PLAY ON!

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The report of the Masters Sport Project on Mature Aged Sport in Australia

A joint project of the Confederation of Australian Sport and The Australian Sports Commission

Ron Burns

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National Sport Information Centre
Australian Sports Commission
P.O. Box 176
Belconnen, A.C.T. 2616, Australia
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Section 1.  Introduction  1

Section 2.  Masters Sport Age Population Into the Twenty First Century  2
  The Role of Sport  2

Section 3.  Ageing and Exercise: The Medical Research  3
  Recommendations  5

Section 4.  Health and Sport: Joint Policy Options  7
  The Need For A New Policy  7
  What Type of Policy?  7
  Economic Benefits  8
  The Place of Sport  8
  Recommendations  9

Section 5.  Federal and State Government Activities In Mature Age Sport  10
  The Australian Sports Commission  10
  Department of Arts, Sport, Environment and Tourism  10
  State Governments  10
  Recommendations  11

Section 6.  National and State Sporting Organisations and Masters Sport.  13
  Research Procedures  13
  Competition Structures  14
  Nomenclature  15
  Masters Age Groups  15
  Sports Not Conducting Masters  18
  Recommendations  20

Section 7.  Masters Games: Multi-Sports Festivals for the Mature Aged  23
  Masters Games  23
  Economic Impact Of Masters Games  24
  Conduct Of Masters Games  25
  Participation In Masters Games  25
  World Masters Games  25
  Other International Events  26
  Sporting Organisations And Masters Games  26
  Unregistered Competitors  27
  Conduct Of The Australian Masters Games  27
  Recommendations  27

Section 8.  Australia's International Masters Sport Links.  30
  Golden Oldies  31
  Recommendations  31
Section 9. Drugs In Masters Sport.
Recommendations

Section 10. The Masters Sport Calendar.
Recommendations

Section 11. Recording Performances.
Recommendations

Section 12. Sponsorship of Masters Sport.
Recommendations

Section 13. Facilities: The Effects of Masters Sport.
Recommendations

Section 14. The Media and Masters Sport.
Recommendations

Section 15. Sports Medicine and The Role of ASMF In Masters Sport.
Recommendations

Competition Or Participation?
Recommendations

Section 17. Non Participants: The Potential Players.
Recommendations

Section 18. Masters Sport In Australia: Where To Now?
A Masters Sport Co-Ordination Service?
Recommendations
Grow old along with me!
The best is yet to be

ROBERT BROWNING
SECTION 1.
INTRODUCTION

The Masters Sport Project, a joint project of the Australian Sports Commission (ASC) and the Confederation of Australian Sport (CAS), was designed to investigate and report on Masters or Veterans sport in Australia.

Masters sport is defined as sport conducted with a minimum age qualification, i.e. over 35 and is typically organised for those beyond the age usually associated with mainstream sports participation.

The Project commenced in February, 1991 and is due for completion in January 1993. The Project was located with the Confederation and a review committee consisting of Commission and Confederation representatives was established to oversee the Project.

A Project outline, as set out below, was developed.
1. To determine which sports presently organise sport for mature aged participants.
   - Their age groups and when these are calculated.
   - Participation rates.
   - Any rule changes which have been made to accommodate the needs of the mature aged.
   - The organisational structures developed to cater for this level of competition.
   - The levels of competition offered.
   - International implications, events and trends.

2. To work with the Australian Sports Drug Agency to develop a drugs in sport policy appropriate to the needs of Veteran sports participants.

3. With the Australian Sports Medicine Federation to examine health and sports injury issues relevant to the participation of the mature aged.

4. To determine the role of multi-sports festivals in the development of Masters/Veterans sport.

5. To establish a calendar of Masters sports events in Australia to facilitate co-ordinated planning.

6. Examine the issue of record keeping and the viability of establishing a national register of records and championships.

7. Survey Masters sports participants to establish a profile of those who are involved, their expectations of Masters sports and how well those expectations are being met.

8. To identify areas suitable for research relevant to Masters sport and promote such research.
SECTION 2.
MASTERS SPORT AGE POPULATION INTO THE TWENTY FIRST CENTURY

Population projections for the rest of this century and into the beginning of the next predict an increase in the number of Australians over 40 from 6.28 million in 1989 to between 8.44 and 10.5 million in 2001.

The 65 to 75 age group is expected to be the fastest growing section of the Australian population in the first decades of the 21st Century as the population cohort known as the Baby Boomers reaches retiring age. This trend towards an older population age profile is known as the "ageing" or "greying" of the Australian population.

Life expectancy is also increasing. It has risen from 63 (female) or (59) male in 1921 to 79.6 and 73.3 respectively by 1989. In 1989, females who reached the age of 65 could expect to live another 18.7 years and males another 14.8 years.

More people living longer does not necessarily mean a large number of healthy older people. One forecast gives males aged 65 an average of 6.6 years before developing a disability such as circulatory disease or some type of handicap (e.g. hearing loss). For females the forecast is 8.5 years. As a result, people over the age of 65 use almost twice as many medical services as those under 65. For those over 75, total annual health expenditure has been estimated at 6.3 times the national per capita average.

There will be an increasing percentage of our population in the Masters sport age group and present trends indicate that they will tend to live longer than people have lived before.

THE ROLE OF SPORT
Sport has the potential to contribute to an extended period of meaningful activity in the later years of our lives. Many researchers contend that a fit, active, 65 year old has the physical capacity of a sedentary 35 year old and that many of the so-called effects of ageing are more the results of disuse than of time.

Sport can also provide the stimulus of social contact with people of a similar age with similar interests. Many Masters sports participants state that friendships are the best part of Masters sport. A survey of competitors at the 1991 Australian Masters Games revealed that social activity rated 18% higher as an expectation of Masters sport participation than competition, at local or elite level. Only fitness rated higher.

Negative stereotypes of the aged as frail or naturally disengaging from social and physical activity create barriers to increasing the activities of older people. People involved in Masters sport still participate actively into their seventies and eighties - Veteran Athletics are looking forward to having their first 100 year old competitor at their 1993 World Veterans Games.

While there is a risk of serious or fatal heart attacks during exercise, it is much more likely that those who suffer them do not engage in regular exercise, and that if the attack is not fatal, those who are active and fit have a much greater chance of full recovery.

Given sensible preparation, appropriate modifications (which many sports have adopted) and relevant age groups, there are no real reasons for imposing any upper age limits on participation sport.
SECTION 3.
AGEING AND EXERCISE: THE MEDICAL RESEARCH

The human body is a dynamic organism, designed to be used. Despite this we seem generally unaware that motor activity maintains many abilities and skills in old age. We also seem unaware of the extent to which we depend on our bodies or the potential the body has to improve our quality of life as we age.

Roberts (1986) claims that only 10% of Australians over 40 exercise enough to promote health and describes the typical 45 year old Australian as overweight, bordering on obese, with high blood pressure, higher than desirable cholesterol and with poor health habits due to stress, smoking, salt intake and alcohol.

A significant number studies show the benefits of exercise to specific functional capacities. There is no escaping some level of functional loss with age, but the evidence is that those who remain active have a less rapid rate of loss than the general population, and these benefits can be gained by starting at any age.

SPECIFIC BENEFITS OF EXERCISE INCLUDE:
Osteoporosis. Women involved in weight bearing exercise have been found to have 25% higher bone mass and 35% higher bone mineral content than average. The prevention of loss of bone mass and mineral content with ageing is critical to maintenance of fitness in the elderly. The aim should be to build peak bone mass to the highest possible level before middle to old age and establish exercise habits which will help maintain this level.

Cardio-vascular Health. Cardio-vascular health (VO₂ max) declines from a peak at age 25 at about the rate of 1% per year. Regular physical activity can slow the rate of decline (from an average of 16% per decade down to 5% in one study). Previously sedentary people who exercised 4 or 5 times a week for 20 weeks increased their VO₂ max by 26%. There is powerful epidemiological evidence to support the hypothesis that regular exercise reduces the incidence of coronary heart disease and that active older people have aerobic capacity equivalent to sedentary people 25 to 35 years younger.

Blood Pressure. A 1986 report estimated that over one million Australians had high blood pressure. Exercise has been shown to reduce blood pressure, systolic and diastolic, in both the young and the aged.

Strength. It has been estimated that by age 70 there has been a 30% loss from the peak of strength and that 50% of this loss is due to the loss of muscle mass. This muscle mass loss is due in part to inactivity (fit young people confined to bed can lose 18% of muscle mass in a week and astronauts exposed to weightlessness also experience a loss of strength). Exercise can not only slow down this rate of loss, it can actually reverse it.

Weight. Being overweight is associated with many of the ill effects that afflict many as they age but is not an inescapable effect of middle age. It is more likely to be the result of decreased levels of exercise without a corresponding reduction of food intake.
The link between weight and blood pressure is well established as is its connection with heart disease. Obesity is also a factor in the development of mature-aged diabetes and exercise could reduce the chances of developing mature-aged diabetes by 50%.

Many of the orthopaedic problems that come with advancing age are caused by the body carrying more weight than the skeleton was designed to bear. Extra weight contributes to ungainliness and if falls occur the extra weight coming down on limbs contributes to the rate of fractures.

Diet. Many Masters sport participants report that they eat better. The changed body composition brought on by exercise and the resulting improved functional capacity may lead to eating habits which will maintain good nutritional status.

Sleep. Masters sport participants claim that they sleep better and research shows that exercise "tiredness" produces an increase, at all ages, in slow wave sleep, during which growth hormones are released in the body.

Flexibility/Stability/Agility. Sports play an important part in the prevention of accidents (not sport related) due to their positive effect on nervous systems affecting the individual's vigilance and ability to react. Physical exertion helps preserve correct spinal condition and this assists flexibility and stability, helping to prevent dowager's hump. Upright stance promotes better visual field so aiding stability. Activity has a positive effect on bones, cartilage and muscles and so aids the stability and flexibility of joints.

Moods. Exercise programmes produce positive mood shifts along with decreases in anxiety and depression. Reasons given for this positive influence include; that it is a diversion, relaxation, social reinforcement, improved self sufficiency and the secretion of endorphins and other hormones. Physical activity is associated with desirable personality characteristics such as life satisfaction, mental health and stress reduction in older people.

Mental Activity. There is evidence that regular physical activity enhances various aspects of mental activity especially those that involve response time, visual organisation, memory and mental flexibility.

Psychiatric Rehabilitation. Sport therapy seems particularly important for rehabilitating those with schizophrenic and affective psychosis.

Quality of Life. The elderly equate self-respect with independence. As we grow older we need to develop systems to maintain independence and physical capacity is the most critical factor. Loss of strength or being overweight can prevent a person being able to get up off a chair, or a toilet or out of a bath. Loss of mobility restricts travel and flexibility loss may make getting in and out of cars or even dressing, very difficult, thus restricting social intercourse.

Death and Injury
Exercise related deaths and injuries do occur and it would be foolish to ignore them. Coronary Artery Disease (CAD) is the greatest killer of those who die while exercising, however, research shows that those who died had started running late in life and had other
CAD risk factors and that the greater the frequency of exercise, the lower the risk. A U.S. study found deaths among fit joggers were between 1:15,200 and 1:18000.

AUSSI Masters Swimming and Golden Oldies Rugby Union have suffered deaths during their activities and in every case the victims had existing CAD risk factors and sometimes were aware of them and competed anyway. Both groups have taken steps to try to prevent these occurrences, however, acknowledge that it is very difficult to prevent those who "want to go in the pool".

There is generally a low incidence of injuries, something that has been attributed to Masters knowing their potential and not pushing beyond it. They are also less likely than younger competitors to engage in excessive competition.

The Australian Sports Medicine Federation's publication *Safe Veterans Sport*, covers the risks for continuing and re-entering Masters and should be required reading for all those involved in Masters sport.

**Longevity.** Despite differences in methodology and the restrictions of some research procedures, the results consistently show that there is a positive relationship between exercise and longevity. This may be the result of the active having lowered the risk factors for premature death by not smoking, having low cholesterol, etc and so really enjoying normal longevity.

Length of life is not necessarily the most important thing. If a longer life means a longer period of sickness or inactivity or being a burden on others then few would opt for it. The preferred option should be to extend active life expectancy so that retirement becomes an active, exciting prospect.

**Adherence.** A strategy is needed to encourage those who are already exercising at an effective level to continue and to entice those who are not active to change their life style to include regular exercise.

Exercise programmes and aerobic classes have a high dropout rate (up to 50% in six months) which raises some doubts about their efficacy as agencies to promote overall fitness. Fitness alone is not a sufficiently strong motivating factor for many. Easily identifiable, rewarding perceptions are very important in motivating many to continue exercising. Sport with its sophisticated systems of measuring personal achievements - personal bests, records, handicaps - and its social contact and activities provides several motivating forces to continue exercising.

