

Explanatory Note: Cultural Sector Interviews

Australian Cultural Fields researchers conducted a range of semi-structured interviews (26 in total) with key government, industry and agency professionals to enhance our knowledge of the changing dynamics of Australian cultural fields since 1994, although often encompassing earlier periods. The interviewees are individuals with deep experience and expertise in their respective fields.

Following the completion of the project, several interviewees gave their permission for these transcripts to be uploaded to the ACF project website for wide public dissemination and reasons of posterity.

Interviews were recorded and professional transcribers turned them into text. In reviewing the transcripts, interviewers checked both audio and text for accuracy as much as was feasible. There is some variation in transcription style and notation, and in many cases further editing was undertaken in consultation with the interviewee (and, in one case, the person responsible for their estate).

The interview material was checked by the interviewers, interviewees (and, as noted, a representative in one case) and other members of the Australian Cultural Fields research team for clarity and accuracy. Often these transcripts are conversational in nature, and no attempt has been made to correct the inevitable *non-sequiturs*, grammatical errors etc. of 'organic' oral communication. Some interview sections were deleted at the request of the interviewees or because of potential legal implications. These deletions are flagged where it is necessary to preserve the overall coherence of the interview. The views expressed in the interviews are those of the interviewees.

These interviews were conducted with approval of the Western Sydney University Human Research Ethics Committee (H11025). Subsequent approval to publish the transcripts to the ACF website was given following a research ethics amendment request. Some cultural sector interviews were not published according to the wishes of the interviewee (or their representative).

We extend our sincere gratitude to the interviewees and their representatives for permission to share these transcripts, and for their assistance in preparing them to be uploaded to the ACF website.

Australian Cultural Fields researchers are confident that these qualitative data, alongside other data analysed in our many research publications, constitute an enduring resource for future cultural research and debate in Australia and beyond.

James Ferguson

This interview was conducted in 2015 as part of 'Australian Cultural Fields: National and Transnational Dynamics' (ACF), an Australian Research Council funded Discovery Project (DP140101970). The project website is <https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/acf/>. The transcript was uploaded to the ACF website in November 2022.

Interviewee and position (at time of interview):

James Ferguson, former Executive Director, Australian Sports Commission

Interviewer: Professor David Rowe, Western Sydney University

Interview date: 16 November 2015

Interview location: Australian Institute of Sport, Canberra

ACF field(s): Sport

START

David Rowe

Okay, so to start off could you tell me about yourself just for the tape, identify yourself please Jim and tell us about your work history and particularly your work within the sport field.

James Ferguson

Well my name is James Ferguson. In my professional career I was, I think. 26 years in the Department of Foreign Affairs in the foreign service. I then moved from the Department of Foreign Affairs to a department responsible for the arts, sport, the environment and tourism where I was responsible for the tourism division which also took in responsibility for sport so I was responsible for the division that covered sport and tourism. Then in 1990 I moved to become the executive director of the Australian Sports Commission, a position I held until 2001.

David Rowe

Thanks. I mean obviously a very important organisation. Could you maybe just talk a little bit about the Sports Commission and its role and function and so on?

James Ferguson

The Sports Commission is the body established by the government to have overall responsibility for the development of sport, meaning the development of sport at the community level in terms of the involvement of children, the involvement of people in the community playing sport for recreation and fitness right through to the highest level of high performance sport as exemplified by the Olympics. The Commission provides funding to national sporting organisations and works with national sporting organisations in terms of helping them develop their plans for the provision of sport services across that range from community to elite.

David Rowe

So the Sports Commission is responsible for the Australian Institute of Sport?

James Ferguson

Yes, the Institute of Sport is a division of the Commission. It's changed slightly in its focus over the years. It started in 1981 purely as a training institution and it's subsequently developed over the subsequent years so that it's now - the AIS is essentially that part of the Commission which is responsible for running training and servicing functions for elite sport, that's the highest level of high performance sport.

David Rowe

Okay. Well I think we'll get on to talk about that later. But could you just comment on the relationship between - you've already indicated this. But the Australian Sports Commission and other organisations specifically in the sports sector, not just the governmental sector but sports in general.

James Ferguson

Well, the Sports Commission provides funding to nearly all national sporting organisations. In relation to the big professional sports like AFL, rugby league, rugby union, that support is usually through specific program elements and doesn't amount to a great deal. In regard to other sports the funding relates to the extent of the sport, its profile in the community and its - to put it baldly - capacity for success at major international events. So a sport

like swimming, which is quite a large sport, receives a large amount of funding from the Sports Commission. A sport like judo, which is quite a broad sport in terms of participation but very low on the scale of international success, receives comparatively smaller amounts of funding. The funding for the sporting organisations is reviewed annually and scaled according to the size, the importance of the sport and its needs in terms of its identified development requirements.

David Rowe

What about policies in the area of sport?

James Ferguson

Policy is developed essentially by the Sports Commission. There is also an office - I think it's still called an Office of Sport - currently within the health portfolio so the Minister for Health is also the Minister for Sport. That's an office which really looks after servicing the Minister and does a bit of coordination between the activities of the Sports Commission and the activities of ASADA, the anti-doping organisation.

David Rowe

Much in the news at the moment. What about a relationship with commercial organisation sponsors and that kind of thing?

James Ferguson

The Sports Commission and particularly the AIS has sponsorship arrangements with a number of commercial organisations. It doesn't deal greatly with commercial organisations although it might contract commercial organisations to deliver certain services. But by and large the contact with the commercial organisations is not direct.

David Rowe

Okay. Community organisations?

James Ferguson

Well, given that most sports organisations are in fact community organisations it deals with them extensively. It deals also with other community organisations that are outside or not directly under the control of the national sporting organisation so it deals with some municipal groups. It deals with state government and state instrumentalities that are

involved in working with community groups. It is involved with a number of groups such as those that look after people with disabilities and so on.

