

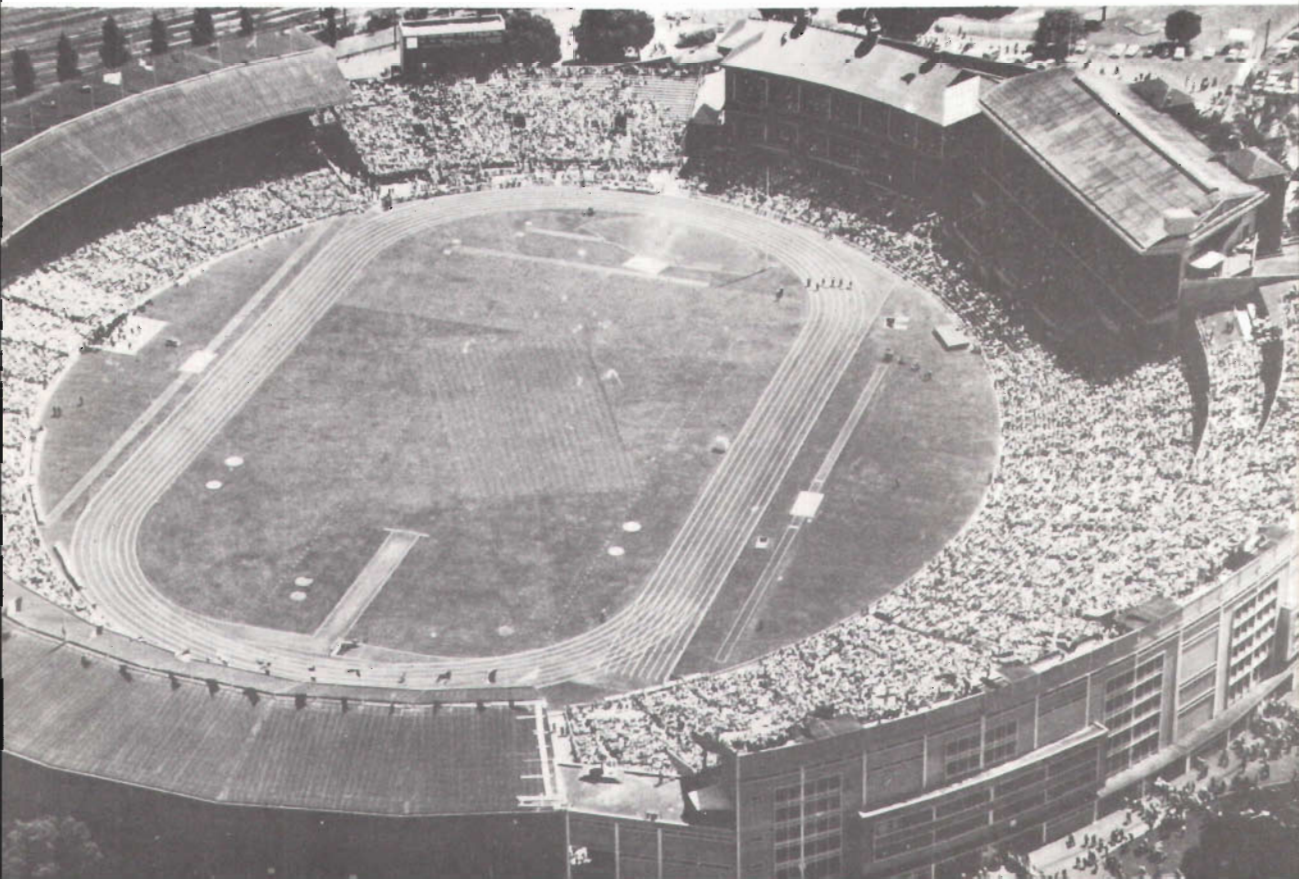
Victoria's Ron Clarke, world junior 1.6 kilometre record holder, carries the Olympic torch around the Melbourne Cricket Ground at the opening ceremony of the 1956 Olympic Games.

*The Herald and Weekly Times Ltd*



The Melbourne Cricket Ground on the opening day of the Olympic Games, 22 November 1956.

*The Herald and Weekly Times Ltd*







Many "fun runs" and marathons are organised in Victoria to cater for the increasing popularity of running.

*Department of Youth, Sport and Recreation*



Children participating in the "earthball" game as part of the "Life, Be in it" campaign.

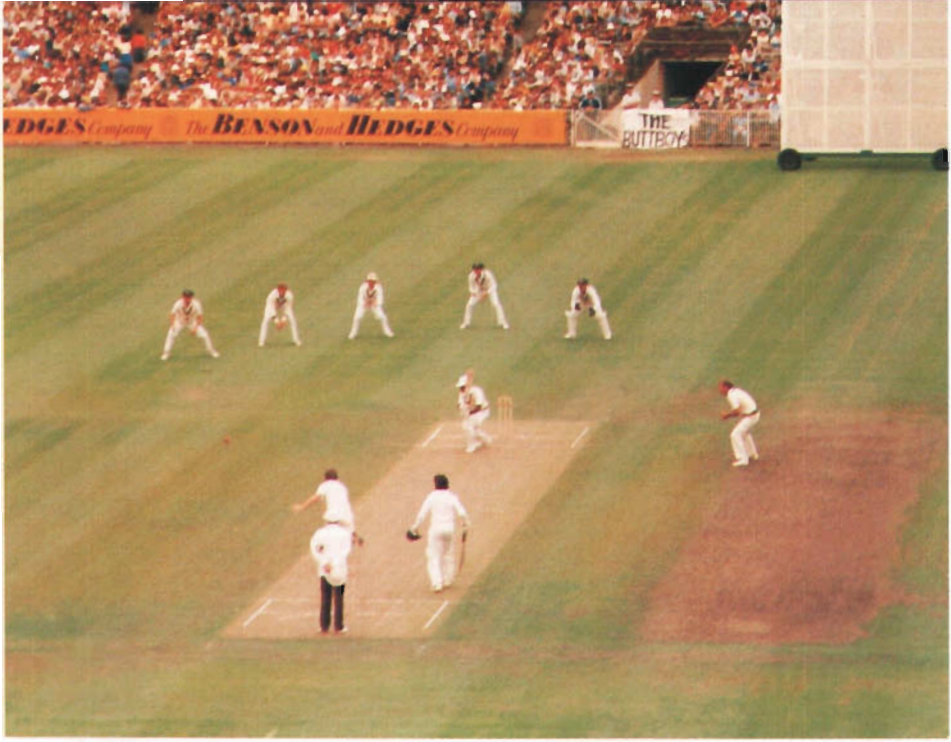
*Department of Youth, Sport and Recreation*

Floats parade down Swanston Street, Melbourne, as part of the Moomba Day celebrations in March 1983.

*ColourCare, Melbourne*







A cricket Test Match in progress at the Melbourne Cricket Ground between Australia and Pakistan, 1983.

*Patrick McDonnell*

(Below left) Many international tennis competitions are held at Kooyong, the headquarters of the Lawn Tennis Association of Victoria.

*L. V. Hort*

(Below right) The high-flying action of an Australian Rules football match between the Richmond and Hawthorn teams.

*Alan Funnell*



types his copy onto the visual display unit of a central computer from where it is edited. The old "hot metal" typesetting method has been replaced by high-speed, computerised photo-setting, either on film or bromide, although existing presses continue to print the paper. The introduction of the computerised systems also had a similarly dramatic impact on the processing of advertising, where substantial savings have been achieved in time and labour. The new technology led to some industrial disputes, one of which spawned Australia's first national strike by journalists in 1980, lasting four and a half weeks.

The Herald and Weekly Times Ltd began to introduce the new technology progressively from late 1979, starting with the company's non-daily publications. *The Age*, which caters for a wide classified advertising market, aimed the introduction of the new techniques first at this section of the paper's activities.