For many the ambience of the sporting experience will provide an environment to keep them active, and therefore healthy, almost as an incidental to the participation in sport for all its traditional, intrinsic values.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. The Australian Sports Commission, the Department of the Arts, Sport, Environment and Tourism and the Department of Health should jointly develop a campaign to involve the mature aged (over 35 or 40) in physical activity, sport and recreation.
2. Because of the significant savings in health care costs a healthy aged population could produce, the bulk of funding for this campaign should come from the Health Budget and be funded as a preventative health care measure possibly through the National Better Health Program's Health of Older Adults priority area.

3. Any such campaign should concentrate equally on the enjoyment, social contact, development of new skills and the health benefits of being involved in physical activity. To concentrate mainly on the health benefits could reduce the effectiveness of the campaign.

4. A campaign such as this would need to address the negative stereotypes that limit both the involvement of older people in sport and the range of activities in which they can be involved.

5. State departments of Health and Sport should be involved in this campaign and encouraged to develop long range plans for the participation of the mature aged in sport rather than the "Come and Try" with limited follow up exercises being commonly undertaken.
SECTION 4.
HEALTH AND SPORT: JOINT POLICY OPTIONS

THE NEED FOR A NEW POLICY
It is only in the Twentieth Century that we have seen increases in longevity as outlined in Section 2. As we have little or no experience in coping with the issues that an expanding older population creates, ageing is often categorised as a problem. Current ageism which stereotypes the elderly as sick, dependent and less than productive, pits the elderly against the young and is a model which leads to failure.

Health policy and promotion for the 1990s should challenge the negative views of older people held in our community. Most elderly people in Australia are well, fit and able to live independently at home and in the community. In surveys in 1981 and 1985 no more than 20% of people over 65 reported health problems. Health policy should be aimed at maintaining this situation for as long as possible.

As the Baby Boomers grow older there will be a new definition of ageing which will be more positive, developmental and better educated. They will have an enthusiasm for health, an awareness of the contribution fitness can make to the reduction of risk factors for premature death, and a habit of action into middle and old age. Health status during youth and middle age is one of the factors underlying good health in older people so to develop positive attitudes and habits now will produce benefits at a later period.

The aged are perhaps the most significant potential human resource in Australia. This resource is being under utilised because of incorrect perceptions of their potential to contribute which results in a restriction on their ability and freedom to realise this potential. Perhaps the issue is too contentious and people fear that to promote participation by older people will mean that they are deprived of resources and opportunities which will be allocated to the elderly.

People in retirement do not necessarily want activities that are designated for the elderly. Research in N.S.W. shows that 50% of older people attend a mainstream club (e.g. Bowls club) once a month compared to 3% for Senior Citizens Clubs and 1% for pensioner clubs.

For long term effect, policies should be aimed at encouraging all mature aged people (over 35) to become active or to stay active and should concentrate on encouraging fitness through sport or recreational activities (e.g. Bushwalking) where the fitness results from activities which are enjoyable for their own sake.

WHAT TYPE OF POLICY?
The answer to what type of policy should be developed can be found in the Labor Party Policy Statement on Sport which states;

Labor will - Pay increased attention to encouraging older people to participate in satisfying sport, fitness, and recreational activities. Veterans sport, and sport and recreation for the elderly, particularly those who do not work, will be developed.
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ECONOMIC BENEFITS
The Department of Health should be involved in the development of such a policy. The economic benefits of involving more people in regular physical activity are considerable:

- In the USA one 1983 estimate was that a successful programme of physical conditioning for the elderly could result in health care cost savings of US$1,210 million.
- Roberts (1986) estimates that physical activity has the potential to save $324million in Australia from reduction in cardio-vascular disease alone.
- A SRMC study in the 1980s estimated that if 50% of the population were active enough to gain protection against cardio-vascular disease there would be a total benefit of $3,995 million in the year 2000.
- In 1988 DASET'T estimated a benefit of $590.2 million for every 10% of the population who take up regular physical activity.

The economic benefits from involving an increased number of the older groups who are the largest users of the health care system would be proportionately higher. Investment in the promotion of mature aged sport would be justified because any extra funds allocated to the sports budget would produce far greater savings in other areas of government expenditure, particularly the Health Budget.

THE PLACE OF SPORT
"Life. Be in it" has been very successful in raising the consciousness of Australians about the need to exercise. This awareness has not yet resulted in increased numbers of Australians going out and getting enough exercise to positively affect their health.

The 1989 National Health Survey conducted by the Bureau of Statistics indicated that only 19% of Australians over 18 participated in vigorous and /or moderate exercise. The percentages drop as the ages rise until at 45 and over, there are at most 14.8% exercising at this level. As this is the age group most at risk for premature death from lifestyle related disease, this seems an unsatisfactory level.

A report to the Sport and Recreation Ministers' Council (SRMC) commented that "retention of adults within activity programmes over an extended time is notoriously poor." Sport has a much greater adherence level and therefore represents a far more effective strategy for increasing the long term involvement of adults in regular physical activity.

The infrastructure to provide this experience already exists through the Masters sports organisations. What is needed is a campaign to promote participation in Masters sport by a larger proportion of people over 35.

Masters sport, while organised and competitive, is sport where the focus is on participation fitness and fellowship. Its success is demonstrated by both its growth (outlined in Section 6) and its retention rate and it has tremendous potential to grow even more and achieve health related goals if properly promoted and supported.

The Sports Commission, the Department of Health as well as the sports themselves have much to gain, so the campaign should be jointly developed and funded. The Department of Arts, Sport, Environment and Territories should also be involved in this process.
RECOMMENDATIONS

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4. A campaign such as this would need to address the negative stereotypes that limit both the involvement of older people in sport and the range of activities in which they can be involved.

5. State departments of Health and Sport should be involved in this campaign and encouraged to develop long range plans for the participation of the mature aged in sport rather than the "Come and Try" with limited follow up exercises being commonly undertaken.
SECTION 5.
FEDERAL AND STATE GOVERNMENT ACTIVITIES
IN MATURE AGE SPORT

Australian Labor party policy states that Labor believes that "our task is firstly to promote healthy lifestyles and satisfying use of leisure time through participation in sport and/or regular physical activity and other recreational pursuits." From this it could be expected that there would be strong support for mature aged sport.

THE AUSTRALIAN SPORTS COMMISSION
The Commission has provided financial support to each of the Australian Masters Games and to international Masters events held in Australia. This support totals $700,000 between 1987/88 and 1993/94. The Commission also provided the funds for this project and its officers were involved in the Project Review team. Funding was also supplied to support the publication of the ASMF's Safe Veterans Sport. The National Sports Research Program has funded some research projects aimed specifically at Masters sport.

Applications for funding from autonomous Masters organisations such as AUSSI Masters Swimming have not been successful as Commission policy is that all funding for a sport should be directed through the relevant National Sporting Organisations (NSOs). Given the independence of some of the Masters groups and the relationships that exist between some of these organisations and their NSOs this policy is not always readily accepted.

DEPARTMENT OF ARTS, SPORT, ENVIRONMENT AND TOURISM
DASET has conducted regular surveys of participation which include information on Masters sport age groups and has published a range of print and audio-visual materials aimed at increasing participation rates, particularly aimed at older Australians.

STATE GOVERNMENTS
State governments have various programmes aimed at promoting sport for the mature aged. Many of these are of the "Come and Try" type which are successful in attracting people to sample activities but because in some states there is little or no follow-up, they are less effective in promoting long term participation. They might be better described as "Come and Try and Forget It" days.

Tasmania. The State Government supports the Tasmanians State Masters Games and the Department of Sport and Recreation is presently developing a policy on sport for the mature aged. The Feeling God Shop which promotes healthy life style was previously a joint project of the State Departments of Sport and Health, but Health have recently withdrawn so Sport runs the project on its own. Any grants to Masters sports are incidental, being part of grants to sports which involve a full age range.

Western Australia. Western Australia did have a Veterans Sport committee but this is no longer functioning. Their "Let's Have A Go" campaign promotes sport for the over 50s by organising a "Come and Try" experience and then encouraging those interested to set up their own organisation which the Government supports for three years. This has proven very successful and at least eight of these groups functioning actively involving over 20,000 people. Despite this success it is doubtful that other states would follow a model which
promoted the development of new sporting organisations rather than directing such development through the existing State organisations.

**Victoria.** "Active At Any Age", which is a joint programme of the Victorian Departments of Sport and Health, is a data base of activities and contacts which provides information for the mature aged. The Victorian Department assists municipal councils which provide special programmes for special groups such as the aged.

**New South Wales.** The State Department relies heavily on the "Come and Try" approach to increase mature aged participation in recreational sport. A well attended seminar on Veterans sport was conducted in 1991.

**South Australia.** The South Australian Department of Recreation and Sport reported no programmes for mature aged sport, but do support some recreational centres where such activities take place. They are currently investigating the feasibility of conducting a State Masters Games.

**Queensland.** The Queensland Department of Sport, Recreation and Racing supported the 1991 Third Australian Masters Games in Brisbane and the Maryborough Masters Games through their regional office but otherwise has no programmes in the Masters sport area. They are exploring the feasibility of a State Masters Games.

**Australian Capital Territory.** The ACT Office of Sport Recreation and Racing has only funded Masters sport as part of some other programme, except for the ACT Branch of AUSSI Masers Swimming.

**Northern Territory.** NT government involvement in Masters sport is limited to support of the biennial Honda Masters Games in Alice Springs. A full time departmental staff of three conducts these Games and the Government's commitment to them is very strong.

Responses from sports and individuals almost unanimously agreed that there was a role for government to play in Masters sport but that this should be limited to support rather than to organise or control. This, they thought, should be left to the people involved. Government involvement was seen by these respondents as justified because of the economic benefits coming from promotion of a healthier aged population and for social justice reasons.

Although the level of government activity reported in this section is not as high as in other areas of sport, the setting up of this national project by the Commission and the initiatives under consideration in Tasmania, Queensland and South Australia indicate that Governments are becoming aware of their need to be involved in this area. More of course needs to be done and sports bodies at all levels need to continually develop strong arguments to put to governments to justify support for mature aged sport.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. Governments at all levels should develop programmes to involve the mature aged in sport.

2. Policies on mature aged sport which recognise it as a particular population sector needing specific policies should be developed by all state governments.
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

These policies should be aimed at encouraging long term involvement rather than being based on the "Come and Try" model which has not proven successful.

3. These policies should be effectively monitored by state governments to determine their efficiency in encouraging long term regular physical activity.

4. National and State Sporting Organisations should be encouraged to show in their development plans how they intend to cater for, and promote, the participation of the mature aged in their sport.

NOTE 1.
Recommendations regarding State Masters Games are included in the Recommendations in the section on Masters Games.
SECTION 6.
NATIONAL AND STATE SPORTING ORGANISATIONS
AND MASTERS SPORT.

RESEARCH PROCEDURES
National Sporting Organisations were surveyed regarding Masters sport and two questionnaires were prepared; one for those sports presently conducting Masters sport and another for those not involved. Draft questionnaires were reviewed by officers of the Commission and the Confederation’s Masters Sport Sub-committee and the questionnaires amended incorporating their suggestions.

In all 135 questionnaires were sent out and 87 written responses received, representing a response rate of 64.4%.

Because much of the Masters Sport development is taking place at state level, 144 State Sporting Organisations (SSOs) were also surveyed, with 66 responding (49.7%).

When the National and State Sporting organisations who are conducting Masters sport are combined, there are fifty one sports providing organised Masters sport at either national or state level. Table 6.1 shows these sports.

### Table 6.1

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<tr>
<th>A - MASTERS SPORTS CONDUCTED AT NATIONAL LEVEL</th>
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<td>Alpine Skiing</td>
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<td>Archery</td>
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<td>Canoe</td>
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<td>Diving</td>
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<td>Field Archery</td>
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<td>Hockey (Women)</td>
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<td>Marching</td>
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<td>Modern Pentathlon</td>
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<td>Powerlifting</td>
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<td>Rifle Shooting</td>
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<td>Roller Sports</td>
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<td>Rowing</td>
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<td>Royal Life Saving</td>
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<td>Squash</td>
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<td>Surf Life Saving</td>
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<td>Table Tennis</td>
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<td>Ten Pin Bowling</td>
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<td>Tennis</td>
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<td>Triathlon</td>
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<td>Volleyball</td>
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<td>Water-Skiing</td>
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<td>Weightlifting</td>
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<td>Woodchopping</td>
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<td>Rugby Union</td>
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<th>B - MASTERS SPORTS CONDUCTED AT STATE LEVEL</th>
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<td>Badminton</td>
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<td>Cricket (Men’s)</td>
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<td>Lacrosse (Men)</td>
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<td>Basketball</td>
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<td>Fencing</td>
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<td>Netball</td>
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<td>Water Polo (Men)</td>
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In addition, although they do not conduct Masters sport regularly, four other sports indicated that they do recognise Masters age participants in some way.
There are fourteen sports where the Masters sport is conducted by a separate body. The Sports Commission reported in 1986 that there were nine sports with a distinct body for veterans so this represents a growth of over 50% in five years.