David Rowe

Okay, thank you. I mean it's a big question but what do you think are the major changes that you've seen occurring in terms of practice, priorities and so on at the Sports Commission over time - well certainly since the '90s?

James Ferguson

I think the major change - well one of them - they're related. One of the major changes has been that there has been a change in the attitude to the delivery of community sport programs. When I came to the Commission a program called Aussie Sport had just commenced. This was a program aimed at developing sport in schools and encouraging kids to become involved in sport with an emphasis on teaching technique and an attitude to sport which was also intended to be good fun and popular. It was a program that was run in nearly all primary schools across Australia. That program has now gone out of existence.

It was replaced by a program called the Active After Schools Program which was a program designed to encourage kids to participate in physical activities rather than to participate in sport. It had no or very little emphasis on developing the techniques or the knowledge of what was involved in sport. It was a fitness program and it was developed under the Howard government because they were concerned about the problem of obesity in children. So that has been a major change. Along with that change has been an increased emphasis on success at, particularly, the Olympics. To the point where the emphasis is very much on success at the Olympics as opposed to success at say world championships or other major international events.

I don't agree with either of these two policy changes. I think the original program of the Sports Commission through Aussie Sport was aimed at developing a knowledge of sport within kids as well as developing their technique in particular sports as well as encouraging greater fitness and greater participation. The anecdotal evidence - and it's only anecdotal - but the anecdotal evidence from high level coaches has been that, when that program was operating, once it started to operate, the athletes that were coming through to the sub-elite level, particularly the athletes coming into AIS programs who were athletes who were not yet at the elite level but were aspiring to reach that level, the technique of those athletes was much higher than it had been before the program started, which meant that

the coaches dealing with athletes at the elite level didn't have to bother about teaching basic technique because that was already known. They could concentrate on more higher level activities. The advice I'm getting from coaches now is that when that program ceased the skill levels of athletes coming through to the sub-elite level is not nearly as high as it used to be when that program was running. So I think that was one of the problems with that change which occurred.

I don't agree with the other change with the very heavy emphasis on the Olympics, and particularly on Olympic medals, because somebody has made an arbitrary decision at some stage that you get medals if you come first, second and third (gold, silver and bronze). If you come fourth in the Olympic Games you don't get a medal, you don't get on the medal tally, but to come fourth in the Olympic Games is an extraordinary achievement. Likewise, if you win a world championship - it's sometimes harder to win a world championship than it is to win an Olympic medal, so I think more emphasis should be given to achieving success more broadly.

I also think there's too much emphasis on winning medals anyway. Sports vary and the sports we tend to win medals in are the sports which are not widely played internationally, like netball and hockey. In those sports where there's a very wide participation in the world, such a volleyball or track and field or boxing, it's obviously very much harder to win medals. So even if you become a quarter finalist or you get into a semi-final in those sports that's a particularly high achievement and should be recognised.

David Rowe

Okay. You raised an interesting point there about the difference between sport and physical activity. When we were putting together the project we decided to concentrate on sport. What do you see as the principal difference between sport and physical activity? People often think of them as the same thing.

James Ferguson

Yes. I think sport is a more organised form of physical activity. If you think of swimming almost everyone in Australia can swim. Lots of people go to the beach. So when they fill in surveys about which sports people participated in in the last six months, if they've been to the beach they'll say, yes, I participated in swimming. That's not actually participating in sport. I mean it's very hard to define precisely what sport is but the general view is that sport involves some sort of a contest. Sport involves a contest. I suppose even if it's a contest against yourself. There's been a big development in informal sport over the last

10 or 20 years and those are people who want to participate in a sporting activity rather than just a recreational activity but who don't want to be in a formal system of competition. That doesn't suit everybody.

So I think sport probably - it's like a spectrum. It goes from a highly formal level of competition down to a very informal level but there is still an element of competition in it. If you're running just to get fit you're not involved in a competition. Your aim is simply to get fit. It's not to win anything. I think that's the essential difference.

David Rowe

So so-called social sport, pickup games and competitions...

James Ferguson

That's still sport.

David Rowe

That's still sport.

James Ferguson

I would class it as sport, yes. It wouldn't qualify for a grant from the Sports Commission but I would say that's definitely sport because there is - it may not be serious competition - but there's an element of competition.

David Rowe

Sure. I mean that was why in our survey we didn't put walking in which is a sport but most people would say I walk so that would over represent...

James Ferguson

I mean there's a lot of literature about the definition of sport and I mean nobody's perfected it. There's no definition which everybody will accept. But that's pretty well my definition.

David Rowe

Yes, sure. This is probably one of the more difficult questions I could ask you so it'd be a good idea maybe now to get it out the way. As you know this project is about cultural fields and we're talking - sometimes people prefer to use field or sector or some other kind of descriptor. If I asked you how do you define the sporting sector or field what does it encompass for you?

James Ferguson

Well I'd say first of all in my view sport is an integral part of Australian culture. It's just as much a part of the cultural landscape as music or arts or the performing arts. In fact there are very significant similarities between them and there are very significant similarities in the way they're organised. Sporting organisations and cultural organisations are very, very similar. They're usually - there's a few big professional ones but most of them are relatively small. Most of them run off the smell of an oily rag. Most of them involve people who are passionately interested in what they're doing and think that that's the most important thing in the world and both sporting and cultural bodies have all those same similarities and the general levels of efficiency in the way they run I think are pretty similar as well.

But in terms of separating sport out from the other elements of culture I find that very difficult because how do you separate sport from ballet? Look at gymnastics. Look at ballet. What's the difference? Okay ballet has music. Gymnastics doesn't, except in one discipline. But the elements that go into gymnastics and the elements that go into ballet are very, very similar. They require the same intense training. They require the same intensity of expression. They get all the same injuries. They have very similar personalities involved in them and I find it very difficult to say that one is part of culture and another is not.