The report of an inquiry into the ownership and control of newspapers in Victoria, conducted by a retired Supreme Court Judge, Mr John (later Sir John) Norris, Q.C., was tabled in the Victorian Parliament in October 1981. He recommended that the Victorian Government set up an independent authority to regulate ownership and control of newspaper publishing companies. Although the inquiry considered that, in general, there be no further concentration of ownership or control of corporations publishing newspapers with substantial circulations in Victoria, Mr Norris did not believe divestiture by companies of any present shareholdings was justified.

### **The Herald and The Sun News-Pictorial**

The Herald and Weekly Times Ltd publishes *The Sun News-Pictorial* (morning) and *The Herald* (evening). The company still reflects the influence of the late Sir Keith Murdoch who steered it out of the quiet 1920s and launched it on a course of expansion. In the second quarter of this century, Murdoch dominated journalism in Victoria.

In 1934, he was the executive head of the company. He had been managing director for five years and was also editor-in-chief. Within eight years he also became chairman. Murdoch introduced an era of development. He applied techniques he had learned from close personal association with Lord Northcliffe in England to the needs of Australian newspapers, and set out to raise standards as well as circulations. When he died, in 1952, he left a core of executives trained in his methods who carried on his philosophies.

In 1934, *The Herald* papers established their first teleprinter link with Canberra. Seven years later, the papers began using Australian newsprint for the first time, at a time when the long existing problem of the cost and irregularity of supplies of imported paper had been accentuated by the Second World War. This was made possible by *The Herald* company and others joining in the formation of Australian Newsprint Mills Pty Ltd (ANM) in 1941. Production began at Boyer, Tasmania, in April of that year, and the following month *The Herald* was using Australian newsprint to supplement overseas supplies. In 1981, ANM now jointly owned by The Herald and Weekly Times Ltd and John Fairfax and Sons Ltd, opened a \$190m newsprint mill at Albury, NSW, capable of producing 75 per cent of Australia's needs.

Despite difficulties imposed by wartime restraints, *The Herald* and *The Sun News-Pictorial*, each added 100,000 to their circulations, *The Sun* rising from 251,000 in 1940 to 351,000 in 1946, and *The Herald* from 240,000 to 338,000 in the same period. In 1941, the price of the papers rose from 1½ pence to 2 pence.

In 1948, the company launched a new magazine, *Woman's Day* (which in 1956, passed into Sydney ownership), and in 1949 took over J.J. Miller's Sporting Annual (known as "Miller's Guide"), then in its 74th edition.

The death of Murdoch in 1952 did not leave a void in the company. The late Mr J.F. (later Sir John) Williams succeeded Murdoch as managing director in 1953; he became chairman in 1964 and maintained his association with the paper until 1973.

During these years *The Sun News-Pictorial's* circulation rose from 351,000 to more than 600,000, and *The Herald* exceeded half a million copies. The company's activities underwent wide expansion during Sir John's time. This included the launching of the television station, HSV7, in 1956; the purchase of *The Brisbane Telegraph* and the subsequent merger with *The Courier-Mail* to form a public company, Queensland Press Ltd, in 1955; the purchase of the Argus and Australasian Ltd in 1957 when the London owners closed *The Argus* newspaper; the purchase of *The Bendigo Advertiser* in 1963; the acquisition, in

1965, of South Pacific Post Pty Ltd in Papua New Guinea; and the acquisition of West Australian Newspapers Ltd in 1969.

In the 1970s The Herald and Weekly Times Ltd expanded its overseas interests to Singapore and Fiji. It also acquired a controlling interest in Davies Bros. Ltd, Hobart, publishers of *The Mercury*, and, in 1978, bought Standard Newspapers Pty Ltd, Cheltenham, publishers of a chain of suburban weeklies.

Through the 1970s, however, *The Herald*, in common with most evening newspapers throughout the world, had a continuing battle against falling circulation. It declined from above 500,000 in 1970 to about 385,000 in 1982. *The Sun News-Pictorial's* circulation also declined from around 650,000 copies to a little over 600,000. In 1979 and 1981 two takeover bids for The Herald and Weekly Times Ltd failed, the first by the Sydney-based company News Ltd, and the second by Mr Robert Holmes a Court's Bell Group.

### The Age

No Victorian daily newspaper changed more between 1934 and 1982 than *The Age*, published by David Syme and Co. Although it had been a robust nineteenth century radical paper, *The Age* had become basically conservative in the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s, showing some detachment in its editorial stand and frequently resisting administrative change. The change in editorial policy began under Sir Harold Campbell (editor from 1936 to 1956), grew under E. K. Sinclair (1959-66), and became more prominent under Graham Perkin, who edited the paper from 1966 until his early death in 1975.

David Syme, who had been the sole proprietor, died in 1908, leaving *The Age* to his five sons in trust for their children. The trust, though very successful for several decades, struck difficulties after the Second World War, when the terms of the will prevented expansion. So, in 1948, through a successful application to the Supreme Court to vary David Syme's will, the trust established David Syme and Co. Ltd—a public company listed on the Melbourne Stock Exchange. The Syme family trust remained the principal shareholder.

Through the 1940s and 1950s, *The Age* and *The Argus* struggled to maintain circulation; it became apparent that Melbourne could not continue to support three morning newspapers, one of which was the successful *Sun News-Pictorial*, with a circulation which exceeded that of the other two combined. After *The Argus* ceased publication in January 1957, *The Age* gained circulation, and laid the foundation for the innovations which were to reach fruition in the 1960s, by setting out to meet competitive pressures, recognising social changes, and winning younger readers by making *The Age* more inquisitive, informative, argumentative, and with a strong emphasis on investigative journalism.

At the same time the management set up a research department to examine reading habits and the editor, together with some of his colleagues, lectured and appeared on television when the occasion demanded. This made the general public far more aware of what went on behind the scenes of a newspaper. The new era of the paper extended freedom to a team of skilled specialist writers, some of whom had already contributed previously on topics such as food, wine, environment, and leisure. It also went in for "personalising" staff writers, who concentrated on interpretive reporting of politics, economics, and public affairs. The Canberra bureau as well as overseas and local news cover were strengthened.

In December 1966, *The Age* took a Sydney partner, John Fairfax and Sons Ltd, publishers of *The Sydney Morning Herald* and other publications. This gave the paper extra capital. The new partnership was administered by a board on which each company had three directors.

In 1969, the company made an unsuccessful attempt to break into evening newspapers, long the exclusive domain of *The Herald*. Both The Herald and Weekly Times Ltd and David Syme and Co. Ltd had been preparing to produce Sunday newspapers but, mainly due to union opposition, the move was thwarted. David Syme had hired staff and brought an editor from England for the proposed Sunday edition and decided to use this force to launch an evening newspaper, *Newsday*, the first new evening newspaper in Victoria since *The Star* in 1933. The move was a failure.

Through the 1970s, David Syme and Co. Ltd continued a programme of diversification and expansion which, through subsidiary companies and shareholdings, took it into such

wide-ranging enterprises as country and suburban newspapers, magazines and special interest publications, TV production, school textbooks, travel, and broadcasting.

Traditionally *The Age* has been the leader among local papers in the classified advertising market, although this was challenged by *The Herald* in 1983. Its circulation had gained by 30 per cent in the 17 years to 1982, when it was about 250,000 copies. In 1983, it was sold to John Fairfax and Sons Ltd.

### The Argus and Australasian

*The Argus*, first published in 1846, for over a century was one of Australia's great institutions, a conservative newspaper which had grown up with the city of Melbourne and had achieved a degree of recognition around the world. Its weekly stablemate, *The Australasian* (later to become the *Australasian Post*) also had wide appeal, particularly in rural areas.

In October 1933, the company launched an evening daily, *The Star*. Like other attempts to break *The Herald's* hold on the Melbourne evening newspaper market, *The Star* failed. It ceased publication in April 1936, a costly exercise from which the company never fully recovered. The year after *The Star's* demise, The Argus and Australasian Ltd became a public company. Innovations were introduced: news replaced classified advertisements on the front page and the paper became a semi-tabloid.