These organisations have a variety of relationships with their respective NSOs ranging from being affiliated and working basically harmoniously, although independently (Athletics Tennis, Swimming, Men's and Women's Golf, Hockey, Rugby Union), through operating without the NSO being really aware of their activities (Squash, Badminton) to relations being described as "not productive" (Superules) or being in conflict (Cycling). Table Tennis, Diving and Parachuting Masters groups really operate as sub-committees of their NSOs.

Other structures include sub-committees (3 sports), Liaison officers(4 sports), or organising Masters from within their normal organisational structure(53). These figures include State Sporting Organisations' structures.

COMPETITION STRUCTURES.
National Championships are organised by 39 sports, 36 organise State Championships and 28 have some form of international competition. Despite these figures there are only 29 who report that they organise local competitions. Rugby Union, Lacrosse and Marching have a non-competitive structure, even at the international level.

GROWTH
Masters Sport is growing quickly. In the 1950s only 3 sports were organising Masters, in the 1960s another 2 began but in the 1970s, 12 began with an explosion in the 1980s when 44 sports organisations began offering Masters. Already in the 1990s, 6 sports have begun Masters and another 10 sports have indicated their interest in starting Masters sport within the next five years.

The growth of multi-sports festivals for the mature-aged (Masters Games) also demonstrates this growth. Only one event, was held each year from 1986 through to 1988 but the number of festivals held each year in various parts of Australia has grown steadily and there will be at least 7 held in 1993.

The Masters aged section of the population is the fastest growing section of the population.

These growth factors are reflected in all the information gathered from sports about the development of Masters sport. Growth in participation rates for the thirteen sports which provided statistics show an average rate of growth around 16% per year with many sports doubling their numbers in a five year period. General comments from another 14 sports all indicated a rate of growth similar to that described above.

The inability of many sports to provide statistics on Masters sport participation makes it difficult to estimate the total numbers involved, but Victorian statistics indicate that around 939,700 mature aged Australians are involved in competitive sport on a regular basis.

This growth will pose serious problems for Masters sport administrators, almost all of whom are voluntary and many retired, as the administrative workload will increase until it is beyond the capacity of the volunteer.
It is claimed that funding for sports administration has taken sports organisation "off the kitchen table" but unfortunately this is not true of Masters sport. Only AUSSI (swimming) has been able to employ a full time administrator using their own funds, yet AUSSI membership numbers exceed many of the sporting organisations supported with government funds.

The issue of support for the administration of Masters sport needs to be addressed urgently.

**NOMENCLATURE**

There is considerable debate about what term should be used to designate mature aged sport. The two names most commonly used are Masters and Veterans Other names used include; Seniors, Old Boys, Golden Oldies, Esquire, Superules, Masterules, Senior Ladies, Legends, Golden Years, and the acronyms AUSSI (Australian Union of Senior Swimmers International), SCRUM (Senior Citizens' Rugby Union Movement) and POPS (Parachutists Over Phorty Society).

**MASTERS AGE GROUPS**

It is difficult to say at what age Masters sport begins. The most common ages used by sports to begin their Masters were 30 (9 sports), 35 (24 sports) and 40 (9 sports). However, 20 (1), 21 (1), 25 (2), 48 (1), 50 (1), 55 (3), 60 (2) 65 (1) and 70 (2) are all used.

There are 7 sports which have a lower starting age for women, but none where the reverse applies.

Some of these ages seem ridiculously low to be involved in Masters sport. Some of these sports with low Masters starting ages have very young competitors in mainstream while others have just started their Masters sport and have set these low ages to encourage people to move directly from mainstream to Masters. Now that people are remaining involved in high level sport for longer, some of these ages may need reviewing to reflect the current situation in that sport.

The individual sports and some team sports have age groups in either 5 or 10 year spans. Many sports are finding it necessary to introduce new age groups, either within the 10 year groupings or at the end of the scale to cater for extra competitors or their ageing competitors. International Tennis already has competitions for those over 85.

There are also some sports which may need to consider lowering their Masters starting age. Some of these sports use much lower starting ages at Masters Games and the number of younger competitors at these events suggest that there is a demand for age graded competition at these lower ages.

There are 14 methods of determining age used in Masters sport. This is not necessarily important as long as they remain consistent within their sports. Changing the way age is calculated can disadvantage some people, particularly where age group championships or records are involved.

**Sports Development Plans.**

Only 33% of NSOs responded that Masters sport featured in their development plan. If Sports Commission objectives are that sport for all ages is an important priority then they
should require that sports' development plans should show how sports intend to cater for this sector of the population.

57.1% of SSOs feature Masters in their development plans. State Departments of Sport should also monitor sports' development plans to ensure that Masters are included in sports' planning.

**Modification of Sports**
Twenty four sports have modified their sport to cater for the needs of Masters participants, many using modifications originally developed to cater for younger competitors. In some cases the equipment has been modified, others have used versions of their game which reduce the physical aspect so reducing the risk of injury, while others have modified the form of competition to reduce competitiveness. Rugby Union do not record results-all games are officially draws- while Lacrosse make up their teams each day by a draw. AUSSI Masters Swimming arrange heats of people who swim similar times regardless of age or gender.

Many other sports could also consider modifications to make them more appropriate and enjoyable for mature aged players without reducing the enjoyment or altering the sport's basic philosophy. There is no doubt that modifications of sport could be as successful for Masters as it has been in Junior sport.

**Benefits to Sport From Masters Sport**
NSOs rated gaining more participants as the greatest benefit from having a Masters component, with recruitment of potential administrators, coaches or officials rated the second benefit. Increased fees, along with greater utilisation of resources and facilities rated well behind them.

Increased participation was rated even more highly as a benefit of Masters sport by State Sporting Organisations (SSOs) while for them, the recruitment of potential volunteers was only slightly more important than use of facilities.

**Outcomes of Masters Sport-The Participants View**
Over 92% of participants at The Third Australian Masters Games believe that Masters sport encourages more people to be interested and participate in sport, improves the health of elderly participants and helps to maintain the independence of elderly participants.

They also believe that it provides role models for children that will encourage them to remain involved in sport (81%), lead to people undertaking other roles in sport (72%), help establish a national identity (75%) and foster improved international relations.

They do not believe that Masters sport; diverts funds from other areas of sport (61%), reduces the number of people willing to take on administrative roles in sport (67%), places a strain on sporting facilities (79%), or on existing sporting organisations (82%).

The response regarding role models for children is particularly relevant for the Australian Sports Commission which has a number of programmes aimed at increasing sports participation by our youth. Promotion of Masters sport would show children that sport can be an enjoyable, rewarding, whole of life activity and not just for the young or the elite.
Volunteers
A common belief is that growth of Masters sport will reduce the number of officials, coaches, or administrators in other areas of sport as people would take the opportunity to continue to participate rather than officiate. If this is true it would have very serious implications for the support of Masters sport from governments and sporting bodies.

Nine sports responded that they believe the main advantage of having Masters is the recruitment of volunteers, two others see this as the second main advantage and in all 21 sports believe that Masters attracts volunteers into other areas of sport. Thirty six sports rejected the idea that Masters reduces the number of volunteers and some were able to produce statistics which showed the positive effect of Masters in increasing the number of people prepared to undertake volunteer roles in other areas of sport.

The survey of participants rejected any suggestion that Masters reduced the number of volunteers and their responses showed that 37% of them were involved in Masters sport as administrators (17%), coaches (16%) and judges/umpires/referees (16%). This means that Masters sport is in the most part self-organised.

Just under a quarter (23.7%) were involved in sports other than their Masters sport in non-competitive roles. Forty two sports were mentioned as the ones they were involved with and thirty one roles were nominated. Coaching (18.9%) was the most common.

These results would indicate that rather than reduce the pool of volunteers, Masters has the potential to increase it through attracting people back to sport and rekindling their interest. This represents a very valid reason to promote Masters sport.

Disadvantages of Masters Sport.
Extra administrative tasks, the difficulty of attracting sponsors, longer competition days because of extra age divisions, and the cost of extra trophies for relatively low numbers of competitors were all mentioned.

There is along running dispute between mainstream Cycling and their Masters which came to the fore here. Most of the disputation arises from the fact that the veteran cyclists believe that Cycling officials take their money, give little in return are not really interested in the older competitors. Mainstream Cycling administrators report that their insurance premiums are higher because of all the claims veterans make and that considerable time and energy is consumed debating and resolving issues, mostly about money.

The Structure of Masters Sport.
Almost all government bodies which support sport favour a model where they deal with one peak body for each sport (with some variations with respect to gender).

Although most sports organise their Masters through their normal administrative processes there are some autonomous bodies in existence for very relevant historical and administrative reasons. These bodies typically administer the Masters sports with the greatest numbers of participants and the most sophisticated competition structures.
The majority of Masters groups believe that Masters is better when administered by Masters. In fact, this is a rule of AUSSI Masters and they believe it has allowed them to develop their sport in a way which best suits their needs.

They all recognise the desirability of cooperating closely with the mainstream organisation but believe that those in mainstream sport do not really understand Masters competitors needs or expectations or that Masters is a low priority.

Despite this, there are strong signs of cooperation between most Masters and mainstream organisations which any funding of Masters sport should aim to foster. This could be achieved by encouraging joint submissions from Masters organisations and the NSOs for assistance from the Sports Development Program (SDP) for administrative support or special programmes. This would recognise the role of the NSO as the body ultimately responsible for the sport in Australia and also recognise the part the Masters organisation has played in developing Masters sport to its present state. It would also ensure that these proposals take into account the particular needs of Masters.

Sports with no specific Masters organisation should also have access to SDP support for their Masters sport. All sports should be eligible for funding for specific funding to introduce or develop their Masters sport.

AUSSI Masters Swimming and Australian Veteran Athletics perform functions similar to other NSOs whose administrations are funded through the Sports Commission. They both conduct competition at local state and national levels, send competitors to World Championships, maintain records at all these levels and have direct membership of an international sports federation. A joint submission with their respective NSOs could be appropriate, but it would seem equitable that Masters sports organisations whose operations are equivalent to those of funded NSOs are eligible for similar financial support.

To ensure that any such funding does not add to the proliferation of sports organisations in Australia any application for independent funding from a Masters organisation should have the written endorsement of the relevant NSO to indicate that the Masters organisation is regarded as the recognised body to organise Masters in that sport.

SPORTS NOT CONDUCTING MASTERS.
Forty one NSOs and seventeen state bodies responded that they do not presently conduct Masters sport. Three of them do have autonomous bodies which conduct Masters in their sport and eight have a separate Masters division in one or more states.

Eleven NSOs indicated that they are considering introducing some form of Masters competition in the future. Their reasons include:

- Growing interest among the players;
- Australia's and/or their sport's ageing population;
- It has been successfully introduced in one or more states;
- Development of a suitable modification

Reasons for not providing Masters sport included:

- Masters was not necessary because people can compete in their sport on an equal footing regardless of age - Darts, Pistol Shooting.
As contact sports they are inappropriate - Taekwondo, Rugby League and Australian Football while Boxing has an upper age limit of 32 for amateurs.

As new sports, their priorities were in different areas of development or they did not have the resources at this time.

Twenty nine NSOs and fourteen SSOs indicated that they were aware of Masters aged competitors in their sport. Most of these sports cater for Masters aged competitors through their normal open competitions or through a graded system so that as they age competitors go down the grades or into competitions of less intensity. Others use social competitions or social matches.

Many sports took the opportunity to make comments about Masters sport and all but one were positive about the possibilities for their sport, sport in general, or the community. They commented that it was rewarding to the participants, another outlet for the physically active and socially minded, that sport should be a lifelong activity, that more publicity should be given to festivals for the mature aged and that it would retain the interest and participation of people in the sport of their choice.

Thirteen sports indicated that they would appreciate assistance in developing their Masters sport. They identified funding, promotion, structure of Masters sport, communication with former players, modified rules, and policy matters such as age groups, rules, medical considerations and drugs as areas in which they would like assistance.

It is important that these sports are encouraged and assisted to develop a Masters component in their sport. If sports do not move to meet a demand for age graded competition in their sport, they may find that some other structure develops. Sports which do recognise and act on this demand should be able to respond in a way which does not introduce extra organisations into the Australian sports scene and which strengthens their role as the provider of opportunities in their sport. Establishment of a Masters sport co-ordination service (see Section 18) would provide those sports requiring assistance to know where to seek it.

Sports with no plans to introduce Masters fall into two categories; those who believe that people of all ages can compete equally in their sport, and those who believe that a grading system caters satisfactorily for those who wish to keep playing despite their age. These sports should be asked whether they have market research or even anecdotal evidence to support these conclusions or whether it is just because it has always been done that way. Assumptions like this have been made before in sport and have led to the establishment of autonomous Masters organisations. The other possibility is that some other group, such as Golden Oldies will step in to meet the unsatisfied demand.