If you look at the performing arts what is the performing arts? When footballers go onto a football paddock they're participating in the performing arts and, it might be a bit more physical, but it's not very different from participating in a ballet or participating in a symphony orchestra. People come along and watch them, they criticise their performances. I find it difficult to differentiate. I suppose the key distinction may be that sport is essentially physical, but then so is ballet. You can't say that ballet involves the mind more than sport because sport involves the mind intimately. So, if I had to make a distinction obviously the difference between the visual arts, the difference between painting and sport is that sport is obviously a physical activity. Of course, painting is a physical activity also, but somewhat different. Music is a very physical activity.

But usually the arts might be said to be not quite so competitive, so I suppose I'd say that to distinguish them would be that sport involves a contest that involves physical activity whereas some of the other elements of culture don't.

David Rowe

Thanks for that. Just to ask a bit more say about organisations, thinking of sport as an institution, which organisations would you see as being part of the sport sector? For example, would you see a company such as Nike, a sports apparel company or a marketing company or an event management company, would you see those as all part of the sports sector or field?

James Ferguson

Well yes. I mean they're part of the sports sector. They're all part of other sectors as well so I don't think you can compartmentalise these things very closely. Nike's ultimate aim is to make money so they're clearly part of the commercial sector. But the way they make money is providing sports goods and if they provide good sports goods they're going to make more money. If they provide poor quality sports goods then they're probably not going to make so much money. So yes, they would be clearly part of the sports sector but not exclusively.

David Rowe

So would you then see - if I was trying to map out the sports sector or field I might think well there are corporations with sponsors, there are companies like Nike, there are the media, there are governments.

James Ferguson

Yes.

David Rowe

Are they all part of the sports sector?

James Ferguson

Well again not exclusively. But television is clearly part of the sports - well the sports part of television are clearly part of the sports sector. Well in the case of a television station you could say that sport is an integral part of its business but it's not the only part. They have news and they have other things as well. Sports journalists are part of the sports sector but journalism itself is much wider. Governments are part of the sports sector in so far as they have an interest in sport but quite clearly they're much wider also. So again I think you can't be exclusive. There are a lot of crossovers. Australian Swimming is quite

clearly in the sports sector and perhaps there's not a great deal of crossover although they have commercial interests as well. They run as a business and they aim to make...

David Rowe

Speedo?

James Ferguson

Well that's right, yes. I mean there are some organisations that are pretty clearly within the sports sector. There are I think a lot that are partly in and partly out so I don't know that you can be too exclusive.

David Rowe

So it's quite fluid you would say.

James Ferguson

I would say so, yes.

David Rowe

Okay, thanks for that. I mean I've got a few areas I need to cover and we're covering them at different times and different order but this is useful for me in fleshing it out. I mean part of what we're interested in is cultural production and consumption. Where does sport do you think fit in? Where is sport produced and where is it consumed and what is the relationship between those two would you say?

James Ferguson

Oh wow.

David Rowe

Big, heavy question.

James Ferguson

That's a big question. Well it's produced I suppose essentially through sporting organisations and in most sports in Australia there's a national sporting organisation which is responsible for the sport nationally and then there are state organisations. The relationship between the state and the national bodies varies quite a bit but there are two tiers and then there's a third tier which is the community level which usually comes under local government and then you would say there's a school element which comes under

the education system or the school system. They're the groups that provide the opportunities for people to participate in sport essentially.

Then there are some commercial ones as well. There's a lot of commercial gyms. There's a lot of commercial bodies where you go along and you pay your money and you play indoor cricket and indoor soccer or similar. They're commercial organisations that deliver sport services. They would be the main people that are providing the sports services. The clients or the consumers are the people I guess that are using - taking advantage of the opportunities that are provided for them. For example, they join up to play a sport in a particular competition. They're only really interested in playing the sport in some sort of competitive way. It's the body which has organised it which has actually organised the competition in which they're playing.

If you take it from the widest level that covers kids from quite a small age to people of quite advanced age like masters' sport, for example. So there's a vast number of people who are involved in sport, some every week, week in/week out, part of their life, some of them are professionals. A lot of them do it from time to time.

David Rowe

So where do say spectators, TV viewers, purchasers of running shoes, where do they fit in to the...

James Ferguson

Purchasers are consumers - sorry spectators are consumers obviously and a very important part of the sports landscape. I suppose the sports apparel companies and the equipment companies I guess they're providers. Providers of equipment and services that are purchased and used by the participants. The media - I don't know. The media's a connecting point in many ways. It's a producer and a consumer, I suppose. It produces articles. It produces television shows. But it also is a consumer because it relies on the provision of the sport in a way in which it can report on it.

David Rowe

I mean there's an interesting line of argument that says spectators at say the football ground are producers too because they're part of the production of the spectacle.

James Ferguson

Well they're part of the spectacle. Indeed that's true, yes.

David Rowe

Anyway as you say that is also shifting. So you were saying before that you feel that sport is an important aspect of national life. Could you say a bit more about that? What is the contribution of sport to Australian culture?

James Ferguson

Well Australians - we do regard ourselves as a sporting nation. Most Australians follow at least one or perhaps two sports reasonably closely. There are some people that don't want to have anything to do with sport at all because they think it's barbaric or because they have had a bad experience of sport in school or for a whole host of reasons. But the majority of Australians - I think the vast majority of Australians - understand that sport's important. They know who's winning the Test series. They know who's playing in the AFL grand final or the rugby league grand final even if they're not particularly interested in it. I think there have been a number of studies that have been conducted that show that when Australian sporting teams do well, internationally when we do well at the Olympics for example, it makes the community feel better about themselves. So I think it's generally recognised that sport is a major topic of interest for Australians. We do participate to a fairly high degree and it goes right across the country.

David Rowe

I mean so if sport is so important to Australian culture why was it largely absent would you say from *Creative Nation* in 1994?

