

The Global Game: New soccer exhibition at National Sports Museum

FIFA World Cup enthusiasts will need to drag themselves away from their flat screen televisions when *The Global Game*, a photographic exhibition of the development of soccer in Australia, opens at the National Sports Museum on May 24.

The Global Game brings together 121 photographs from the late 19th century to the present day, drawing extensively on the personal archives of leading sports journalists and photographers Les Shorrocks and Laurie Schwab.

It includes photographs of past and current champions, including Alan Davidson, Harry Williams, Jimmy Rooney, Johnny Warren, Theresa Deas, Cheryl Salisbury, Harry Kewell, Tim Cahill and many, many more. Photographs of coaches, players and fans who played a role in the history of the game in Australia are also featured in the exhibition.

Soccer is known as 'The Global Game' for its enormous geographic reach and its broad appeal to players and spectators alike. Australians are no strangers to this world-wide obsession and have been playing soccer – or football as it is more widely known – since 1879.

In Australia, the game surged in popularity as migrants arrived after each of the World Wars, with early suburban clubs often forming along ethnic lines. National and state leagues gave rise to spirited competition, replaced in 2005 at the top level by the A-League, with eight professional teams drawing huge crowds.

Australia continues to stake its claim as a major player in the international arena, sending teams to the Olympic Games (Olyroos), the Women's World Cup (Matildas) and FIFA World Cup (Socceroos).

Laurie Schwab, who died in 1997, was a leading football journalist in Australia, writing for *The Age* and commentating on matches on ABC radio. He was also founding editor of *Soccer Action*, a weekly newspaper focusing on the sport.

Les Shorrocks worked as a photographer and journalist in print and broadcast media as well as undertaking roles in football administration at club and state level. He won the national Soccer Photographer of the Year award in 1982, 1984 and 1985.

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Some interesting facts about soccer in Australia:

- A Chinese soccer team toured Australia in 1923.
- Australia's first overseas international was played in and against New Zealand in 1922.
- The first recorded women's match took place in 1925.
- Australia hosted the FIFA World Youth Cup in 1981 and 1993.
- The most-capped Australian player is Cheryl Salisbury, who retired in 2009 after playing 150 internationals with the Matildas.
- The leading men's player is Alex Tobin, who represented Australia in 87 matches.

The Global Game has been developed in partnership with Deakin University.

It will be open to the public from Monday May 24 - the day the Socceroos take on New Zealand at the MCG in a farewell match before they head off to South Africa, and heralds a two-month program of soccer-related events and activities at the National Sports Museum.

Activities include demonstrations from the Freestylers, foosball championships and make-and-take activities as part of the School Holiday program in June.

The National Sports Museum is Australia's only multi-sport museum. Entry is included in general museum admission.

The Global Game
May 24 – August 8
National Sports Museum,
Gate 3, Olympic Stand, MCG

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