In common with *The Age*, *The Argus* had a circulation problem due to the increasing popularity of *The Sun News-Pictorial*. In 1949, a controlling interest in the company was bought by the London based companies, Daily Mirror Newspapers Ltd and Sunday Pictorial Newspapers Ltd.

The British owners injected new zest into *The Argus*, transforming it into a "popular" paper which embarked on campaigns, gave more freedom of expression to its writers and contributors, and generally engendered a spirit of excitement in the old publication. In mid-1952, *The Argus*, with the aid of new high-speed colour processes, became the first newspaper in the world to present daily news pictures in full colour. But, although circulation continued to grow steadily (in 1955 it gained 3.7 per cent, against a 1.4 per cent gain by *The Sun* and a 2.6 per cent loss by *The Age*), the return from the capital outlay was not sufficient to save *The Argus*. On the morning of 19 January 1957, the newspaper world learned that *The Argus* had closed. Under a banner headline, "Your last Argus", the directors announced that because of continued heavy losses, due to rising costs, especially for newsprint, *The Argus* had ceased publication.

The Herald and Weekly Times Ltd bought The Argus and Australasian Ltd, which is now a wholly owned subsidiary, and continued to publish the survivors of the Argus fleet, *Australasian Post* and *Your Garden*, as well as other activities.

### Other dailies

The first experiment in a truly national daily newspaper in Australia was *The Australian*, first published in Canberra in 1964 by News Ltd. Its headquarters moved to Sydney three years later. It is now published simultaneously in all States. *The Australian Financial Review*, produced by John Fairfax and Sons Ltd, started as a weekly in 1951, became bi-weekly 10 years later, and daily in 1963. It went national with facsimile editions in 1969. Together with *The Sun News-Pictorial* and *The Age*, these two national dailies give Melbourne readers the option of four morning papers.

### Non-dailies

The custom of Melbourne daily newspapers sponsoring weekly companions began last century when, in 1856, *The Age* proprietors started *The Leader*, an essentially rural weekly. *The Argus* management followed suit in 1864 with *The Australasian*, which later added fiction, sketches, verse, and other contributions to its rural content. This, aided by the later development of a pictorial section, gained *The Australasian* a nationwide circulation. Between the world wars, its sales began to fall, probably as a result of the coming of radio. In 1946, with the name changed to *Australasian Post*, the format was drastically altered. *The Leader* finally succumbed in 1957, up to which time it was Australia's longest running weekly newspaper. *The Herald* introduced a weekly stablemate, *The Weekly Times*,



in 1869. Essentially a rural paper, *The Weekly Times* has continued successfully in this field.

Ipec Pty Ltd took the opportunity to launch *The Sunday Observer* in 1969 when *The Age* and *The Sun* failed to start their proposed Sunday editions. The venture lasted only until March 1971. After its closure, Ipec failed in a court action to prevent the name "Observer" being used for *The Melbourne Observer*, which sprang up in its wake. *The Melbourne Observer* was published until 1977 when it was bought by Peter Isaacson, proprietor of a suburban newspaper business, who reverted to the name *Sunday Observer*.

Meanwhile, in 1973, The Herald and Weekly Times Ltd and David Syme and Co. Ltd entered Sunday publishing with a joint enterprise, *The Sunday Press*, which soon established circulation leadership in this market.

For 57 years from 1922, The Herald and Weekly Times Ltd published the twice-weekly *Sporting Globe*, the Saturday evening edition of which was almost a Melbourne institution. In the 1950s it attained a circulation of 220,000. The coming of television, however, with its Saturday night sporting cover, made inroads into *The Sporting Globe's* sales and in October 1979, the Saturday edition was incorporated in *The Sunday Press*. The mid-week edition continued.

The national weekly, *The National Times*, published in Sydney by the Fairfax organisation from 1971, enjoys good support in Victoria. So does Australia's widest selling magazine, *The Australian Women's Weekly* (Australian Consolidated Press, Sydney), which was in competition with the Melbourne based *New Idea* (Southdown Press) in 1983 when the *Weekly* became a monthly publication.

The Sydney publishers, Truth and Sportsman Ltd, first published a weekly edition of Melbourne *Truth* in the 1890s. The paper was acquired in 1960 by Southdown Press, a division of News Ltd, and later published twice weekly. In December 1980, the title was purchased by Truth Newspapers Pty Ltd.

The Sydney based national magazine, *The Bulletin*, formerly a pacesetter in developing the talents of Australian writers and artists, and once known as "the bushman's Bible", was acquired by Australian Consolidated Press, Sydney, in 1960 and is now more of a news-background magazine. It has always enjoyed a share of popularity in Victoria.

The Melbourne based geographic and travel magazine *Walkabout* was popular from its inception in November 1934 for its informative articles about Australia and its excellent photographs. It ceased publication in June 1974.

Victorian readers have a wide selection of special interest newspapers and magazines. The arrival of post-war immigrants gave impetus to the development of the ethnic press and today Melbourne has a large number of foreign language newspapers catering for migrant groups. Publications are aimed at special interests including television, radio, home computing, politics, religion, aviation, motoring, science, travel, gardening, home-making, and various other social, cultural, and sporting activities.

### Country and suburban press

Although the metropolitan dailies are delivered to most provincial centres, the hometown newspaper has always played an important role in Victorian life. These generally set a high standard and range from large country dailies like *The Geelong Advertiser* (circulation about 30,000) to small weeklies like *The Western Plains Advertiser*, Skipton, with a circulation of 600.

Many country newspapers are long established, with fine traditions of service to their communities. *The Geelong Advertiser*, for example, established by John Pascoe Fawkner in 1840, is Victoria's oldest newspaper. *The Portland Guardian* (1842) is almost as old. *The Port Fairy Gazette* commenced in 1849, *The Bendigo Advertiser* in 1853, and *The Castlemaine Mail* in 1854. The majority of Victoria's 96 country newspapers are now produced on modern off-set printing plants.

Metropolitan Melbourne has about 50 suburban newspapers, mostly delivered free to all homes in their respective districts. These range from chains produced by large companies, some of which are subsidiaries of the metropolitan newspaper companies, to single papers published by independent operators. Like the country papers, the suburban "locals" are usually of high quality and fill an important place in the life and times of the community, keeping residents abreast of local affairs not covered in their daily newspapers.

## SPORT AND LEISURE

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### INTRODUCTION

Victorians have always valued the opportunities afforded by leisure time, and the developments in sport and recreational activities (many of them referred to as "hobbies" in former days) reflected the social changes in the State since 1934. This Chapter presents an overview of sport and leisure during the 50 year period, considers aspects of competitive sport, commercialism in sport, sport as entertainment, the involvement of government and "umbrella" organisations, and special groups in sport and recreation.

### GENERAL PATTERNS OF SPORT AND LEISURE

The Depression with its financial hardships caused many attendances at sporting functions to fall. This affected both the matches of the Victorian Football League (VFL) and the Victorian Football Association (VFA), and many clubs could not pay their players more than \$6 a week. In some districts, cricket declined because men could not afford to play. Because horse racing was regarded as an inessential activity the Victorian Government also intervened to pass legislation which restricted it; attendances and stake money declined as a result. On the other hand, recreations such as hiking and community singing, which required little money, became increasingly popular.

The Second World War was even more disruptive of sporting activities in Victoria. The Commonwealth Government restricted horse racing. Cricket associations played out the 1939-40 season, but then suspended Sheffield Shield and district cricket for the duration of the war. In football, although the VFA suspended their competition between 1942 and 1945, VFL teams continued their matches. Most sporting associations and clubs, even those such as golf which catered more for older players, experienced a significant decline in membership as participants volunteered for the Armed Services. Many sporting facilities and grounds were used for war purposes; in mid-1940 the Army occupied Caulfield racecourse and the Caulfield Cup was held at Flemington until 1943; the Melbourne Cricket Ground buildings were used from April 1942 to October 1945 as a staging camp for the Armed Services and the Commonwealth Government also took over several football grounds including Footscray, South Melbourne, St Kilda, and, for a while, Collingwood and Port Melbourne.

