the broadsheet press as traditionally working-class sports such as football have begun to attract an increasingly larger middle-class audience (Briggs & Copley, 1998, p. 367).

The closest a publication has gone to making an in-depth study of Australian print sports journalism is David Rowe's *Sport, culture and the media* (1999). Rowe, a sociologist who is at the forefront of academic studies of sports journalism in Australia, questions the professionalism of the role of print sports journalists (Rowe, 1999, p. 36). He points out that sports journalists are among "the most visible of all contemporary writers", yet he claims sports journalists do not have a standing in their profession which corresponds to the size of their readerships or of their salaries.

In the 1992 publication *Journalism and popular culture*. Rowe, whose main interest and area of study is the cultural and social aspects of sports reporting, claims that the sports journalist is "sandwiched between interest groups making conflicting

demands" (p. 109). But this observation appears to be more relevant to the period before World War II, when the *West Australian's* reporters were keen not to offend senior officials of clubs and the controlling sporting associations, than to more recent times.

Rowe approaches sports writing from the angle of popular culture and "as a vehicle for ... popular identifications" (Rowe, 1992, p. 97). Though Rowe acknowledges that sports writing is "mostly produced within an industrialized and professionalized framework" (Rowe, 1992, p. 109), he chooses not to take professional practice aspects into account when analysing sports reporting. I want to assert that paying attention to this part is of great importance when trying to appreciate why sports writing takes the form it does. A cricket fan, first and foremost, wants to be informed about the result, the highlights of the day's play, accompanied by human interest pieces. The readers are unlikely to worry about "a petitioning process of simultaneous persuasion and antagonism" (Rowe, 1992, p. 103). They are more concerned with the reliable delivery of results and captivating descriptions.

Rowe correctly points out that sports hard news generally appears on the back page of newspapers, establishing regularity with front-page news. In my research, the main item on the main sports page — inside the paper for most of the period of this study and on the back page from 1 February 1971 — addressed events and issues which were considered of major importance to local sports fans. Such items, for example, were generally restricted to the paper's major team sports — football in winter and cricket in summer — though horse racing reports were frequently the day's major stories. These articles included evaluating the game, supplying match or race results and statistics, and examining prominent individual performances.

Rowe argues that most sports journalism is directed at a large, male, working-class readership which forms the natural constituency of sport (Rowe, 1991, p. 83). He has subsequently repeated these claims (Rowe, 1992; Rowe & Stevenson, 1995; Rowe, 1999). This assertion is supported by Hargreaves (1986, p. 140), and Garrison and Salwen (1989, p. 57). Hargreaves, who points out that sports journalists are integrated into both the sports community and the working-class, also contends that the status of sports journalists among their colleagues is low and they are the lowest-paid journalists. However, Garrison and Salwen moved away from that statement by saying that during the previous two decades sports journalists had become more skilled and better educated. The analyses by Rowe, Hargreaves, and Garrison and Salwen, in relation to

status and salary, are out of step with the situation at the *West Australian*. The paper's sports journalists during the period of this study matched their colleagues in status and salary (W.T.G. Richards, personal communication, November 27, 1998; K. Murray, personal communication, November 29, 1998).

Reporting of Local, National and International Sport

It was principally through the media that the functions of sport had been incorporated into Australia's cultural attitudes. An important indicator was that sports reporting had always constituted a significant amount of coverage in both print and electronic media (Stoddart, 1986, p. 85). In 1950, the book *Mightier than the Sword* said the major Australian metropolitan daily newspapers carried between 15 and 23 per cent of sport in their total editorial space (Sommerlad, 1950, pp. 45-46). Between the 1920s and the 1970s, the amount of sports coverage in *The Times* in London remained fairly constant, devoting 17 per cent on average of their total news space to sport (Chalaby, 1998, p. 92; McQuail, 1997, p. 17). This is in line with the amount of sport published in the *West Australian*, which allocated an average of 17.52 per cent of its editorial space to sport during the seven decades of this study. At the turn of last century, sport was not a high priority for the senior editorial team at the paper. Organised sport was still in its infancy in Western Australia and the paper's editor, Winthrop Hackett, had more pressing newsworthy issues to report, such as Australia's moves to become a federation.

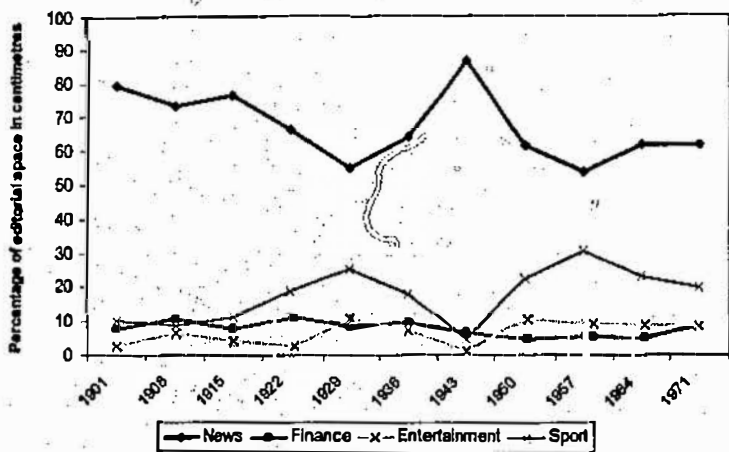


Figure 1. Editorial coverage in the *West Australian* - January

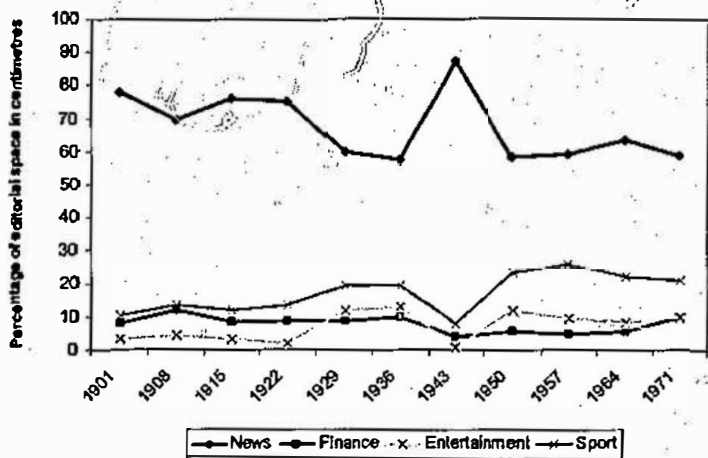


Figure 2. Editorial coverage in the *West Australian* - July

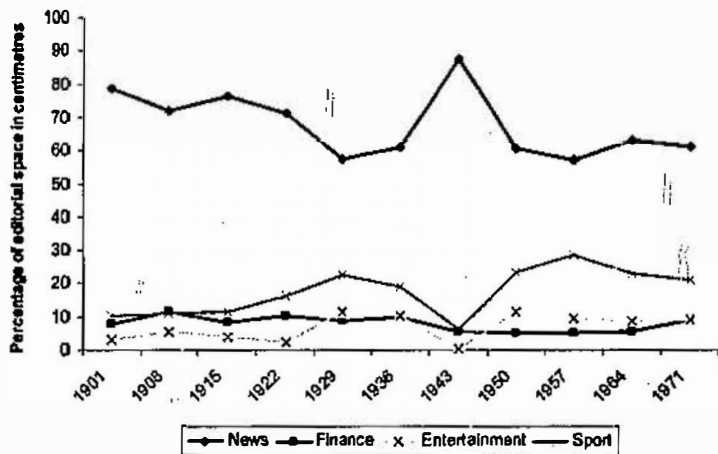


Figure 3. Editorial coverage in the *West Australian* – Overall.

The percentage of sport published in the *West Australian* remained constant for the first 14 years covered in this study. In 1901, 10.17 per cent of the available editorial space was allocated to sport. This increased to 11.22 per cent in 1908 and 11.60 per cent in 1915. The increasing role sport played in the community was responsible for the growing number of individual sports reported in the paper, improving from 25 in 1901 to 32 in 1908 and 36 in 1915. Local sports dominated the coverage, with 66.64 per cent of all sport reported in January and July 1901 having taken place in Perth. The comparative figures were 68.86 per cent in 1908 and 80.13 per cent in 1915. The reporting of national sport ranged from 28.84 per cent to 1901, to 20.78 per cent in 1908 and 19.22 in 1915, while international sports accounted for 4.52 per cent of the space in 1901, 10.36 in 1908 and 0.65 per cent in 1915. The large difference in the 1915 figures was due to World War I, the influence of which will be discussed later in this chapter.

As sports became more organised in Western Australia, sport commanded more coverage in the *West Australian*. After the war, sports reporting increased significantly to 16.18 per cent in 1922 and 22.54 per cent in 1929, before falling to 18.93 per cent in 1936 and 6.38 per cent in 1943. There was a drop in percentage between 1929 and 1936, despite the amount of sport published increasing, because the numbers of pages in

each edition went up. In other words, the number of columns of sport increased from 920 in 1929 to 1,060 seven years later.

In 1950, the *West Australian* carried 23.19 per cent of sport. This was higher than major newspapers in the Eastern States the previous year, when the *Sydney Morning Herald* carried 18.7 per cent sport and the *Melbourne Herald* contained 15.7 percent (Mayer, 1964, p. 213). Again, local sport was clearly most strongly represented at 68.73 per cent; national sport amounted to 22.68 per cent; and international sport received 8.63 per cent.

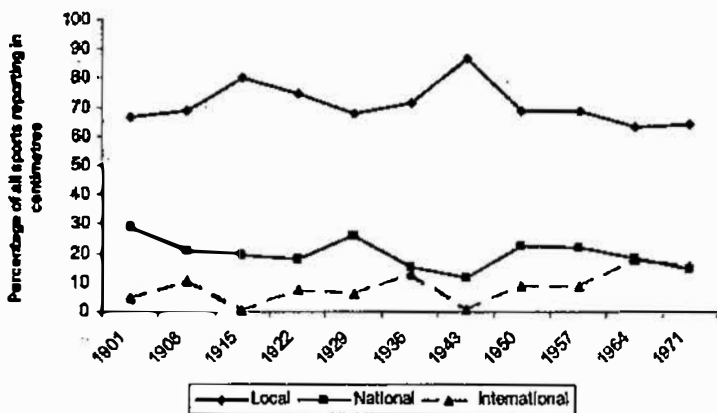


Figure 4. Coverage of sport in the *West Australian* – Overall.

Australia's performance, finishing third overall behind the Soviet Union and the United States at the 1956 Olympic Games in Melbourne, heightened local interest in sport. Several Western Australians won medals, including gold to hurdler Shirley de la Hunty and swimmer Kevin O'Halloran. This translated to an increase in sports coverage in 1957, with 28.65 per cent of available space from 1,172 columns being allocated to sport. The figures were similar to seven years earlier — local (69.10), national (22.29) and international (8.62).

The sports pages continued to increase, with a total of 1,215 columns in January and July 1964. This was an increase of 43 columns since 1957. Though the amount of sports space increased, the sports percentage decreased by six per cent to 22.89. This

compared with 63.05 per cent of news, 5.37 per cent of finance and 8.69 per cent of entertainment. Local sport (63.56 per cent) and national sport (16.54 per cent) fell, though international sport increased by more than eleven per cent to 19.90. The reasons for this was the cricket home Test series against South Africa in 1963-64. A record 51 individual sports were reported in the *West Australian* in 1964, which was an increase of eight from 1957.

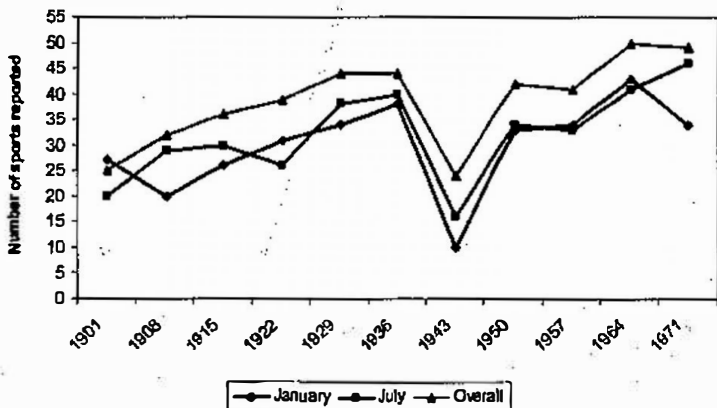


Figure 5. Number of sports reported in the *West Australian*.

In 1971, for the fourth successive seven-year period, the percentage of sports reported in the *West Australian* had decreased. But the number of columns in January and July 1971 totalled 1,520, which was the most sport reported in the paper throughout the seven decades under examination, and was 305 columns more than in 1964. But since the mid-1960s, the size of the paper had increased considerably. Sport in the paper was 21.04 per cent, down from 22.89 per cent in 1964. This compared with the 1971 levels of news (60.75 per cent), entertainment (9.27 per cent) and business (9.14 per cent). Local sport received 64.40 per cent in 1971 (an increase of 1.04 per cent), national sport recorded 16.85 per cent (an increase of 0.31 per cent) and international sport received 18.75 per cent (a decrease of 1.15 per cent). The *West Australian* reported 51 sports, the same as in 1964.

