

Australian Football the International Game? The Danish Australian Football League and the Internationalisation of Australian Football, 1989- 1996

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On the 24 May 1989 the first Australian Rules training night was held at Faelledparken in Copenhagen. It followed an advertisement in a local newspaper placed by Mick Sitch, a Copenhagen resident and Collingwood devotee, asking if anyone would like to meet him under a tree and have a kick of the footy. Only one Dane and one New Zealander answered the call of this expatriate on that first long spring night.¹ Now, less than a decade later the DAFL, the Danish Australian Football League, has six teams. How important will that first ‘kick to kick’ seem a hundred years later? Will it be almost as important as when Tom Wills played a game with a few friends in the Richmond Paddock on 31 July 1858? Will the name of Mick Sitch have a place in the history of Australian Football or will he be forgotten or otherwise remembered only as a cousin of Rob Sitch of the TV series *Frontline*? Will the Copenhagen Crocodile Kym Modra be remembered as an early runner-up for the Sitch Medal (in 1994) or, when remembered at all, as the almost forgotten relation of Adelaide Crows full forward Tony Modra? Will there be a European Australian Football championship?

By the end of the twenty-first century will the Danish Australian Football experiment be an important beginning or will it be forgotten? A historical footnote like the competitions in South Africa and New Zealand nearly 100 years ago? Will Australian Football be struggling to survive in Australia itself, as a local game in a world devoted to what some might see as the lowest common denominator international sports of soccer, and basketball — and to McDonalds and Coke?

Australian ‘Cultural Cringe’

Any assessment of the significance of the Danish expansion of Australian

Football requires an understanding of two larger contexts. One is the historical derivativeness of Australian culture and the Australian colonial 'cultural cringe' expectation that cultural forms would be imported rather than exported. The second is the contemporary phenomenon of the internationalisation and diversification of sport. The results of the latter are contradictory. The playing of more sports from more distant and smaller countries suggests a new pluralism. However, most small scale and low profile sports are at a disadvantage in the era of global status sports marketing. In a final complication, Australian Football is both a low profile sport and the product of a fashionable 'new world' society which has some of the youth appeal associated with the United States and American popular culture.

The tradition of Australian culture has been one of derivativeness ever since the European invasion and occupation after 1788. In the colonial era until 1901 the assumption was that Australia was being colonised; it was not expected that Australia would seek to 'colonise' any other part of the 'civilised' world by exporting its institutions. Derivativeness continued in the period of imperial dependence (or 'Dominion Culture') from 1901 until about 1939 or even later. It took new forms in the post-War era of looking to America (which I have termed elsewhere the era of the 'satellite society').² Even in the contemporary era of globalisation, during which Australia has exported TV soaps, films and popular music, Australian society has remained primarily derivative. Ideas, inventions and institutions have, with rare exceptions, been imported rather than exported. While the imported ideas and institutions have often been adapted and localised the normal assumption sees Australia as a receptor of culture from overseas; the transmission has historically been one way. The major exception has been the talented individual Australians in the arts and popular culture who have made careers in Britain, the USA and Europe.³ Even for a semi-industrial developed country, the law of informal and formal colonial economic relations is that empires, large nations and multinationals export developed cultural forms and manufactured products and colonial or small nations import them. This has been a continuing reality for the last two centuries since the Industrial Revolution.

Most major Australian social and cultural institutions have been based in the beginning on imported models, although they may have been adapted and varied over time. Australian Football has been a rare exception — an Australian invention and an important Australian social

and cultural, as well as sporting, institution.⁴ It is the only significant Australian sporting creation which prospers in Australia in an era of international sport and sporting diversity.

The colonial 'cultural cringe' as defined by A A Phillips has reinforced the pattern of derivativeness.⁵ It is assumed that the best comes from overseas, that the Australian is inferior, and must be measured against overseas standards. Once, as described in Phillips's article, the standards were set in Britain. More recently they have been set in the US (in popular culture) or are abstracted in such terms as 'world class' and 'international benchmarking' in most spheres of life.