James Ferguson

Because I think there has been a view that sport is not part of culture. I don't agree with that view obviously. There's a view that the arts and sport are somehow competitors and they may be true to some extent in terms of the allocation of government funding but so are they both competitors with everything else in terms of the allocation of government funding. Sport is a competitor to health or the amount of money spent on roads or whatever else, and the same as the arts. So when the government is dividing up the money they have to make those decisions about where they're going to put their money and that, I think, has led to this view that if money goes to the arts it won't go to sport or vice versa.

I don't accept that. I think it's a silly argument. I want to see money go to both sectors because I think they're both very important. Just as sport is a part of the Australian culture

so is music. Then you get into things like ballet and symphony music and so on. That's definitely a part of the Australian culture. But it attracts a somewhat smaller following than other parts of popular culture, particularly sport. What's the difference between sport and the movies? Movies I think is a part of the arts, generally regarded to be. People like to go to the movies because they want to be entertained. They go to sport because they want to be entertained.

David Rowe

Okay. So if there's a bit of a hierarchy and an unfair one you would suggest sometimes constructed between areas of culture and sport are there hierarchies within sport too? Are there some sports that are more prized than others?

James Ferguson

Oh yes. Well I guess you can look at that in two ways. Which sports have the most people playing them and that's essentially the football codes and particularly soccer as well as cricket, and then you go down to lesser and lesser people participating in certain sports. That's one way of looking at it. The other is the sort of commercial value of the sport where AFL is quite clearly at the top followed perhaps by rugby league, at least in some states and rugby union and soccer/football. Again then, there's a bit of a hierarchy which sort of comes down until you get to a sport that nobody's much interested in watching and doesn't get on television.

Then you can look at them in terms of the hierarchy of say international success. Which of the sports win us medals at the Olympics? So there's a number of ways you can look at the hierarchy of sport but I think there is a hierarchy undoubtedly.

David Rowe

So I mean are some sports more prestigious than others? I mean talking of hierarchies in class terms, for example, are some sports 'classier' than others?

James Ferguson

There are definite class differences in sports. I don't know that - that depends what class you come from I suppose. I don't think anyone would try and classify a hierarchy in that sense. But there are definite differences. For example, rowing is a sport where many of its participants are professional people and that's mainly because most of them come out of the public [private]* school system. Boxing is a sport which is very much a blue collar

sport and it's a working-class sport with a lot of Indigenous participants. So there is some sort of a hierarchy but it'd be sort of very difficult to list them all because most of them - and I think this is one of the important things about sport. Sport is one of the great social levellers that there are.

If you play a sport it doesn't matter once you get on the field where you come from, what level your education is, what your parents have been like, how much money you've got. What matters is whether you're successful or not. Whether you can do what's required on the field. That's the same in other parts of culture. It's the same in the arts. If you're a writer it doesn't matter whether you've come from a wealthy family or not. If you're a painter it doesn't matter as well. Sport again is very similar to that but one of the things sport does do, and again I think this is one of the reasons why it's important in the culture, is that it gives an opportunity to anybody.

If you look at the Indigenous community sport is really important in the Indigenous communities. It's a way in which they can express themselves. It's a way in which many of them can find ways to advance themselves materially and it's a way in which they can - it's something that they can identify with.

*Used here in the UK sense of fee-paying.

David Rowe

So you see sport as an egalitarian force within Australian culture.

James Ferguson

Yes.

David Rowe

I mean over the last few decades, couple of decades, would you say has that changed at all? You mentioned before in terms of the Sports Commission the greater emphasis on winning medals, for example.

James Ferguson

I don't think it's changed greatly but I am a little bit worried about the development of professional sport, and I think that there is a danger that professional sport will become so important in business terms and all the things that relate to that, such as the media and so on which is connected to it that that could end up creating a situation which is similar to what I think they've got in the United States, where you have a relatively few number of

people playing professional sports for very large amounts of money and the vast majority of the population are not doing anything but watch. I don't think we're in that position yet but it's something I think we need to guard against.

David Rowe

I mean another way of putting it is commercialisation. Is that...

James Ferguson

Commercialisation and professionalisation, yes.

David Rowe

You see those as...

James Ferguson

Potentially, yes.

David Rowe

The role of government in the sports sector? Has that changed in your time?

James Ferguson

I don't think it has basically changed. I think you find that it waxes and wanes and that depends a bit on who the minister is and what the government is and what's happening. Governments tend to get involved when things go wrong. When it's all going well they tend to let it go. When we fail, as we failed at the Olympics in Montreal, then governments get very concerned. When there's a major drug scandal the governments get very concerned. But providing it's going along okay they don't tend to get too involved. They love to have their photos taken. That's one of the main parts of it. That's another element about how you tell sports are important to Australian culture. Because politicians love to have their photos taken. I once saw a prominent politician literally push somebody out of his way so he could have his picture taken next to Mal Meninga.

David Rowe

Okay. So government in terms of funding and its policy priorities, they've been more or less continuous over the last...

James Ferguson

Again pretty much so. They've waxed and waned a bit. There has been as I said this move away from more structured junior sport to a greater element on fitness. I don't think that was necessarily a very conscious decision of government. I think it was impelled by Howard suddenly realising we had to do something about obesity. I don't think it was planned. I think had it been planned - well I hope the government would have got better advice. So I don't think there's been a huge change.

David Rowe

There have been a number of reports. I've been tracking them over the last couple of decades. Reports and policies. Is there a report or a policy shift that stands out for you in that period over the last couple of decades?

James Ferguson

I suppose the one that comes to mind is the issue of drugs. We all knew that the East Germans were on drugs. Everybody knew that. But...

David Rowe

So just to clarify are you talking about the Australian Crime Commission report?

James Ferguson

I'm going way back.

David Rowe

Going further back, okay.