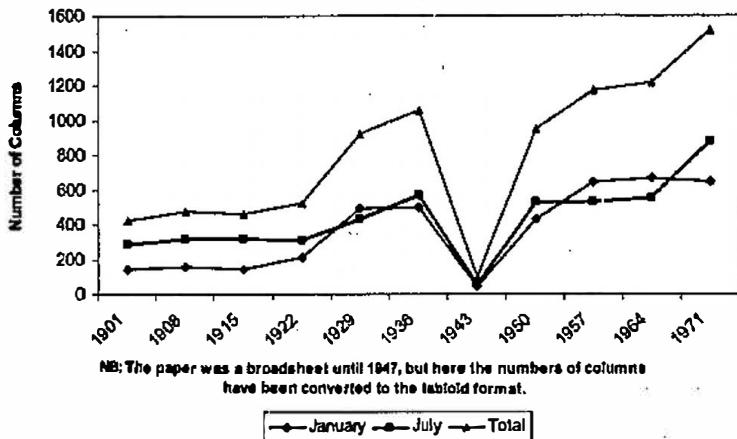


Figure 6. Columns devoted to sport.

Placing of Sports Articles

The sports writing in the *West Australian* early in the twentieth century was staid, in contrast to the lively and challenging approach of its morning daily rival, the *Morning Herald*. Headlines in the *Morning Herald* were brighter and the layout of the pages was less cluttered than the *West Australian*. Overall, the 1901 issues of the *West Australian* were chaotic, conservative and inconsistent. Type faces were restricted and the front page was reserved for advertising. All the same, given the distances between the Australian cities, and these being the only media available, for the first two decades of last century, Western Australian newspapers had an enviable strength and influence.

Columns consisted of closely packed type without a sub-heading to break the monotony, and there was no serious attempt at attractive presentation and display. Local and Eastern States sports stories were usually placed on the same page in the *West Australian*, but not necessarily in the same place each day. On some days, sport was printed on page three, with pages four and five being mostly in the middle of the paper, or towards the back on other days. The general sports section consisted of a cascade of items, organised in narrow columns, with headlines in multiple tiers stacked above a single column of text. The section had an obvious symmetry, but little hierarchy. International sports, which usually arrived by overseas press services, were generally

confined to one or two paragraphs and occupied a spot on the overseas cable news page. This was similar to US newspapers which, in the early 1920s, carried mainly untitled sports pages and often carried non-sport items (Barnhurst & Nerone, 2001, p. 246):

Sport was not confined to that page and could even be the top story of the day. More commonly, sports news associated with schools and colleges might mix in with other educational news. By the mid-1920s, however, sport had become clearly segregated into sections of at least two pages. (Barnhurst & Nerone, 2001, p. 246)

Test matches and interstate cricket reports were also kept separate from the general sports section and printed on a general news page. The different treatment of cricket compared to other sports can be traced to the sport's deep-rooted significance as part of Australian culture.

Until the late 1920s, the *West Australian* carried sports pages which were untitled and often included non-sports items. By the mid-1930s, however, sports had become clearly segregated into sections of at least one page of the broadsheet publication. At the same time, the content of the section had come to emphasise professional rather than amateur sport.

A world-wide shortage of newsprint after World War II restricted the space allocated to sport because of small papers. As chief sub-editor in the late 1940s, Griff Richards was in charge of redesigning the *West Australian*. After the paper altered its design to a tabloid in 1947, the editorial sections were printed in a structured format. The sports section was placed in the centre of the paper after the general news pages, and before the finance, entertainment and classified advertising pages. Particularly in the early 1950s, the layout changed to allow a more attractive presentation. All sport was contained in the sports section, unless it was deemed by the editor to be of general interest and included in the articles in the forward part of the paper.

A newspaper can emphasise or depress individual news items on a scale of significance by their positioning on a page, or by employing the whole repertoire of typographical distinctions, including headlining, bold use of types, strapline, elaborations and attention-getting captions. From the 1950s and into the 1970s, focus of attention, and thus of significance, was used by the paper as a way of ordering the news, either by working within these perceptual patterns; using typographical devices to guide the reader's attention from the most crucial to the least crucial item on a page.

For example, in the 7 July 1971 issue of the *West Australian*, the sporting news dominated two pages. Horse racing and football were the *West Australian's* dominant winter sports, and were treated accordingly. Racing news, fields and a photograph was a strong feature of the first sports page, taking nearly four columns. Next, a trotting story, fields and a photograph took two columns. Near the bottom of the page were small articles on tennis, overseas cricket, boxing, wrestling and rugby union. Australian Rules football was the most significant item on the next page. This was accompanied by short articles in a variety of sports, including cycling, croquet, swimming, rifle shooting, hockey and golf. The positioning of the stories on these pages was in line with the individual sport's value to the paper.

As the *West Australian* sports section became more structured due to expanding space in the 1960s, its appearance became more homogenous. The paper became more modern by improving its format, layout, illustrations and photographs, and headlines. The *West Australian* carried a major photograph on the main sports page and smaller photos in a variety of sports were placed on most of the other sports pages. By 1971, the *West Australian's* sports section contrasted in comparison to seven decades earlier. Fewer items occupied more space. Comparing 1971 with earlier in the century, there was a clear hierarchy, so that the main sports page constituted the day's main sporting event and the headlines told the point of an item rather than outlining its content. For example, here is a headline on an article after the second-last day of the second Test between Australia and England at the Melbourne Cricket Ground in January 1908:

International cricket.

Second Test match.

Still in the balance.

England wants 123 runs.

Six wickets to fall.

("International cricket", 1908b)

In contrast, here is a headline on the article after the second-last day of the fourth Test between Australia and England at the Sydney Cricket Ground in January 1971:

Long innings needed to

save Australia

("Long innings needed", 1971)

Front page

The *West Australian's* front page was the sole preserve of advertisements until 1949 (except for six days at the end of World War II). Sport was occasionally printed on the front page, mainly cricket — either reporting on the Sheffield Shield domestic competition, or Test matches involving Australia. Cricket had always been strongly reported in the paper, but the sport gained further importance in the 1948-49 season, when Western Australia joined the Sheffield Shield interstate competition for the first time.

In the 1950s, most of the cricket articles on page one were Test cricket matches. However, there were times when a significant performance by a local player in a Sheffield Shield match warranted highlighting. For example, on 29 January 1957, Ken Meuleman, the Western Australian captain, scored a State record 234 not out in the Sheffield Shield match against South Australia in Perth. The *West Australian* gave the performance wide coverage. Two photographs of Meuleman and a story dominated the front page and another photograph and a large story, including the scoreboard, appeared in the sports section.

At times, sporting human interest stories were published on page one. For instance, Western Australian sprinter and hurdler Shirley de la Hunty (competing at her first two Olympic Games under her maiden name of Shirley Strickland), won a record seven medals, including three gold, at three Olympic Games (1948, 1952 and 1956) and was featured on the front page of the *West Australian* on 16 January 1957. A story, accompanied by two photographs — one of her winning the 80 metres gold medal at the 1956 Melbourne Olympics and the other of her in the kitchen with her three and a half-year old-son — was designed as a personality article of one of the world's great athletes returning to domestic chores. This article can be placed in the profile category, which the paper occasionally included a sporting human interest story on the front page. Following is an extract:

With the roar of the Olympic Games crowd in her ears seven weeks ago, Shirley Strickland flashed to victory in the 80-metres hurdles final to win a gold medal for Australia.

It was a memorable moment for one of the greatest athletes Western Australia has produced, a moment of triumph for a woman whose sporting career has taken her all over the world and brought honour to herself, her country and her State.

Yesterday, Mrs de la Hunty had another moment of triumph when she settled down happily to the kitchen chores at her Applecross home.

...

She found that she thoroughly enjoyed the transition from the athlete to the domestic field.

Instead of the roar of the crowd she heard the prattle of her 3½-year-old son Phillip. Dishes became her hurdles and in place of a relay baton she carried a broom.

But Shirley enjoyed it all the same. ("From the crowd's roar", 1957)

In previous years, this type of human interest article would not have been written. The development of the human interest story from the early 1950s was a significant change in the *West Australian's* sports department. Journalists explored new territories with these types of articles and reported aspects of personal and social life previously unrecorded in the paper. Human interest stories are selected for their entertaining value and their capacity to hold readers' interest and attention (Chalaby, 1998, p. 101). A common point of this type of genre is their narrative dimension. The reporting of athletes' private lives has often been attributed to television in the last quarter of the twentieth century. However, this type of reporting was evident in newspapers before the arrival of television.

From the early 1950s, a story, accompanied by a large photograph, of the Perth Cup occupied a dominant place on the front page. In addition to the annual two-mile race (changed to 3,200 metres in 1972), the annual event, traditionally held on New Year's Day, was one of Perth's major social events of the year. The *West Australian* responded to the importance of the race with significant coverage. The Western Australian Trotting Cup was traditionally held on the evening of 1 January each year. A story, sometimes accompanied by a photograph of the winning horse, was usually placed alongside the Perth Cup coverage of the front page. Another sporting event which always resulted in a story and photographs was the Western Australian National Football League's grand final, held in late September or early October each year. Under the editorship of Griff Richards, major sporting events were given prominence in the general news section of the paper, particularly on the front page.

Major Sports Reported

The two earliest sports in Australia were horse racing and cricket. For at least a few of the early European Australians — those anxious to distance themselves from the convict stigma — the establishment of British sporting activity was seen necessary from shortly after the arrival of the First Fleet in 1788. Those two sports continued in that vein throughout the period examined in this study. At the beginning of the twentieth century they were the *West Australian's* most popular summer sports. In winter, horse racing continued to be the dominant sport, with Australian Rules football the number two reported sport. The popularity of these three sports by the paper's editorial management is in line with the sports which first came to prominence in Western Australia. An analysis of the coverage of horse racing will be undertaken in "Gambling sports" later in this sub-chapter.

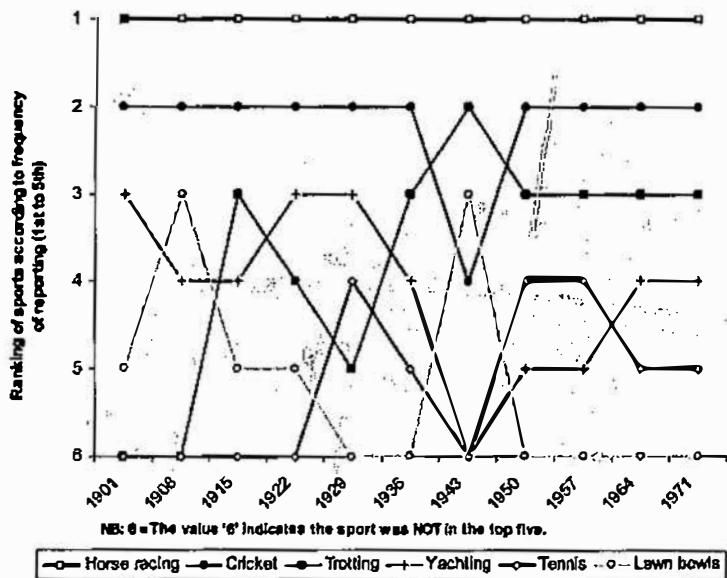


Figure 7. Top sports reported in the *West Australian* – January.

Cricket, first reported in the *West Australian* on 5 April 1835, was in the form of an advertisement in which a group of builders working on the new Government House challenged the builders working on the Commissariat building. There was no mention of the game taking place. In the second half of the nineteenth century, cricket became one of the most-reported sports in the *West Australian*. This strong reporting continued into the twentieth century, where the sport increased from 13 per cent in 1901 to 35 per cent in 1908. This dramatic increase can be attributed to the English cricket team's tour of Australia. Two Tests were played during January 1908. Though it was another four decades before Western Australia was admitted to the Sheffield Shield, Australia's domestic cricket competition, the visits of other State and international teams were always well-supported by the public. The *West Australian* provided in-depth coverage of cricket matches — Test matches and interstate contests. Regular and detailed coverage of the matches in the paper amplified an already broadening public interest in the sport.