As Phillips noted there is another side to the coin. The opposite of the 'Cringe Direct' is the 'Cringe Inverted' which assumes that the Australian is the best in the world, inverting the cringe in a formulation based on simple parochial self-congratulation. In this less common view Australia has the very best in the world and has nothing to learn from overseas.⁶

The colonial cultural cringe has encouraged the assumption, until recently, that Australian Football is less deserving of government support than 'international' and Olympic sports.' Secondly, it has been assumed that like most Australian creations the game cannot be successfully exported. If it can be, then the most likely places are the traditional overseas cultural centres for Australia, Britain and the USA.

Australian Football is faster and more spectacular than most comparable sports, 'a fusion of the creative and the physical, of speed and strength, of subtlety and endeavour, of the aesthetic and the practical, of courage and stamina, of the individual and the co-operative . . . a superior sporting achievement'.⁸ However, it has been assumed that an Australian product, even a superior one, cannot be exported to a world stage, to playing fields a long way away. The tyranny of distance condemns it to, at best, the centre stage within most of Australia. The possibility of it becoming a major international sport, as its intrinsic qualities might suggest that it should, is rarely considered.

Despite such assumptions a contemporary variation on this Australian modesty has been the expansion of TV coverage of the sport since the 1980s through the emergence of multi-channel pay TV in Europe and North America. Although the scale has been limited — usually packaged highlights — and coverage has been intermittent rather than continuous, Australian Football has acquired an unprecedented international exposure.

The emergence of grass-roots Australian Football competitions in several countries, particularly Britain, Denmark, Canada and the USA as well as in New Zealand and the Pacific closer to home has been a result of this new awareness. Stimulated by television coverage, direct experience of Australia through travel and the involvement of some Australian expatriates, Australian Football has become in an amateur way at least an international sport. For the first time since expatriate miners took it to South Africa at the turn of the century and other Australians took it to New Zealand and Scotland a few years later, Australian Football has expanded beyond Australian shores.⁹

Evolution of the Danish Australian Football League

The evolution of the Danish Australian Football League since 1989 offers both a measure of the success of the sport and an opportunity to assess, firstly, the relationship between the grass-roots development of the Danish Australian Football League and the impact of TV replays and high profile Australian Football League (AFL) overseas tours and, secondly, the attitude of the AFL, the media and the public to the development of the game overseas.

To what extent has the AFL been driven by short-term economic demands or by a larger vision of the internationalisation of the game in a global world? Has it been imaginative and long-term or has it looked entirely at the TV dollar? Has the cultural cringe orientation of the AFL to the traditional cultural sun of Australian popular culture, the United States and to television, limited its commitment to grass-roots development elsewhere? And are such perspectives reinforced by a cultural cringe inverted, the dismissal by Victorian football administrators and followers in particular of development areas as inferior, as 'barbarians' with tones of 'what would they know?'; from teams and supporters in Sydney and Brisbane to the new international competitions?

The success of the DAFL is arguably of major long-term significance. It has occurred with minimal support from Australia and a background of only a few years of TV coverage of the AFL. There has been no full-on AFL 'developmental' effort to colonise the north, no major financial investment and no full-scale exhibition matches between AFL teams.

The early progress of the DAFL and that of other small, local competitions elsewhere may augur well for the internationalisation of the sport which — in the mid-1990s — also shows promise of living up to its

aspiration by becoming 'the national game'. It may be that, in the era of the globalisation of culture and sport, an Australian sport can gain from the 'New World' aura of the country, even if it pales by comparison with that of the US. Or, alternatively, competitions like the DAFL will remain both the poor relations of bodies such as the AFL and low down in the pecking order of international status by comparison with American sports such as the 'World League' of gridiron football, basketball or baseball.