Although the war disrupted recreational and sporting activities, it also helped to introduce new ones. American soldiers stationed in Melbourne in the 1940s influenced the increase in popularity of sports such as volleyball, softball, and basketball. After the war the picture changed significantly. The ex-servicemen, many of whom acquired a taste for regular exercise and sport in the Forces, returned to join various sporting clubs and associations. Then, after the late 1940s, the arrival of migrants from Britain and Europe saw the introduction of many new sports and the stimulation of several old ones. Soccer had had little publicity before the Second World War, but the new settlers made it increasingly popular, and formed a great number of ethnic soccer clubs.

The increasing affluence of the 1950s and 1960s not only saw new sports developed, but established sporting and recreation groups, which had suspended their activities during the Second World War, were revitalised. The greater use of the car in gaining access to



national parks and outdoor recreations facilitated the popularity of power boating, and with it, water skiing.

The economic problems of the 1970s again caused a re-direction of sporting interests. The financial difficulties of clubs helped bring about a rapprochement between sporting associations and business, resulting in increased sponsorship, not only of professional sports such as racing and Australian Rules football, but also of small amateur associations seeking finance to conduct competitions.

Technological changes since 1934 have altered the patterns of leisure activities. Pre-eminent has been the acceptance of the motor car which in the 1930s was a luxury but, after the war (and the end of petrol rationing in 1950) became commonplace. This revolution in personal mobility has been perceived to be the greatest single influence which has given access to coastal, bushland, and mountain environments as mass recreation areas for city dwellers. By the 1950s, the increasing number of visitors to the National Parks prompted a re-organisation of their management through the National Parks Act of 1956. The new Authority created by this Act stressed the importance of conservation, and was involved in recreation.

In the more sedentary use of leisure, television was the technological change which was most widely assimilated into Victorian homes. Its introduction coincided with the staging of the Olympic Games in Melbourne in 1956. It was to cause a decline in the spectator attendances at many sporting events but also, by capturing a wider home audience, awakened in industry the potential of sport as an advertising vehicle. The growth of television also led to a considerable decline in movie-going which had reached the height of popularity in the 1930s and 1940s. In Victoria, in 1956-57, when television transmissions had just begun, cinema attendances were 34 million, but four years later the figure had declined to 16 million. Technological change has also played its part in the development of sporting equipment and the sophistication of training methods.

Social leisure patterns have changed significantly since 1934. The religious observance of Sunday progressively declined; in the 1930s it was still strong and some local councils disallowed sport and band practice on Sundays. With increasing mobility, especially in the 1950s, there was a growing tendency to make use of the two day weekend for excursions; but this was to some degree associated with a growth in home centered activities, encouraged by wider home ownership and television. The latter won large audiences for major sporting events, but did so at the expense of physical attendances at horse racing, cricket, tennis, and Australian Rules football functions.

The highly organised sports have come to provide more opportunities for top level competition. They are assisted by government funding and sponsorship (with industry providing an increasing amount for sport), and many associations employ professionally trained administrators and/or coaches. The differentiation between amateur and professionals in sport has continued but amateur rulings are less stringent; "open" sport is more acceptable; and professional sportsmen have more opportunities to make their "recreation" their livelihood.

A sustained trend, particularly since the 1960s has been the move away from competitive sports towards an emphasis on informal, individual and outdoor recreations, many of which, such as climbing, bush-walking, skin-diving, hang-gliding, skiing, and wind-surfing require a close relationship with nature. An interest in the preservation of the environment (also evident in the 1960s) has also strengthened this trend and has been marked in such activities as Nordic skiing, orienteering, water sports, birdwatching, and gemstone collecting. Surfing and sun-bathing remained very popular.

Occasional special events, highly organised but with an informal atmosphere, have been "fun runs" and "walkathons", both drawing a wide range of participants as regards ability and age. In 1974, a survey conducted by the National Youth Council of Australia noted that 12 to 14 year old boys are very interested in team sports, but that this was not an enthusiasm shared by older boys, or indeed by girls of any age, both of whom tended to prefer informal, social pastimes, or individual, non-competitive sports, and outdoor activities. Adults continued to be attracted to informal outdoor forms of recreation such as gardening, barbecues, and picnics. As the 1970s brought growing economic difficulties the old homely forms of recreation regained their popularity: home grown vegetables were produced; kite-flying, bush-walking, jogging, and cycling (with the provision of more

bicycle paths) again became popular; interest in Australia's past was demonstrated by the growth in the number of local historical societies; health studios flourished; and older hobbies such as stamp collecting, photography (both still and movie), and model railways and aircraft, were joined by new recreations such as slot cars, war-gaming, electronic games, and the many diversions of home computers. Home billiards and table tennis have always been enjoyed.

There was a trend to commercialism in organised sport and growing opportunities for an ever widening range of other leisure time activities. The introduction of the 40 hour week in 1948, increasing family incomes where the wife as well as the husband had jobs, changing public attitudes, and growing government encouragement to various recreational activities (not least the introduction of daylight saving in 1971) have all had their impact.

The main pattern of leisure activities in the 1930s provides an illuminating contrast with subsequent developments. Just as the Depression had temporarily slowed spectator and participant sport, so technology began to make an impact on leisure time pursuits, although for many these were too expensive in the early 1930s. However, from 1934, cinema attendances increased at the expense of commercial live theatre, although amateur theatrical groups actually increased. Ballet, too, was becoming popular, largely as a result of visiting companies from overseas and the establishment of dancing schools around Victoria.

The wireless aided relaxation at home and by 1934 two years had passed since the first radio broadcasts by Melbourne stations 3AR and 3LO. The Australian Broadcasting Commission had been established in 1932, and was already encouraging the appreciation of music. Sales of wirelesses rose steadily and by 1939 the number in use had quadrupled in a decade.

Another leisure time pursuit in the home—though hardly a new one—was reading. Mechanics Institutes had provided library facilities until the 1930s and local libraries were financed through voluntary subscription and government subsidy. However, by 1934, lack of funds had caused a deterioration in services and in 1935 the Munn-Pitt Report called for improvements which included the provision of rate supported municipal free libraries.

Gardening and home related crafts were popular in the 1930s, encouraged by the Royal Horticultural Society (which had promoted gardening since the middle of the nineteenth century) and the Country Women's Association, formed in 1928 and providing companionship for women in rural areas.

In the 1930s, however, not all recreation was centred on the home, the car, and the cinema. City parks provided walking and rest areas among beautiful lawns and flower beds, and playing fields and tennis courts had also been established in some public places. Hiking was becoming very popular and was to remain so until the Second World War, encouraged by more than 30 hiking clubs in 1932, regular columns in Melbourne newspapers, and in 1939 by the beginnings of a network of youth hostels throughout the State. This encouragement of physical fitness was shared by many organisations concerned with the welfare of youth since before the 1930s. The Melbourne City Newsboys' Society, Toc-H, the Boy Scouts and Girl Guides Associations, the YMCA, the YWCA, and to give it its present name, the Play-grounds and Recreation Association were some of these. The latter was already organising supervised play activity for children in crowded inner areas and did much to encourage local councils to provide recreational areas for children. The Victorian Council of Physical Fitness, later to be the National Fitness Council was established in 1939. Over the years, it promoted recreational programmes, at first, for youth in Victoria, but since the war, for all age groups. Two of its most important functions have been the training of youth leaders and the establishment of camps.

Another State Government body which was to become significant in its contribution to the development of non-competitive leisure activity was the Council of Adult Education whose activities grew rapidly after its establishment in 1947. Lectures, discussions, and outings were some of the developments which expanded in the early 1970s.

The role of municipal councils in recreation did not become significant until the 1960s. The Melbourne City Council was the leader, establishing a recreation division within the Parks and Gardens Department. The public was encouraged to participate in parks and community centres. Barbecue areas were set aside and fitness courses led to increased activity. Other municipal councils and the MMBW followed the lead of the Council and

municipal recreation officers were gradually appointed in the 1960s and 1970s to co-operate with existing organisations and the public.