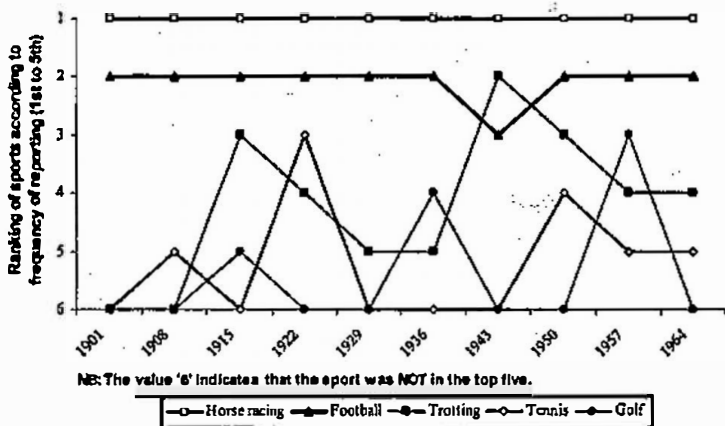


Figure 8. Top sports reported in the *West Australian* – July.

Cricket was the second-most reported summer sport, behind horse racing, in each year of the seven-year period that this study covers, except in 1943. The amount of coverage varied, largely depending on the Test match program. The percentage that the sport received in coverage was 17.52 per cent (in 1915), 14.25 (1922), 25.77 (1929),

18.04 (1936), 7.36 (1943), 15.70 (1950), 15.29 (1957), 20.37 (1964) and 21.43 (1971). As in 1908, cricket coverage was considerably increased because of England travelling to Australia for Test series in the 1928-29 and 1970-71 seasons, and South Africa playing a five Test series in Australia during the 1963-64 season.

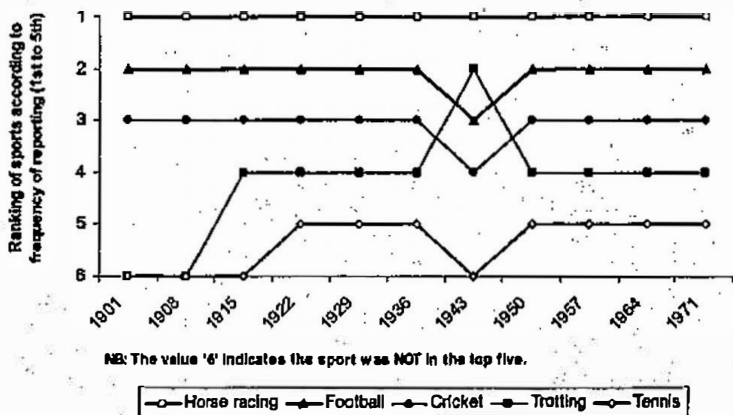


Figure 9. Top sports reported in the *West Australian* - overall.

With the increasing sizes of the paper in the 1960s, all major sports, in particular cricket, were allocated considerable space as the sports pages gained a less-cluttered appearance. Cricket regularly was the main sports story. Three Test matches between Australia and South Africa — played in Melbourne, Sydney and Adelaide — were held during the analysis of the sports section in January 1964. This resulted in strong coverage, especially as the teams were evenly matched, each winning one Test and the other a draw. The other two Tests, which were outside the review month, also finished in a draw. There were other factors which helped to create major cricket news. Australian captain Richie Benaud, who had led the team since 1958, stood down as captain on the eve of the second Test. West Indies player Garry Sobers, one of the world's best batsmen, played for South Australia in the Sheffield Shield competition. These two items created numerous headlines, not only in the *West Australian*, but in all major newspapers in the country.

In 1901 Australian Rules football was afforded more space in July than all sports, except horse racing, but it was still in its infancy with 11.08 per cent. Football, which began in Western Australia in 1885, was beginning to command increasing space in the paper by 1908, to record 18.63 per cent of the coverage. The sport received a boost locally when Western Australia beat New South Wales and South Australia, but lost to Victoria to finish runner-up in the inaugural Australian championships in Melbourne. As with cricket in summer, football was second behind horse racing in July in every seven-year period, except in the war year 1943.

Football writing during the first three decades consisted of little more than facts and results. During this time, the reporters were generally more concerned with the weather and gate takings than the actual match. There was a shift in emphasis in the 1930s. This coincided with the employment of Charlie Ammon as the paper's first full-time football writer. He incorporated an analytical aspect to his reports. Also, under Ammon, by the 1950s, football reporting gained a greater narrative structure, which was then available to the more imaginative storytellers amongst the sports journalists at the *West Australian*. However, Ammon was not the first sportswriter at the paper to develop narrative writing in his sports coverage. Sports editor Ted Collingwood started this trend with his descriptions of boxing and wrestling in the late 1920s and, later, in horse racing.

There were limited travel opportunities for the *West Australian's* sports writers during the first half of the twentieth century. Only the paper's chief racing writer would be sent to Melbourne to cover the annual spring racing round, which included the Melbourne Cup. The paper's management preferred to obtain its coverage of other Eastern States and overseas sporting events by national and international wire services, and from other news organisations to which the *West Australian* had an agreement to supply copy. Ted Collingwood covered the 1932 Los Angeles Olympic Games, but he had taken several months leave from the paper and paid for his own travel.

Professional Sports Versus Amateur Sports

Sports editor Ted Collingwood usually favoured professional sports over amateur sports. He was a keen advocate of amateur tennis being replaced by open tennis. During 1957, Collingwood gave prominence to pressures within the tennis administration to make it open, allowing professionals to play in all of the world's top tournaments. The Wimbledon championships were restricted to amateurs until

progressing to an open tournament in 1968. At every opportunity, Collingwood ensured that moves to make the sport open to amateurs and professionals were displayed prominently in the sports pages. Collingwood devoted his column on 9 November 1968 to examine the International Olympic Committee and amateurism in sport. His strong feelings about the aspects of amateurism and professionalism in sport are obvious:

In this established cocoon of a sports junta, the I.O.C. is aloof from effects of criticism. It may resist popular clamour, the undercurrents, the sweeping changes which effect interpretations of amateurism and have led to the hypocrisies now practised at the Olympic Games.

. . . There are competitors in these and other countries who take part in sports for months every year, whose wages or salaries are paid as usual and who, as paid performers, of professionals.

These were handsomely rewarded at Mexico City compared with the Australians, who mostly were on an Olympic federation pittance of a dollar a day. Some were paid their usual salaries by employees but generally Australians were, to many other competitors, the last of the amateurs.

. . . The national committees, with a stronger voice in control, will bring to bear a sense of realism because they are closer to today's problems and they are nonconformists in tradition.

Their outlook allows for elasticity on amateurism's problems compared with the stringency seen for so long in the attitude of the I.O.C. (Collingwood, 1968)

Tennis has been one of Australia's most successful sports since the early twentieth century, with the Wimbledon championships in the middle of each year generating considerable interest in the media. In a vein similar to contemporary sports writing, Collingwood ensured there was strong patriotism in the *West Australian's* coverage of the Wimbledon championships when Australians were successful. For instance, Australian Lew Hoad's victory in the 1957 Wimbledon men's singles final resulted in dominant coverage in the paper. It was also the start of one of the biggest sporting controversies when, despite Hoad's denial, there were indications that he was about to turn professional. Collingwood's strong support of sport being open to professionals showed in the vast number of articles which appeared in the sports pages during the 1950s and sixties. Though Collingwood did not write any of the articles forecasting Hoad's change to professional tennis, he ensured coverage of the controversy was strongly displayed in the paper's sports pages. The main sports story on 9 July 1957 began:

LONDON, Mon.—Before boarding an airliner for New York last night, the Australian tennis star, Lew Hoad, said that he had turned a professional. "I am merely going to America to discuss an offer," he said.

Hoad said that Kramer's tour manager, Ted Schroeder, had told him that Kramer was willing to offer him 125,000 dollars or 25 per cent of the takings, plus 5 per cent incentive for every matches he won. ("Hoad leaves to", 1957)

In the following day's *West Australian*, again the main sports story, US promoter Jack Kramer announced that Hoad was to turn professional ("Hoad to make", 1957). In his professional debut a week later, Hoad beat former leading Australian player, Frank Sedgman, at Forest Hills in the US ("Hoad beats Sedgman", 1957).

Collingwood also favoured professional boxing and professional wrestling over their amateur counterparts. Collingwood, a former professional boxer, was adamant that competitors in the combative sports should also not be segregated into either amateur or professional ranks. He was one of the earliest advocates of the Olympic Games being open to professionals. His writings often showed irreverence towards amateur sports administrators and officials. An example was the controversial seating arrangements at Beatty Park Aquatic Centre during the 1962 British Empire and Commonwealth Games. Collingwood starts his article:

Chaos over seating arrangements and programmes which have been drawn out until they have had some spectators yawning, have made swimming the worst-run sport at the Games.

The last-minute shifting of the public to emergency seating, high-handed demands by officialdom and unexpected pressures from VIP's have aroused bitterness among local swimming fans.

. . . The rudest shock was the sudden demand by the swimming technical committee which said that it was essential that there should be seats for about 300 competitors and officials at the Beatty Park pool.

There would not be any swimming in the afternoon unless the seats were provided, said W. Berge-Phillips, chairman of the committee.

This irresponsible threat, if carried out, could have wrecked the Games. (Collingwood, 1962)

Debate over whether professional wrestling is a sport or entertainment had taken place over many years. Yet Collingwood ensured a strong coverage of the "World Championship Wrestling" programs when they took place in Perth from the 1950s to the 1970s. Occasionally he devoted his weekly column to the wrestling program which had been held earlier in the week.

Gambling Sports

Horse Racing in the Twentieth Century

At the turn of the twentieth century, sports journalism in the *West Australian* mainly concentrated on horse racing. The Western Australian Turf Club (WATC), founded in 1852, quickly became an important social institution. Many Australians believe horse racing to be an egalitarian sport, but membership of the WATC's ruling bodies was socially restricted, actual membership only slightly less so. Involvement as an owner or even as a part-owner requires access to surplus capital for training, feeding and riding fees as well as other constant costs (Stoddart, 1986, p. 41). However, with the attendances usually in excess of 15,000 at the Perth Cup, horse racing still had one of the best followings of Western Australian sports. The *West Australian* responded accordingly, with horse racing dominating the sports pages in each of the seven year periods. This was underscored by the fact that, from early last century until the 1970s, the paper's sporting editors were also the chief racing writers.

As mentioned, the dominance of horse racing in the sports coverage in the *West Australian* can therefore be attributed to an overwhelming dependence on the newspaper for racing information. This was because until the late 1920s there were no electronic media to check race fields, starting times, starting prices or results. More attention was given to the gambling sports in the paper, because horse racing, in particular, can be seen as it were, as the stock exchange of sport, where many thousands of dollars changed hands every Saturday during the year. There are similarities between racing fields and the stock exchange. The racing form guides in newspapers give punters information on the horse's form, its barrier draw and weight, bookmaker's price and the name of the jockey. Shareholders, who can be described as 'punters' on the share market, look at the business pages as the 'form guide', where newspapers provide current and previous prices, and the fluctuation, of listed companies.

The Perth Cup, Western Australia's major horse race, is traditionally held on New Year's Day, unless it fell on a Sunday. In that case, the two mile race (3,200 metres) was held the following day, which was always a public holiday, or on the Saturday. The Perth Cup, first held in 1877, previously known as the Metropolitan Handicap, was one of Perth's major social occasions. Each year, the *West Australian* was represented by several journalists, some of whom covered the racing, while the

others reported on the fashions and the social scene. This resulted in saturation coverage in the next day's paper, with follow-up articles during the following week.

Until the 1970s, the chief racing writer was the paper's senior sports journalist. Alf Dunn, who succeeded Ted Collingwood as the chief racing writer, continued his coverage in a similar vein to his predecessor by writing in a colourful style. Comparable to several of his colleagues during the 1950s, Dunn strove to seek a human interest angle and to look beyond the bare facts in his articles. Neville Catchpole joined the sports department in 1954 and the following year began to specialise in racing journalism. The hallmarks of his writing were the same as those of journalism today — clarity, directness, force. His vocabulary and grammar were straightforward, and he carried his readers along with care, from one point to the next. Catchpole served as the paper's chief racing writer from 1959-63.

Kevin Murphy, who covered early-morning track work at the metropolitan race courses throughout his career, also wrote factually in an easy-to-read style. Though he never achieved the position of chief racing writer, Murphy played an important role in the coverage of the sport. His writing was the kind that Ted Collingwood required — fairly plain, yet evocative. Throughout his 46-year career at the *West Australian*, Murphy's two roles were to attend early morning visits to the track, with his stopwatch, up to six days a week, and to be responsible for keeping the office racing records up to date. Murphy's trackwork articles were generally shorter in length than the stories written by the paper's major racing writers. Murphy was extremely well respected in the racing industry and at the paper because of his dedication to regular attendance of the training sessions; and, like a good financial forecaster, he was highly accurate in his predictions at local race meetings.

