

SPORT IN THE GLOBAL SOCIETY – HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES

# Sport, War and Society in Australia and New Zealand

Edited by  
Martin Crotty and Robert Hess



# Sport, War and Society in Australia and New Zealand

Sport and war have been closely linked in Australian and New Zealand society since the nineteenth century. Sport has, variously, been advocated as appropriate training for war, lambasted as a distraction from the war effort, and resorted to as an escape from wartime trials and tribulations. War has limited the fortunes of some sporting codes – and some individuals – while others have blossomed in the changed circumstances.

The chapters in this book range widely over the broad subject of Australian and New Zealand sport and their relation to the cataclysmic world wars of the first half of the twentieth century. They examine the mythology of the links between sport and war, sporting codes, groups of sporting individuals and individual sportspeople. Revealing complex and often unpredictable effects of total wars upon individuals and social groups which as always, created chaos, and the sporting field offered no exception.

This book was originally published as a special issue of *The International Journal of the History of Sport*.

**Martin Crotty** has research interests that encompass masculinity, sports history and Australian society at war. He is an Associate Professor and lectures in History at the University of Queensland and is the author or co-editor of a number of books in these fields including *Anzac Legacies: Australians and the Aftermath of War* (2010) and *Turning Points in Australian History* (2009).

**Robert Hess** has a long-standing interest in the history of Australian Rules football. He is an Associate Professor and lectures in Sport History at Victoria University, Melbourne, and is the current Managing Editor of *The International Journal of the History of Sport*.

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# **Sport, War and Society in Australia and New Zealand**

*Edited by*

**Martin Crotty and Robert Hess**

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# Series Editors' Foreword

On January 1, 2010 *Sport in the Global Society*, created by Professor J.A. Mangan in 1997, was divided into two parts: *Historical Perspectives* and *Contemporary Perspectives*. These new categories involve predominant rather than exclusive emphases. The past is part of the present and the present is part of the past. The Editors of *Historical Perspectives* are Mark Dyreson and Thierry Terret.

The reasons for the division are straightforward. *SGS* has expanded rapidly since its creation with over one hundred publications in some twelve years. Its editorial teams will now benefit from sectional specialist interests and expertise. *Historical Perspectives* draws on *The International Journal of the History of Sport* monograph reviews, themed collections and conference/workshop collections. It is, of course, international in content.

*Historical Perspectives* continues the tradition established by the original incarnation of *Sport in the Global Society* by promoting the academic study of one of the most significant and dynamic forces in shaping the historical landscapes of human cultures. Sport spans the contemporary globe. It captivates vast audiences. It defines, alters, and reinforces identities for individuals, communities, nations, empires, and the world. Sport organises memories and perceptions, arouses passions and tensions, and reveals harmonies and cleavages. It builds and blurs social boundaries, animating discourses about class, gender, race, and ethnicity. Sport opens new vistas on the history of human cultures, intersecting with politics and economics, ideologies and theologies. It reveals aesthetic tastes and energises consumer markets.

By the end of the twentieth century a critical mass of scholars recognised the importance of sport in their analyses of human experiences and *Sport in the Global Society* emerged to provide an international outlet for the world's leading investigators of the subject. As Professor Mangan contended in the original series foreword: "The story of modern sport is the story of the modern world—in microcosm; a modern global tapestry permanently being woven. Furthermore, nationalist and imperialist, philosopher and politician, radical and conservative have all sought in sport a manifestation of national identity, status and superiority. Finally for countless millions sport is the personal pursuit of ambition, assertion, well-being and enjoyment."

*Sport in the Global Society: Historical Perspectives* continues the project, building on previous work in the series and excavating new terrain. It remains a consistent and coherent response to the attention the academic community demands for the serious study of sport.

Mark Dyreson  
Thierry Terret

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Wray Vamplew

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**Chapter 8**

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*W. N. 'Bill' Carson: Double All Black, Military Cross Recipient*

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# Notes on Contributors

**Martin Crotty** teaches History at the University of Queensland, Australia. He has written in the fields of sports history, masculinity studies and the experiences of Australians during and in the aftermath of World War I.