### SPORT

By 1934, competitive sport in Victoria was well established and many of the administrative bodies of the present sporting organisations had been founded. Competition evolved at a local level, followed by inter-colonial matches before Federation and inter-State matches after 1901.

Major changes in competitive sport since 1934 have included the formation of more controlling bodies, changes in the types of sports played, growth in membership of sports bodies, and changes within the composition of membership. This has not only led to the establishment of new associations, but has been reflected by changes within the old ones. It is possible to identify trends within competitive sports and their organisations, influenced as they were by social and economic circumstances. World standards have risen with the dedication of sportsmen and sportswomen, together with improved nutrition, training, equipment, and facilities and greater government and commercial involvement. Funding requirements have encouraged sporting associations to make their sports available to as many as possible. The standard and number of coaching courses has increased as a result of increasing funds and amalgamations between sporting bodies.

For organisations established before the Second World War, the effect of the war was a decline in membership. Competitions were discontinued in many sports. The resurgence of enthusiasm after the war was not, however, automatic, although generally the war indirectly boosted participation during the following decade. Returned servicemen increased the popularity of athletics, and migrants from Europe joined existing associations and established their own. Soccer was one of the sports to benefit most from this population growth and some of the clubs formed at this time grew strongly.

By the 1950s and through to the mid-1970s, Victoria was enjoying economic prosperity which also had its effects on sport. More persons had money and the time to participate more widely in competitive sport and the increasing ownership of motor cars simplified transport arrangements. During this period the more expensive sports such as gliding, sailing, skiing, golf, parachuting, and power boat racing gained in popularity. Formerly "exclusive" sports extended to the wider community, as facilities and personal incomes increased. Also activities like trail-bike riding, hang-gliding, and go-kart racing became more common. As Melbourne expanded to the new outer suburbs, which had a young population and the space to establish facilities, further sports clubs were established.

Apart from the general social and economic influences on sport already discussed, there were five specific factors which bore on the development of sport: competition, membership patterns, equipment, administration, and media coverage. Two events had a wide impact on most of these factors. One was the 1956 Olympic Games held in Melbourne, which were a climax of the competitive sphere for those sports involved. The second was the membership patterns, which illustrated, among other things, the new position of women within sport over the last 50 years.

### Competition

Competition in Victoria ranges from traditional sports seen at their best in such outstanding events as the "Centenary Test" to lesser known sports such as trugo and orienteering, which can be enjoyed by whole families.

By 1983, many sporting associations were competing from local to international level. Some inter-State competitions and national championships existed in the nineteenth century, but as inter-State travel became more popular, an increasing number of associations organised inter-State sporting events. International competition increased after the Second World War for a number of reasons: communication and travel became quicker and simpler, while greater prosperity allowed individuals and organisations to take advantage of increased opportunities. In addition, sponsorship encouraged involvement by subsidising national and international events for amateur bodies, while at the professional level, high prize money attracted overseas competition.

The involvement of juniors in sport is examined elsewhere, but a brief consideration of one of the school sports associations demonstrates the extent of their involvement. The



Metropolitan Technical Schools Sports Association had 65 affiliated schools in 1981 with weekly sports competitions and annual championships. Their activities also extend to the international level and in 1979, boys' and girls' basketball teams toured the United States. Promotion by many of the sporting associations has been directed at the schools. For example, when the Royal Victorian Bowls Association obtained the record sponsorship of \$250,000 for the period 1980 to 1985, it was stated that a proportion of this amount would be used to promote bowls in schools.

For the majority of sporting associations, the highlights in their histories since 1934 have been the holding of, or attendance at, State, inter-State, or international competitions. Many world championships have been held in Victoria, for example, in billiards (1938 and 1977), golf (1959 and 1972), softball (1965), modern pentathlon (1966), snooker (1968), bocce (1979), bowls (1980), fencing (1980), squash (1967 and 1978), and men's field hockey (1982).

The number of sports at which Victorians have excelled has increased, due partly to affluence and the ability to travel and seek international competition. As well as participating in such traditional local events as the Stawell Gift foot race; the Melbourne to Warrnambool road race, *The Sun* Tour, and the Austral Wheel Race in cycling; and similar contests in rowing, swimming, boxing, athletics, and so on, Victorians have been represented in many international sporting arenas. These include Wimbledon, the Davis Cup and other major world tennis tournaments, the Tour de France and other notable cycling championships, the America's Cup, heading many famous yachting challenges, and their equivalents in such varied sports as billiards and snooker, motor-racing, and marathon running.

#### *Games of the XVI Olympiad, Melbourne, 1956*

The success of Australian sportsmen and women at these and other sporting events of the 1950s was notable, and encouraged many sporting associations. It was not only a stimulus to the performance of the top sportsmen and sportswomen, but also to the membership of the associations. These were the first Olympic Games—indeed the first programmes—to be televised in Victoria and they played a large part in introducing that medium to Australia. This in turn publicised the sports.

Melbourne played host to 67 nations at the 1956 Games. The 9.4 hectare State-owned area of land previously used for sport was developed into the Olympic Park, situated close to the City centre. Houses were built under the Housing Commission programme at Heidelberg and these formed the Olympic village. The total outlay on the Games was \$8m, which was raised by the Australian Olympic Federation, by spectator fees, and by contributions from the State and Commonwealth Governments. Australian sportsmen and women took part in a programme comprising athletics, boxing, cycling, fencing, gymnastics, modern pentathlon, rowing, shooting, swimming, weightlifting, wrestling, yachting, basketball, canoeing, soccer, hockey, and water polo. Australian football was demonstrated as a national sport and baseball as an overseas sport. Overall, Australia's 13 gold, 8 silver, and 13 bronze medals were mainly won in the swimming events and women's athletics.

#### **Membership patterns**

Sporting association membership has grown since 1934; some sports, for example, soccer, have recorded the greatest influx of new members as a result of immigration in the 1950s and 1960s.

Apart from the participation of the younger and older sections of the community (noted later), the other growth area in sport has been among women. In part, the technological advances of the last 50 years have reduced the time spent on housework. Women have moved into the labour force or fill their leisure time in other ways, including sport. For instance, after the World Bowls Series of 1980, held in Victoria and publicised through television, there was a general rise in membership, but especially among women over 40.

However, it is a change in attitude towards women in sport which has probably most encouraged the growth in this area. Even in 1936, when women were being represented at the Olympic Games, myths abounded about the unsuitability of sport for women: sport for women was "unladylike" and would lead to infertility; sport was not among the traditional roles of women, which included child rearing and home management, rather than rowing across Albert Park Lake. Women were hampered by such attitudes and by

the types of clothing deemed suitable for ladies. It was after the Second World War that sportswomen were grudgingly given some further recognition, perhaps partly because they had proved during the war that they could handle "men's work" and that such activity was not in fact harmful for them.

In Australia, the 1930s' attitude of men towards sportswomen waned slowly at an official level. It was only just before the 1956 Olympic Games that women representatives of the Victorian Women's Amateur Sports Council were admitted to the Victorian Olympic Council and even in the 1980s there were still barriers to women's participation in some sports. Despite the background of discrimination in women's sport, female membership in sporting associations has grown with the changes in social attitudes. Many associations which were segregated in early days have amalgamated, as, for example, in the case of the Victorian Amateur Swimming Association, and those that remain segregated are moving towards amalgamation.

### **Equipment**

Changes in equipment, facilities, and uniforms were also trends noted by sporting associations. The most obvious modifications of sports uniforms have been for women, though until quite recently traditional ideas were stressed. For example, slacks for lady golfers were permitted only in the 1960s. Both the Victorian Women's Amateur Athletic Association and the Victorian Netball Association gradually moved towards the development of a uniform to allow greater ease of movement. In addition to clothing, equipment has been modernised to make performance more efficient. Unbreakable aluminium bats were tried in cricket and baseball, the development of self contained underwater breathing apparatus has led to scuba diving, and hang-gliders have become safer and more efficient in design. The Archery Society, Soaring Association, and Surf Life Saving Association also have obtained more sophisticated equipment.

