

ASSH AUSTRALIA AND ASSH INTERNATIONAL: SOME POLICY PROPOSALS

Below are some ideas about how ASSH might extend its activities and add to its membership in regional Australia and in the neighbouring countries of Oceania.

ASSH Australia

ASSH has long been strongest in the bigger cities of Australia, particularly Melbourne and Sydney. Branch chapters have been established there from the 1980s. Over half the 15 biennial conferences (from 1977 to 2005) have been and will be held in Melbourne and Sydney (four each). Adelaide, Brisbane, Canberra, Christchurch, Launceston and Perth have each organised one conference. Branch chapters of ASSH have been set up in Adelaide and Brisbane. One of the encouraging signs at the recent conference was the possibility of more ASSH chapters, including one at Canberra and one proposed for South-east Queensland.

I believe that ASSH should consider supporting activities outside the big cities to further encourage events at say Townsville or the Sunshine Coast, Darwin, the Riverina and other parts of regional Australia. This could be achieved by the following:

- someone-off seeding money for the establishment of an ASSH chapter in a new town or region;
- some seeding money for a one-day ASSH conference in regional Australia in a place which has not hosted an ASSH event. While it may be impossible for Peter Horton in Townsville or Rollo Manning in Darwin to bid for a four-day biennial ASSH conference, a one-day forum may be both feasible and attractive.

If such ideas appeal, guidelines could be set up for applications.

ASSH International

It was encouraging to see so many New Zealand delegates at the recent ASSH conference and I believe that the time is right to see what can be done to support sports history in New Zealand as well as other countries of Oceania including Fiji, PNG and perhaps even adjacent regions, such as Singapore.

Clare Simpson, Charlotte McDonald, Doug Booth and myself met at the recent conference and considered three models to progress the Australian–New Zealand relationship.

1. ANZALS MODEL: This is based on equal sharing (50 per cent of the Executive from each country). This is appropriate for ANZALS where there is a parity in membership but not for ASSH, where the membership proportions are more like 80-90 per cent Australian to 10–20% New Zealand.

2. CONFEDERATION MODEL: This model is based on a meeting of two separate bodies but assumes that a New Zealand Society for Sports History might be set up. This is unlikely to occur in the foreseeable future.

3. INFORMAL MODEL: This is the preferred model and could be advanced by the following measures:

- One member of the ASSH Executive could be from New Zealand. This could be achieved informally or more formally through a reserved position with New Zealand members voting for a particular candidate.
- New Zealand should continue to have the right to bid for a biennial ASSH conference. Doug does not support the idea of a guaranteed place for New Zealand in any conference rotation scheme. Rather he believes that any New Zealand city should compete with other bid contenders.

It is also worthwhile thinking about the possibility of future one-day ASSH forums in New Zealand, Fiji, PNG or Singapore along the same lines as the proposed regional ASSH conference. It is worthwhile, in my opinion, for ASSH to invest some of its capital in flying the flag in regional Australia and nearby countries.

I would be pleased to hear from members about these proposals. Please contact me on r.cashman@unsw.edu.au.

Richard Cashman
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