The history of the DAFL and its relationship to the attempted expansion of Australian Football illuminates these subjects and may provide provisional answers to such questions. Its achievements have been international as well as local. On 13 July 1996 the combined Danish/Swedish Vikings (the DAFL has one Swedish team) defeated Great Britain in London by five points, following their earlier 1995 victory in Copenhagen. In the words of their *Ugeavis (Football Record)* headline the Danes were '*Europa Mester*' (European champions). A year earlier the Danish headline had read '*Sejren er Vor!!!*' ('Victory is ours!'); 'Kim's Commandoes Pummel Poms in Farum Furnace' was the racier sub-head after captain Kim Madsen's team had won at suburban Farum on an unusually hot Danish summer's day.¹⁰

The late 1980s and early 1990s was a period when Australia was still flavour of the month (or even the decade), that of the America's Cup win, *Neighbours*, *Crocodile Dundee* and the Bicentenary. Australian Football was discovered along with Australian films, culture and wine. Australian Football was on TV around the world — in Britain on Channel 4 on Sunday mornings after an Indian movie, in North America on the sports cable network ESPN and in Europe on the cable networks Skychannel and Eurosport.¹¹

In 1990 the first official DAFL exhibition game was played. On 8 June 1991 in the first DAFL competition game the North Copenhagen Barracudas defeated the Copenhagen Crocodiles 9.13.67 to 4.5.29. The DAFL was formalised in 1991 with the formation of North Copenhagen, Copenhagen, and the Amager Tigers. Later, new teams came from Aalborg on the peninsula of Jutland in the north of Denmark (a six-hour journey from Copenhagen) and in Copenhagen's northern suburbs, the Farum Lions. From Sweden came two teams, the Lund Bulldogs and the Helsingborg Saints (just across the water from Hamlet's castle at Elsinore). By 1995 there were seven teams, although the demands of travel from Sweden led to the withdrawal of Lund, reducing that to six. On 7 September

1996 the Farum Lions pulled away from the Helsingborg Saints in the last few minutes, winning by nineteen points in another typically close DAFL Grand Final, something that the AFL could only envy.

The evolution of the DAFL, was typical of many new sporting competitions. In the early years the first players were recruited in pubs, almost in the way in which the Royal Navy had dragooned sailors.¹² Access to grounds was a problem. Copenhagen and other Danish cities have a few playing areas of suitable size. When grounds could be found they were usually also set up for other sports. The need to 'BYO goalposts' and then take them away after the match demanded a pioneering spirit.

'Why Denmark?' or 'Why Scandinavia?' are questions which might well be asked. The bonds of immigration to Australia are weaker than with several other European countries. Although there have been players of Scandinavian origin in the VFL (Geelong full back, the 'big Swede', Paul Vinar and South Melbourne ruckman Vic Aanensen) there have also been players of French, British, Italian, German, Dutch, Greek, Macedonian, Ukrainian and American extraction.

A successful new initiative requires visionary, dynamic and committed individuals. The endless energy of Mick Sitch and the high tech skills of Ian Hill, who edits the *Football Record* and created the DAFL Home Page on the Internet, have been crucial. However, the team lists attest to the fact that the Danes and Swedes have taken to the sport in a big way.

Two other reasons may be important. One has its origins in town planning. The Danish commitment to community recreation spaces has meant that Danish towns have, by Western European standards, relatively large parks and playing areas. On some of the latter — contrast the smaller spaces of French and German towns — it is sometimes possible to draw the oval boundary line of an Australian Football ground.

Finally, in sport, as in other areas of culture, smaller countries (and sometimes smaller places) are more open to new ideas than old imperial and larger countries. For example, the British, seeing Australia as the traditional enemy in cricket and an ex-colony, inevitably condescend to the sport of colonials.

But this was a good time, one of the opening up of Denmark to a wider world, when local mayors were sympathetic to new sports and their need for grounds. The league wisely sought to go beyond informal club structures. It began to locate clubs in Copenhagen suburbs to promote

local grass-roots interest. It was also a period when young Danes and Swedes were discovering exotic Australia, especially during the northern winter. Some of the players had seen Australian Football League matches in Australia when back-packing around or visiting friends. And even the pub culture provided benefits. Along with localism, the Australian tradition of going to a nearby pub after the match with supporters and girlfriends has created a camaraderie which is less common in other sporting teams and competitions.

The Danish Australian Football League (aka the '*Dansk Australsk Fodbold Liga*') clubs have chosen colours based on AFL colours — despite Mick Sitch's allegiance to Collingwood none chose the black and white. Thus the DAFL *UGEAVIS*, with its symbol of a Danish cross and colours on a football, gives the week's fixture in which the Helsingborg Saints play the Aalborg Kangaroos while the Farum Lions play the Amager Tigers.