The amount of space allocated to horse racing was greater than any other sport in each of the seven-year periods between 1901 and 1971. However, a different observation emerges when consideration is given to dividing the editorial content into two areas: a) all editorial, which includes previews, reviews, track work and general racing news; and b) fields, tipping, betting markets, form guides, results and stewards reports. Though all areas of a newspaper that are not advertising are editorial content, I re-examined the other major sports, cricket in summer and football in winter, by removing the team line-ups and scoreboards in those two sports to count the column centimetres of coverage. I compared this research with the area allocated for horse

racing articles. My finding was that during three years — 1929, 1964 and 1971 — cricket and football articles received more coverage than racing's articles. Reasons for the change in 1929 was the paper that year experienced a considerable increase in space for sports, increasing from 517 columns in 1922 to 920 columns in 1929. The Test cricket series in the 1928-29 summer received comprehensive coverage in articles, while the scoreboards took up a lot less space than racing fields in winter. In addition, Western Australia played three interstate football matches in Perth in July 1929. The fact that the home side beat South Australia both times generated dominant coverage, and even though Western Australia lost to Victoria, the *West Australian* provided extensive previews and reviews of the game. As with cricket, the football scoreboards were significantly shorter than racing fields.

In the years 1964 and 1971, more space was allocated to the sports section in those years than at any earlier times in the twentieth century. Under the guidance of Ted Collingwood, editorial coverage of horse racing was still comprehensive, but the fields and form guides had increased in size in an effort to sell more papers to punters. This was to meet the challenge of the *Punter* newspaper in 1963, which changed its name to the *Sports Review* the following year. The *Sports Review* was essentially a racing newspaper, with a small section on other sports. The *Daily News*, Perth's afternoon newspaper, the *Sports Review*, and the *West Australian* were all a part of West Australian Newspapers Limited. But they were strong rivals in trying to lure the sports fans.

In a study in the coverage of women's sport in the *Newcastle Herald* from 1890 to 1990, Peter Brown (1995, p. 26) revealed similar findings to this examination in relation to the percentage of sports allocated space in the paper. He reported that animal-related sports (horse racing and trotting) received more coverage than the combined total of all other sports in the *Newcastle Herald* from 1890 to 1965. The fact that the racing sports were also strongly reported in the *Newcastle Herald*, one of Australia's largest provincial newspapers, is an indication that the percentage of sports in the *West Australian* is very comparable to those in other papers at the time in Australia.

Trotting

Trotting, first established in Western Australia in 1910, quickly attracted large numbers of spectators to its meetings. Trotting and horse racing were the State's only

legalised gambling sports during the period of this study. Trotting's popularity in the paper indicates the considerable importance the sports editor, Godfrey White, and later, Ted Collingwood, assigned to the gambling sports in the sporting community.

The amount of space afforded to trotting ranked that sport among the top five in each year from 1915. Its percentage was consistently between 5 and 10 per cent, though in 1943 it reached an astonishing 21.79 per cent. The reasons for its dramatic rise during World War II was the lack of sporting events in Perth. With the other gambling sport, horse racing, also virtually unaffected by the international conflict, trotting, the only sport in Western Australia to be regularly held under lights during the war, attracted large numbers of spectators. This, in turn, attracted significant coverage in the *West Australian*.

As with horse racing, some of the papers most gifted writers were assigned to the trotting round. Clarrie Hart and Jack Lee, two of the earlier trotting writers, were extremely accomplished writers under deadline pressure. The sports editors required the trotting writers to be well-versed in the sport and to work to tight deadlines. On Friday night or public holiday meetings, the trotting writer had a limited time to send his copy to the office from either metropolitan trotting course — Gloucester Park or Richmond Raceway, via a copytaker. Ken Casellas, who only a few months earlier returned to Perth after six months in the Australian Navy, took over from Lee in 1957. The impact of reporting gambling sports during the two world wars will be covered later in this chapter.

Other Sports

At the turn of the century, cycling ranked in popularity with football and cricket. This is due to the fact the bicycle played an important role in the early prospecting days of the Western Australian goldfields. Every town in Western Australia had a cycling track, which usually ran around the perimeter of the cricket oval (Watt, 1901, p. 161). But this popularity did not translate into strong coverage of cycling in the *West Australian* after 1901. That year, cycling was the fourth-best reported sport in January and fifth in July. But because cycling in Australia, and particularly in Western Australia, did not have an international presence, the *West Australian's* editorial team allowed very little coverage of that sport.

Australasia won the Davis Cup, the world's leading international team tennis tournament, for the first time in 1907. Australian Norman Brookes partnered New Zealander Anthony Wilding to beat the British Isles 3-2 in London. This victory and Brookes becoming the first Australian to win a Wimbledon title by taking out the men's singles and men's doubles in the same year, can be attributed to the increase of interest in tennis throughout the nation. The *West Australian* responded with an improved coverage of the sport in 1908. In July 1908, the coverage of tennis increased from 1.46 per cent of the allotted sports coverage in 1901 to 5.54 per cent. This improved the sport from number ten, seven years earlier, to fifth in 1908. Tennis was strongly reported in the paper for the rest of the period under examination, being consistently ranked in the top ten summer and winter sports. Subsequently, apart from receiving 3.27 per cent coverage in 1936, cycling fell back to less than 2 per cent in the last five years being studied.

Speedway, from its origins in the 1920s, became extremely popular as a participant and spectator sport. It was less expensive to participate in motor cycling than in motor racing, and for that reason many of its clientele came from skilled tradespeople and young family groups, along with unskilled labourers (Stoddart, 1986, p. 40). Claremont Speedway, which was opened in 1927, attracted many of the world's top speedway riders until it closed in 2000. Local rider, Sig Schlam, who won the handicap final on the opening program, started achieving victories against visiting interstate riders. By 1929, Schlam had established a world-class reputation, beating many international stars. Schlam's success and the attraction of large crowds to Claremont Speedway had an immediate impact, with strong coverage in the *West Australian*. The sport was the tenth-most reported sport in January 1929. But this early strong coverage became spasmodic, except for previews and reviews of international meetings at Claremont Speedway, during the last three decades examined in this study.

Soccer was introduced into Australia by British coalminers in the early 1870s, though it was another two decades before English and Scottish migrants brought the sport to Western Australia (Kreider, 1996, p. 8). The sport was officially organised from 1896 and the code had a prolonged period of growth between 1897 and 1910 (Kreider, 1996, p. 17). This popularity was responsible for soccer being the third most-reported winter sport — behind horse racing and Australian Rules football — in 1901 (5.04 per cent) and 1908 (6.39 per cent). There was very little reporting of Eastern States or international soccer, but coverage of the sport locally was extensive. The reports were

never referred to as "soccer", but as "British Association Football". It was kick-by-kick reportage by W.C. Thomas, who wrote under the pseudonym "Penalty" from 1900 until after World War I. The sport did not recover from the First World War until 1923 (Kreider, 1996, p. 31), and a few years later the number of clubs decreased when many of the players could not afford their fee (Kreider, 1996, p. 33). Soccer never again reached the heights in its coverage in the *West Australian*. The percentage of sports space allocated to soccer until World War II were 1915 (2.07), 1922 (1.01), 1929 (2.90) and 1936 (2.72).

After infrequent mentions of the sport during the Second World War, soccer regained in popularity in the community. Ted Collingwood had realised this, with the decision to increase the exposure of the "world game" in the paper. The Australian national team visited Perth twice during 1950. In May, the national team outclassed the crew from the ship "Arawa" 11 goals to nil and then beat local team, Fremantle City, seven goals to one. In August, the national team returned to Perth and beat the Western Australian State side five goals to one. These matches received substantial coverage in the *West Australian*. After World War II, the coverage of soccer was ranked in the top 10 sports reported in the *West Australian* for the remainder of this study. In percentage terms, soccer received 2.06 (1950), 3.23 (1957), 3.99 (1964) and 3.85 (1971). had become popular in Western Australia after World War II.

Comparison Between Sports Played in Western Australia and Sports Reported

At the turn of last century, as mentioned, sports journalism in Perth's daily newspaper mainly concentrated on horse racing. Other spectator sports such as Test cricket, the Davis Cup and golf, were either unknown or of trivial importance at the turn of the century. However, as racing is a gambling and not a participatory sport, this is in conflict with the documented sports *played* in Western Australia at the time.

Looking at the literature about sport in Western Australia at the turn of the twentieth century, it becomes clear that judging by the number of people participating, the following were the favourite sports: cycling, lacrosse, tennis, swimming, athletics, golf, boxing, wrestling, rugby union and soccer. However, the paper paints a different picture, dividing its attention between: horse racing, cricket, football, lawn bowls, tennis, athletics, lacrosse, hunting, yachting and rowing.

In the 1920s, post-war technology helped reduce the working week from 50 to 48 hours. The automobile made sporting events more accessible, and with additional leisure time, sports fans had the time to attend them. Sports provided an outlet for individual achievement, as well as an opportunity to cheer and celebrate the individual and his achievements. The Western Australian economy thrived in the 1920s, and sporting promoters found profit in capitalising on the nation's obsession with sport.

Horse Racing

The social restriction of horse racing is clearly evident in its small number of 453 members early last century ("Western Australian Turf Club", 1908). The coverage in the *West Australian* appears to be an imbalance, unless one takes into account the importance the race results had for the betting public. However, the Saturday race meetings attracted several thousand spectators, with the "sport of kings" being described as a sport of the people and one which had become a major part of the lives of Australians (Brassel, 1990, p. 7).

Though the number of participants — the jockeys — is small compared to many other sports played in Western Australia at the time, the attendances at horse racing meetings were higher than other sports for the first three decades of this study. The attendance at the 1922 Perth Cup meeting was 16,180. This was 4,645 higher than the previous year; however, the number of spectators at that meeting was influenced by an engine drivers' strike, which seriously affected the transport to and from the course. All the same, the attendance was higher than the record 15,080 at the 1919 Perth Cup. In 1957, public interest in horse racing was still at a high level, judging by crowds at Perth Cup meetings of between 15,000 and 20,000 for the next two decades and 21,000 at that year's Perth Cup meeting on New Year's Day at Ascot Racecourse. This corresponded to the sport's continual strong coverage in summer and winter. In sporting events in Western Australia during the period, these attendance figures were only surpassed by the WANFL grand finals.

With racing attracting increasing membership, record prize money and constant large attendances, The *West Australian* was justified in its decision to continue leading the sports section with horse racing. Membership of the Western Australian Turf Club increased from 720 in 1964 to the statutory limit of 1,000 in 1971. This expansion corresponded with the number of racing days in 1971 totalling 62 (41 at Ascot and 21 at Belmont), an improvement from the 58 days racing seven years earlier. During the same

period, stake money increased from \$480,400 in the 1963-64 season to \$1,030,600 in 1970-71.

Australian Rules Football

During the first decade of last century, the *West Australian* published very little football between Tuesday and Friday — no stories of stormy tribunals, no pages of excitement over the threatened sacking of new coaches, no tales of high prices being paid for high-profile players and no articles about State football leagues threatening action over failure to grant interstate clearances. But increasing numbers of spectators at the local games resulted in the paper paying greater attention to the Australian sporting invention and providing more space. Attendances slowly improved until the 1936 grand final between East Perth and Claremont, which attracted a record 20,874 spectators. World War II did have a dramatic effect on the sport, with it changing to an under-18 competition from 1942 to 1945. As a result, coverage in the *West Australian* suffered.

After the war, attendances recovered to higher levels than previously, with 34,049 attending the 1949 grand final. In 1955, 40,000 attended a WANFL grand final for the first time, and a record 51,385 attended the 1969 grand final between West Perth and East Perth. The *West Australian* responded with strong coverage through the 1960s and into the seventies. For instance, 18.75 per cent of the paper's sports coverage in July 1971 was Australian Rules football, in a month which totalled 878 columns of sport — the most space allocated to sport during the seven decades of this study.

Cricket

Cricket was the first team sport to be played in Australia. At the turn of last century, the Western Australia Cricket Association (WACA) consisted of only six clubs — North Perth, South Perth, West Perth, East Perth, East Fremantle and South Fremantle — though there were a couple of other cricket associations. The WACA, the State's ruling body, consisted of only one grade at the time. Though Perth did not hold its first Test match until 1970, from early last century, large crowds watched visiting teams. A number of Eastern States sides and, during the first half of twentieth century, the English team would travel to Australia by ship, disembark at Fremantle, play a game against a Western Australian State team, before continuing to the Eastern States by train for a Test series against Australia. In the 1920s these matches regularly attracted between 5,000 and 6,000 spectators on the first day (Barker, 1998, p. 77). Barker adds:

"In proportion to a metropolitan population of just over 200,000, such crowds were the equivalent of some 35,000-40,000 in the Perth of the late 1990s" (1998, p. 77).

The *West Australian* justifiably strongly reported cricket throughout the period. Local grade competitions, interstate games and visiting overseas teams to the east coast were comprehensively covered during the summer months. The paper also strongly reported Test matches in the northern hemisphere, even if the competition did not include Australian teams. This was influenced by the deep-rooted significance of cricket to Australian culture.