**Robert Hess** is an Associate Professor in Sport History with the Institute of Sport, Exercise and Active Living in the College of Sport and Exercise Science at Victoria University, Melbourne, Australia.

**Wray Vamplew** is Emeritus Professor of Sports History at the University of Stirling and Visiting Research Professor at the International Football Institute, University of Central Lancashire, UK. He has been Managing Editor of *The International Journal of the History of Sport* since 2010. His current research is focused on a history of the British sports club.

**Bruce Coe** is an Australian private scholar and Olympic historian who is a member of the Australian Society for Sports History and the International Society of Olympic Historians.

**Ian Syson** is a Senior Lecturer in Literary Studies at Victoria University, Melbourne, Australia. He is writing a cultural history of soccer in Australia.

**Kate Ariotti** is a Lecturer in Australian History at the University of Newcastle, Australia. Her work focuses on the impact of wartime imprisonment on Australians during the First World War, specifically how those affected by captivity in Turkey coped with the unique challenges it posed.

**Greg Ryan** is Dean of the Faculty of Environment, Society and Design at Lincoln University, New Zealand. He has authored or edited five books and written numerous articles on the history of sport in New Zealand with a particular emphasis on cricket and rugby.

**Bruce Kennedy** is a retired Australian civil servant, and has recently become a published historian and statistician in Australian Rules football. He is currently researching and writing another book relating to the Victorian Football League and the two world wars. His other historical and statistical studies include cricket.

**Lynn Charles McConnell** is a writer/editor in New Zealand who is studying History as a mature student at Massey University. He has written 18 books and is the compiler of the *Encyclopedia of New Zealand Cricket*. During an award-winning career in newspaper

## NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

and online journalism, he has specialised in sports but also has an interest in military history.

**Peter Crossing** is a secondary school chemistry teacher and cricket coach. He has had many years' involvement as a player, coach, committeeman and President of Prospect District Cricket Club, Adelaide, South Australia. He has had numerous book reviews published in the *Canberra Times*.

## **Introduction: Sport, War and Society in Australia and New Zealand**

Martin Crotty<sup>a</sup> and Rob Hess<sup>b</sup>

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The papers in this special collection had their genesis at ‘Sporting Traditions XIX’, the biennial conference of the Australian Society for Sports History (ASSH). Held in Canberra over three days and four nights in July 2013, the event was ambulatory in that each day of the conference was held at a different location in the nation’s capital. On Thursday, July 4, the proceedings were hosted by *The International Journal of the History of Sport* as part of its commitment to regional workshop/conferences designed to foster new scholarship in the discipline. The theme for this day of the conference was ‘Sport, War and Society in Australia and New Zealand’, and, fittingly, all papers were delivered within the confines of the iconic Australian War Memorial (AWM). Dr Brendan Nelson, Director of the AWM, was on hand to welcome delegates and he officially opened the programme by offering a reflection not only on his leadership role at the Memorial but also on his own experiences as the former Minister for Defence (2006–2007) in the Australian federal government. This address set the scene for the keynote lecture of Professor Wray Vamplew, and the varied range of papers that followed.

Part of the impetus for the day was the fact that the conference was being held on the eve of commemorations associated with the centenary of the Great War, hence the title of ‘Anzac Centennial’ for this collection of papers. However, even though the first units of the Australian Imperial Force were raised in August 1914, it has been the grouping together of the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps (Anzacs) in Egypt prior to the landing at Gallipoli in April 1915, and their subsequent involvement in the conflict at Anzac Cove and more broadly on the Western Front, that has attracted ongoing attention from writers and historians. While a growing band of scholars have taken an interest in the sporting and recreational activities of Australian and New Zealand military personnel (either behind the lines or in prisoner-of-war camps), and there have been some significant explorations of the impact of war on sport in the domestic sphere (especially in terms of the recruitment of athletes and the backlash against the continuance of organised sporting competitions), no collection of academic essays has ever been dedicated to gathering together the latest work on these topics from an antipodean perspective.

In this context, it is important to note that the papers are not narrowly restricted to themes and issues associated with sport and the Great War. True to our original brief as editors, this collection encompasses the gamut of inter-connections between sport, war and society in Australia and New Zealand across time, hence the inclusion of relevant organisational histories and biographical material related to World War II.