James Ferguson

Yes, I'm going right back to before it became the issue in Australia. There was a general view that the East Germans were involved and I don't think it was any secret. I think that people didn't know how to deal with that issue. Then there were concerns about what might happen with Australian athletes. The initial concerns were more about health than about cheating but they fairly quickly came together. There were obviously pressures on the Australian athletes because they knew they were competing against people who were taking drugs so there was the incentive that they should take drugs themselves. That was a significant policy change and I mean it's evolved over the years. It's got more and more complex as it's gone on. But the initial idea that there should be a drug testing agency

and that there should be a systematic form of testing was quite clearly a significant new policy.

The other area I think there has been a policy change is the recognition of Paralympics or sport for people with disabilities. I think that was a significant policy change as well and you can see now there's quite an emphasis on the Australian Paralympic team.

David Rowe

Okay. I mean if I could run a - I mean one report that had a bit of an impact certainly in the media was the Crawford Report 2009.

James Ferguson

Yes.

David Rowe

Where it seems to have touched on some of the issues that you've raised about the Olympics, Olympic funding versus grassroots and so on.

James Ferguson

Yes.

David Rowe

Do you have any comments to make about the Crawford Report?

James Ferguson

Well the Crawford Report was sunk rapidly just like most of those reports do with a vast amount of money spent on it and a vast amount of money wasted because it didn't come up with anything new at all. The one conclusion they seemed to come to was that the Olympics aren't that important, we don't have to do so well in the Olympics and we should concentrate more on community sport and fitness. That's a view that some people take. But they presented it as being an either/or and I don't think it has to be an either/or. I think we can do both.

David Rowe

Thank you. Some big issues that we've been dealing with - obviously we've been talking almost exclusively at the national level because this is about nation.

James Ferguson

Yes.

David Rowe

But I mean Australia is an island but it isn't. So take the area of globalisation for example. It's often suggested that sport is becoming globalised, that nations are less important than they used to be in sport and other areas of culture. What would you say about that?

James Ferguson

I think that sport is somewhat in the same position the way that we're recognising the influence of multinational companies. There's a very interesting article in this morning's *Canberra Times* about the dying of the nation state. It's well worth reading. By a fellow called Julian Cribb who's a very good writer.

David Rowe

Yes, science writer.

James Ferguson

Yes. I think there's an element of that in sport as well. It's got a long way to go. I mean sport is still seen to be perhaps one of the prime areas of nationalism. I think it's also a matter of pride for Australia that orchestras like the Sydney Symphony and the Melbourne Symphony and the Australian Chamber Orchestra are amongst the best in the world. I think that's wonderful. But nobody sort of stands up and says we've got the best symphony orchestra in the world, where they still tend to do that in sport. But I think it's lessening and it's one of the effects of professionalism. If you look at the number of sportspeople that are going overseas because they can get better money.

Once upon a time sportspeople used to travel because it was sort of part of a cultural thing. You could go to another country, you could play sport in another country, you could become part of that community even though money wasn't involved. I think it's much more now about money and that's being driven by professionalism and that will have some effect.

David Rowe

What about sports and sportspeople coming the other direction? So Ultimate Fighting Championship or athletes coming in or baseball and so on.

James Ferguson

We've had quite a lot of athletes who have come to Australia and become Australian citizens and gone on to be very prominent sportspeople. In fact, there was a time when we went out and looked for them and tried to convince them to come. That was all part of nationalism. It was part of Australia wanting to show that it was better than the rest of the world. That's still very strong in sport but I think it's weakening. Sports - if you look at say baseball which was a sport that was hardly ever played in Australia or played at a very lower level - it's now a, its prominence as a sport has increased quite significantly. Yes, I don't know. That's a difficult question. I...

David Rowe

You're not getting too warm there by the way?

James Ferguson

No, it's fine.

David Rowe

Are you okay?

James Ferguson

No, it's fine. My feeling is that there is a sort of a move towards a more international approach but I think it's got a long way to go because at the highest level sport is still competitive and with the Olympic Games nations want to compete against each other.

David Rowe

Yes. I mean you spoke before about the place of sport in Australian culture and you said it's still very important. But of course the demography of Australia is changing and a lot more people - a part of our research is about transnationalism as well as globalisation and cultural diversity. So a lot more people coming from other parts of the world with much less of an investment either in sports or in the particular sports that Australians have traditionally favoured. Would you want to respond to that kind of suggestion?

James Ferguson

Well I think again it perhaps goes two ways. There's no doubt that soccer/football in Australia has developed enormously as a result of the migrant intakes and it's been the same with other sports as well. Table tennis, for example. That's another sport which has

come up quite a lot because of the Asian population. I think that there will be changes. There will be - if you look at the big sports you start to see now more and more people who are not of Anglo Saxon background who are playing those sports. It's particularly the case in, I think, rugby league and AFL. It's starting to be the case in cricket. It's obviously been the case in soccer for a long time and then a few of the other sports.

So I think that there is going to be perhaps - as the migrant community assimilates they will tend to move into the established sports but the migrant community will also have an effect on changing the relative popularity of particular sports. But I think it'll take quite a long time.

David Rowe

Okay. I'm as you probably know quite particularly interested in the sport media and I guess one area we could talk about it is broadly the effect of digitalisation that makes sports available as a viewer at least pretty much from anywhere at any time.

James Ferguson

Yes.

David Rowe

Is that having an impact? I mean, for example, if I'd rather watch the English Premier League than the A-League and I can do that.

James Ferguson

Yes.

David Rowe

I mean as an example of that kind of thing. Or if I'd rather watch the NBA than the NBL.

James Ferguson

Yes. Look it's a challenge for the media organisations, there's no doubt about that.

David Rowe

Presumably for the leagues as well, the domestic leagues too.

James Ferguson

Well yes potentially but I think the big ones - it doesn't matter to AFL I suppose because if you're going to watch Australian football you're going to have to watch the AFL. It

probably doesn't matter to rugby league because if you want to watch decent rugby league you're going to watch Australian rugby league. The same with netball. But it will have an effect on - and they're predominantly the big spectator sports. If you're going to watch cricket you might watch the Big Bash in India but you'll probably watch the big games in Australia. So in those big commercial sports it will have an impact on the way the sports interact with the media organisations that provide the viewing for their sports.