Unlike the British Australian Rules Football League, the BARFL, which has a maximum of 50 per cent Australians, the DAFL has mainly local players; a 1995 rule restricts Australians to a maximum of 20 per cent of a team sheet. Not surprisingly, the DAFL season is played during the mild Danish summer, rather than the traditional winter.¹³

The DAFL is run with a degree of Nordic-Australian efficiency, with an orderly roster and an attractive *Football Record*. The AFL and individual AFL clubs have helped, with footballs, guernseys and small financial contributions. In a traditional way, sponsors include pubs and cafes (which, like Farum's Cafe Williams, are also pubs in Denmark). In the global era however the DAFL also has its own home page¹⁴ which gives details of the Grand Final, the Sitch Medal, the Austrade Goalkicking, links with other international leagues and even the minutes of the Annual General Meeting. Similarly, the *Football Record* went into a full colour cover to celebrate the 1995 victory over Britain.

In 1995 two players, Dennis Klindt and the Swede Joacim Aulin, came to Australia on football scholarships to develop their administration, playing and coaching skills, with AFL assistance. They also received sponsorship from the Danish Club in South Melbourne, a club stronger these days in pokies than it is in Danes, who comprise only a small proportion of its membership.¹⁵ Since the two played in the Victorian Amateurs in a lower grade this encouraged a very specific form of inverted cultural cringe. In the mindless prejudice of those whose eyes

were blinkered from anything happening not under the light towers of the MCG or on their Channel 7 TV screen, the fact that they weren't top-line AFL players was more significant than anything else. The DAFL could be dismissed, like those other grass-roots competitions, Tasmanian football, the VFA/VFL and Victorian country football and, until 1996, the Brisbane and Sydney AFL sides, as of no significance.

The DAFL has prospered in a changing Denmark. 'Multi-culturalism' is not a purely Australian phenomenon. 'Wonderful Copenhagen' has strong Danish cultural and communal traditions and is also a pluralist society open to influences from around the world. Among its many ethnic or theme restaurants and pubs are Australian ones, both authentic and merely theme, including the Down Under Bar. Perhaps the bilingualism of younger Danes, speaking English as well as Danish, and the international appeal of Copenhagen for tourists together expose its people to other cultures.

American Influence

The most powerful cultural influence in Western Europe is the USA. In Copenhagen the main malls are inundated with jeans shops and American fast food chains, despite one fashion outlet called Boomerang. A large adolescent clothing shop sells licensed American NFL gear and other licensed American sporting clothes.

The real competitor for attention and sporting interest is the American League grid-iron football competition which has been going since 1986. The DAFL is, like those institutions and individuals which teach Australian Studies around the world, compared to those who pursue things American, a poor relation. The American NFL has given great support to the local Danish league and has poured money into its artificial creation, the 'World League' of European teams. Locally, it paid for a Danish team to go to New York for matches.¹⁶

The young Helsingborg Saint, Joacim Aulin, tells the story of the uphill battle faced by the advocates of Australian Football (and Australian culture) around the world. When the Swede Kennett Andersen goaled twice during the 1994 soccer World Cup he made the gesture of an Australian Football goal umpire, signalling a goal with those two emphatic fingers. Instead of this being a free kick for the Australian game, it was misread as an American symbol, Swedish newspapers describing the gesture as 'a shot from Dallas'.¹⁷ This story of 'colonial' frustration at

being ignored or distorted would resonate strongly for many of those who teach about Australia in Denmark or France, Germany or Italy, China or Japan.¹⁸

Australian support for the local Danish version of the game is not so strong. The AFL focuses more on revenue (and on debt reduction) and on identifying talent than on creative expansion and the expenditure it requires. To club hardheads, 'the Irish experiment' does not mean the several series of Gaelic Football-International Rules matches from 1967 to the 1990s but the recruiting of the Melbourne Brownlow Medallist, the ruckman Jim Stynes and the backman Sean Wight.¹⁹ Talent, not grass-roots growth, is the issue regarding 'overseas' in the same way as some AFL clubs reduce country football to just feeder leagues providing AFL talent.