Tennis

Tennis was one of the most consistently reported sports around the year in the *West Australian* during the seven decades under examination. No other sport in Australia in the 1950s and sixties rivalled tennis in the number of highly-ranked players produced in this country. Australians also had significant success at the annual Wimbledon championships, the world's leading individual tournament, and the Davis Cup, the world's best men's teams event. With these achievements and a solid membership base locally, tennis was one of the best reported sports from 1901 to 1971. Tennis was ranked in the top 10 in coverage in each of the 11 winter periods and in the top 10 in nine summer months. This corresponds with tennis being a popular sport in Perth. Only six years after the formation of the Lawn Tennis of Western Australia (LTAWA), the 1909 Australasian championships were held in Perth. As Phillips observed: "It was one of the first occasions since federation that Western Australia had been designated the location of a national sporting event of such significance" (1989, p. 128). The growing popularity of the sport is evident by membership of the Western Australian Lawn Tennis Association increasing from 5,400 in 1945 to 10,416 in 1971, which peaked at 13,693 in 1962 (Phillips, 1995, p. 360). During the same period, the number of metropolitan clubs doubled from 19 in 1945 to 38 in 1971.

The coverage of the sport in the summer of 1971 was assisted with several of the world's best tennis players contesting the Western Australian open championships at Royal Kings Park. They included Russian Alex Metreveli, who beat John Alexander, the world's best under-25 player, in straight sets in the men's singles final. In the women's final contested by former Wimbledon singles champions, Perth-based Margaret Court took only 37 minutes to beat Britain's Virginia Wade in straight sets.

The popularity of the event resulted in a total of 30,538 spectators attending the championships and gate takings were more than \$50,000.

In each of the seven year periods, tennis was one of the top sports in regards to publicity in the *West Australian*. But its figures were boosted by the Wimbledon championships — the world's most prestigious individual tournament, which is traditionally held in July. But more impressively are the January figures. Coverage of local and interstate tournaments enabled tennis to be ranked among the top five sports reported in January every seven years after World War II. This can be attributed to Australian being a tennis world-power, which influenced the sports editor to afford significant space to the sport.

Baseball

Baseball was first played in Western Australia in 1936 and the *West Australian* was at the forefront in promoting the sport locally. Charles Patrick Smith, the paper's managing editor from 1927 to 1951, and a baseball fan, attracted several leading Eastern States baseballers to Perth. These exhibition games were the forerunner of the sport in Western Australia. They included New Zealander Bert Kortlang, a successful baseball player in the Eastern States, who was contracted by the *West Australian* to regularly write articles about the sport during the late 1930s.

In addition to the Western Australian Baseball League (WABL) matches, regular games between the *West Australian* and local teams were played on the Esplanade, near the city centre. Large crowds attended the games. For example, more than 5,000 spectators watched the game between "Wests" and "Tigers" on 15 July 1936. Many of the State's top baseballers were employed at the *West Australian* and "Wests" won this game seven runs to six. Because of the enormous public interest in the match, radio 6WF broadcast the following day's game between the same teams ("Wests defeat Tigers", 1936). The *West Australian* often printed a briefing box, naming the players of both teams and listing the individual players' statistics — times at bat, strike outs recorded by the pitchers, safe hits, runs scored, stolen bases, put outs, assisted outs, fielding errors, home runs and the number of three-base hits. Though the *West Australian* was at the forefront of bringing the sport to the State and provided considerable coverage to its lunch-time games, the sport was relatively slow to progress to regular competition. As a result, the sport did not attract consistent publicity.

Lawn Bowls

Lawn bowls was one of Western Australia's fastest-growing sports during the first decade of the twentieth century. In 1898, the Western Australian Bowling Association consisted of three clubs, but in 1908 the number had increased to 23, seven of which were in country centres (McDonald, Cooper & Hall, 1998, p. 19). There were 832 registered bowlers in the State, with about a third living in the regional areas of Western Australia. The high membership and development of the sport justified the *West Australian* providing an expanded coverage for lawn bowls during their seasons. Membership of the Western Australian Royal Lawn Bowls Association (WARLBA) continued to rapidly improve after World War II, reaching 17,787 in 1971. The reporting of the sport in the paper was constantly high throughout the 70 years examined.

Golf

Golf was one of Western Australia's rapidly growing sports during the 1920s. Between 1917 and 1930, the State's population, aided by immigration, increased from 306,838 to 431,610. During the same period, the number of professionals and public servants playing golf increased from 14,237 to 16,719 (White, 1997, p. 3). Many new golf clubs were established in Perth and rural districts in the 1920s. One of the *West Australian's* most celebrated golf writers, employing the pseudonym "T Box", E.O.G. Shann, was Professor of History and Economics at the University of Western Australia. The Depression did not affect the strong growth of the sport in Western Australia during the early 1930s (White, 1997, p. 8). In 1932, there were 65 golf clubs affiliated with the Western Australian Golf Association (WAGA) and more than 5,000 registered members ("Hazard", 1932); but twelve months later the number of clubs had increased to 79, with others lined up ready to join, and 10,000 members ("Hazard", 1933). From 1927 to 1933 the number of clubs nearly quadrupled and the one hundredth club was registered in 1935. There was a similar growth in women's golf. The member clubs in the Ladies' Golf Union (LGU) increased from 31 in 1929, 53 in 1933 and 81 in 1936 (White, 1997, p. 8). This is in line with the coverage of the sport in the *West Australian*, which afforded consistent strong coverage, and golf was among the top seven sports reported in July in each seven-year cycle since 1929. Golf was played as a predominantly winter sport in Western Australia, because of regular heatwave conditions during the summer months.

Athletics

The Western Australian Amateur Athletics Association had a brief lifespan early last century, being in existence from 1905 to 1908. However, the organisation was reformed in 1928 and in the following three decades produced two of the world's greatest track and field athletes — Shirley Strickland-de la Hunty and Herb Elliott. The sport received only spasmodic coverage in the *West Australian* until the late 1940s. But with Olympic success by Western Australian high jumper John Winter (1948), hurdler de la Hunty (1952 and 1956) and middle-distance runner Elliott (1960), track and field was established as one of the paper's leading sports during the final two decades of this study. The increased space given to the sport did not accord to the membership of the Western Australian Amateur Athletics Association, which had only a small membership base, usually less than 600.

Soccer

An expanded coverage of soccer represented the enormous growth of the sport during the first decade of last century. The near doubling of the State's population was responsible for soccer enjoying a prolonged period of growth from 1897 to 1910 (Kreider, 1996, p. 17). Soccer was preceded only by horse racing and Australian Rules football as the most reported sport in the *West Australian* in July 1901 and in July 1908.

However, apart from the first decade, there was little reporting of international soccer in the *West Australian* during the first half of the twentieth century. This corresponded with a steady, but relatively small, coverage of soccer locally. World War I took its toll on WA soccer players and officials and it was not until 1921, with the assistance of immigration, that the code regained full strength and established 16 teams competing in two divisions.

There were spasmodic visits to Perth by Eastern States and overseas teams during the last two decades of this study. This was a major reason for soccer establishing itself as one of the strongest reported sports in the paper from 1950 onwards.

Major Sporting Events

The Olympic Games has been the biggest sporting event in the world every four years since 1896, except during the two world wars. The Olympics influenced the reporting of sport in the *West Australian*, though the early Games resulted in scattered

and inconsistent coverage. The 1896 Olympics consisted of only 43 events, compared to 301 at the Athens Olympics in 2004, and was held over 10 days. However, the next five Games, between 1900 and 1928, were held over several months. The *West Australian's* coverage of the Games before World War I was severely restricted. Reports were usually limited to one or two sentences. This was caused by the high cost of receiving overseas news items by cable. At the time, there was a monopoly which ensured that there was only a single press cable service supplying international news for the whole of Australia and New Zealand (Putnis, 1999; Putnis, 1998; Putnis, 1997).

The 1936 Olympic Games, held in Berlin from 1-16 August, were one of the world's notable sporting events. In 1931, when Berlin was chosen as the site for the Olympics, few people suggested that only two years later Germany would see the rise to power of Adolf Hitler and the Nazi Party. The 1936 Games are "best remembered for Hitler's failed attempt to use them to prove his theories of Aryan racial superiority" (Wallechinsky, 2004, p. 11). The *West Australian's* coverage of the opening ceremony was not of the teams taking part, but concentrated on the precision and the ability of the German organisers:

The XI Olympiad was officially opened in the main stadium at Olympic Park today with a spectacular demonstration of the German genius for organisation. The pageantry of the occasion lacked only sunshine. The dominant impression had by visitors was of a nation of efficiency in uniform; every ceremony was carried out within seconds of schedule—from the time 40,000 boys and girls of the Hitler youth organisation assembled in the Lustgarten in the morning until the German Chancellor (Herr Hitler) stood up in his car, amid a farewell of a fanfare of trumpets, and drove from the stadium to the Chancellery. He drove first through a chain of black-uniformed guards, alternately with their faces and backs to the roadway; then past miles of brown shirts, who solidly lined both sides of the roadway leading to the city. Mr. James Taylor, the Australian representative to the International Olympic Committee, who is attending his fifth Olympiad, described the opening scene as unprecedented for its grandeur and inspiration. ("Opening pageant", 1936)

Coverage of the 1936 Olympic Games under the banner "Olympic Games" was separate from the general sports pages and consisted daily of four columns of editorial and photographs. These Games were the only time in Olympic history that Australian athletes failed to win a medal. There was some focus in the *West Australian* on the Australian performances. But the main coverage focused on some of the stars of world sport — including black American Jessie Owens winning four gold medals in track and field, and New Zealand Rhodes scholar Jack Lovelock taking out the 1,500 metres. This

was a largely international-focused coverage, because the *West Australian* did not have a representative in Berlin. All news from the Games was received via international wire news services.

In 1956, Melbourne hosted the first Olympics to be held in the southern hemisphere. Front page reporting, as well as saturation coverage, featured in the *West Australian* on each day during the biggest sporting event to be held in Australia until the 2000 Olympics in Sydney. Three journalists from the *West Australian* travelled to Melbourne for the Games — Ted Collingwood in his role as sports editor, Geoff Christian who was considered the paper's best general sports reporter, and Jim Ross who won a trip to the Olympics after being named the paper's Cadet-of-the-Year. That trio provided coverage of the highlights on each day. The *West Australian* also utilised the services provided by various national news services.

Another influential sporting event reported in the *West Australian* was the Commonwealth Games, which attracts particular interest from Australians. They were initially named the Empire Games, first held in Hamilton, Canada, in 1930, and were also held every four years, except during World War II. Though the paper did not have a representative at a Commonwealth Games until 1962, when they were held in Perth, the *West Australian* provided a strong focus on Australian performances, especially when local athletes achieved success. Perth track and field athlete Decima Norman was the outstanding competitor with five gold medals at the 1938 Games in Sydney. Stories surrounding Norman's performances consistently dominated the sports coverage in the *West Australian*. The locality of the competition, together with Norman being better known to readers of the *West Australian* and being touted as a potential gold medalist at the 1940 Olympic Games (which were not held because of World War II), were compelling reasons for significant attention on the WA athlete.

Perth athlete Shirley Strickland (later known by her married name Shirley de la Hunty) was regularly in the news since winning a bronze medal at the 1948 Olympic Games in London. One article in the build-up to the 1950 British Empire Games in Auckland highlighted her financial problems, which prevented her from travelling to the Eastern States for regular competition. The fact that Strickland, Western Australia's first female Olympic track and field athlete, and was a household name, was prime news material, so justified her coverage.

The situation was different with high jumper John Winter, Western Australia's first Olympic gold medalist. In the post-Olympics coverage in the *West Australian*, the amount of space accorded to Winter was insignificant compared to Strickland. There are a few compelling reasons for this. For example, at major track and field meetings, the high jump is generally not considered as important as the sprint events, and Strickland was one of the world's best sprinters and hurdlers at the time. Winter was not ranked a genuine medal chance at the Olympics when he caused a major upset to beat his more-fancied rivals at a height which was not considered a world-class performance. Winter also spent considerable time living overseas after his success at the London Olympics, so his availability to the local media was also limited.

Other Factors Influencing Sports Reporting

Tyranny of Distance

Until the late 1940s, the *West Australian* generally relied on wire services and reporting from special correspondents based in the Eastern States for coverage of general sporting events. Travel opportunities for the paper's sports journalists were rare during this period. Exceptions were the chief racing writers, Godfrey White, and later Ted Collingwood, who regularly attended the annual sprint racing carnivals in Victoria, which included the Melbourne Cup. In the early 1950s, the paper's tennis writer, Irwin Powell, and cricket and football reporter, Charlie Ammon, were the paper's first journalists in sports other than horse racing to travel interstate on assignment. The paper's chief football writers then regularly attended interstate games and the cricket writers travelled to the Eastern States for Test matches and some Sheffield Shield games.