In terms of the other sports, baseball for example, nobody watches Australian baseball anyway so it doesn't matter if they go and watch the American baseball. It will certainly have or has had I think already an effect on soccer. One effect has been a good effect because I think it stimulated the A-League and the A-League has been very successful. The majority of people who are keen on soccer they'll watch the UEFA games, they'll watch the league in Britain but they also watch the A-League. So I think in terms of the big commercial sports, the commercial sports that Australians play, it's not going to siphon many people away.

I think in the other sports it will siphon some people away but it will also have a reverse effect and then in the sports that are not televised much in Australia I doubt - it might have some effect on making it more difficult for them to get coverage in Australia but I don't see it as being very significant.

David Rowe

Thanks. So that relationship between media and sports, some people say the media have come to dominate sports or have too much power in sport or it's become that way. Is that something that you want to comment on?

James Ferguson

I haven't done any study on it but I suspect that it hasn't changed a great deal. I think the media has always been very important. Politicians, sports managers, people involved in sport watch the media very closely and if there's a media story, even if it's a media beat up, they tend to take it fairly seriously because they're worried about the impact it'll have on their sport or in terms of the government and the government's attitude to sport. I think it's an uneasy relationship but I suspect it's always been an uneasy relationship. Sport needs the media and the media needs sport.

David Rowe

Sure. I mean, I think your social media here - I'm an athlete and I want to talk to my public from the athletes' village so I want to Tweet or put it on my Facebook page. I mean there's that kind of use of social media. There's fans using social media. There are the mainstream media also using social media. Everyone's communicating about sport in some way. What do you think might be happening there?

James Ferguson

Again I think that there's - certainly there's been a huge increase in that intercommunication which is sort of informal intercommunication. There's absolutely no doubt about that. I think it's got some good elements like most things. It's very stimulating. It can be stimulating. You can have access to a vastly greater audience than you had previously, albeit in a somewhat different way. I think it's also got a downside and one of the downsides that concerns me a bit is that it's just becoming so enormous that there's no control over it and I think it's going to result in an awful lot of people getting very confused because an athlete will now be getting all sorts of advice from all over the place on what they should be doing and what they shouldn't be doing.

All sorts of rumours will circulate, whether they're right or wrong, that will divert a lot of people's attention and possibly hurt a lot of people. So I think it's that sort of uncontrolled - and I'm not a person that likes too much control. But I think it's that uncontrolled element that concerns me. I guess nobody knows where it's going.

David Rowe

Okay, thanks. We talked a bit about commercialisation and professionalisation before. We haven't talked about amateurism. People don't talk about 'amateurish' much anymore.

James Ferguson

No.

David Rowe

Have we reached the end of amateurism?

James Ferguson

No, I don't think so but I think again you're finding that the distinctions are becoming blurred. There are some sports that try to preserve amateurism but they're fighting a losing battle. Even amateur sports like swimming are hardly amateur anymore. You can win

prize money, you can get a lot in sponsorship and endorsements and so on. But this is at a particular level. Sport at the lower level is still amateur. It's not because they think they want to be amateurs or because they think there's any great moral value in being amateurs. They're amateurs because they're amateurs. They're not making any money. If they could make money they probably would.

So I think again it's graduated. At the lower level it is predominant - almost entirely amateur but that's because of the circumstances under which it's organised. As you come up the chain a bit then it becomes a bit more confused until you get into a totally professional environment.

David Rowe

Because in 1995, the year after *Creative Nation*, rugby union went fully professional as an example of the formal end of the amateur era, certainly in the elite rugby union. Was that inevitable do you think?

James Ferguson

I think it was yes because the sports do compete amongst each other. They compete for participants. They compete for media coverage. If rugby union hadn't done that they would have lost out. They had to do something to counter rugby league which had such a very strong media profile and basically were getting all the good players. Rugby union players were going to league because that's where the money was. Rugby union players then started to go overseas to France and other places where they could play rugby union but play it for money. So I don't think there was any option that the Australian rugby union had [but] to introduce it.

David Rowe

I mean there were people who obviously objected to that and still do.

James Ferguson

Oh yes.

David Rowe

Say that something changes in sport when a person gets paid to play and so on.

James Ferguson

Yes.

David Rowe

What's your view on that?

James Ferguson

I think that's true. But we don't want to overblow it too much. The culture of rugby union, albeit it's now a profession at the upper levels and is becoming international with players trading themselves internationally, but the basic elements of the game haven't changed all that much. One change has been that at the upper level, levels of drinking have gone down significantly, levels of behaviour have actually gone up. Probably the two are connected. But that's not because they're - well it's partly because they're professionals because there's so much emphasis now on performance. In the old days the thing was you played your heart out and then you all went and got drunk together and it was a lot of camaraderie.

At the highest level that has gone to some extent but it hasn't gone completely. The players basically respect each other. They still fraternise a lot. They move around. They move from different clubs so they know each other quite well regardless of what club they're playing with. That's actually probably quite a good thing. In the old days you played for your local club because that's where you were born and you never went anywhere else and you didn't actually like the people from the next town. I think that's - and I suppose that was one of the things about rugby. When you played the next town at the end of the game you all got together and you did fraternise and there was a camaraderie which developed out of that. It's not quite the same now at the top level but there's still a pretty strong level of camaraderie exists, I think.

David Rowe

Okay. We talk about camaraderie there in a particular kind of masculine environment let's say.

James Ferguson

Well yes.

David Rowe

Getting drunk together and so on. Obviously one area that we're interested in is gender in sport.

James Ferguson

Yes.

David Rowe

I wonder what changes you might have seen there over the last few years if any.