The relationship — and the gap -between TV exports and grass-roots development can be seen by looking at the VFL's international TV sales during the 1980s. In those heady days the international expansion of Australian business and of Australian Football was big. These were the days of Alan Bond's 1983 America's Cup Win, when John Elliott was planning to 'Fosterise the world' and Christopher Skase wanted to buy American film studios as well as Brisbane football and basketball clubs. At this time headlines trumpeted that Westpac was 'Taking on the World' and the Swan Beer jingle, 'They said you'd never make it!', was the theme of aggressive Australian entrepreneurs.

In those expansionist times even the football was a little more pumped up than usual. 'And the Big Suits Fly' was the theme at home and abroad. In those confident days business journalists, reporting the expansion, argued that 'the marketing of the VFL to a worldwide market is the key to its survival'.²⁰

This meant television. Notwithstanding hyped figures ('likely worldwide audience of 100M' to watch Grand Final — 1987) VFL replays were on free-to-air and cable TV (Channel 4 in Britain, sports cable networks in North America). At the time this exotic, but exciting sport, was known to many telespectators around the world by the cryptic abbreviation 'VFL'. There were also Australian-Gaelic 'international rules' matches in 1978, 1984, 1986, 1987 and 1990, only some of which were televised in Eire and Australia.²¹

In the roller-coaster days of Jim McKay's Active Marketing and then Powerplay, which acquired the TV rights, 1987 was the big year.

And October 1987 — now long remembered on the stock market — was the big month.²² The Canadian entrepreneur Tom Bryant declared that ‘Canadians love Australia . . . [and] you’ve got a really hot number in Paul Hogan there’. He hoped that this aura, and the image of the big ruckman John Ironmonger eating raw meat on a Vancouver footpath, would attract the crowds as well as media attention. It did not.²³

Nor did the October 1987 matches in Los Angeles or Yokohama quite live up to expectations. In London, the British press was ever ready to condescend towards the Antipodes. Several papers ran photo-stories of ‘violent colonials’ at play after the ‘Battle of Great Britain’ match between North Melbourne and Carlton at the Oval.²⁴

International Expansion of Australian Football

It seemed a sad irony that the very month of the attempted international presentation of the game (in an era when business was reshaping the organisation of Australian Football) was the month of the worst stockmarket crash since 1929. In the following years the hype about overseas television audiences has retreated, as have some of the outlets and the audiences, while many 1980s big businessmen have gone away to lick their wounds or to find quieter retreats. Instead, the game has been quietly establishing itself internationally — competitions in Canada, Denmark and Great Britain and international matches between their representative teams.

Although the great imaginary tele-edifice has faded, television is important if the game, which Melbourne PR men call ‘international’ in the metaphorical sense of its style and power, beauty and appeal, is to become literally international. This is necessary in a global world in which the merely Australian is often undervalued.

For the Danes, as Australian Football disappeared from Eurosport (after Rupert Murdoch sold the channel to a French company), a Grand Final highlights program is important. However, problems over price and over ensuring appropriate marketing and presentation support meant that it was not on television in 1995 after several years of modest success (in 1994 an hour at 11.00 pm on Saturday night).²⁵

While AFL club treasurers understandably worry about every shekel or kronor, the AFL focus remains on next week’s receipts. Like Australian business, the short-term is usually given higher priority than the long-term.

International matches are important to players, however. For Bobby Skilton his 1967 Galah guernsey in Australia's green and gold colours, worn in the matches against Irish Gaelic football teams, was full of meaning.²⁶ Exhibition matches between the All-Australian team and the AFL premiers would give the best players the possibility of representing their country (and playing a match!) and supporting the grass-roots development of the game overseas.