Ted Collingwood was the *West Australian's* first sports journalist to officially travel overseas on assignment, when he covered the 1960 Olympic Games in Rome. He then went to Mexico City to cover the next Olympics four years later. This meant that the paper was reliant upon syndicated copy from various international news organisations for all overseas sporting events during the first six decades of the study. Collingwood was the only sporting journalist to travel overseas on assignment during the period of this study. However, he provided a coverage of the 1932 Los Angeles Olympic Games, after taking leave from the paper and making the trip to the United States at his own expense (M. Collingwood, personal communication, 15 May, 1999). Alan Newman was the paper's second sports journalist to travel overseas on assignment

when he was a part of the Melbourne-based Herald and Weekly Times team at the Munich Olympics in 1972.

There is an inherent danger of incorrect messages being received via the press cable services. For example, the Australian media credited Frank Beaurepaire to a gold medal that he did not win at the 1908 Olympics. A report claimed that he had won the half-mile freestyle. However, there has never been a swimming race over a half-mile or its metric equivalent of 800 metres for men at an Olympic Games. Beaurepaire had won the reported race during a lead-up meeting a week before the start of the Olympic swimming. With no Western Australian journalists in London covering the Games and years before radio was available in Australia, this information was not possible to verify. There was not the mass reporting of major overseas sporting events which became commonplace in the last three decades of the twentieth century. The day after the initial report of Beaurepaire's "victory", the *West Australian* reported that he had been chosen in a four-man swimming team to compete at the Olympics "after a trial". It is obvious that the cables failed to arrive in Perth in the order of being dispatched. The fact the error was not noticed by the editorial team at the paper indicates there was little local enthusiasm and interest in the Olympic Games by the paper's editorial staff.

World Wars

Sports writing in the early decades of the twentieth century indicates some impact of the First World War. The reporting of international sport fell to almost nil and there was an unprecedented interest in rifle shooting in 1915. The allocation of space to sport in the paper, however, fell by less than half a per cent to 11.60 per cent since 1908. The space of sports reporting in 1915 was comprised of 80.13 per cent local coverage, 19.22 per cent national and 0.65 per cent international.

On a national level, McKernan argues that during the war, there were two classes of people in sport — professionals and amateurs (1979, p. 1). According to McKernan, the pressure of World War I heightened and clarified many of the emerging conflicts in Australian society, and brought these divisions about the meaning and purpose of sport into focus. Each day, newspapers carried extended lists of casualties and reported the number of fallen soldiers. For many, sport lost its relevance. Those who subscribed to the amateur view, which mainly prevailed in the middle-class, demanded the abandonment of sport during the war because it distracted the nation from its commitment to the Empire. However, those who held the professional view, which

was to be found among the Australian working class, insisted that sport continue, in order to provide some relief from constant contemplation of the horrors of war. During the war these two classes moved further apart, "divided by the fundamental question of the priority Australians should give to the defence of the Empire" (McKernan, 1979, p. 1).

Overall, sports in 1915, as measured by their reporting, had a downturn, but this pales in comparison to the impact on sport of the Second World War. Thirty seven sports were reported and a total of 423 broadsheet columns (equalling 464 tabloid) were devoted to sport in January and July 1915, in contrast to 19 sports and only 68 columns (96 tabloid) allocated to sport in those two months in 1943. This compared to 772 broadsheet columns (1,060 tabloid) in the same months in 1936. The percentage of sport in the total editorial content decreased sharply from 19 per cent in 1936 to 6 per cent in 1943. This was, however, largely caused by a massive shortage of newsprint. The need to conserve shipping space and foreign exchange forced the Federal Government to ration the importing of newsprint during World War II. Most Australian newspapers were greatly reduced in size during World War II. For example, at the *Newcastle Morning Herald* in regional New South Wales, the weekly paging was reduced from 108 to thirty-four (Kirkpatrick, 2000, p. 393). This was the situation with *The West Australian*, which regularly consisted of between 24 and 36 pages before the war, and shrank to eight or 12 pages between 1941 and 1945.

During the same period, the number of sports reported in the *West Australian* decreased from 44 in 1936 to 19 in 1943. Only a third of the 1936 figure was allocated to sport in 1943, with 6.38 per cent, which was the smallest number of sport printed in the paper during this study. General news, which was dominated by items from World War II, amounted to 87.28 per cent. Finance news consisted of 5.34 per cent and entertainment was a minimal 0.49 per cent. Of the sports coverage, local sport dominated with 87.02 per cent. This was well ahead of national (11.85) and international (1.12) sports.

Most members of the *West Australian's* sports staff spent at least a few years in the Australian armed forces during World War II. Sports editor Ted Collingwood was absent from Perth from 1942 to 1945. Former sports editor Godfrey White accepted an invitation to return to the paper as the acting sports editor until Collingwood returned. White agreed with the provision that his work at the paper did not interfere with his

playing of lawn bowls. Former *Sunday Times* racing writer, Syd Cusack, who had retired from that paper and was a friend of White's, agreed to serve as the *West Australian's* chief sport sub-editor during the war. White continued the tradition of racing domination in the paper, and Cusack also contributed with some writing and under the pen-name of "Levuka", he covered the trotting meetings.

There were several compelling reasons for the minimal amount of sport published in the *West Australian* in 1943. The lack of available newsprint greatly reduced the size of the paper and most of what was available was used to keep the public informed of news from the war, which was justifiably given preference over other items, including sport. Many sports were in recess as able bodied men and women were serving in war. A lack of staff at the paper meant that only the main sports could be reported. Sport was seen by many people as unnecessary diversion, similar to the view held in World War I. Also, rifle shooting was considered an important sport in 1915, while it played no role in 1943. The reason for this can be found in the fact that all potential participants were engaged in the actual war.

Horse Racing and Trotting

Horse racing, trotting and lawn bowls were the only sports to continue almost unscathed during World War II. The reasons for lawn bowls being unaffected during the war will be established later in this section. A major reason for horse racing being unaffected by the war was partly because the jockeys, who were small in stature, were generally not called up for enlistment in the Australian armed forces; and that the gambling sports filled the void caused by the cancellation of other sports and entertainment generally. This is also reflected in the overwhelming predominance of horse racing and trotting in the sports pages of the *West Australian*. Those jockeys who did join up had to get their uniforms specially re-tailored to fit their diminutive frames.

Perth did not quite see the sudden rise in popularity of racing as did Brisbane. Thousands of United States servicemen were based in Brisbane during the war, and its Albion Park race meetings were strongly patronised by American servicemen. Because the American soldiers were much better paid than the Australian servicemen, the sudden influx of American racegoers was noticed. Former leading Australian jockey George Moore, who rode at Albion Park, Brisbane, between military duties, noticed that most of the men attending the Brisbane race meetings were Americans in uniform (cited in Hayes, 2000, p. 114). However, no equivalent observation exists about Perth.

Membership of the Western Australian Turf Club (WATC) fell from 448 in 1936 to 370 in 1943.

White team sports, especially those played by able-bodied young men, were strongly affected by the war, the gambling sports of horse racing and trotting were not. Horse racing was the major sport reported in 1915, recording 38 per cent of the column centimetres afforded to sports in the paper in January and 40 per cent in July. The emergence of trotting, the other legalised gambling sport in Western Australia, made a significant impact in its coverage in the *West Australian*. The fact that trotting immediately became the third most reported sport in the paper indicates the considerable importance the sports editor, Godfrey White, believed the role of the gambling sports held in the sporting community. There was popular consent in the many voices against the continuation of racing during the war, but they had a slim chance of being heard because of the thousands of dollars which the race clubs and prominent racing identities donated towards the war effort. The basis for the opposition was that fit young men would be put to better use for the national effort by enlisting, rather than racing. Because racing was discontinued in Europe during the war, a significant number of leading northern hemisphere horses were sent to Australia to race.

Coverage of trotting received 9.74 per cent of the sports coverage in January 1915 and 11.87 per cent in July. The sport was ranked number three in as far as coverage is concerned in both months — behind horse racing and cricket in summer, and behind horse racing and Australian rules football in winter.

But a different picture emerged in 1943. In a consensus from the paper's management, three quarters of the sports editorial in the *West Australian* in January was given to the two gambling sports. Despite the WATC's decrease in membership, the coverage of racing in the *West Australian* increased by 18 per cent of space in January and 28 per cent in July, as compared to seven years earlier. Racing continued to be the paper's highest-reported sport, with 47.40 per cent. Of this, 29.44 percent of the sports space consisted of articles, while 17.96 percent was allocated to results and fields. For the only time during this study, trotting had emerged as the second highest reported sport in the paper, with 27.58 per cent, replacing the two top team sports — cricket in summer and Australian Rules football in winter.

The coverage of horse racing and trotting in the *West Australian* totalled 73 per cent of the sports pages in 1943. Horse racing dramatically increased from 26 per cent

in 1936 to 48 per cent in 1943, while trotting increased from nine to 25 per cent. Trotting is often referred as a "poor relation" of horse racing. However, the attraction of being able to legally gamble and the fact that the Western Australian Trotting Association (WATA) provided the only sport consistently held at night in Perth attracted large crowds to its weekly meetings. This popularity was translated into considerable exposure in the paper's sports pages.

Australian Rules Football

Australian Rules football was beginning to command increasing space in the paper at the outbreak of World War I. When war was officially declared in August 1914, there was little initial impact on sport in Western Australia. The football season had only a month to be played. The prevailing mood at the time was that many predicted the hostilities would be over by the time Australian troops arrived in the theatres of conflict. Most believed the war would be short-lived, with minimal casualties (McFarlane & Roberts, 1999, p. 43; Pollard, 1992, p. 205; McKernan, 1979, p. 1).

World War I had entered its second year by the start of the 1915 Australian Rules football season and though, consensually, public opinion favoured a curtailment of all sport, particularly at top level, the Western Australian National Football League (WANFL) went ahead with its program. However, attendances suffered "because many football followers were reluctant to watch grown men kick a football around while thousands of their fellow-countrymen were fighting and dying at Gallipoli and in Europe" (Christian, Lee and Messenger, 1985, p. 23). In their book *The footballers: A history of football in Western Australia*, Christian et al. claim that in common with other sports, football received little publicity in the newspapers, with most of the space dedicated to news from the war (1985, p. 23). But this assertion is contradicted by my research, which shows football continued to be reported strongly. In 1915, 16.55 per cent of the sports coverage in the *West Australian* was allocated to Australian Rules football, which was only 2.08 per cent less than the sport received in 1908.

But when the WANFL decided on 5 August 1915 to curtail its season on 21 August, four weeks early, two of the clubs — Perth and East Perth — decided to test the legality of the decision in the Supreme Court. Perth and East Perth were fifth and sixth, and only one victory behind the Midland Junction and East Fremantle teams, which were third and fourth. If the season had been completed early, neither team would have been eligible to play in the finals. But the WANFL did not contest the action and the

season continued as scheduled. Perth and East Perth subsequently qualified for the finals. Despite the falling attendances, football continued to be played in Perth throughout the war years.

Australian Prime Minister, William Hughes, believing that he needed to placate public opinion during the May 1917 federal election campaign, announced that his government would introduce controls on sport. Hughes had a resounding election victory, but his government waited until September before taking action, which meant that it was not forced to move against the various codes of football, the major spectator sports in all of the capital cities. In an attempt to manage public opinion through consent, the government eventually announced that horse racing would be restricted, particularly on weekdays, and that only one boxing program would be permitted in each State per fortnight.

During World War II, the large number of men serving in Australia's war efforts caused the WANFL to change the State's elite football competition into an under-18 years age competition from 1942 to 1944. The same eight clubs — East Fremantle, South Fremantle, Claremont, Subiaco, Perth, Swan Districts, East Perth and West Perth — still played under the auspices of the WANFL. Only 8,415 spectators attended the 1943 grand final to watch East Fremantle beat Swan Districts to win its nineteenth premiership. This attendance contrasted with the 20,874 who saw East Perth beat Claremont in the grand final seven years earlier. Despite the falling crowds at the football and the age restriction of the WANFL, the percentage of space allocated to football in the *West Australian* had increased since 1936. This can be attributed to the sport being seen as a quintessential Australian sport, deeply rooted in society.

Cricket

Though there were no international cricket or Sheffield Shield matches during World War I, the sport received 17 per cent of the available sports space, to remain the *West Australian's* number two summer sport, behind horse racing. This was due to the paper providing consistently strong reporting of the local grade matches.

In contrast, cricket, with only 7 per cent of the sports coverage, fell to fourth in 1943 — behind horse racing, trotting and lawn bowls. Coverage of cricket was restricted to the local pennant competition, with many of the matches having been reduced from two days to one.

The war did not immediately end all spectator sport in Western Australia. In early February 1940 considerable newspaper attention was focused on Don Bradman's South Australia, playing two exhibition cricket matches in Kalgoorlie, and even more on the Inter-Dominion trotting championships at Perth's Gloucester Park. But these were uncertain times and with the war moving to the north of Australia, the local cricket competition was suspended for five years and the Western Australian Cricket Association Ground was occupied by the military.