James Ferguson

Actually I think a very significant change. You asked about policy changes before. Again I don't think this was - yes it was a deliberate policy change. There was a belief that women's sport needed to be promoted more. There were two sides to this. There was a belief, and I think justified, that women found it difficult to get into sport - there was a certain barrier to women participating in sport. They weren't allowed to participate in some sports. Again when you got to the top level in some parts of society there was almost a stigma about it. There was a widespread view that if you were a good female sportsperson you were somehow unusual. That was the general broad view.

There was a definite decision to change that attitude and I think it's been remarkably successful. I think the development in women's sport has been one of the really striking things about Australian sport. The other thing that's had an effect on it was that we realised that at the Olympics Australian sportswomen are comparatively better than our sportsmen. We've won comparatively more medals amongst the women than we have amongst the men. There are various reasons for that. When I was at the Commission we made a very specific decision that we would target certain disciplines in sport at the Olympic level for women because we thought we would have a better chance of winning medals there than we did with the men.

So I think those two factors have contributed to that and there's been a big change in the attitude and women play now in far more sports; almost play in any sport they want. Most sports have women's competitions. Boxing, for example, has quite a strong women's competition and getting stronger. Women are playing rugby union, have been now for quite a long time. Rugby league, AFL. Indeed, the notion that there are sort of specific sports for women I think is almost gone. I think the attitude to women playing sport has changed also very significantly. They're no longer seen as being a bit odd. It's perfectly acceptable and I think that's a wonderful thing.

David Rowe

Yes. Would you see sport as still though being male dominated largely?

James Ferguson

It still is male dominated but to a much less degree. There are still - if you look around the boards of sporting organisations, there are still far more men than there are women. Again there are specific moves in place now to change that and they're having some effect. If you look at sports practitioners, if you look at sports scientists, for example, there are a lot of women involved in the sport sciences. It's one - I don't know whether it's equal but it must be getting pretty close to being equal. If you look at coaching it's still predominantly male but you're getting more and more female coaches.

I'm not sure of the case but I suspect that at one stage even if you were a female in sport you might have had a male coach. That's rarely the case now. I can't think of any male sports that have female coaches but they all have female referees and officials. So yes, it's still predominantly male but it's definitely changing.

David Rowe

I mean if you're thinking earnings, top earners in sport, major media sports...

James Ferguson

At that level it's heavily dominated by male sport and the females get a bit upset with that and understandably.

David Rowe

Participation levels as well to some degree I think are still skewed towards men.

James Ferguson

I haven't seen any figures on that for some time. I suspect that's the case but again I think that that's changing and I think if you look at a sport like soccer at the junior level the boys and girls are all playing together. At hockey at the junior level boys and girls are playing together and that's becoming much more popular. Almost the norm now for a lot of those sports. It's not the case in rugby league, AFL and those bigger sports and it's certainly not the case in prize money. I think the essential factor there is who do people want to watch? At this stage they by and large still want to watch males because males dominate those big viewer sports, basically the football codes.

But if you look at basketball, basketball in Australia has probably - the national women's league gets reasonably good support. Probably as good as the men get. A much better game. Much better to watch the women than the men in my view. But I think it's essentially

the big spectator sports are still the male sports and I think that's why you're finding the disparities in the amounts of money that the top athletes get. If you look at the Australian women's soccer team on television there's hardly anybody watching it which is a shame because they're quite good. But the average spectator probably doesn't necessarily want to watch men but just wants to watch it at the highest level and the highest level happens to be male players. I think that's going to take a long time to change.

David Rowe

You talked before about the role of sport in Indigenous people's lives. Do you think Indigenous people, Aboriginal people, have been important to shaping Australian sport or has their role been particularly important?

James Ferguson

Well they've helped to shape it in a couple of sports. I think they've helped to shape it in boxing, where a number of our celebrated champions have been Indigenous and that's generally been seen as a positive thing. I think they've certainly helped to shape it in AFL or rugby league where a lot of Indigenous players have been dominant and high profile players. I don't know that it's actually changed the nature of sport so much but it's certainly provided opportunities for Indigenous people that were never there in the past. The thought that, although there's some racial abuse in AFL, now that the numbers of Indigenous people playing AFL would have been unthinkable 30 years ago.

David Rowe

Has it been easier for Indigenous people to get involved in sport through policy changes or encouragement?

James Ferguson

There have been policies aimed to help Indigenous people get involved so that there's been money provided for identification of Indigenous people with talent. There's been money provided to help Indigenous kids get to tournaments which they couldn't otherwise have got to. But I think it's relatively small. I think it's still pretty difficult for Indigenous kids to get to a position where they're recognised. It depends very much on the individuals that they come up against, the communities that they happen to be born into. So although you might say that there have been some small policy changes I think they've been

relatively small and I think it's still pretty difficult for Indigenous kids to get involved in organised sport.

David Rowe

We were talking about Australia becoming more culturally diverse, so around different ethnic groups and so on has that been an issue in policy terms of encouraging involvement of people from different cultural groups? That may not...

James Ferguson

If it has been I don't think it's been a very significant one. There is a lot of talk about involving refugees in sport as a way of helping them to acclimatise. I'm not sure that you could say that it's been a deliberate policy. There's been some work done on it. Looking back to the past I don't think there was - it certainly doesn't jump out at me that there was any significant policy direction that was aimed at assisting the migrant communities become involved in sport. I think it was generally thought that okay well it's there, they can become involved if they want to and those that were interested in particular sports like soccer did.

David Rowe

So before we were discussing this you felt that it was likely that over time people from different migrant backgrounds all essentially joined the major sports of the moment and make some impact on the ranking of sports if you like.

James Ferguson

Yes.

David Rowe

Is there any prospect of other sports being introduced from outside Australia that haven't been all that strong here historically?

James Ferguson

Well certainly table tennis and badminton are two sports which attract the Asian population and have undoubtedly benefitted from that. New sports, the only one I can think of is sepak takraw, which I don't think is going to be introduced into Australia. It's too difficult. I can't think of any sport that we don't have that might be introduced by the migrant communities.