In the 1980s the major focus was on big dollars and big stadiums in English speaking countries. This was a familiar Australian view of the known world as synonymous with the world that matters — the USA and Britain. In the 1990s dollar-oriented realists call for a retreat. The Australian assertiveness of the 1980s has been supplanted by a cultural cringe sense of inferiority, somehow justified by the cringe inverted, a localised chauvinism, which discouraged any reflection on the international possibilities of the game. As the Federal Government pulls back support for Australian culture overseas,²⁷ traditionalists similarly suggest that the development of the game should be put on the back-burner. The 1980s expansion. ideas reflected both Australian self-assertiveness and the fantasies of that business decade of suits without substance. But it could be argued that to leave behind egotistical fantasies is not necessarily the same as abandoning legitimate development.

Globalisation

The sceptics say that in a global world 'if you're not an international sport you don't count, you won't last!' Perhaps Australian Football administrators could look beyond both the cringe inverted, local self-satisfaction, and the colonial cultural cringe fear about the viability of an Australian creation in the international world of sport. Perhaps, in a world of diminishing distances, a notably spectacular and dramatic game should be suitable for 'export'.²⁸

The Danish Australian Football League has long wanted an exhibition match in Copenhagen at the end of the Australian Football season. However, in these areas the locals have had to make their own way, which they have done. In Sweden, the Helsingborg Saints played a half-time exhibition match before a crowd of 10 000 at a local soccer game. The prospect of AFL exhibition matches has foundered on numbers — crowds and money. The AFL wanted a stadium that would hold 40 000 and a large financial guarantee. While 'bottom line' economics appeals to

1990s accountants, unwillingness to take risks was not exactly how multinational companies spread around the world.

It could be argued that the population of around six million of Denmark and southern Sweden does not justify a high priority and that other overseas developments might have better prospects. However, the AFL's support for other developments has been mainly rhetorical. Only two out of 192 pages in the AFL's Five Year Plan (1994) are devoted to the future of football outside Australia.²⁹

So, as Mick Sitch and Dennis Klindt and their families and friends have a beer after a match with other DAFL enthusiasts at the Cafe Williams in Farum, sometimes they 'might think of what they have achieved. The Danish/Swedish Vikings have defeated Great Britain twice and seek to play against Canada in 1997. For the League's founder, Mick Sitch, defeating the British on their home soil was one of the great moments of his life. Or they might reflect, along with Ron Barassi, many football followers and perhaps even AFL Chief Commissioner from 1986 to 1996, Ross Oakley, on 'why?' — 'why isn't the world's best field sport one of the world's leading sports?'

Barriers to Expansion

Previously, Australian Football could not expand — because of distance, isolation, and a small population. It had not even been the undisputed national game, weakening Federal Government support.³⁰ The traditional cultural cringe said that Australian creations were not of much interest to the world while the inverted cringe (parochial pride) led to a different form of myopia whereby nothing exists beyond 'my club, my league'. Those days have not completely gone.

The VFL/AFL expansion to create a national league has been the one significant exception to this tendency toward myopic self-absorption. At a cost to revenue (subsidising the Sydney and Brisbane clubs) and to Victorian pride (premierships 'going west' to the West Coast Eagles and Sydney and Brisbane in the finals) the AFL has, after some 'hiccups', successfully built a national league.³¹ 'AFL', as it is called in mediaspeak, is now the most popular national sport on the playing fields, in the plastic seats and before the television sets. Paradoxically, the AFL has not learned the logic of this venture on a larger scale, in the globalising world of the coming twenty-first century. That, as survival as a national sport has hitherto depended on developing a national competition, by the same

laws of the market and mass communications, Australian Football needs an international dimension to prosper in the future.

In creating a national league the AFL has sought to mimic American sporting bodies, particularly the NFL, when it comes to marketing and presentation, including licensed products, Monday night football for television and Grand Final entertainment as well as in the player draft and in the concept of feeder leagues. AFL executives travel religiously to the Superbowl every January to catch the latest in the presentation of sportainment. However, they have shown no interest in the American model for the planned development of the game overseas. Even the international proposals in the Five Year Plan of 1994 were limited in their conception. The focus was on a revival of the 'international rules' with the Gaelic Athletic Association teams so as to allow players to have a chance to play for their country. The underlying reason was one of reaction to other problems: to challenging the appeal of basketball and soccer for young Australians which derived from their international element. A supplementary list of overseas players (approved in December 1996) is another AFL innovation which remains focused on 'what's good for the AFL club' rather than what's good for football.