Facilities, too, have changed and governments have contributed to their increased availability. Local councils have been especially active here and the Victorian Amateur Diving Association has acknowledged the growing provision of diving facilities at local swimming pools.

### **Administration**

As membership of clubs has grown and fixtures have become more complex, it has become difficult for "kitchen secretariats" to cope efficiently. With the increase in grants made available by the Department of Youth, Sport and Recreation, full-time State directors have been employed by some sporting associations. Their own successful financial dealings have also allowed the larger bodies to take on further staff. This has particularly benefited promotion and coaching and has meant that representatives may be sent into country areas and schools. In order to encourage expertise in administration the Victorian Government has conducted courses to allow associations to improve their standards.

### **Media**

By 1934, the importance of sport coverage as an influence on the number of newspapers sold had become obvious to editors. The size of the sporting section of Australian newspapers has been commented on by many, and reflects the importance of sport to the average Australian. The sports covered have been those that could be expected to sell the most newspapers, such as Australian Rules football, which for many months of the year dominates the Victorian newspapers. During the 1970s, the less popular sports gained more coverage, as in the case of ladies' rowing. In addition to coverage in the daily papers, specialist magazines have also been produced, some catering for specific sports and recreations.

Since 1956, television publicised sporting competitions, with the greatest coverage going to local matches and international events such as the Olympic Games and Wimbledon. This acted as a stimulus for membership of clubs, although perhaps it also contributed to the decline in spectator figures for football. Television coverage of many events in motor car racing, at Albert Park, Calder, and Sandown, and of boxing, particularly in the 1960s, stimulated interest in these sports.

## COMMERCIALISM IN SPORT

The growth of commercialism in Victorian sport has been most evident in recent years but debate in modern times about the effects on sport of increased professionalism and commercial involvement has its origins in the nineteenth century. It has long been feared that the emphasis in sport may shift from playing for sheer fun and devotion to playing for money, and in recent times there has been the added threat that private entrepreneurs may divert funds away from investment in the sport itself and into the area of private profit. But these fears have to be balanced with the understanding that participants in sport have become subject to greater demands of commitment than ever before, and hence specialisation and commercialism have arisen as natural corollaries.

The 1970s have seen many Victorian sporting associations taking on the characteristics of business enterprises. In fact this commercial orientation has been obvious for much longer in sports such as horse racing. In the 1930s gambling was a popular Australian pastime pursued with inventive vigour in such "national" games as Two Up, but it has been in its connection with horse racing that gambling gained its greatest public support since then. In 1930 in Victoria, the long battle for an on-course totalisator was finally won, ironically at a time when, due to the Depression, racing clubs had difficulties erecting the necessary buildings and purchasing the equipment for machine betting. Before the 1930s, such was the opposition to gambling of any kind (even church lotteries and whist drives were frowned upon early in the century), that twenty previous legislative attempts had been made in Victoria to gain a legalised on-course totalisator. But, even when achieved, this facility was not enough for the punter, who really wanted gambling on the telephone or, at least, at the local shopping centre. By 1950 illegal betting with starting price (SP) bookmakers had become significant. State by State, legislatures sought to stop the SP bookmakers by legalising off-course betting. Victoria, in 1961, was one of the last States to do so, but it was the first to introduce it in the form of a Totalizator Agency Board (TAB). There were fears that legalised off-course betting would lead to a great increase in gambling, so the initial operations of the TAB were governed by restrictions. But soon a TAB was established in almost every city, town, and suburb in Victoria.

**TOTALIZATOR AGENCY BOARD, VICTORIA:  
NUMBER OF AGENCIES AND TURNOVER,  
1961 to 1982 (a)**

Year	Agencies	Turnover \$'000
1961	(b) 30	3,826
1962	83	27,653
1963	140	52,767
1964	203	81,188
1965	283	111,650
1966	326	129,374
1967	346	144,209
1968	383	163,290
1969	405	187,503
1970	421	203,771
1971	437	231,722
1972	448	275,427
1973	451	322,819
1974	463	365,711
1975	466	461,984
1976	476	497,347
1977	474	546,840
1978	473	570,821
1979	472	585,279
1980	471	628,456
1981	465	688,374
1982	436	731,020

(a) At 31 July.

(b) The Totalizator Agency Board had operated for five months only.

Source: Totalizator Agency Board annual reports.



Racing attendances and betting have grown greatly in the last fifty years. However, fluctuations in attendances at race meetings, such as occurred during the Depression and after the introduction of television in 1956, combined with improved off-course betting services provided by the Totalizator Agency Board, persuaded clubs to provide modern facilities on-course to attract patronage. To aid racing clubs, the Victorian Government passed legislation in 1968 establishing a Development Fund to provide financial assistance for capital improvements on racecourses. This fund's main source of revenue is a deduction of 1.25 per cent from the "daily doubles" and "quadrillas" conducted by the TAB. An amount of \$42.2m has been credited to the Fund since its inception but the introduction of Tattsлото (a type of lottery) in the 1970s and the "tightening" of the economy have restricted the financial expansion of the racing industry.

In 1978 a Working Party appointed by the Victorian Government to inquire into racing industry finances recommended that financial relief be granted mainly in the form of a reduction in the government share of totalizator investments. In 1946 the Victorian Government had taken control of trotting and in 1955 the Control Board for greyhound racing was established. These two activities that in earlier days were practised mainly in country areas became established industries and popular in the metropolitan area.

Commercial interests have given impetus in other sporting arenas for many years. The sporting goods industry, in the form of large public companies, has been able to serve the growing market for recreation and leisure goods. For instance, the increasing popularity of running in the 1970s provided the impetus for the production and sale of a wide range of specialised clothing and footwear.

A sport such as ten pin bowling has attracted commercial investment since its introduction to Victoria in 1960. Its initial popularity declined and within five years a number of centres were forced to close. Other commercial enterprises such as public golf courses, tennis and squash courts, ice skating rinks, and mountain ski lifts, have also been developed since the 1930s. Business enterprise, through the establishment of hotels, lifts, and access roads at mountain resorts, has made skiing a popular Victorian sport. At the turn of the century, a golf course in a Victorian country town was a rarity; by the 1980s only the very smallest did not possess one.

Since the 1970s sports organisations ranging from the VFL to the Lawn Tennis Association of Australia have come to assume a commercial orientation. The VFL is the best example in Victoria of this trend. Some clubs such as Carlton and St Kilda have become incorporated organisations and each club in the League now has a formal administrative structure and in some cases clubs have appointed promotion and marketing officers. There has been a move of businessmen into the VFL and club administration and in 1976 the VFL established a Properties Division which is concerned with licensing the VFL name and logo. The first game on the League's own ground, VFL Park at Waverley, took place on 18 April 1970.

Most of the commercial trappings that have come to be associated with many sports in the last decade serve to finance the development of the game itself, rather than private individuals. However, there have been increased demands, especially among the top few in a sport, for financial recognition. Payment of players was once viewed askance, but with the growing commitment of participants, it has become accepted in several of the popular sports. Today, players in the VFL not only receive a base payment from their own clubs but are also eligible for amounts set aside for them when they retire, in the form of Club Provident Funds and the VFL Players' Provident Fund. In addition, top players and those with long service are able to hold individual contracts with clubs. In 1973 the formation of a VFL Players' Association, to obtain injury compensation and insurance and to provide employment and contract advice for players, has even further institutionalised the employer/employee relationship in football to the extent that many footballers now regard the game as their profession.

The VFL has dominated Victorian football for some 80 years in spite of the fact that the VFA was the body from which the VFL originated. The VFA survived, was innovative in its rules, increased the number of clubs, but was not able to compete with the charisma and commercial effectiveness of the VFL.