Golden Oldies already conduct their festivals in six sports, only one of which has a national structure for Masters, and they are looking at expanding into two other sports which also have no national Masters structure. Indoor sports complexes and the YMCA have also moved to provide sports opportunities not provided by the established sports organisations and could well move to provide Masters sport if the NSOs do not respond.

From a sports participation aspect this may not matter but sports organisations will be the losers as the potential benefits already discussed will be lost and it could be that aspects of the outside bodies' activities will create conflict.
The benefits of Masters sport for sport are many, the equity of catering for this section of the population is surely unquestioned and failure to respond is to risk a loss of control of sections of the sport. The message should be clear.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Masters sport should be supported by the Australian Government, through the Australian Sports Commission, as a specific area of sport, with its own particular needs and features, not just as part of general sports participation.

2. Masters sport should be recognised as a distinct area of sports participation similar to Junior Sport, Women in Sport and Sport for People with Disabilities.

3. The Australian Sports Commission should promote to sports organisations the benefits of involving the mature aged in their sport.

4. The Confederation of Australian Sport should promote the benefits of involving the mature aged in sport to its members.

5. Masters sport should have access to support from the Australian Sports Commission at a level which will sustain the development which has already taken place and stimulate further development.

6. National Sporting Organisations should be required to show in their Development Plans how they intend to cater for the participation of the mature aged in their sport.

These Development Plans should show specifically the organisational and competition structures to be used to deliver this participation.

7. Funding should be made available to National Sports Organisations through the Sports Development Program to assist with the administration and development of Masters sport on a needs basis.

This funding should be allocated in response to a specific submission to the Commission by the NSO and be regarded as a special purpose grant.

Where an affiliated body organises the Masters sport in a particular sport (e.g. Tennis), the submission should be jointly developed and presented by that affiliated body and the National Sports Organisation.

8. Where a National Organisation presently exists to organise and develop Masters participation in a sport and its operations are totally independent of the National Sporting Organisation for that sport, the Masters organisation should be eligible for funding through the Sports Development Program.

To be eligible for this funding the independent Masters organisation should satisfy the following criteria:

(a) It should be a legal entity, i.e. an incorporated body.
(b) Competition must be conducted at local, state and national levels.
(c) The Masters Organisation should submit a properly constructed Development Plan.
(d) The Organisation should have formal links, in its own right, with an international body for that sport. This international body may be an International Masters organisation which has a formal relationship with the relevant International Sports Federation or the International Federation itself.

(e) International Masters sporting opportunities should be available for competitors including a World Championship sanctioned by the relevant International Sports Federation.

The submission/application should be endorsed by the National Sports Organisation for that sport to indicate that they recognise the Masters Organisation as the legitimate body to administer and develop mature aged participation in that sport. This endorsement would be the only part of the submission/application the National Sports Organisation would be endorsing.

9. Sports presently conducting Masters sport should be encouraged to consider modifying their sport and the structures for delivering it, particularly for the older age groups to encourage long term participation.

10. Funding should be made available on a short term basis through the Sports Development Program for programmes developed by sports to increase the participation of mature aged persons in their sport.

11. Sports presently conducting Masters should keep their starting age under review and consider changing to an older age level if there are significant numbers of people eligible for Masters still competing in mainstream sport.

Any change in starting ages should be done so that no competitor involved in Masters sport is denied an opportunity to continue Masters participation.

12. Age divisions should be constantly monitored to ensure that extra age groups are introduced when necessary.

13. The Australian Association of Veterans Athletic Clubs should approach WAVA to change the name of the World Veterans Games to the World Veteran Athletics Championships which would describe the event more accurately.

14. AUSSI Masters Swimming should consider moving its starting age progressively to 25, to be the same as the international criterion.

15. Sports not presently conducting Masters should seriously consider whether they are providing adequately for all competitors in their sport or whether some form of age-graded participation would be more equitable.

16. Sports not presently offering Masters sport should undertake some research to determine whether there is a "grass roots" demand for Masters competition within their sport and should not assume that moving down through the grades will satisfy those who wish to continue playing their sport.

17. Sports considering introducing Masters competition to their sport should begin sooner, rather than later, to reduce the chance of breakaway groups forming to meet
unsatisfied demand, or the possibility of outside groups developing "products" so that the benefits of increased participation are, to some extent, lost to sport.

18. When developing a Masters sport component National Sports organisations should create a structure which keeps the organisation of Masters sport within the framework of that sport's administration but allows Masters participants the major role in developing rules, competition structures and procedures for the conduct of their sport.

19. Sports introducing a Masters component should consider modifying their sport and introducing alternative competition structures to suit the needs of mature aged participants.

This does not mean that all Masters should have to play modified sports, in some sports it may be advisable to have two or three versions of the sport available for Masters, perhaps at different ages.

20. Advice should be available for sports introducing Masters to their sport from a Masters sport co-ordination service about modifications and alternative structures - see Recommendation 3, Section 18.

21. Funds should be available through the Sports Development Program on a short term basis for programmes developed by sports to introduce Masters sport to their sport and to increase the participation of mature aged people.

22. Starting Ages should be set to encourage people competing in mainstream to move directly into Masters.
SECTION 7.
MASTERS GAMES: MULTI-SPORTS FESTIVALS
FOR THE MATURE AGED

Multi-sports festivals for the mature aged are generally known as Masters games. At the end of 1991 there were seven of them established and being conducted regularly. Another two are to commence in 1992 and two states, Queensland and South Australia are investigating the possibility of conducting state Masters Games.

Tables 7.1 and 7.2 (Section 7) show that in 1986/7 only two of these festivals were conducted while in 1993/4 there will be at least ten.

MASTERS GAMES
Australian Masters Games (AMG)
There is no doubt that the impetus to conduct these festivals came from CAS which was involved with the Australian competitors at the First World Masters Games in 1985. CAS took steps to introduce the concept to Australia and the Northern Territory Government indicated an interest. An agreement was reached to conduct a Games in Alice Springs, to be known as the Central Australian Masters Games.

There was some disagreement over whether this was a national or a regional event so CAS continued to pursue its concept of an Australian Masters Games and in September 1985 reached an agreement with the Tasmanian Government. The First Australian Masters was held in Tasmania in 1987 with 4,277 registrations in 35 sports.

CAS has established a company, The Australian Masters Games, and registered six trademarks. All Australian State and Territory Governments are invited to bid for the rights to host the Games and the decision on which state will conduct them is made by the Confederation’s Board. Licence fees are charged by CAS, and these have risen from $25,000 for the first three to $50,000 for the fourth Masters Games in Perth in 1993.

The Second Australian Masters Games were conducted by South Australia and held in Adelaide in 1989 and attracted 8,048 participants.

The Third Australian Masters were conducted in 1991 in Brisbane with Brisbane City Council as the Host body. These Games which were originally planned to be part of a larger festival, the First APOSA Festival of Sport, were adversely affected by the collapse of this festival and attracted 6,960 participants, not the 10,000 which had been expected.

The Fourth Masters Games are being conducted in Perth as a stand alone event, something which future AMG should emulate. As the "flagship" event of Masters sport in Australia these Games should be used to promote the concept of mature aged sport. They certainly do not need other events to enhance their status.

The AMG has been the catalyst for Masters Games in Tasmania, Albany, Maryborough and the proposed state Masters Games in Queensland and it was their attendance at the First Australian Masters that inspired people from Wanganui, N.Z. to start the New Zealand Masters Games.
Other multi-sports festivals in Australia include:

**Honda Masters Games, Alice Springs.** These Games were formerly known as the Central Australian Masters. The fourth Games are to be held in October 1992 and if they grow at the same rate as the previous three will attract 4000 competitors and reach saturation point for Alice Springs in both sports ability to cater for participants and the town’s facilities; sporting and tourist. They attract entries from every Australian state and territory and to a less extent from overseas.

**Tasmanian State Masters Games.** Having successfully staged the first AMG Tasmania realised that there was a demand for such an event and have now conducted two State Masters with a third Games planned. These Games rotate around the state and there was a 25% increase in participation between the first two.

**Western Australian State Masters Games.** These Games are permanently situated in Albany and are really a regional games. They are conducted by a committee in the town with some support from the State Ministry and because of this semi-private ownership and the geographical situation of Albany it is difficult to see them performing the function of a State Masters Games. While no-one actually gave them permission to use the name State, no-one told them they couldn't use it either.

**Australian Veterans Games, Wagga Wagga.** These Games grew out of the participation by Wagga residents in other Masters games and a subsequent decision to cater for the needs of the region’s veteran sports people. The Games are conducted by a committee of Wagga residents and strongly backed by the Council. These Games which attracted around 1,000 participants have attracted some strong opposition from CAS and some Masters sports organisations over the time of year they are held and the use of the word "Australian" in their title.

**Norfolk Island Veterans Games.** These are basically local games and are held in February each year.

**Maryborough Masters Games.** These games were held a week before the Third AMG as a warm up meet for the AMG but caused some consternation for the Brisbane management. Although they only attracted a comparatively small number of competitors the city viewed the games as successful and there is a great deal of support for them now. They are planned to be held annually.

**VicHealth Masters Games.** Held on the Mornington Peninsula in 1990 and conducted by the Mornington Peninsula Agency for Tourism, these Games resulted in a severe financial loss and the collapse of the Agency. Although they attracted 2,000 competitors which is very successful for an initial Games, they expected 6,000 and made expenditures based on this expectation. It is extremely unlikely that these Games will be conducted again.

**ECONOMIC IMPACT OF MASTERS GAMES**

The Mayor of Alice Springs sees the Honda Masters Games as very beneficial to the town as it attracts a large number of people during what is normally a quiet period for the tourist industry. Alice Springs benefited to the extent of $2 million from the 1990 Games.
The First Australian Masters Games produced an economic benefit of $3 million for Tasmania and the economic impact for Queensland of the Third Australian Masters was $10 million. All other Masters Games have reported significant, positive, economic results for the centres conducting them.

**CONDUCT OF MASTERS GAMES**

Masters Games organisation in Australia follows an organisational model copied from the First World Masters Games and other sporting events. The procedures in these models are not necessarily the most effective for regional or even national Masters events. Experience from several events where there have been difficulties suggests that there may be alternative procedures which would be more effective.

There has been very little discussion of these matters and as the number of events and the requests for financial assistance from government at all three levels rises it is imperative that some guidelines be developed to assist those planning Games and as criteria on which government bodies can evaluate events. By November 1992, 17 Masters Games will have been conducted in 6 years with at least another 16 planned for the next two years. This seems an appropriate time to discuss the whole issue of Masters Games and draw up some guidelines.

Poorly run events and a cluttered calendar will reflect badly on the whole movement and adversely affect both existing events and new events being planned. As State and Federal governments are involved it would be appropriate that this process involve the Sport and Recreation Minister's Council (SRMC) or the Standing Committee on Recreation and Sport.

**PARTICIPATION IN MASTERS GAMES**

The survey of participants in the Third Australian Masters Games conducted by Griffith University investigated many aspects of the attitudes of participants. The results of this survey are dealt with at some length in the report, but some highlights are:

- **Games Fees** - 77% thought that one of the many attractions of Masters Games was that they are not too expensive.
- **Reasons Encouraging Participation** - the most important reasons were that they don't cater solely for elite participants (85%), they cater for male and females (84%), and that the atmosphere is friendlier than in mainstream sport (81%).

**WORLD MASTERS GAMES**

First World Masters - Held in Toronto, 1985 attracted 8,305 competitors from 61 countries in 24 sports and were very well organised however lost at least US$1.3 million.

These Games were devised by an expatriate Australian Maureen O'Bryan who developed them for individuals or teams, not for nations. She wanted no involvement from governments or international sporting bodies which she believed would either use the Games for political purposes or make them elitist. To give the Games some credibility she invited prominent sports administrators from various regions of the world to form an International Board of Governors. An Australian, Les Martyn was a member of this Board.

O'Bryan overestimated ticket sales and when the Games struck financial trouble was assisted by the Canadian and Ontario Governments. After the Games the Governments took O'Bryan to court and put the Games into receivership.
Second World Masters Games - The International Board of Governors had granted the Games to a consortium of Danish cities despite a strong bid from Brisbane. The Canadian Government sold the ownership of the Games (rather than just the rights to host) to the Danes for US$800,000 to recoup some of the losses. The Danish Games were poorly organised, lost money and were run in opposition to other major international Masters events.

Third World Masters Games - Minneapolis-St Paul in the US were granted the rights to host the Third Games but withdrew so the Danes tried to interest others but as they were asking one million sterling there was not much interest.

Event Corporations in Victoria and Queensland became interested in the possibility of conducting the Games. Eventually Victoria withdrew but Queensland have continued negotiation and appear almost certain to conduct an event in late 1994.

