

National Sports Museum

The Icons...

Don Bradman's baggy green cap

Don Bradman was, beyond any argument, the greatest batsman who ever lived and the finest cricketer of the 20th Century. Throughout the 1930s and '40s, Bradman was the world's master cricketer, so far ahead of everyone else that comparisons became pointless. In 1930, he scored 974 runs in the series, 309 of them in one amazing day at Headingley, and in seven Test series against England he remained a figure of utter dominance.

The National Sports Museum will display Don Bradman's baggy green cap, one of two owned by the cricket legend, and believed to be the cap he favoured when playing (the other reserved for functions and events).

Bradman's baggy green will be displayed alongside 22 other caps in a special "baggy green room" – part of the *Backyard to Baggy Green* exhibition which offers due reverence to the stature and symbolism of the official Australian cricket team hat.

Other caps displayed include those of Richie Benaud, Allan Border, Greg Chappell, Neil Harvey, Lindsay Hassett, Ray Lindwall, Rod Marsh, Keith Miller, Bill Ponsford, Keith Stackpole and Bill Woodfull.

Edwin Flack's olive branches

Edwin Flack was Australia's first ever Olympic champion. A gifted runner who won the Australasian one mile championship in 1893 in Melbourne, he first heard about the inaugural Modern Olympic Games whilst working in England as an accountant for Price Waterhouse.

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He paid his own fare to Athens where he won both the 800 and 1500 metre races – whilst at the same time playing both doubles and singles tennis. He finished his competitive career in 1897 and returned to Australia to work for his family's accounting firm, Flack and Flack.

The National Sports Museum will display the olive branches and medals awarded to Edwin Flack upon his victory in Greece as well as other personal materials. Flack's wreath sits in the *Faster, Higher, Stronger* exhibition alongside a wreath awarded to swimmer Petria Thomas at the 2004 Athens Olympic Games.

The first ever rules of Australian Football

“One day, however, after a severe fight in the old Richmond paddock when blood had been drawn freely, and some smart raps exchanged, and a leg broken, it occurred to some of us that if we had a set of rules to play under it would be better.”

So wrote W.J. Hammersley in 1859, one of four authors of Australia's most popular football code, Australian Football, after a particularly messy game of football in Richmond.

Hammersley and fellow committee members retired to the Parade Hotel to create 10 rules based on elements from a number of football games that were played in English public schools at the time. The men were motivated to create a game that was as simple and safe as possible and the result was Australian Football.

The National Sports Museum will display the original rules hand-written by Australian Football founding fathers in the exhibition, *Australia's Game*, which traces the history of the game from the early years through to the present day.

Catherine Freeman's swift-suit, Ian Thorpe's full body swimsuit

Without doubt two of Australia's greatest modern-day athletes, Catherine Freeman and Ian Thorpe stunned the world at the 2000 Sydney Olympics with stellar performances on the track and in the pool. Both were wearing costumes that were revolutionary and today have come to symbolize the effort, skill and sheer brilliance of these inspirational sporting stars.

The National Sports Museum will proudly display Catherine Freeman's gold medal-winning swift-suit and one of Ian Thorpe's full body swimsuit in the *Faster, Higher, Stronger* exhibition, which traces Australia's role in the Olympic Games from ancient times to the present day.

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The inaugural Brownlow Medal

The Charles Brownlow Medal was instituted in 1924 as a memorial for Charles Brownlow, a prominent football administrator and player with the Geelong Football Club in the 1880s. It is awarded each year to the AFL's fairest and best player and is popularly regarded as the most prestigious individual honour in Australian Football.

Umpires cast Brownlow Medal votes following each game and these are tallied after the home and away season. A suspension automatically disqualifies a player from winning the medal.

The first Brownlow Medal was awarded to Edward "Carji" Greeves in 1924. "Carji" played 124 games with Geelong from 1923 to 1933 and was a member of Geelong's 1925 and 1931 premiership teams. "Carji" also ran second in the Brownlow Medal counts of 1925, 1926 and 1928.

Betty Cuthbert's 1956 Olympic Gold Medals

Betty Cuthbert was the sensation of the 1956 Melbourne Olympics. Shy and unassuming, she had already bought tickets to the Games before a late rush of brilliant form saw her selected to compete.

She won the 100m and 200m and, uniquely, in both events beat the German Democratic Republic's Christa Stubnick and Australia's Marlene Matthews.

With mouth agape and blonde hair shining, the "Golden Girl" led throughout in the 100 metres, and in the longer event equalled the Olympic record. She also ran the final leg of the 4x100m relay which Australia won in world-record time.

The National Sports Museum will proudly display these three gold medals.