Generally, it has been over the issue of payment of players that "money incentive" has clashed most with the cry of "for the good of the game". In the late 1970s, the cricketing

world saw a debate about telecasting rights precipitate a split between "establishment" and "commercial" factions of the game. The refusal of the Australian Cricket Board to guarantee exclusive broadcasting rights to a commercial television chain resulted in the private promoter contracting more than fifty of the world's leading cricketers to appear in a succession of international "Supertests".

The split was reproduced in the Victorian sphere. The Victorian Cricket Association (VCA) in 1977 maintained that the basic issue was that cricket was "essentially an amateur game". Very few players reached first class cricket and it was only at that level that matches were profitable. Those profits were indispensable to the continuing development of the game and since the "Supertest" scheme diverted those profits into private hands, the VCA felt that the future of cricket was jeopardised.

In the early 1980s the two factions were reconciled and cricket continued to be a popular spectator and participant sport, although the trappings of "one day" matches and night cricket would possibly have raised the eyebrows of earlier players.

### Sponsorship

In the 1960s, large companies began to take a major interest in sport by providing prizes for professional events, by bringing overseas teams and coaches to Victoria, and by subsidising amateur sport. This growth in commercial sports sponsorship accelerated in the 1970s. All sporting clubs and associations have to find ways to finance their activities, to develop their facilities, and yet balance their budgets, and this has become more difficult to achieve with the increase in administrative costs due to inflation. In the 1970s as sporting groups were attempting to meet funding targets, the corporate world began to perceive sport as an attractive vehicle for promoting and advertising its products.

The growth of sponsorship was evident in many sports. Prior to 1976 no VFL team was sponsored, yet by 1980 all clubs were involved in at least one sponsorship contract. The sort of sporting entrepreneurship which before the 1970s was confined to professional boxing, wrestling, and occasionally tennis, appeared in the cricket world as outlined previously. Sponsors have also been involved in golf and soccer.

Commercial sponsorship has provided economic support not only to professional and semi-professional sports, but also to amateur orientated and suburban centred sports. The Victorian Little Athletics Association in 1980 received sponsorship from a large number of companies. Since the ban on television and radio cigarette advertising, tobacco companies have had surplus funds available for promotional activities and companies have given financial assistance to cricket, tennis, and motor racing. However, this move has been controversial.

Sponsorship has brought about an improvement in facilities as well as an increase in prize money and player incomes. Commercial support has made it possible for full-time professional players to survive at realistic income levels. Many Australian cricketers and golfers have relied on this support.

### SPORT AS ENTERTAINMENT

A number of major sporting events are also seen as major entertainment and tourist attractions — particularly in horse racing, cricket, and Australian Rules football. The most famous race in Australia, the Melbourne Cup, is handicapped. This contrasts with the Derby in England, which is run at set weights.

Foot racing, predominantly amateur, has included a small component of professional races since the mid-nineteenth century and most of these are handicap races. Handicapping is also designed to heighten the entertainment value and to attract the spectator, a necessary aim for professional and semi-professional sports. The Stawell Gift meeting at Easter is the highlight of the professional year and attracts runners from all States and from some overseas countries.

Some sports have large crowd followings. Cricket Tests attract crowds sometimes exceeding 50,000 and in 1961 a record 90,000 spectators watched the second day of play of the fifth Test in the Australia v. West Indies series at the MCG. Australian Rules football is the most popular spectator sport in Victoria, drawing more than three million spectators to VFL games in Melbourne each year. The VFL Grand Final regularly draws over 100,000 spectators and reached its record in 1970 with a crowd of 121,696. The

reliance on this revenue from gate takings led to some initial resistance to the introduction of radio and television broadcasting of some sports. In 1960 no television coverage was permitted because of the great fall in gate takings in the previous three years. It was not until 1977 that the VFL accepted the idea of a direct telecast of the Grand Final and even then it was on the condition that all seats were sold.

Racing has seen similar battles being fought between radio stations and racecourses in the 1930s and the wide wings on the winning post at Flemington are a legacy of that era. Their width was designed to prevent the outside broadcaster, who was stationed in the hotel opposite the course, from reporting the final winner. Radio, which by the 1930s was beginning to challenge the press as a disseminator of sporting news, was seen as a great asset to the SP bookmakers. Elaborate efforts were made at the Pakenham Racing Club in 1941 to ban broadcasting and to obscure the numbers of winning horses from the eyes of outside observers. But this initial resistance to radio and television gradually waned as favourable media outlets for sporting associations became available. For instance, the once ailing VFA was revived in part by the regular telecast of a Sunday match.

With increasing commercial involvement in sport and increased emphasis on the need to entertain and attract publicity, sponsorship has allied itself with the television industry to modify the sports they promote in an effort to stimulate audience interest. Some VFL team colours have been redesigned since the introduction of colour television in Victoria; tennis has introduced the tie-breaker to create a more decisive and climactic finish to the game; and World Series Cricket has introduced night games, special pitches, and even microphones on the field.

#### INVOLVEMENT OF GOVERNMENT AND "UMBRELLA" ORGANISATIONS IN SPORT AND RECREATION

Before the 1970s, sport in Victoria was very much a matter of separate associations, headed by the club secretary who worked voluntarily in his spare time and for whom this was a recreational activity. Government involvement was minimal, apart from early funding for the National Fitness Council, the Olympic and Commonwealth Games, and life saving associations. Moves did come from within the sports ranks themselves to work towards common goals by forming umbrella organisations.

An early umbrella organisation was the Victorian Olympic Council (VOC). The VOC was formed in 1912 and was the first co-ordinating body for sport in Victoria. Its objectives were directed at successful participation by Australia in the Olympic Games and this meant involvement in both funding and organisation. The second co-ordinating body for sport in Victoria was the Victorian Women's Amateur Sports Council (VWASC), founded in 1932. Its objectives were directed towards sport for women and girls, physical education, and appropriate uniform. This group was one of the earliest to recommend to the Premier in the 1960s that there should be an appointment made at Ministerial level with responsibility for sport. In 1977, the VWASC was incorporated into the third co-ordinating body, the Sports Federation of Victoria (formerly the Sports Council of Victoria).

The Sports Federation of Victoria was established in 1966. Thirty-one sports associations were initially involved and by 1979 this figure had reached seventy-four. The Sports Federation sought primarily to identify the problems of its members and to bring these to the attention of the Victorian Government, lobbying for government aid in answer to needs within the sporting world. It also kept sports organisations in touch and distributed advice and information. A central secretariat was established by the Victorian Government for sports organisations as a result of a submission by the Sports Federation drawing attention to the inefficiencies of the "kitchen secretariats" from which many sporting groups operated.

Educational institutions have played their role in encouraging sport. Physical education has been taught in most schools and specialist teacher preparation courses have been introduced at tertiary level. In addition to these influences of schools and the Victorian co-ordinating bodies, sport in Victoria has also been affected by national organisations. One such group is the Australian Sports Medicine Federation which was founded in 1963, with its national headquarters in Melbourne. It provides information on sport and exercise as they affect health, advises government and sports and recreation bodies, and encourages research in sports medicine. The Confederation of Australian Sport is the latest major



national sporting body to influence sport in Victoria. This was established in November 1976 and has its head offices in Melbourne.

Apart from co-ordinating bodies which have sought to bring some unity to sport in Victoria, the remaining influence has been government at all levels. Significant government involvement in sport did not take place until the 1970s, although local councils had provided playing fields and other recreational facilities. Commonwealth and State Governments had provided funds for sport and recreation in a rather "piecemeal" fashion, but after the 1970s they became involved in sport in a more co-ordinated manner. The Commonwealth Government established the Department of Tourism and Recreation and in 1974, the Australian Sports Council. After 1975, it was affiliated with the Confederation of Australian Sport.

There were also changes during the 1970s in Victoria. The Department of Youth, Sport and Recreation was established in December 1972, and one of its roles was to provide funds to community groups for leisure time activities. The policies of the Department were directed towards support for voluntary youth groups, and the development of community centres aimed at family participation. Local government co-operation was seen as essential and an improvement of standards was sought. The Victorian Government has provided assistance to a wide range of youth, sport, and recreation bodies, in various areas. Sports are funded through associations, one State wide association being funded for each sport.

