

National Sports Museum The Story So Far...

As ground manager of the Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG) since 1853, the Melbourne Cricket Club (MCC) has continually strived to ensure that both the stadium's unique sporting culture and heritage are enhanced and appreciated.

To that end, the club's extensive collection of sporting artefacts was put on display to the public on November 22, 1986 (exactly 30 years after the 1956 Olympic Games) with the opening of the Australian Gallery of Sport and Olympic Museum, adjacent to the MCC Members Pavilion.

In October, 2003 the "AGOS" building was demolished as part of the \$450 million northern stand redevelopment of the MCG.

For three years, the club's massive collection of sporting and cultural artefacts and memorabilia were stored away in a confidential off-site storage facility, where an extensive preservation and cataloguing project was undertaken.

As reported at the time, a major feature of the redevelopment was to be the "relocation and expansion of the Australian Gallery of Sport as part of MCG City, a seven-day attraction featuring interactive devices and a museum precinct."

It is this seven-day attraction that we now know as the *National Sports Museum*.

In April 2006, then Federal Treasurer Peter Costello announced a funding allocation of \$15 million for the development of the *National Sports Museum* at the MCG. Twelve months later, Mr Costello pledged another \$10 million, this time towards the development of "Stage 2" of the *National Sports Museum*.



Photo: The Australian Gallery of Sport and Olympic Museum, circa 2000.

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This funding presented the MCC with a unique opportunity to expand the scope of MCG City into the *National Sports Museum*. The brief was altered so that the *National Sports Museum* would incorporate all sports within Australia into its displays and temporary exhibitions, showcasing what Australian sportsmen and women have achieved on the world stage.

In June 2006, leading exhibition designer Cunningham Martyn Design was commissioned to design both the ground level reception area and the various exhibitions housed on the two levels below, which is easily accessible by escalator.

Exhibition producer Kim Fletcher was also appointed to coordinate the massive task of bringing together a diverse range of exhibitions that tells the story of Australian sport through the ages.

A shop-fit contractor (Classic Resources) was appointed in February 2007, with installation of the 2500 objects to be displayed commencing in October of the same year. Meanwhile behind the scenes, concept planning is underway for "Stage 2".

In January 2008, the multimedia and interactive work was commissioned, with all on track for an opening to the public on Thursday March 13, 2008.