Conclusions

Will Australian Football eventually become a recognised international sport? Or will it retreat to a minor sport on the periphery of a global culture? Perhaps development work in countries such as Denmark, where pioneering has attracted real local interest, is as important as the search for the American television dollar.

The Danish Australian Football experiments demonstrates that, despite the forces of rationlisation and diversification in the contemporary world, the Australian Football League remains the prisoner of the cultural cringe in both its versions. On the one hand, the cultural cringe direct leads to a lack of vision—Australian creations are not of great significance on the world stage and are therefore not worth developing as cultural exports unless money comes speedily. Here, the materialism of commercial sports clubs reinforces the cringe. On the other hand, the cultural cringe inverted leads to a similar but different myopia — a form of locally oriented self-congratulation which doesn't look beyond the nose and rejects as inferior and/or irrelevant all that is foreign.³² It assumes that the local doesn't need the international world to survive in a manner

reminiscent of the view of many Victorians (still held by an ardent minority) that the game did not need to go national to survive in an era of national sporting competitions. Perhaps, on the verge of the twenty-first century, there are lessons from Helsingborg and Copenhagen (as well as 'Elsinore') for many Australian Football followers and administrators, particularly in Melbourne: 'that there are more things in Heaven and Earth, Victoria, than are dreamt of in your philosophy'.

NOTES

- 1 'Danish Australian "Rules" Football League (DAFL)' — Formed 18.08.1989 — A Brief History', unpub. paper, Copenhagen, 1995.
- 2 S Alomes, *A Nation at Last?*, Angus and Robertson, Sydney, 1988, chs 3 and 7; S Alomes, 'The Satellite Society', *Journal of Australian Studies*, no. 9, Nov. 1981, pp. 2-20.
- 3 See N Meaney, ed., *Under New Heavens: Cultural Transmission and the Making of Australia*, Heinemann, Port Melbourne, 1989. On the expatriation of musicians see S Alomes, 'Home and Away: the Expatriation of Australian Performers and Creators to Britain (1945-1999)', *Sounds Australian: Journal of Australian Music*, no. 27, Spring 1990. On the migration of sporting talent see John Bale and Joseph Maguire, eds, *The Global Sports Arena: Athletic Talent Migration in an Interdependent World*, Frank Cass, London, 1994.
- 4 Polocrosse and trugo are sports of Australian origin. Neither has had the significance and impact of Australian Football.
- 5 A A Phillips, 'The Cultural Cringe' in his *The Australian Tradition: Studies in a Colonial Culture*, Cheshire, Melbourne, 1958.
- 6 Phillips, 'The Cultural Cringe', pp. 89-95.
- 7 Until December 1996 Australian Sports Commission assistance for Australian Football was, by comparison with other sports, minimal. A new one million dollar scheme to establish a football academy and hall of fame angered administrators from some Olympic sports, particularly athletics which had seen its funding cut. *Age*, 18 Dec. 1996, *Australian*, 18 Dec. 1996. See also Bruce M King, 'Cultural Cringe Alive in Sport', *Herald-Sun*, 13 May 1995. On the international expansion of the game see J Main, 'Up there, Jorgensen', *Panorama Magazine*, no. 120, Aug. 1992.
- 8 S Alomes, 'Tales of a Dreamtime: Australian Football as a Secular Religion', in I Craven, ed., *Australian Popular Culture*, CUP, Melbourne, 1994.
- 9 New Zealand played in the Melbourne carnival to celebrate the Jubilee of Australasian Football in August 1908. The War-time match played by soldiers in London on 28 October 1916 at the Queen's Club in Kensington was another exception as were matches played in Stalag 333 and various other parts of the world during World War II.
- 10 *DAFL UGEAVIS* (Round Ten), 29-30 July 1995.
- 11 See S Alomes, *A Nation at Last?*, ch. 9; Janet Saunders, 'VFL Plans to Make its Mark High and Wide', *Australian Financial Review*, 29 Aug. 1986.
- 12 Pubs continue to sponsor DAFL teams. In a sense this continues an old tradition which goes back to the beginnings of organised sport in Australia; see R Cashman, *Paradise of Sport*, OUP, Melbourne, 1995, pp. 22-5.
- 13 Correspondence, Mick Stitch to S Alomes, 25 Nov. 1996.
- 14 At <http://www2.dk-online.dk/users/dafl>.
- 15 A Maher, 'Great Danes!', *Inside Football*, 22 Feb. 1995.