The Department also assists other areas of sport apart from the Sports Assistance Programme. Municipal councils receive assistance for youth, sport, and recreation and by June 1983 payment of subsidies and loans to municipal councils for major capital works had totalled \$31.7m. By June 1983, the contribution of local councils in Victoria to sport and recreation facilities was over \$70m.

The Victorian Government has also sponsored conferences, research, and publications. Perhaps the most widely recognised piece of research it has carried out has been that leading to the "Life. Be in it" programme begun in 1975. This identified the attitude of Victorian society towards fitness and physical activity. The result was a campaign that sought to "get a lot of people to do a little rather than a few to do a lot". The campaign used modern marketing techniques, including television advertising, and by 1977 there was a high level of awareness. On the basis of such success, the Recreation Ministers' Council decided in 1977 to extend the programme throughout Australia.

The other major development has been in the provision of international standard facilities. In 1980, a State Swimming Centre (previously the Frank Beaurepaire Pool) was opened and the first stages of a State Equestrian Centre at Werribee Park were begun. A sports medicine centre was commenced at the City Baths in Melbourne in conjunction with the Australian Sports Medicine Federation (Victorian Branch). In 1982, an "astroturf" artificial pitch for men's and women's field hockey—only the second of its kind in Australia—was opened at Royal Park.

## SPECIAL GROUPS IN SPORT AND RECREATION

Organised involvement of special groups such as junior, veteran, and disabled participants grew during the period. Through their awareness of the special nature of their participants, junior, veteran, and disabled groups have been articulate about the philosophy and aims underlying their attitudes to recreation and have continually felt the tension between the need to cater for the different capabilities of their members and the desire to encourage integration with others in the community.

### Juniors

In many instances, recreations that have traditionally drawn older persons, have increasingly attracted younger participants. In cricket, football, netball, tennis, soccer, hockey, and rugby, there has been a steady increase in the involvement of juniors and with it growing organisational structures to cater for them. Golf has also recently witnessed an upsurge in junior interest, particularly in country areas. Netball has changed in nature from a Saturday afternoon sport to a very popular evening sport for teenagers and young adults.

The increasing participation of children in sports has led to many associations developing modifications of their game specially designed to cater for younger, smaller players. The

emphasis, in these modifications, has been on enjoyment rather than on stress and competition. Baseball, basketball, and cricket have designed special games and mini-hockey, mini-rugby and mini-volleyball schemes have been developed. These modifications include such elements as shorter playing time, smaller playing area, more encouragement for the inexperienced and an emphasis, through substitution rules and smaller teams, on everyone participating. Sporting activities offered to students have been progressively broadened, and annual championships are conducted in such sports as judo and artistic gymnastics, while individual technical schools are conducting programmes in ten pin bowling, ice skating, and archery.

Associations solely designed to cater for the special needs of youngsters in sport have developed. The Victorian Little Athletics Association is one such group and it grew from the first informal but regular athletics meetings organised for children under 12 in Geelong in 1964. In 1980, the Association had 88 operative centres in the State and approximately 27,000 Victorian boys and girls as registered members.

### **Veterans**

Several associations designed to cater for the retired or older adults have appeared since the 1960s. The Australian Retired Persons' Association, the Early Planning for Retirement Association, and the Council of Adult Education all provide either counselling on retirement needs and plans or opportunities for further education, often in areas of recreation such as art and craft, yoga, and literature studies. The Recreation Development and Youth Affairs Division of the Department of Youth, Sport and Recreation has initiated programmes designed to teach older adults recreational skills which may be useful in retirement and has recently organised camps for persons over fifty.

A great increase in the number of older adults making use of the facilities of sporting associations has been evident since 1934. Nearly all sporting clubs involve older persons to a certain extent, often in the role of non-playing administrators, but there are particular sports such as bowling, golf, trugo, croquet, billiards, fishing, horse racing, yachting and shooting, which attract a substantial senior age membership.

The Royal Victorian Bowls Association reached its centenary year in 1980 and has members ranging in age from 18 to 100 years. Cycling, women's cricket, and men's field hockey have witnessed a growth in veteran membership and veteran athletics have been organised in Melbourne since the 1971-72 season.

Trugo is a sport of Victorian invention which is played only in suburban Melbourne and is the preserve of persons over sixty. It began in the 1920s as a game played by Newport Railway workers in their lunch hour and consists of hitting buffer washers or rubber discs with a mallet, aiming to send them through two metre wide goal posts from a distance of 27 metres. Fifty years after its beginnings, 12 clubs have emerged in Melbourne with about 100 men and 60 women, all over sixty years of age, playing in a weekly competition between August and April.

### **Disabled groups**

Handicapped groups have been encouraged to seek recreation for its own sake and the social opportunities it provides. In many cases, institutions changed their emphasis and sometimes self-help groups have been formed. This growing awareness was illustrated by the establishment of the Victorian Advisory Council on Recreation for the Disabled in March 1976.

The developments in recreation for the mentally retarded illustrate many of the trends that have been evident among disabled groups: a movement in institutions towards encouraging recreation for enjoyment and social purposes, an emphasis on using community facilities and the appearance of many groups catering solely for recreational and sporting needs.

The Victorian Blind Sports Association was formed in October 1979, but comprised sporting groups with much longer histories. The Blind Cricket Association was established about 1924 and grew from fielding two sides to adding a fifth team in 1979. "Swish", otherwise known as blind table tennis, has become a very popular game since the early 1960s. A Rifle Shooting Club was begun and a Ski Club formed in 1967, while a lawn

bowls competition has been held regularly since 1975. The Victorian Olympic Sports Association of and for the Blind was set up in mid-1979 to assist the competitive aspects of sport and recreation for the visually impaired. Three major international events form the goals towards which this organisation works. These are the Olympics for the Handicapped, which last took place in Holland in June 1980; the Far Eastern and South Pacific Games for the Handicapped, which are also held every four years and took place in Hong Kong in 1982; and the Winter Olympics for the Handicapped, in which Australia was represented for the first time in Norway in February 1980.

These international events involve not only the blind, but also other physically disabled competitors. "Paravics" is a wheelchair sporting group which has sent representatives overseas and interstate for many years. Their association is another example of the movement towards self-help among disabled people. A Victorian Sports Council for the Disabled has been formed. It is a body with representatives from five disabled sporting associations — those for the blind, the deaf, the mentally retarded, the physically disabled, and amputees.

The Adult Deaf Society of Victoria and the Victorian Deaf Committee both provide many recreational opportunities for the deaf, as well as encouraging sporting groups. They conduct such sports as basketball, netball, tennis, table tennis, golf, cricket, Australian Rules football, soccer, badminton and squash, and other recreational activities covering theatre, film, craft, and various hobby groups.

The Limbless Soldiers' Association was founded after the First World War in 1921, and established a golf club in the early 1930s and a bowling club in 1952. The Amputees' Association of Victoria was formed in 1980. With the growing awareness of the personal importance of sport and recreation for disabled persons there has come an increasing emphasis on non-competitive attitudes to sport, with the motivation for participation being social, educational, or purely for personal fulfilment.

#### CONCLUSION

It is not possible to isolate sport from other forms of recreation, because sport is both competitive and non-competitive, active and passive, spontaneous and organised. What can be said for the 1980s in contrast to the 1930s is that large-scale, competitive sport has become very highly organised and that the money devoted to its commercial sponsorship involves large sums. That is a clear change from the 1930s. Another is the growing government involvement — at all levels — in encouraging and helping to pay for various sporting facilities.

Recreation has shown less clearly defined patterns of development. In many ways the path has been more cyclical, as many of the homely self-made recreations of the 1930s regained their popularity. There has also been a change brought about by electronic and other technological advances so that the family that played a game of draughts or chess or cards in the 1930s played a video screen game in the early 1980s.