There are some problems still to be resolved about World Masters Games before bodies such as the Confederation and the Sports Commission could consider supporting such an event. These include the status of the Board of Governors as an invited group not really responsible to anyone, the lack of any sanction from official World Sporting bodies, the ownership of the Games by a trust in Denmark and the associated questions of what licence fees are to be paid, and to whom. The question of whether International Sports Federations will support the event given its previous history needs to be resolved. The Queensland organisers are aware of these problems and feel sure they can be resolved satisfactorily.

OTHER INTERNATIONAL EVENTS
World Masters Games are not the only festivals of this type for mature aged participants:

World Corporate Games - organised by the O'Bryans of World Masters fame these are held every 2 years and participants compete under the name of their business firm.

Maxi Games - these are organised from South America and are held at various times, as single sport tournaments or sometimes as multi-sports festivals.

New Zealand Masters Games - now held every year alternating between Wanganui and Dunedin these Games are owned jointly by the two city councils. There is significant Australian participation in these Games.

SPORTING ORGANISATIONS AND MASTERS GAMES
As these events become more common and popular sporting organisations will have to develop policies with regard to them.

Since 1986, 63 sports have actually been part of at least one Masters Games. There was almost universal support for the concept of Masters Games from national and state sporting organisations.

Twelve sports have conducted Masters championships as part of Masters Games and 22 indicated that they were considering this. Their reasons were that it would give their event greater status, increase entries, and allow their competitors to mix with people from other sports or even participate in some other sports.
Fourteen sports indicated that they would not co-conduct their championships with Masters Games because they already had viable national events, their Masters Championships were held in conjunction with their other championships or that Masters Games should be a "Sport for All" event.

UNREGISTERED COMPETITORS
Almost all Masters Games are open to all competitors registered or not, although not in all sports. When NSOs were asked whether they were concerned about this, 37 answered that they were and 35 were not. Twenty State Sporting Organisations were concerned but 19 were not.

Those who were concerned gave their reasons as: insurance and legal liability, safety, knowledge of the rules and/or courtesies of the sport, sanctions for inappropriate behaviour, the lack of financial or other commitment to the sport. Sixteen of the sports which indicated that they would not conduct their Masters Championships as part of Masters Games were among those who expressed their concern about the presence of non-registered competitors.

Sports not concerned saw Masters Games as an opportunity to increase participation in their sport stating that they believed participation would lead to registration.

There are ways to overcome these difficulties if sports wish to do so. Two levels of competition is one way, another is to include the registered and the non-registered in the same competition but separate their results using computer programs. For those sports where safety is a factor, allowing ex-players to compete may bring them back to the sport. If each sport approached the issue of how to safely and effectively involve non-registered competitors in their sport at multi-sports festivals most difficulties could be overcome.

The Confederation of Australian Sport should ensure that the "sport for all" philosophy of the Australian Masters Games is upheld and that only those sports which can show that they are providing open competition in some form be allowed to hold Championships as part of their involvement in these Games.

CONDUCT OF THE AUSTRALIAN MASTERS GAMES
The Confederation should take a more active role in the conduct of these Games. They are a CAS product and as such reflect the philosophy of the organisation. The bidding documents clearly outline the type of event CAS envisages and it should act to ensure the actual event matches the vision.

Part of the problem is the mobile nature of the Games and though CAS has representation on the Games Board each time, it needs to be more involved in the basic negotiations with sports which take place at management level. Standardised reporting procedures for sports involved in each Masters Games would ensure that the information passed on to organisers of subsequent Games would be relevant and complete.

RECOMMENDATIONS
A. MASTERS GAMES - GENERAL
1. A working party be convened to develop a set of guidelines for the conduct of Masters Games. This working party to be made up of people involved in the
organisation of Masters Games in Australia - national, state and regional - and representatives of sports involved and have as its highest priority development of procedures to ensure that Masters games are developed and conducted to maximise the development of Masters sport, and that sport receives an equitable share of the benefits.

2. The recommendations of this working party be presented to the Standing Committee of Recreation and Sport (SCORS) and/or the Sport and Recreation Minister's Council (SRMC) for their approval and subsequent to this approval, become the criteria on which applications to governments, state or federal, for funding of multi-sports festivals for the mature aged are judged.

3. Matters which this working party would consider would include;
   (a) Starting ages for each sport, taking into consideration those set by the individual sports.
   (b) Dates for determining age
   (c) Rules for competition, taking into consideration rules developed for Masters by each sport.
   (d) Methods of ensuring that events are open to all who wish to enter and satisfy the age criterion.
   (e) Timing of events to avoid cluttering the Masters sport calendar and to assist in the development of sport for the mature-aged.
   (f) Criteria to be used in selecting sports to be part of a Masters Games.

B. AUSTRALIAN MASTERS GAMES

1. The Australian Masters Games should be a "stand alone" event to promote Masters sport and the Masters Games and any other associated events, e.g. seminars, should promote these concepts.

2. CAS should develop some type of secretariat for the Australian Masters Games to assist in developing continuity of games management and to ensure that those features of AMG conduct that the Confederation believes are important are adhered to.

3. A CAS staff member should be a member of the Games Office staff in a consultative role to ensure that decisions made reflect CAS philosophy and represent a continuity of Masters Games development. The actual details of the CAS representative's role in the organisational structure of the Games Office to be the subject of an agreement between the Games Manager and the Executive Director of CAS.

   A representative of CAS should certainly be involved in the negotiations with sports included in the Games to ensure that lessons learned in each games are passed on.

4. A standardised Australian Masters Games report be developed by CAS for sports involved in an Australian Masters Games to ensure that all essential information is presented in a form that will be of use to the co-ordinators in the next Australian Masters. This would certainly include a balance sheet for each sport.

5. A set of Masters Games Records be developed and maintained by the Confederation. These records to be circulated to those sports involved as soon as possible after each Games.

C. WORLD MASTERS GAMES.

1. Any World Masters Games conducted in Australia should be held at a time when it does not adversely affect the viability of established Australian Masters sports events.
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2. Before the Australian Sports Commission supports any World Masters event in Australia it should be sure that the event will assist in the development of Masters sport in Australia and internationally, and that the finances directed to such an event will not detract from funds available for ongoing Masters events in Australia or for developmental Masters sport projects.

3. All sports to be part of a World Masters event in Australia should have the specific endorsement of their International Sports Federations before either the Australian Sports Commission or the Confederation of Australian Sport officially supports the event.

4. Both the Commission and the Confederation should also be certain that the International Board of Governors of the World Masters Games is appointed by sports bodies and responsible to sport, before officially supporting a World Masters Games.

D. STATE MASTERS GAMES.

1. Each State should develop a State Masters Games, funded to some extent by the State Department of Sport as a Sports development exercise.

2. These State Masters Games should be held biennially, preferably in the year when the Australian Masters Games are not held to avoid clashes, and to assist in the co-ordinated development of Masters sport.

3. State Masters Games should be held in different areas of the state, both to assist in the development of mature aged sport throughout the state and to allow different areas to gain the economic benefits of these events.

4. Regional Masters Games should be encouraged to develop Masters sport, and to promote tourism in those areas.

5. Steps should be taken to ensure that State and regional Masters Games are organised with sports bodies having the major role.
SECTION 8. AUSTRALIA'S INTERNATIONAL MASTERS SPORT LINKS.

Many Masters sports have developed to the stage where significant international events are conducted on a regular basis in which Australian teams and individuals compete. These events are conducted by international Masters organisations either independently or jointly with the International Federation for that sport while others are run by the International Federation itself, either directly or through a designated sub-committee.

International organisations directly involved in the organisation of Masters sport are;
- Masters Swimming International (MSI)
- World Association of Veteran Athletics (WAVA)
- World Masters Cross Country Ski Association
- World Senior Golf Federation
- Veteran Ladies Golf Association of England
- International Golden Oldies
- World Veterans Table Tennis
- World Masters Weightlifting Committee of the International Weightlifting Federation
- Veterans Committee of the International Tennis Federation

Thirteen other International Sports Federations were nominated as being involved in Masters sport.

MSI has conducted Masters Swimming internationally under an agreement with the Federation Internationale de Natation Amateur (FINA) known as the Pasadena Agreement which was negotiated in 1988. World Swims are conducted biennially by MSI and jointly sanctioned with FINA. There is evidence that FINA is moving to withdraw from the Pasadena Agreement and take over Masters Swimming now that it has become so popular. MSI officials, of whom several are Australian are resisting this takeover.

WAVA is affiliated to the International Amateur Athletics Federation (IAAF) which is also looking to take more control of Veterans Athletics. WAVA conducts the World Veterans Games biennially and runs several regional events.

The ITF Veterans Committee is responsible for the International Veterans Teams Cups (of which there are 12) and the World Veterans Championships. There are currently over 260 International Veterans tournaments each year and the number of events, competitors and age groups is growing every year.

Although International Masters Weightlifting has been around for some time, it was only when they formed themselves into an autonomous body that the IWF became involved and took Masters Weightlifting into their organisational structure.

World Masters Championships are held in 28 sports either each year, or every two years, with the number of sports increasing each year. Twelve sports select representatives or teams for these championships while for the other sports there is open entry for registered members of the relevant national organisations. Tennis and Table Tennis have selections for the teams events and open entry for the individual events.

Some of these events attract huge numbers of participants, eg Swimming and Athletics each have 4000 competitors, Rowing 3000, Table Tennis 2000. Ages range from 25 for
Swimming to well into the 80s for Tennis, and Skiing. Athletics have age groups into the 90s.

There are many other opportunities for Masters sports people to compete internationally in a wide variety of sports.

Australians have performed very well at international Masters levels, producing many World Champions and World Record holders. Australians also hold many high level positions in the international Masters organisations and Australia has been granted rights to host many international Masters events.

**GOLDEN OLDIES**

Better known for their Rugby Union Festivals, Golden Oldies also conducts festivals in Hockey, Netball, Cricket, Softball, and Soccer. These festivals are all conducted as commercially packaged events which has been very successful with some of these festivals attracting huge numbers of participants (eg 5,000 in Rugby Union, Perth 1991). Many players go to each festival conducted in their sport saving their holidays to do so.

Golden Oldies is owned by Air New Zealand and they impose some strict conditions on entry. Players must fly Air New Zealand, or their nominated airline, and take the Ground Package which includes accommodation. Participation in Golden Oldies festivals is not cheap, even for players who live locally, but the fact that people keep attending them indicates that they receive value for money.

It is not only the packaging that makes Golden Oldies Festivals successful. Playing the game is an important part, although winning is not because all games are declared draws. The fellowship, so much a part of all Masters sport is very important at these festivals.

The International Management Group (IMG) manages Golden Oldies for Air New Zealand through the Golden Oldies International Secretariat which operates as part of IMG's Auckland office. IMG do not see themselves as being in conflict with sporting organisations and feel that their festivals could lead people to join other Masters sports organisations and that their festivals held every two years offer a different experience.

There are potential problems for sports organisations. Mature aged Rugby Union in Australia is run by Golden Oldies with no competitive structure or schedule of matches. Rugby Union is happy with this arrangement but it does mean that an area of their sport is highly influenced by an organisation outside their control. Other sports may find this a less comfortable situation than Rugby does, but Masters are an attractive market group for commercial interests and IMG have obviously developed a package to appeal to this group and are looking to expand.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. National Sporting Organisations and the Australian Sports Commission should recognise the achievements of Masters sports individuals and teams in international competitions.

These performances should be given the same recognition accorded performances in other restricted sports categories (Disabled, Junior) and be eligible for assistance to attend international competition under the same conditions as these other restricted category competitors.
2. Official representatives of Australian National Masters sports organisations should be eligible for travel assistance to attend overseas meetings of their international bodies.
SECTION 9.
DRUGS IN MASTERS SPORT.

There is sufficient anecdotal evidence to suggest that the use of performance enhancing drugs is a small, but significant problem in Masters sport. Some members of ASMF's Veterans in Sport Committee believe that the competitiveness of some Masters events is conducive to the use of drugs and one, Marilyn Shrapnel from Brisbane, makes a strong recommendation for drug testing of veteran athletes.

Almost a quarter of the participants in the Brisbane Masters survey thought that drugs in Masters sport was a big issue. Just under 20% believed there was some use of performance enhancing substances and around 10% recognised that there was pressure to use these substances. Thirty percent believed there was a need for drug testing in Masters sport.

Only 20 National Sporting Organisations indicated that they had developed a Drugs in Sport policy for Masters sport but many of these were policies developed for the whole of their sport and applied to Masters. The comments from NSOs indicated that most did not really believe that drug use was an issue for Masters sport.

Policy development on drugs in Masters sport is complicated by the use of some of these substances by people of this age group for legitimate therapeutic purposes, but it is simplistic to say that those who need them should be allowed to use them on presentation of, say, a doctor's certificate. Not only will those not using these substances feel that they are at a disadvantage, but those with the dispensation may be encouraged to experiment, to take a little more to see if they get an advantage. Such dispensations could also lead to an "epidemic" in these conditions.

