

Editorial Preface

Welcome to the first edition of the *Occasional Papers in Football Studies*. We are excited about this new publication that seeks to draw together social scientific research on the various codes of football and to generate debate amongst researchers in different areas and who are researching on different football codes. Part of the rationale for the *OPFS* and for the formation of the Football Studies Group came from the four codes of football that are played professionally in Australia and the need to begin cross-code and inter-regional dialogue. Very quickly, however, the project became bigger than Australia and we have had interest from North America, Europe and Africa thus far.

The *OPFS* welcomes contributions from the range of social sciences that focus on a aspect of any football code (American, Australian, Canadian, Gaelic, rugby league, rugby union, soccer and others). We anticipate two issues a year at this stage and, if the interest continues to grow, we hope to make this a regular academic journal. All papers submitted to the *OPFS* are fully refereed anonymously.

In this issue we begin with four research articles, a Viewpoint article and two research essays. The articles cover Australian rules football, rugby league rugby union and soccer and are situated within the geographic spaces of Australia, England, New Zealand, Norway and South Africa. In Viewpoint, a section to explore conceptual and theoretical questions, concepts and issues, Dave Nadel asks 'What is a football community' based on his many years of work on Australian rules football and local identities in Melbourne, Australia. We invite commentary on any of the articles in this issue to be considered for publication in the near future. Anyone interested in reviewing books for the journal should contact the reviews editor, Murray Phillips, at the University of South Australia.

I encourage all members of the Football Studies Group, as well as those who are not members, to submit papers for consideration by the *OPFS*. Several innovations are planned over the next several issues including reviews/critiques of major works and bodies of work on different football codes that have influenced our analysis of football in society. I would also encourage all who are interested in football studies to attend the second football studies in Melbourne in late June 1998 to be coordinated by Victoria University of Technology. Further information on the conference appears later in this issue. Welcome to football studies!

John Nauright
Editor