There was an eight-year gap in Test cricket series between Australia and England, after Australia completed a five-Test match series tour of England in August 1938. Both countries won one Test match each, one match was abandoned, with the other two matches drawn. Despite it being so soon after World War II, England embarked on a five Test match tour of Australia in November 1946. It was a disastrous tour for the visitors, with Australia winning the series three Tests to nil, with two matches drawn. It is surprising that the English undertook the tour so soon after World War II. The war-torn nation was still feeling the effects of hostilities, but the English team accepted the Board of Control invitation to tour Australia. England did not regain the Ashes until its 1954-55 tour of Australia. At the outbreak of World War II, Western Australia appeared certain to join the Australian domestic cricket competition, the Sheffield Shield. But because of the war, WA was not admitted to the Shield competition until the 1947-48 season. These factors helped restore cricket to the number two sport in the *West Australian* by 1950.

Rifle Shooting

There was an unprecedented interest in rifle shooting resulting, with its coverage increasing four-fold in World War I. Rifle shooting rose in its coverage in the paper from 2 to 8 per cent between 1908 and 1915. The reason for this is that rifle shooting was consensually linked to the defence of Australia in times of war.

The paper's articles during the war reported less on the shooting competition itself, but it was used as a vehicle to remind people of the contribution of rifle shooting to the war effort.

In contrast to World War I, there was very little coverage of rifle shooting in the *West Australian* during the Second World War. There is no evidence there were regular competitions between 1940 and 1946. In addition, with the vastly decreased amount of

space for sporting stories, the paper's management had to be very judicious in what sporting details to publish.

Tennis

The two world wars caused the cancellation of most international sport. Despite there being no Wimbledon championships in 1915, local tennis received wide coverage in the *West Australian*, though the Western Australian Lawn Tennis Association (WALTA) cancelled the 1915 State open championships. The Open was not again held until 1919. The Wimbledon tennis championships were not held from 1915 to 1919.

The WALTA had difficulties in arranging committees to carry on its affairs in 1942 (Phillips, 1995, p. 132). A lack of international tennis during World War II, with the Wimbledon championships suspended from 1940 to 1945, and the problems experienced locally, were responsible for the sport receiving less than one per cent of the coverage for the only time in July during the seventy years of this study. There was a serious shortage of tennis equipment during World War II, which contributed to the curtailing of activities. However, the WALTA was not threatened with extinction as it had been in the First World War (Phillips, 1997, p. 105).

Lawn Bowls

The outbreak of World War I in August 1914 brought to an end a decade of expansion by the Royal Western Australian Bowling Association (RWABA), as human energies were devoted to the war effort and more than 80 bowlers enlisted in the armed forces. During the previous seven years, the paper's coverage of bowls had increased slightly to 7 per cent of the sports allocation in 1915.

During World War II, petrol-rationing had a substantial wartime impact upon lawn bowls in Western Australia. This caused the RWABA to reduce the pennant games from 25 to 21 ends, to allow players more time to travel by public transport. Japan's entry into the war in December 1941 meant an intensification of the national emergency. Blackouts brought night bowling to an end. Almost immediately after Australia entered World War II in September 1939, the RWABA began to explore ways in which it might contribute to the war effort. The Association established a fund in the following year.

In contrast to World War I, most members of the RWABA were over the age for enlistment or home defence in the Second World War (WABA annual report, 1940). As

a result, the sport was unaffected by the war and in January 1943, lawn bowls was third, behind horse racing and trotting, with 14.06 per cent of the allocated space for sports reporting in the *West Australian*. This enormous jump in popularity by the paper was obviously due to the influence of the acting sports editor Godfrey White, an avid lawn bowler.

Between the Wars

Between the two wars, significant turning points for newspapers and Australian society were "the advent of radio broadcasting in Australia during the 1920s, the emergence of the Australian Broadcasting Commission in 1932, and the Great Depression of 1929-32, with lingering effects for some years afterwards" (Kirkpatrick, 2001).

Post-World War technology helped freed workers from extremely long hours, reducing the working week from 60 to 48 hours. The automobile made the nation mobile. Sports events became more accessible, and people had the time and money to attend them. In the 1920s, there were few parallels in history to an Australian culture which was presented with the gift of leisure, not just to one class but to almost the entire culture. Australians found in sports a place for loyalties that in past decades had been primarily extended as a nationalistic feeling to the country in times of war.

It seems improbable that every sport's ultimate champion arose in the same ten-year period. Yet the heroes of the Golden Age have endured. Cricketer Don Bradman, billiards player Walter Lindrum and champion racehorse Phar Lap became household names in Australia and overseas. The appeal of these heroes and legends reached beyond the hard-core sports fan who had the inside knowledge of the games needed to evaluate their abilities and place in context their achievements. The sports stars became household names as the sportswriters conveyed more than the game to the readers, enhancing their appeal.

Whether the sports press caused the sports boom or responded to public demand, it certainly shaped the public's perception, because newspapers provided the country with virtually all its exposure to the sports stars. In a time before television, and before widespread newsreel sports coverage, few fans were able to see the great players. Most people came to know these sports stars through the images created by the sportswriters.

These sports stories made the heroes larger than life at a time when there were no yardsticks.

As a group, sportswriters played a large role in the growth and development of modern Australian sport between the two wars. In the days before radio and especially television, their millions of words in the press on Australia's sporting instincts aroused our passions, affected our speech and popularised ideologies and opinions. The professional sportswriter was a principal player in the sometimes dramatic, often melodramatic story of a young Australian male struggling with himself for permission to play during the tough economic conditions of the Depression in the early 1930s.

Technological Changes

Radio's impact upon Australian social life remains underrated, particularly in sport where the new medium quickly established new ways of life (Stoddart, 1986, p. 92). Radio commenced in Western Australia in 1924 and four years later, 6WF started to broadcast metropolitan horse racing meetings. The following year, the station broadcast descriptions of play for ten-minute sessions in the semi-finals and grand final of the WANFL. With this new medium playing a role in providing the public with sporting information, newspapers needed to change their delivery of sports news to combat this new challenge to the monopoly that the print media had enjoyed. However, some of the writings in the paper embraced the necessary changes earlier than others.

The advent of television had the biggest impact on the media during the twentieth century. The immediacy of television was expected to exert early changes on how the print media covered sporting events. However, there is very little evidence to show that television greatly changed the way that sport was covered for the first decade after the medium first appeared in Western Australia in 1959. There was very little live televised sporting coverage in the State until the late 1960s and it was not until 1970 (Melbourne Cup and the English cricket tour of Australia) that Western Australian viewers received a live telecast event from the Eastern States. Sports journalists at the *West Australian* had, several years before the introduction of television, begun to write human interest and background stories of sportsmen and women. Television did eventually create changes in how sporting events were covered in the print media, but the major changes did not start until in the mid-1970s.

A significant change to the sports section of the *West Australian* in the second half of the twentieth century was the increased number of photographs. However, Ted Collingwood did not totally embrace the improving technology in regards to photographs. He seldom used large photographs, preferring to utilise the space for additional text. It was not until Collingwood's retirement in April 1971 and the appointment of Ray Eastwood as the new sports editor that photographs noticeably increased in size. This can be attributed to Eastwood having been the paper's pictorial editor for several years before his appointment as head of the sports department. Because of his previous position, Eastwood was more picture-conscious than Collingwood. There is evidence in the layout of the sports pages that Collingwood considered the inclusion of pictures as a waste of space. It appears that this was because he had started his employment at the paper when photographs did not play an important role in the presentation of news.

The lack of technology until the 1950s prevented pictures in the *West Australian* from moving from the static montages of news to the action shots of modern newspaper photographs. Most close-up photographs of sportsmen and women during the first five decades of last century were posed. Action shots entered the *West Australian* in the early 1950s, but it was another decade before close-up action photographs were regularly published.

Women's Sports Writing

Women's sport in the late nineteenth century, and for the first 50 years of the twentieth century, had a different social role to that of men's. Men's sport was "well grounded in the positive attributes of manliness and individuality, while women's sport, where it existed, was believed to have definite biological and demographic implications because of their roles as potential wives and mothers" (McCarthy, 1994, p. 119). This attitude was in line with the reporting of women's sport in the *West Australian* during the first half of last century. The paper reflected community attitudes with very little reporting of women's sport in the paper, except for the Olympic Games when Australians achieved success, notably in 1952 and 1956, where women won eight of Australia's sixteen gold medals. This is despite only a restricted number of sports and events being available to women, as compared to men.

The first regular reporting of women's sport in the paper was a weekly "Women in Sport" column, which began in the women's social pages in 1936. Written by

"Atalanta", whose identity is unknown, and published each Tuesday, the column focussed on the social aspects of women's sport and serious competition. "Atalanta" was not a sports journalist, but a general reporter who had an interest in sport. Many of her articles were aspects of women's sport that were not deemed newsworthy in the general sports pages, while much of her writing was about recreation for women. This column disappeared during World War II, because of the restrictions in the paper's size. Before the war, and for several years after the conflict, there was little evidence of sport involving women in the sports section.

Pat Higgins resumed the women's page sports column under the banner "Women's sport" shortly after joining the *West Australian* in 1954. The column was also printed on the women's page every Tuesday, though her role contrasted to the previous columns compiled by journalists specially attached to the social pages. Higgins concentrated mainly on the competition side of sport, rather than the social aspects, as did her predecessors. Higgins' columns usually consisted of between two and four items every week. For example, on 8 January 1957, she wrote about swimming, diving and tennis. She often examined issues of hardship affecting Western Australian athletes, for example, the plight of local swimmers and divers who were striving for Australian selection.

Higgins continued her women's sport page column after joining the paper's sports department in 1956. At her own admission, during her seven years she was in the sports department, Higgins endeavoured to address the imbalance of what she perceived as a male bias against women's coverage of sport in the paper (P. Higgins, personal communication, December 21, 1998). Though she covered some men's events, much of Higgins' writing was about women's sporting competition and personalities. Her specialty rounds were golf and hockey. It was notable that after Higgins resigned early in 1963, the number of women's sports articles decreased. This can be attributed to Ted Collingwood's belief that the sports section had mainly a male readership and there was little interest in reading about women's sport. Collingwood accepted women's sporting items from Higgins. His decision to appoint Higgins to his department was not because of her gender, but rather because of her sporting prowess. She was a Western Australian junior golf champion and a member of the State golf team for several years. The next, and only second female sports journalist, Gené Stephan, was appointed to the paper in 1989.

After Higgins resigned, one of the paper's social writers, Roslyn Owen, continued to write the weekly women's sport column. Entitled "Sport", the column was published on the women's social pages every Thursday. Another social writer, Margaret Lenton, started to write the column in July 1964. Owen and Lenton's writings were "soft news" items, which would not be considered strong enough — either in content or length — for publication in the general sports section. Similar to "Atalanta", the columns were less reports than PR releases on women's sport. In contrast, Higgins had usually looked for the hard-news angle.

CHAPTER 9

CONCLUSION

This chapter is designed to provide an overview of the research and emphasise the evolution of sports writing in the *West Australian* between 1901 and 1971. Using evidence cited in the previous eight chapters, these conclusive statements will provide reasons for the development of sports journalism in one of Australia's major daily newspapers. As mentioned in Chapter one, I have been a member of the paper's sports staff for the last two decades, though I was not employed by the *West Australian* during the period under discussion.

This research has also investigated the role the paper has played in society as a major communications organ in the dispersing of sporting details throughout the State. The study was based on a large number of sources, gained from interviews, content analyses from the *West Australian*, the paper's internal publications and other readings of texts. I will now conclude with my nine research questions outlined in chapter three. I will address each research question individually:

1. **How did the type of preferred sports articles change over time?**

News summaries, match reports, which also includes race reports, and columns can be found throughout the entire period under investigation. Hard news articles first appeared during the First World War, whereas features, interviews and commentaries were not used until 1957. The last genre to make it into the sports pages was the profile, which cannot be found until 1971. One can conclude from this that the variety of sports articles we get today is a phenomenon of approximately the last 50 years. As radio increasingly covered sports, sports writers became conscious of its impact, though it was minimal, and realised they had to provide more than just a description or chronology of the sporting event.

The major development affecting sports writing at the *West Australian* was the introduction of television sports in the 1960s, though much of the impact falls into the time beyond the frame of this study. As both local and national sports telecasting grew

— particularly Australian Rules football and cricket — the paper's sportswriters were again forced to adapt. Their stories became more insightful and interpretative, the emphasis less on the results of the competition and more on the *why* these results occurred. Writers continued to provide newspaper readers with *who, what, when, why* and *where*, as well as *how*, but in smaller proportions. Television already did this instantaneously — and with pictures. No writer, even with a short deadline and overnight distribution to readers, can outperform the electronic media in transmitting results. The reaction of sports writers at the *West Australian* was to develop probing analyses of events.

