

Coming Of Age



It is now the best part of a decade since two significant events created a great many new opportunities for Australian Sport.

The combined effect of the introduction of Subscription Television and also the successful bid for the 2000 Olympics in Sydney naturally led to much business excitement during the early 1990s. As a consequence many sports federations, corporate sponsors, athletes and media organisations saw enormous opportunities for wealth and fame.

Fortunately, the resulting temporary insanity, which gripped Australian business for a short while in this period, could not last. The individuals behind the proliferation of sports marketing companies with bold ideas for a brave new world have largely returned to whence they came with their tails between their legs.

Just as a strong solid focus reaps a successful sporting campaign, the same is true in business.

Through the madness of Superleagues, globalisation and the Olympic dream, only those committed to steadily building television coverage of Australian sports events around the world remain today.

The development and sale of television coverage of Australian sports brings many millions of dollars back to Australian athletes to help reward their tireless efforts.

Again like a sports campaign, the rewards are not immediate, or huge and are generally commensurate with the hard work invested to reach the goal.

The madness of the 1990s has not all been in vain. Many of the less honourable elements have been flushed out, and a new professional approach now prevails.

Sport was never intended to make people rich, but clearly the focus required to reach excellence in a chosen field comes at a financial cost.

Nevertheless, through corporate sponsorship, the sale of TV rights and ticket sales, plus government support, we can go some of the way to helping athletes with the cost of living and competing on a daily basis.

While sporting success must inevitably come at a sacrifice, perhaps our financial support is essential for enable athletes to consistently focus to achieve at an elite level.

TPL Sports' James Bunn talks about the state of the Australian sport marketing industry and its implications for television.

NEW OPPORTUNITIES

The real challenge lies in the new millennium. When the Olympic circus has left town, and competitive momentum is drained as a consequence, it will be essential to look for new opportunities.

Having placed Australia firmly on the map, we must now utilise the fine Olympic facilities and now heritage to enable Australia to truly come of age.

By continuously pushing the envelope of sporting achievement and providing professional corporate support for athletic achievement, we will ultimately show the world that their focus on the Sydney Olympics was truly deserved.