- 16 Interviews, Mick Sitch, Copenhagen, 8 and 11 Oct. 1995. Originally the World League also had some American teams.
- 17 Maher, 'Great Danes!'; this view was also conveyed to the author by another Swede, 'Terry' Ingmar Lundquist, during a match between a Danish All-Stars scratch team and Balmain AFC, 8 Oct. 1995.
- 18 On Australian Studies overseas see A Lohrey, ed., *Australian Studies Overseas: A Guide*, AGPS, Canberra, 1988 and National Centre for Australian Studies (Monash), *International Directory of Australian Studies*, NCAS, Melbourne, 1992. On proposals for development see Committee to Review Australian Studies in Tertiary Education, *Windows onto Worlds*, AGPS, Canberra, 1987, ch. 11.
- 19 See Jim Stynes, *Whatever it Takes*, Celebrity Publishing, Melbourne, 1995, ch. 21. Businessman and Carlton President, John Elliott, has looked beyond talent recruitment, suggesting the development of the game in Moldova in the ex-USSR where he has business interests.
- 20 Saunders, *Australian Financial Review*, 29 Aug. 1986.
- 21 Saunders, *Australian Financial Review*, 29 Aug. 1986.
- 22 G Linnell, *Football Limited: The Inside Story of the AFL*, Pan Macmillan Ironbark, Melbourne, 1995, pp. 332-5,339.
- 23 *Age*, 7, 9, 10, 13 and 20 Oct. 1987; *Sun* (Melbourne), 26 June 1987; Herald, 9 Nov. 1987. While the Vancouver Place stadium (capacity 60 000) attracted over half of that total for the first match, the second match (hastily rescheduled from Los Angeles) attracted under 10 000.
- 24 *Age*, 10, 13 and 17 Oct. 1987, 8 and 13 Nov. 1987; *Australian*, 28 Oct. 1987.
- 25 Interview, Sitch, 11 Oct. 1995.
- 26 Gerard Healy, who also played in few finals matches, similarly remembered his 1984 match against Ireland before 40 000 people at Dublin's Croke Park (in which he kicked the final winning score for Australia) as one of the highlights of his career (Main, 'Up there, Jorgensen', p. 41).
- 27 See D Grant and G Seal, eds, *Australia in the World: Perceptions and Possibilities*, Black Swan, Perth, 1994.
- 28 The usual arguments given against this proposition are: that it is not already international so there is no immediate market; that it is not shown to its best on television; that the sides of 21 players and large playing surfaces make it difficult and expensive to develop in overseas cities.
- 29 Maher, 'Great Danes!'
- 30 In the Commonwealth Parliament on 23 Mar. 1950 the suggestion of the Member for Fawkner, W M Bourke to play Australian football matches in South East Asia to improve Australia's image was lost as Members from New South Wales and Queensland argued loudly for other sports. *CPD*, H of R, vol. 206, 23 Mar. 1950, pp. 1159-60. In 1974, Dr Jim Cairns, the Minister for Overseas Trade, endorsed proposals involving Carlton, the VFL (and his friend Carlton President George Harris) for overseas exhibition matches in Britain, Ireland, Europe, North America and Japan and offered government financial and promotional support. *Age*, 18 Mar., 3 May 1974.
- 31 See Bob Stewart and Aaron Smith, 'Inter-City Expansion and the Australian Football League', unpub. paper, Sport in the City Conference, University of Memphis, Nov. 1996.
- 32 For example, on Monday 23 Sept. 1996 3AW radio host Neil Mitchell mocked Americans interested in the Grand Final (listeners via real audio on the Internet) by asking them questions about their knowledge of the language of football, particularly the strange expressions of broadcaster Rex Hunt.