Therapeutic use of performance enhancing substances is a problem for some in mainstream sport as well. The Australian Sports Drug Agency (ASDA) indicates that the feasibility of some form of Medical Review Board is currently under investigation.

International influences have a bearing on this issue. Masters Swimming and Veteran Athletics have world events conducted under the rules of their International Sports Federations and are liable to be subjected to Drug testing. The development of Masters Weightlifting was threatened when those organising it demanded that there be no testing and the International Weightlifting Federation threatened to ban it. Masters Weightlifters are now liable to be tested.

Current ASDA advice is that elite Masters performers should not consider themselves immune from drug testing. Events held in facilities constructed with Federal Government funding, or which have been supported directly with funds from the Sports Commission are subject to Drug Testing as a matter of Government policy. If recommendations elsewhere in this report are accepted and Masters sports and individuals receive government financial assistance they too, will be liable to be tested.
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

There are other problems:

- Competitors at Masters Games are not necessarily registered with the sports organisations. Should these competitors be tested, and what sanctions can be applied if a positive test is returned?
- Testing through the use of urine testing is an intrusive method and for some people of Masters age, particularly females raised in a time when personal modesty was paramount, producing a sample under supervision may not just be embarrassing, it may be almost impossible.
- In most sports events athletes have long breaks in the programme which can be utilised to conduct tests. This is not always the case in Masters sport.

ASDA places great emphasis on education as a prevention strategy and participants at the Masters Games agreed with 75% feeling there is a need for information and 67% for education.

Sports need to develop Drugs in Sports policies for Masters that recognise their specific situation and are relevant to their needs and organisations which conduct Masters events should realise that they need to develop policies so that if testing does take place they can respond.

ASDA has a role to play too as many of those involved in Masters sport previously played their sport when drugs were not an issue. They need educational materials which are relevant to their needs and situation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. National Sporting Organisations should be advised by the Australian Sports Commission to develop Drugs in Sport policies that specifically address the particular needs of mature aged participants. These policies should be developed in consultation with the Australian Sports Drug Agency and the Sports Commission.

2. The Australian Sports Drug Agency through its education section should develop educational materials to inform mature aged people returning to sport about the issues involved in drugs and sport.

3. The Confederation of Australian Sport should develop a drugs in sport policy for the Australian Masters Games. This policy would need to address the problem of non-registered participants and in this area, at least, needs to be developed in consultation with ASDA.
SECTION 10.
THE MASTERS SPORT CALENDAR.

The need for some co-ordination of Masters events has become obvious. Tennis, Swimming and Athletics who all have a number of events to timetable have found that other events were being staged at times which clashed with their events.

The Confederation became concerned when the Australian Veterans Games in Wagga was programmed for the same year as their Australian Masters Games. They believe that another event in the same year with a similar name would cause confusion and detract from the status of their event. Athletics and Tennis who both had major events in Canberra in 1991 close to the Wagga date were similarly concerned. A similar situation arose between the Maryborough Masters Games and the Third Australian Masters Games.

Tennis in fact called for "greater co-ordination between official Masters multi-sports and Veteran sports activities in Australia." At this stage there was no-one Wagga, or anyone else, could have approached to find out about what Masters events were planned, other than to go to all sports separately.

This demonstrates the need for a calendar of Masters sports events to be compiled and circulated. An interim calendar was prepared and circulated from information received from sports during this project and has been positively received. Dubbo and Young have used this calendar to schedule their new Masters events to avoid clashes. The national and state sporting organisations which have indicated their interest in holding championships in conjunction with Australian Masters games have indicated that they need more notice of when and where the Games are to be held so that they can arrange rosters and give the hosts adequate lead time.

The Confederation is moving to announce the hosts of each Masters games three years in advance to provide this notice and to allow the new hosts the opportunity of observing the planning and conduct of the Games before theirs. At this stage the Confederation is encouraging hosts to conduct the Games in the September/October period of the year, but is not insisting on it. Perth’s Fourth Masters Games are being held in April/May, a time which has caused problems for some sports. They believe they can make up any shortfall in Australian participation with overseas competitors from Asia or South Africa.

Tasmania has pointed out that this timing was very close to the traditional time for their State Masters Games and that this created difficulties in planning.

Given the pre-eminent position of the Australian Masters Games in Masters sport and the Confederation’s stated belief in the need for a co-ordinated calendar of Masters sport events, CAS, as a major force in Australian sport, must ensure that its event is a role model by being staged at a consistent time so that other events can be planned around or with it.

There is obviously a need for a calendar of Masters events to be published each year and widely distributed. This calendar would not only be useful to sporting organisations but would also be useful to state government departments, local government and to commercial interests such as travel agents.
It is possible that a Masters circuit could develop given the number of sports involved and the events being conducted. A co-ordinated approach to scheduling is vital to protect the credibility and viability of existing Masters events, multi-sport and individual sport, and to allow new events to begin with a reasonable chance of continued success.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. A Masters sport calendar should be produced annually by either the Australian Sports Commission or the Confederation of Australian Sport, featuring regional state, national and international events and distributed to all National and State Sporting Organisations and to all other bodies involved in, or interested in, Masters sport.

2. A sponsor should be secured, if possible, to cover the costs of this calendar.

3. Major events for the following year(s) in Australia, and abroad, should be included in this calendar to facilitate planning.

4. The Confederation of Australian Sport should announce the host of each Australian Masters Games at least three years in advance to allow sufficient lead time for the host organisation and to allow other events to plan around the Australian Masters Games.

5. The Confederation should require that the Australian Masters Games be held within the September/October/November period to assist in the development of a co-ordinated calendar of Masters sports events.
SECTION 11.
RECORDING PERFORMANCES.

Twenty National Sporting Organisations and twenty State organisations keep Masters performance records while thirty nine keep records of national Masters championships. These records are maintained either by the national or state office, or recorders/records officers.

The conditions necessary for records to be recognised do not differ greatly from the conditions that apply in other levels of sport.

As in mainstream sport, Athletics and Swimming have the most complex set of Masters records to maintain, but in Masters sport this is complicated by the large number of age groups for which records have to be kept. AUSSI Masters Swimming also has a set of cumulative distance awards, known as the Aerobic Trophies, which were introduced to stimulate members to strive for greater fitness. These awards involve a tremendous amount of record keeping by the organisation and the individual.

The Confederation of Australian Sport keeps copies of the results of Australian Masters games but these have not been consolidated onto a computerised data base for easy access. This is an oversight which should be rectified.

Non-registered competitors at Masters Games complicates the issue of whether records set at thses events should be regarded as National or World Records. Some sports are reluctant to recognise record performances achieved in competition with these unregistered competitors, but as long as the person setting the record is registered and all other conditions necessary for records to be ratified are met, there seem no reasons why these records should not be recognised.

Competitors at events like to know what the relevant records are so that they can compare their performances, or even as motivation to try harder to come close to the record level. Organisers of Masters events should endeavour to include details of records on their programmes.

It is not necessary to keep a national register of all Masters sport records but each sport should keep them and supply the information to anyone interested. The National Sports Information Centre should have a data base of Masters sports contacts so that those who enquire can be easily directed to the appropriate source.

The number of Australians who hold World Records, are World Champions or a highly placed in world rankings should be recognised and these details included in any publication of Australian elite performers in much the same way as other restricted category achievements (Disabled, Junior) are recognised.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. A data bank of Masters sports contacts should be developed and kept by the National Sports Information Centre.
2. Any publication of Australians holding World Records or winning World Championships should include Masters achievements.

3. Performances at any multi-sports festivals should be eligible for recognition as local, State or Australian Records as well as meet records providing all conditions required for records to be recognised are met and the competitor is registered with the relevant sports bodies.

4. All Masters sports bodies should be responsible for keeping their own records.

5. Organisers of multi-sports festivals should be responsible to contact the various sports bodies to get information on their records.
SECTION 12.
SPONSORSHIP OF MASTERS SPORT.

Only 43% of NSOs reported that their Masters sport is sponsored and just under 9% of Masters Games participants were sponsored.

While Masters as an emerging area of sport may appear to increase the competition for sponsors, and therefore reduce the funds available for other areas of sport only 9 out of 36 sports thought that this could happen. It may actually broaden the pool of potential sponsors. Marketing strategies, and promotion are usually aimed at specific market groups and Masters represent a different market to other areas of sport.

Masters are people who typically make decisions about major purchases, or are in a position to invest money so the businesses that sponsor their events are banks and other financial institutions, real estate firms, and those in the hospitality and travel industry who recognise that Masters are at a stage of their lives when they have a fair amount of disposable income. Honda sponsors the Masters Games in Alice Springs because it is this section of the population who are the main purchasers of their products.

Many sports indicated that they believe that Masters, because it does not have many spectators or attract much media coverage is not interesting to sponsors. I do not agree. State and local government authorities are keen to have Masters sport events in their jurisdiction and highly commercial organisations such as Air New Zealand and IMG have recognised the potential. Masters sport organisations should recognise the unique market their participants represent and develop sponsorship strategies to take advantage of this uniqueness.

Many Masters participants are in positions of influence in many organisations and Masters sport organisers should utilise these people and their contacts to achieve sponsorship.

On-site sales at events is another way of attracting sponsorship and this has been successfully used by Golden Oldies to attract sponsors. Providing access for the sponsor to membership lists gives them opportunities for direct marketing. This would be very attractive to potential sponsors of Masters sport who are involved in superannuation and investment, although there could be difficulties for sports administrations if they released membership details.

Masters sport is a new, growing, development in the sporting environment and as such presents new opportunities for links with business. Approaches which take into account its uniqueness will ultimately determine the level of success in attracting sponsorship.

RECOMMENDATIONS
1. Masters sports organisers and participants should realise that Masters sport can be as attractive to sponsors as many other areas of sport.

2. Masters sports organisations and event organisers should develop sponsorship proposals which maximise the opportunities Masters sport provides to allow sponsors access to a unique market.
SECTION 13.
FACILITIES: THE EFFECTS OF MASTERS SPORT.

The development of Masters sport as a new level of sports participation has the potential to increase or change the demand for sports facilities. Lack of facilities could hold back the development of Masters sport or the increased demand could adversely affect the conduct and development of other areas of sport.

Sports which are conducted using specific purpose facilities (eg Golf, Indoor Cricket, Squash, Ten Pin Bowling) rated facility usage as either the greatest advantage or the second greatest advantage of Masters sport. It appears that for many sports which operate in highly expensive or commercially operated facilities, Masters sport actually makes the facility more economically viable. This is because Masters sport is usually played at off peak times such as evenings for Hockey or mid-week for Golf, when the facilities would otherwise not be used. Many of the sports indicated that Masters sport had actually generated funds which had made it possible to improve facilities for all.

There were some sports (Water Polo, Basketball) who indicated that lack of facilities was holding back development of Masters in their sport, although not in all states. Other sports have been able to schedule their events so that there is not really a problem.

Many of the sports commented that sports opportunities could be greatly increased if sport could use tax funded facilities such as school gymnasias. There are obstacles to sports using school facilities which centre on the fact that access to the facilities can also mean access to the rest of the school so creating a security problem these. Another problem involves the charges imposed for use of these facilities as education authorities see community use as a way to increase funds in times of diminishing resources.

In many cases these difficulties can be overcome, particularly if schools are regarded as community facilities rather than the private property of education authorities. New schools should be designed so that their facilities are available to the public in such a way that this use does not interfere with the school’s day to day operation.

RECOMMENDATIONS
1. Any promotion of Masters sport should highlight the fact that, given flexible timetabling, introduction of Masters can increase the income from facilities and make them more financially viable.

2. The Australian Sports Commission and the Confederation of Australian Sport should press for tax funded facilities such as school gymnasias be made more available for public use and that future construction of such facilities be designed to facilitate community use.
SECTION 14.
THE MEDIA AND MASTERS SPORT.

Reactions to the media from all sections of Masters sport are mostly negative as they believe that coverage of Masters sport is limited and does not really portray the movement accurately. There is a strong feeling that when coverage does occur it concentrates on the elite performers or the very old participants as "human interest" stories, many of these in the form of "isn’t this marvellous at her/his age?"

Less than 14% of Masters competitors thought television was very important in influencing people to become involved in Masters sport. Print media rated higher with 35% rating it an important influence. There were a number of unsolicited comments in the survey regarding the media and only one was positive.

Conveners of sports at the Third Australian Masters Games were also negative, about the media, many claiming that there was no coverage (which was not true) and others complaining that only the bigger sports were reported. Organisers of the Golden Oldies Rugby Union in Perth were very concerned at the "dramatic" way the deaths at their festival were reported which they felt gave a "misleading impression to the public".