2. How did the writing style change over time?

At the turn of the twentieth century, the style of reporting was basically unskilled writing, with sporting events being reported simply in terms of the results and little else. Most of the writing in the *West Australian* was uncritical, with seemingly an overwhelming desire to appease officials and administrators of the sporting bodies. The interview became evident during the 1930s and it was not until after World War II that the style of reporting sporting news in the paper made strong progress.

After the *West Australian* became tabloid in 1947, the sports section became more structured. Changes included the language used in the sports writing which became clearer and more succinct. During the 1950s, with the pending arrival of television, features and personality pieces, as well as deeper analysis of sporting contests, became prominent on the sports pages. This style of writing became more prevalent during the 1960s and into the seventies.

3. What influence did the sports editors have on the paper's sports coverage?

This study shows that the sports editor did have a great deal of influence on the paper's sport coverage. This is shown in sport editor Ted Collingwood favouring professional sports over amateur sports and this being strongly reflected in the *West Australian's* reporting. At the time when amateurism predominated over the public's sporting interests, Collingwood constantly argued that amateur tennis should be replaced with open tennis, where amateurs and professionals could play in the same tournaments. At every opportunity, Collingwood ensured that moves to make the sport open to all players were displayed prominently in the sports pages.

Collingwood also favoured professional boxing and wrestling over their amateur counterparts. He was one of the earliest advocates of the Olympic Games being open to professionals. His writings often showed irreverence towards amateur sports administrators and officials. Under Collingwood's direction, apart from the Olympic or Commonwealth Games, which were amateur sporting competitions, professional sports were generally given greater prominence in the paper than their amateur counterparts.

Collingwood's predecessor, Godfrey White, had enormous influence on the racing fraternity. The fact that the Western Australian Turf Club adopted White's starting prices in the *West Australian* as the official odds at local race meetings showed the esteem he received.

The senior sports journalists took leading roles in the establishment of the Totalisator Agency Board (TAB). Because of the enormous pressure by the *West Australian* in editorials and prominently placed articles, the influence of the paper was largely responsible for the State Government instigating a Royal Commission into betting, and subsequently the abolition of off-course Starting Price betting shops. In the late 1950s, the *West Australian* led the public debate. The paper argued that bookmakers in betting shops could easily evade much of their taxation responsibility and that the Government-control of off-course betting would provide a percentage of profits to the racing industry. The sports department's stance received the full sport of editor Griff Richards and managing editor Jim McCartney.

4. What role did correspondents play in providing coverage of sport?

Despite the important role they provided to the paper and sports fans, many of the correspondents frequently wrote their stories from the point of view of "unabashed sports fans" who were seeking to boost the popularity of the sport. In this manner, this type of writing invariably assisted the entrepreneurial promotion of top level sport.

Because the sports staff was relatively small at the *West Australian* during the period that this study covers, the paper relied on correspondents for most sports. Though most were not paid for their efforts, their contributions were valued by the paper's editorial team, because they provided a necessary service to the paper's readership.

Until the 1930s, the *West Australian* also relied on non-staff members to cover Australian Rules football matches. Correspondents were still heavily relied on to help cover Western Australian National Football League (WANFL) matches for two decades

from the early 1930s. But with the sport becoming more professional, the part-timers gradually gave way, particularly after World War II, to the paper's permanent sports writers.

Though most correspondents did not receive any monetary reward, the *West Australian* obtained the services of contributors who were paid per article. These people not only had a vast knowledge of the sport locally, they had a greater understanding of the sport nationally and internationally than most. Reporters in this category included track and field's Bernie Cecins and soccer's David Andrews.

5. Did the writing styles and use of language of the *West Australian's* full-time sports journalists differ from that of the paper's correspondents?

There were no full-time sports reporters at the paper until 1907 and, at the turn of the twentieth century, sports reporting was basically non-narrative. Only brief accounts of the matches themselves were given, and the descriptions of the games approached narrative only in broadly charting the ebb and flow of the action. This style of reporting, which was basically unskilled writing, remained virtually the same until after World War II. Most of the reports published in the paper, with the majority being provided by non-journalistic contributors, were dull and lifeless. The exceptions were articles written by full time staff members, which occasionally used flowery language during reportage of boxing and wrestling bouts, and the coverage of racing's Perth Cup.

Particularly during the first five decades of the twentieth century, most sports were covered by part-time correspondents, most of whom were enthusiasts of the sport they covered. The writers contributed the articles to the paper's editorial team, who processed them for publication. The small number of full-time staff reported the major sports, notably horse racing, Australian Rules football and cricket. During the 1950s, a larger number of sports were being covered by the paper's permanent reporters.

As this thesis reported earlier, there was a significant difference between the two types of sports reporters. The contributions by unpaid correspondents, who appeared to feel a sense of duty to write glowing reports about the organisation's activities, were highly uncritical. The fact that this was tolerated by the paper's editorial management showed a contrast of attitude to contemporary sports reporting, which calls for a greater analytical edge to the articles. Especially during the first five decades of the twentieth century, even full-time reporters generally wrote uncritically. In many of the articles,

the results of the games, or races, were often of secondary importance, to reports of the weather and gate takings. However, the permanent reporters provided more factual details in their coverage than the part-timers.

6. What impact did the introduction of radio and television have on the paper's reportage of sport?

The introduction of radio to Western Australia in the 1920s made little difference to how sport was reported in the *West Australian*. This was in contrast to the beginning of television more than three decades later. The early racing commentaries in the late 1920s, and Test cricket descriptions and short football reports on radio in the early to mid-thirties did not change the style of reporting the sports in the paper. The introduction of interviews, however, can be said to be influenced by the broadcast media.

Though television had made only minimal impact on sports reporting in the *West Australian* in the first five years, by 1971, because of the increasing number of sporting programs, the medium was making a significant difference to how sport was being reported in the paper. The immediacy of television meant newspaper journalists needed to analyse the sports action in print. These analytical pieces were most prevalent in the paper's three major sports of horse racing, cricket and football.

7. What changes can be observed when the *West Australian* changed from broadsheet to tabloid in 1947?

Changing to a tabloid was a defining period for sports journalism at the *West Australian*. The sports section became more structured, and writing styles in the paper's sports pages evolved during the second half of the twentieth century. The most obvious difference between the first five decades of last century and the following two decades was the style of language used in writing the articles. The writing approach of sports journalists in the paper underwent dramatic changes in the 1950s. The unwieldy and cumbersome style, which included big sentences and lengthy paragraphs, and which had frequently prevailed, was gradually replaced by clearer and more concise writing.

8. What impact did both world wars have on the sports coverage in the *West Australian*?

There were vast differences between the coverage of sport in the *West Australian* during the two world wars. This can largely be attributed to the positions of the conflicts. The First World War was contained in Europe, which meant that many sports could continue, if in a reduced form, on a local level.

Sports writing in the early decades of the twentieth century indicates some impact of the First World War. The reporting of international sport fell to almost nil and there was an unprecedented interest in rifle shooting in 1915. Overall, sports in World War I, as measured by their reporting, experienced a downturn, but this pales in comparison to the impact on sport of the Second World War.

The Second World War was on a global scale, with considerable hostilities in the Pacific. As a result, a high proportion of Australia's male population was involved in the war effort, which forced the abandonment of most sports. This was common to countries around the world, where sporting competition had virtually ceased, with the exception of the gambling sports.

Though space allocated to sport decreased sharply during World War II, the two gambling sports of horse racing and trotting dominated the sports coverage. These two sports were seen as legitimate entertainment in the war years. Despite the public mood changing rapidly after Japan's entry into the Second World War in 1941, with the conflict now at Australia's doorstep, horse racing and trotting continued throughout the war. However, it can be said, overall, that World War II, with its global scale and Australia's direct involvement, brought about, as would be expected, a far more pronounced change in sport and sports reporting than World War I.

There were several compelling reasons for the minimal amount of sport published in the *West Australian* in 1943. The lack of available newsprint greatly reduced the size of the paper and most of what was available was used to keep the public informed of news from the war, which justifiably was given preference over other items, including sport, which had previously consumed considerable space. Many sports were in recess during the war and the lack of staff at the paper meant that only the main sports could be reported.

9. Did the *West Australian* play a pivotal role in the rise of organised sport in the State?

In line with Cashman's persuasive argument that "organised sport was, and is virtually a child of the media" (1995, p. 169), the *West Australian* played a major role in the organisation of sport in the State. From the gold rushes in the Eastern Goldfields in the 1890s onwards, the paper played a central role in the expansion of sporting culture. From the 1950s, the *West Australian* has played a prominent role in shaping sporting agendas and created sporting heroes and heroines.

But even before then, the paper played a major role in the rise of organised sport. For instance, the *West Australian* was to the forefront of the formation of a baseball competition in Perth in the mid-1930s. The paper's management encouraged the game to flourish and its participation in the sport ensured its roots became firmly established as a major recreational pastime in Perth.

Overall — A Comparison Between Then and Now

As Australian newspaper sports departments continue to redefine their roles in the twenty-first century, we must ask, "Where is sports journalism going?" Sports editors, once the shapers of the paper's sports section, are now mainly functionaries in a larger enterprise. The sports editor at the *West Australian* today is a mid-level executive of a separate section, under the control of editors, marketers and the human resources department. During the period examined in this study, the sports editor was a more important figure. He had a freer hand in hiring and firing. He had a greater say in how the section was to look, what its content priorities would be, and its style of writing and presentation. He was much more visible, with the two sports editors during the first seven decades — Godfrey White and Ted Collingwood — also being prominent writers and columnists. Since the retirement of Collingwood more than three decades ago, the following ten sports editors have gradually assumed a less visible presence on the sports pages. They have become more concerned with the administration, under direct control of the paper's editor, of the sports department.

During the seven decades examined in this study, coverage of sports in the *West Australian* concentrated on sports events and ignored most of the other aspects of sport. Now it is not sufficient to report only the results of a game. The game off the field is as important as the one in the arena. Today more coverage is devoted to salaries and

contracts of players, drug use, violent behaviour and off-field activities of sportsmen and women than to the on-field performance of the team or individual. To cover sports now takes more than knowledge of the game. It demands a wide understanding of the rules of the operations of the club or association, the economics of the sport, and historical aspects of the organisation and its individuals.

The audience for the mass media is shifting. These shifts are changing the way sports journalists operate and the relationships they have with their readers. Finding that audience and interacting with it will be a challenge greater than it was for the previous generations of journalists.

The Internet and computer communication technologies in general are in their infancy. The notebook computer makes instant communication and research possible, which was not easily achieved as recently as a decade ago. This has changed the way that journalists file their reports from outside the office. Its potentialities will continue to change the way journalists, publicity people and offices interact, and the press box routine will reflect them. During the period investigated by this study, a journalist would dictate his article by telephone to a copy taker, who would type the story on small sheets of paper and then transfer these to the sports department. But now, most articles from out in the field are filed by computer directly to the sports editor's computer screen. Mobile telephones also play an important role in instantly relaying breaking news events to the office.

Today's fans enjoy sports in different ways from fans a generation ago. They have grown up with television, which helps them experience major sport all year round, not just "in season." Few feel as intensely about any particular game or team; many more are exposed only to the high points. They simply respond differently to a different time and different conditions, in accordance with different tastes, attitudes and a different way of life. Pay TV is increasingly playing a larger role in the transmission of sporting events to the Australian public. An example is the National Basketball League, which involves the Perth Wildcats, one of Western Australia's highest profile sporting teams, and which is no longer telecast on free-to-air television. It is only available on Pay TV. But many people cannot afford to obtain Pay TV. These fans would still look to the newspaper for results and analysis of matches.

Further Research

This thesis has opened new areas for research. An interesting facet of the media to be examined would be the changes that have occurred in the *West Australian* after the time frame examined by this study. Technology has the deepest impact on newspapers, and has resulted in the media having undergone significant changes since 1971. These changes were initially brought about with the introduction of colour television to Australia in 1975. Improving technologies during the last quarter of the twentieth century and into the twenty-first century have meant a greater number of sporting events are being shown live on television. The Internet became prominent for many Australians in 1990s, with its instantaneous reporting of many major international sporting events from around the world. Further research of this contemporary period could look at the staff, editors, and changes in reporting, and relationships between the *West Australian* and other media and sports organisations in Western Australia. This research into the media is essential to attain a concise understanding of what is a complex issue.

A Final Word

Jack Lee, one of the *West Australian's* most respected sports journalists during the period of this study, commented on the past and future of sports writing in the paper by saying:

Technology has an obvious impact on newspapers and how they operate. It is imperative that the *West Australian* keeps abreast with trends as to the way that news, particularly sporting coverage, is covered. And the sports writer must not lose the fact that he has an obligation to entertain, and above all, inform the public. I am satisfied that during my time at the paper we did a good job at covering sport . . . a darn good job. (J. Lee, personal communication. October 26, 2000)

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