For role models to have any effect they need to be covered accurately in the media to develop public profile. The media has an important role to play in promoting Masters sport as a worthwhile and viable activity for all. This can be done by recognising the achievements of Masters sports people as outstanding, legitimate sporting results achieved through talent and dedication while still reflecting the true nature of Masters sport as a mass participation movement offering the same benefits and opportunities as other areas of sport.

Masters sport itself has a role to play. It is of little use to complain about inadequate or inappropriate coverage if the media are not correctly informed, given accurate briefing and exposed to efficient event organisation and management. Masters sports organisations should develop media policies and strategies and contact with the media should be in accordance with these strategies to achieve policy objectives.

RECOMMENDATIONS
1. Sporting organisations should use media contacts to promote the real nature and goals of Masters sport.

2. Masters sports administration should develop media policies to achieve portrayal of Masters sport in a way which will;
   a) Promote it as a legitimate level of sporting endeavour and achievement.
   b) Portray it as a true "Sport for All" movement.
   c) Highlight those features of Masters sport which make it attractive to many e.g. fitness, friendship, participation and varying levels of competition.
SECTION 15.
SPORTS MEDICINE AND THE ROLE OF ASMF IN MASTERS SPORT.

ASMF has established a special committee on Veterans in Sport which developed the publication, *Safe Veterans Sport*, and stated ASMF's belief in the benefits of regular physical activity. Several writers have commented that lifestyle diseases are best treated by changing the patient's lifestyle. The enigma is that despite the well researched and documented benefits of exercise many doctors do not regard exercise as a course of treatment as viable as other medical treatments.

The challenge for groups like ASMF is to ensure the rightful place of exercise among the other aspects of medical care. The National Better Health Program recognised the need to educate medical professionals about active older people as one way to develop better health.

There has been some research at Australian Masters Games into the health, fitness and strength of participants but this has not been co-ordinated or followed up from one Games to another. This is a pity because Masters Games offer the opportunity for development of longitudinal studies of mature aged people in a number of areas. Masters sports organisations enthusiastically support such research.

Research at Masters Games does show that the majority of injuries are similar to what could be expected at any competitive event in the sports involved. Sports conducted on hard surfaces produced leg injuries and events which involved a number of games in a relatively short period produced a number of muscle injuries and general soreness. Those organising Masters events should take this into consideration in their planning.

Exercise induced death is always a consideration when planning Masters events even though research shows that the chance of such death is reduced through regular exercise. There have not yet been any fatalities at any Masters Games in Australia although there was one heart attack at the Brisbane Games. The attack was suffered during the Ten Pin Bowls, but interestingly the individual had participated in the Track and Field earlier in the week.

There is a difficulty for sports in assessing the level of medical coverage which is realistic for an event. Many of the sports at the Third Masters Games complained that they had been forced by the Games management to have a level of medical coverage beyond their needs. One wonders whether they would have felt the same had there been a serious incident.

There are no guide-lines or standardised measures developed regarding the level of medical coverage needed for an event so decisions are made on various criteria and it would be a tremendous boon to sport at all levels if ASMF, in consultation with other groups, could devise a set of guidelines for medical coverage at sporting events. Not only would this be beneficial to individual competitors but would assist sports organisers and provide a measure of protection in the case of any litigation which may result from injury or illness.
RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The Australian Sports Medicine Federation should develop a set of guidelines for medical coverage at sporting events. These guidelines should consider such things as the age of the competitors, the nature of the sport, the weather, the venue and its location in regard to emergency medical facilities and costs.

2. A standardised medical information form should be developed for use by all participants at all multi-sports festivals for the mature aged. This form should be developed by ASMF’s Veterans in Sport committee.

3. The ASMF Veterans in Sport committee should also develop a standardised injury report for multi-sports festivals for the mature aged so that reliable statistics on injuries can be gathered to form the basis for decisions about the level of medical coverage needed at these events.

4. ASMF should use its influence in the medical profession to promote the use of physical activity and sport as therapeutic treatment, particularly for life-style diseases as a viable alternative to treatment through drugs or surgery.

5. ASMF should also promote strongly the potential of physical activity and sport as preventive health measures, particularly for the so-called effects of ageing.

6. An investigation of deaths during sport be undertaken to determine the part that sport played in these deaths as related to pre-existing conditions and the presence of other risk factors.
SECTION 16.
MASTERS SPORT PARTICIPANTS: THE PLAYERS.

Very few sports were able to give any information which would enable a profile of Masters sport participants to be developed, the exception was AUSSI Masters Swimming which had surveyed their members in 1990. Golden Oldies International supplied some data from surveys that they had conducted of participants at their festivals and this data is included in the report.

As part of this project two other surveys were carried out:
- The first; a profile survey form was sent out with entry forms for the Third Australian Masters Games had 384 responses.
- The second; a more comprehensive survey was developed in co-operation with Griffith University and 600 questionnaires were mailed out to competitors after the Games had finished. The response rate for this survey was a very pleasing 84%.

The findings of these surveys are discussed in detail in the main report but some key findings are included below.

The average age of participants in Brisbane was 46 with almost three-quarters in the 35-56 age group. AUSSI Masters average age was 42. This suggests that Masters sport is a recreational activity of those in the mid years of their lives. Over 60% were male and this was consistent with previous Masters Games and other statistics from Masters sports.

Just over half earn more that $30,000 per year. While this might suggest that Masters sports participants are more affluent than the average it must be remembered that this survey was conducted at a high profile event which cost more than usual Masters events so a higher level of income was perhaps to be expected. The four surveys all showed significantly more people in the managerial/professional occupations than any other category although around 18% at the Masters Games were retired.

This suggests that the typical Masters sport participant is a male in the 40-55 age range employed in a professional, managerial or other white collar occupation. Women in general and people over 55 are under represented and this suggests that they could be targets for any promotional campaign.

Almost 46% had been competing in their sport for 10 years or less and 83% had competed in this same activity in mainstream sport. Over half (53%) had a break in their sporting career principally as a result of family or business/career reasons. Only 25% had their Masters sport interrupted for similar reasons.

"Playing the sport before and enjoying it" or that "it seemed like fun" were given as the important reasons for starting Masters sport for over 75% of participants. Social activity was a very important expectation of Masters sport with only fitness rating higher.
The five main reasons for participating in Masters sport were given as:

1. Being with others who enjoy the same things I do 94.5%
2. Keeping physically fit 93.4%
3. Developing my skills and abilities 84.7%
4. Relaxing physically 84.7%
5. Being with friends 83.6%

Responses to questions about life circumstances showed that the participants are financially secure (63%), healthy (over 90% rejected two suggestions of poor health), had good family relationships (78%), comfortable living standards and physical home environment (92%).

Masters sport was rated as "one of most satisfying things I do by 92%, or one of the most enjoyable things I do by 87%, and 85% enjoyed discussing it with their friends while 84% said it was "very important to me".

On average they trained three times per week for 85 minutes per session which demonstrates the effectiveness of sport in encouraging regular exercise at a level of intensity high enough to produce a positive health benefit.

Training programmes were based largely on previous experience (87%) and practice games (81%). The influence of coaches, personal or club, was relatively unimportant. This is a concern because many Masters participants have not been involved during the years when there has been a great expansion in knowledge about sports medicine and coaching methods. Incorrect practices may have been tolerated by a younger body, but if used when older could result in injury.

Many sports thought that the only coaching considerations for Masters were the medical problems they might have and that otherwise they were experienced enough to coach themselves. Other sports were alarmed at this thinking and AUSSI Masters Swimming have actually produced their own coaching manual, Mastering Swimming.

It seems obvious that there is a need to produce some coaching materials, directed specifically at those who are coaching themselves, to give them some guidelines on the correct ways to go about it. This will make the Masters sport experience more enjoyable and will help to ensure that an increase in Masters sport does not mean that there is an increase in sports injuries.

Fifty percent of participants spent less than $730 per year on their Masters sport which indicates that for many it is a relatively low cost, healthy activity. There were 30% who spent more than $1,400 per year with travel and accommodation the most expensive items.

Just over 48% rated their health as excellent compared to others of their age, another 46% rated it as good. Less than 1% said their health was poor.

93% of respondents were non-smokers compared to the 71% of the general population over 35 (Australian Bureau of Statistics 1990). This reinforces findings at the Second Australian Masters Games in 1989. Of the non-smokers 32% had previously smoked but had stopped. Again this is rate is higher than the ABS figures which show that the proportion of ex-smokers in the general population is 22%.

Non-drinkers were 35% of the respondents but less than 4% were ex-drinkers. Few of those who responded to the survey described themselves as more than moderate drinkers.
This research supports the premise that Masters sport encourages a healthy lifestyle, not only through regular exercise and diet but also encourages participants to make other health related decisions which reduce the risks of premature death.

Australia has produced many sports people who have achieved high levels of performance in Masters sport in Australia and internationally. These elite performers have enhanced Australia's international standing and serve as powerful role models to induce mature aged people to return to sport or to begin their involvement. They also serve as role models for those presently involved in sport and show that major achievements and improvements are possible even at an age some would regard as old.

**Competition or Participation?**

There is no doubt that the original motivation for Masters sport was participation in sport, this was closely linked to fitness and social activity but sport was the main focus. Competition was always a part of that and research in New Zealand (Sadlier 1991) showed that participants believed that competition provided an incentive to swim regularly.

Competition does not just mean winning, it can mean that trying to win motivates the person to expend energy and maximise skills and that this improved performance becomes the aim rather than the medal, or the trophy. For most Masters winning has not lost its appeal or its thrill, but losing is no longer the disaster that it seems in other areas of sport.

There are signs that this is changing. The increasing number of national and international championships along with concerns about the use of performance enhancing substances indicate that winning is becoming more important to some. Many of those moving into Masters sport directly from mainstream sport are bringing with them attitudes towards winning that are at odds with the prevailing philosophy in Masters sport.

The presence of highly competitive teams at Masters Games could act as a disincentive for club teams or a group of players who just come together for a game. Two levels of competition may be needed to overcome this dichotomy.

Sports administrators should not assume that Masters will be non-competitive, just because they are older. This is not the case. Surf Life Saving have found that their Masters are very competitive and are demanding a level of recognition equal to that of the mainstream Surfing.

A high level of competitiveness may prove very difficult for long term Masters administrators who believe strongly in the "fun, fitness and fellowship model". They may find a more aggressive sports structure contrary to their philosophy and so may withdraw.

Sports need to decide on their approach to Masters sport and to develop policies and structures to achieve their objectives. These decisions should be made in consultation with Masters participants and communicated to present participants and those who come in as "new" Masters. These policies should be constantly reviewed and modified if they prove unsuccessful or out of date.
RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The questionnaire of Masters Games participants developed for this project be repeated at future Australian Masters Games and other Multi-sports festivals for the mature aged as part of an ongoing investigation of Masters sport in Australia.

2. This questionnaire also be used at some national, state and local level Masters sport events to develop a more reliable profile of ordinary Masters sports participants.

3. The Sport Australia Awards conducted by the Confederation of Australian Sport should include a category for Masters sports Star of the Year for achievements in competitions restricted to mature aged participants.

4. Coaching materials should be developed to provide guidance for Masters competitors who design their own training programmes. This is particularly vital in Track and Field and in this sport should be developed jointly by the Australian Veterans Athletics Association and the Australian Coaching Council.

   General coaching advice directed specifically at Masters should be developed by the Australian Coaching Council and distributed to all Masters sports organisations.

5. Masters sports competitors selected to represent Australia, who have recorded World Age Record or similar performances, or have won or placed highly in World Championships should be eligible for support through the Australian Sports Commission's Sports Talent Encouragement Plan.
SECTION 17.
NON PARTICIPANTS: THE POTENTIAL PLAYERS.

Six and a quarter million Australians were over the age of 40 in 1989, well over a third of our population with estimates that by 2001 this will have risen to 8.44 million.

DASET'T's 1987 Recreation and Participation Survey showed that well over 80% of people aged 40 to 54 do not participate in organised or social sport and for those over 55 the proportion not involved in sport of any sort was 90% or more. ABS figures showed that in 1989 40% of people over 40 reported that they did not do any exercise, not even walking. They also show that less than 20% of the total population exercise at moderate or vigorous levels and that these levels drop from 14.8% at 45 to 54, to 10.6% for those 55 to 64 and less than 10% for those over 65.

Why are so few people involved in Masters sports when over 50 sports offer an organised enjoyable experience for those in these age groups?

Many people do not know of the existence of Masters sport and many who have heard about it have wrong impressions of its nature and aims. They quite commonly believe that Masters sport is:

- Only for those who were high level performers and wish to continue their sport in an age graded elite competition;
- Only for those who have been involved in the sport for a very long time and have always been competitive and achievers;
- For those who are very experienced in that sport so don't make fools of themselves;
- Very competitive and not really about participation and having fun;
- Just an excuse for ex-players to get together and have a "booze-up";
- Only for the really old, not for those in their late 30s or 40s;

This lack of correct information creates huge barriers to participation which can only be overcome by a public education and awareness campaign.

There are other barriers to participation which will need to be overcome if a significant number of inactive people are to become involved in physical activity. These include:

- Apathy
- A belief that sport is inappropriate at their age.
- A perception of family and friends that sport is inappropriate at their age.
- A lack of previous sporting background or experience-particularly relevant to women
- A fear of injury or exercise induced death.
- Other commitments
- A lack of confidence in their own body to perform physically.
- A lack of role models.
- Lack of time.
- Transport problems to get to facilities.
- The social expectation that as a certain age is reached a person should slow down and enjoy a "well earned rest".
- Cost.
People drop out of sport for a number of reasons and research at the Brisbane Masters Games revealed these reasons for breaks in sporting careers for 52% of respondents:

- Friends dropped out: 11%
- Family commitments: 74%
- Business/career: 67%
- Study: 25%
- Marriage: 41%
- Following spouse's/partners sport: 8%
- Injury or illness: 34%

The benefits for individuals, their families, the community and the economy have been outlined earlier in this report and these represent strong motives to encourage those who are not involved to become more active.

Sport represents a highly effective way to involve many people in regular long term physical activity because it contains many elements that make it interesting and enjoyable while exercise classes have been shown to have a very poor record of adherence.

Sport provides opportunities for social interaction through training sessions and the aftermatch formal and informal functions. These social functions are as important a part of Masters sport organisation as the games themselves.

Sport can provide all the physical performance indicators that are available from fitness classes and allows the participant to monitor their performance using indicators that are seen to relate to the performance of peers rather than as merely statistics. Age records allow participants to evaluate their performance on a sliding scale which they can relate to as being relevant to their personal situation.

Sport also provides the opportunity to participate in environments which are attractive and varied (different Golf courses or Tennis clubs, different routes for the run, the walk or the ride).

The challenge is to address this market to increase participation so that individuals, sports bodies and governments can gain the benefits available. The Japanese are promoting more mature aged participation through the introduction of modified or new sports which are specifically designed to be low level competitive, simple yet challenging, able to be played in a variety of settings with specially designed equipment. In Victoria, a group of mature aged people developed Pryme Ball, a combination of Netball and Basketball which has become very popular.

These initiatives indicate the effectiveness of modifying sports for the mature aged as a strategy to increase participation of mature aged people in physical activity.

Presentation of people who have come back to sport at a relatively advanced age or have taken up new activities, and who were not previously high level performers, as role models will help to dissolve myths about needing to be highly skilled or experienced before starting. There is a need for a publicity campaign to encourage older people to change their attitudes and to give them choices. A campaign such as this could use role models and concentrate on the pleasure, the pride and the enjoyment that these people get from their involvement in these activities.
To attract the mature aged back to sport they need the opportunity to participate without pressure. It is not necessary to try to get them to return to sports they previously participated in, many Masters sports report people who come to their sports without previously having been involved. In fact taking up a new sport may well avoid the frustrations of comparing present performance with achievements at a younger stage of life. Any campaign to increase participation should highlight the wide range of sports available.

Although one of the main outcomes of a campaign to increase participation in Masters sport would be an improvement in the health of the individuals and therefore an improvement in the health profile of this age group, this does not mean that health should be the main focus of any such campaign. To concentrate on health could be seen as lecturing, rather the activities should be promoted because they are enjoyable in their own right. Any campaign which results in an increase in healthy activities will have these positive outcomes no matter what the motivation of those who become involved.

RECOMMENDATIONS
1. A publicity campaign should be developed jointly by the Australian Sports Commission and the Confederation of Australian Sport to involve more mature aged people in sport.
2. This publicity campaign should promote Masters sport goals as participation, fitness and social activity rather than highlight competitions and results.
3. Any publicity campaign should emphasise that Masters is age-graded competition and that many of the sports are modified to meet the needs of mature aged competitors and that it is not only for the ex-elite, or for those who aspire to compete at an elite level or for those who have always been involved in sport and are very experienced.
4. A publicity campaign should highlight the variety of sports available for the mature aged.
SECTION 18.
MASTERS SPORT IN AUSTRALIA: WHERE TO NOW?

The National Better Health Program recommended that a national leisure policy be developed to involve more older people in physical activity and so improve their health.

The House of Representatives Standing Committee on Long Term Strategies recommended the development of a national recreation strategy linked with a health promotion campaign.

This report has recommended (see Section 4) a joint campaign to promote Masters sport to be developed by the Australian Sports Commission, DASET and the Department of Health.

These recommendations all address the same aim: to improve the health of mature aged Australians by involving them in regular physical activity. To achieve this an eclectic campaign is needed, a campaign which promotes exercise, recreation and sport so that all sections of the population are included. To concentrate on any one of these areas will be to run the risk of missing those to whom the other activities are attractive enough to motivate long term involvement. A successful campaign will promote all these activities and the participants will choose those which suit them.

It would also be a mistake to categorise people into groups by way of these activities. There will be people to whom sport and recreation will be attractive and there are many activities which can be promoted as either sports or recreation (eg canoeing).

A new strategy is necessary because the current ones have not produced high levels of activity among older Australians and the levels of activity fall increasingly in the older age groups.

While promotions by "Life. Be in it" and the National Heart Foundation have highlighted the risk factors for premature death and the need to modify lifestyle to reduce these risks there has not been a significant increase in the number of people exercising enough to produce a health benefit.

A multi-sectoral approach would concentrate on continuing the work of raising the awareness of the need and benefits of exercise and present the various alternatives for becoming involved. It would then be the responsibility of various groups to promote their area as part of this overall strategy.

Many of the agencies responsible for developing policies for the aged promote exercise as part of special events such as Seniors Weeks but they tend to do this in a protective way promoting only those activities which they believe to be "safe". The Australian Sports Commission should promote the value of sport to these agencies to help overcome the reluctance many State Departments of Sport have found for these agencies to be involved in the promotion of any "vigorous" activities.

To be successful the Commission would have to educate these agencies, and the elderly, on the real nature of Masters sport; that it is a participation model, for the most part organised by and structured for the participants and the competition is mostly low key and is really only the means by which the aims of fitness, fun and fellowship are achieved.

Any such campaign should also promote the roles older people can play as sports officials which will allow them to become part of sport, to be physically active without necessarily being involved in competing against others. Many sports have removed the age barriers which existed for officials so those who become involved in this side of sport should be able
to look forward to a long period of worthwhile activity. Those sports which still have age barriers relating to officials (official or unofficial) should examine these policies to see whether they are based on realistic evaluations of performance, or are ageist and assume some mythical, set point of deterioration.

A MASTERS SPORT CO-ORDINATION SERVICE?

There is no doubt that Masters is a rapidly expanding area of sport: the number of participants, the number of sports involved, and the number of Masters Games have all grown remarkably through the 1980s and into the 1990s. Regardless of what is done this growth will continue, if only because of the size of the population cohort involved.

Many people are aware of the benefits of exercise and regard sport as a lifetime activity. Sports which fail to recognise and cater for this demand will find that they lose participants to break away organisations, commercial operators or other sports. This will represent a tremendous loss of resources for those sports.

Because there has been an unco-ordinated growth of Masters sport to date all of these things have happened and further unco-ordinated growth, particularly when a growth spurt can be expected, could lead to enormous problems. These problems, such as clashing events, are beginning to emerge and will escalate unless some co-ordination is introduced.

This project has established the need for a Masters sport information and advice service to be established. Once people became aware that there was an agency where all the data on Masters sport was being collected, many began to contact the project office for information and advice. These inquiries come from individuals, from sports, from Government at all levels and from tertiary institutions.

Through this Project, research needs specific to Masters have been identified and promoted and there has been an encouraging response from tertiary institutions. Continued promotion of research into the medical, physiological, psychological and sociological aspects of Masters sport is an important ongoing task if sport for our mature aged population is going to be developed on an informed basis.

There is also a need for a forum for ongoing discussion of issues and communication of information regarding Masters sport. The growth which is taking place will create pressure on sports organisations and cause changes in the structures developed to deliver Masters sport.

There is no doubt that this project being a joint undertaking of the Sports Commission and the Confederation has contributed tremendously to its legitimacy and also enhanced the status of Masters sport. If a co-ordination service is established it would fit comfortably into either organisation.

The Commission has a responsibility through its own charter and Government policy to assist in the provision of sport for all sectors of the population and has addressed the needs of other sections (youth, disabled, women, elite) through various programmes. A 1986 Commission discussion paper on Veterans sport recommended that the Commission should act as "information brokers" for sports organisations and while acknowledging that given the priorities at that time this could only be an "ad hoc" and occasional activity, it also said "should these priorities change, the appointment of a full-time staff member would enable establishment of new ways of regular communications between sports and veteran sports in particular."
The growth of Masters sport, the size of the particular population group, the economic and social benefits from a healthy older population along with the calls from many areas for models which increase participation, indicate that the priorities should change if they haven't already done so.

The Confederation of Australian Sport has a very strong interest and responsibility in the area of Masters sport. It played a leading role in the development of multi-sports festivals for the mature aged in Australia and has developed the Australian Masters Games to the point where it is the flagship of Masters sport in Australia. The Australian Masters Games are an important part of the Confederation's operations and are also a major consideration in the planning of other Masters sport events, national, state and regional. CAS needs to devote more resources to the Games because in many ways the Confederation's public image will rely on the perceived success of the Games.

National Sporting Organisations, which are the Confederation's members, will be influenced by the growth in Masters sport and the increase in multi-sports festivals and will have to develop policies to take account of these changes. They will look to their industry association for assistance and advice.

Regardless of whether a Masters sport co-ordination service is established within either organisation it is vital that they continue to co-operate in this area. It is too important for either to leave the responsibility for support, promotion and development to the other.

It must be recognised that Masters is unique in many ways in sport. It is administered by the participants and has been adapted by them to suit their needs. They have the skills and the experience to provide the type of sport they know is relevant for them, they also have the political knowledge and will to develop alternative strategies if others try to impose structures on them that they believe are not appropriate. A support structure which was perceived as a bureaucratic measure of control could be resented and lead to fragmentation, rather than encourage co-ordinated growth.

There have already been suggestions about the formation of a Masters Sport Association to give Masters participants and organisations a stronger voice and to facilitate the communication of new developments. This does not mean that such an organisation would necessarily oppose existing organisations, but it will be an indication that there was a significant group whose needs were not being addressed.

Recently national conferences have been held to examine issues in Junior sport and Women in Sport. Given the size, growth and complexity of Masters sport and the increase in research into medical, social and physiological aspects of exercise for the mature aged, there is certainly enough scope for a conference to be held on Masters sport.

One of the goals of the Australian Sports Commission is to "promote widespread community participation in sport". The Confederation of Australian Sport believes strongly in the philosophy of "Sport for All". Masters sport presents a tremendous opportunity for both to realise these objectives.

Lois Appleby, General Manager of the Third Australian Masters Games said that the Games "encouraged people to have a go, and the experience was so positive that they are now going to make sport a part of their life." Perhaps Sport for All should be modified to Sport for All of Life. This may not be universally achievable but sports policy at all levels should aim to involve more people, in more sport, for more of their life.
RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The Australian Sports Commission should promote the benefits of mature-aged sport to those agencies responsible for policies for the ageing with a view to convincing them to promote sport as a worthwhile activity in their promotional materials and campaigns. Such promotions should not overlook the possibility of promoting involvement in areas of sport other than competition, e.g. acting as officials, as healthy activities which can also produce a feeling of achievement, provide social contact and involve healthy physical activity.

2. The Australian Sports Commission should recognise that Masters sport is the fastest growing area of sports participation and needs to be assisted so that development is coordinated rather than the "ad hoc" growth that has occurred to this stage in some areas.

3. A Masters sport co-ordination service should be established, either within the Sports Commission or at the Confederation of Australian Sport to facilitate this co-ordinated development and to provide information and advice for sports, governments and individuals on all aspects of Masters sport.

4. Materials promoting mature aged sport should be developed for use in the media. These materials should be developed by the Commission similarly to those developed for the Women in Sport campaigns and should concentrate on the achievements of "ordinary people" rather than highlighting the involvement of former "stars".

All sections of the media should be used to ensure that the promotion of mature aged sport is as wide as possible.

Promotional materials should not only include role models but should also contain practical information such as sports available and contact persons.

5. A National Conference should be organised to discuss the whole area of Masters sport. This conference could discuss issues in Masters sport such as:

- the balance between participation and competition,
- appropriate organisational structures for the delivery of sport for the mature aged,
- the Sports Medicine aspects of Masters sport,
- Medical Research on Masters sports participants,
- Drugs and Masters sport,
- the advantages to sport from the introduction of Masters sport,
- the disadvantages to sport from the introduction of Masters sport,
- coaching and Masters sport,
- modifying sport for the mature aged competitor.
National Sport Information Centre

Play on! : the report of the masters sport project on mature aged spor