David Rowe

Okay, thanks. Obviously we're interested in questions about access and equity around national sports culture, so we're thinking of say region and age, where a person lives and how old they are.

James Ferguson

Yes.

David Rowe

Also as we discussed before their social class or their economic status. I mean have you seen changes at all in that area in terms of participation?

James Ferguson

I think there's been a major change which is related to the decline of the country areas. The country was the hub of Australian sport. I don't know whether it was a majority but a very large number of top Australian sportspeople came from the country and that's where they got their starts. It used to be said Wagga Wagga's produced more members of Australian teams than any other town in Australia.

David Rowe

I've lived there. I know.

James Ferguson

But the country towns are dying all over the place and I think that's having an effect. It's had a major effect on tennis. The country towns were the hub of tennis. That's where tennis players developed because that's what you did at the weekend. You played tennis. Or you might play rugby league but you certainly played tennis. That doesn't happen now. I think that's certainly had an effect on tennis. It's changed the way in which other sports operate. Rugby league, for example, used to have a very strong country competition. It's now really quite weak. If you want to get on in rugby league you've got to come to the city, go to one of the cities. I think that trend will probably continue.

So that I think is a major change and it's had nothing to do with sport. It's just a change in the socio-economic pattern of the country. But undoubtedly where you're born, the group you're born into, your socio-economic level, whether you have easy access or not, these are all factors that impinge on a person's ability to get into sport and do well in sport. There was a study done by Professor Gagné in Canada some years ago. Do you know that?

He looked at what makes a success in sport. This was one of the elements that he came up with.

David Rowe

Yes, so sport you see is becoming metropolitan dominated in Australia in this period. What about participation by age? Have there been any changes there you have seen?

James Ferguson

I think there has probably not been a very significant change at the elite level. People although – no, there's been some change in that in some sports people have been able to stay in the sport for longer. So they've been able to be - they're somewhat more mature when they're winning medals at Olympics. I think the main change has been the masters sport movement which has kept a lot of people in sport at a particular level and indeed encouraged some people to take up sport at the masters' level. So I think - that would be the main change I think.

David Rowe

You mentioned barriers and I mean in another project I'm involved in match fees and registration fees have come up as an issue.

James Ferguson

Yes.

David Rowe

As has the cost of equipment, coaching, transport, all that.

James Ferguson

Yes.

David Rowe

Is that still an issue?

James Ferguson

Yes, it...

David Rowe

It hasn't been really dealt with?

James Ferguson

It is an issue and again it varies from sport to sport and this I think relates to the socio-economic status of the sport. In some sports it is definitely a factor. In other sports which might be considered to be reasonably expensive it hasn't been a particular factor because the people who participate in it have been able to do it. That of course means that it's a barrier for those that are not in that group. I think you see a perpetuation of those socio-economic profiles in sport. Rowing really hasn't changed. They might say we'd love to have more people join us who didn't go to public schools but not very many have...

David Rowe

Public in the English sense of private?

James Ferguson

In the English sense, yes. Private schools here. So price is still an impediment and the cost of equipment is an impediment. I think that's one of the reasons why you see more people from lower socio-economic backgrounds go into sport where the costs of equipment are not high. If you want to play football you can play in bare feet. You need a football. When you get reasonable you need a pair of boots. But you don't need much more. But if you want to play hockey it's quite expensive.

David Rowe

Actually one issue that's come up is that registration fees in football are actually rather high. Soccer fees are amongst the highest of the codes which people tell me is...

James Ferguson

I think the cost of equipment is probably more daunting than the cost of the subscriptions. Sports get very tied up about subscriptions. They really don't want to raise them by a dollar because they think that will have an off-putting effect. I've never really subscribed to that view. Nobody wants to pay more for anything obviously. But relatively small fees I don't think is a significant off-putting factor, but I think the cost of equipment is a much more serious factor.

David Rowe

Obviously some of these things are related, different characteristics, social characteristics. So if we're talking about participation levels, let's say women from some migrant backgrounds are very underrepresented among sports participants.

James Ferguson

Yes.

David Rowe

Have there been any policy attempts to deal with that?

James Ferguson

It's been discussed. I don't know that there's been any definitive policy developed. There's been the idea yes we need to encourage people. We need to provide more opportunities. We need to be more flexible about the ways in which women, particularly from those migrant groups, are able to participate. So we've got to be more sensitive about the issues of clothing and so on. I don't think there's been any specific policy initiatives in that area, although I think the most you could say is that there has been a recognition that it is a factor. The fact that there hasn't been any policy direction may reflect the fact that nobody quite knows what to do.

David Rowe

Okay, I think we're getting towards the end you'll be relieved to know. Thank you for your time. It's been very informative. A couple of just final questions. Future prospects, key challenges for the sector, those kinds of questions. So if you're looking into the future in the light of what we've discussed, the changes over the last couple of decades, what do you see as being of particular importance in terms of prospects and challenges?

James Ferguson

I guess some of the things we've been talking about. I think the professionalism is an area which has further to go. There will be more changes in that. Urbanisation is definitely a factor. Access I think has improved in some respects and has gone back in other respects. But I think access will be an important issue in the future. If we want Australians to continue to participate actively it's becoming more difficult and I suspect that it will become more difficult than it used to be in the past. That's perhaps associated with the idea that professionalism will encourage a spectator population rather than a participating population.

David Rowe

You have no deep objection to people making a career out of being athletes?

James Ferguson

No. No, what would be the point? They do. No, I don't have any objection to that. I hope we can keep some balance. I think the amounts of money that are paid to some professional sportspeople are ridiculous. But I guess that's the market. There are far too many - and I think there's a danger in that that the smart ones recognise. But you can make a lot of money playing football, being a professional sportsperson, but you don't last as a top professional sportsperson for very long and you're going to have another 50, 60, 70 years of life after that. You've got to support yourself. Very, very, very few are making enough so that they can invest enough which will support them through life.

I think this is one of the elements of professionalism that worries me. Rugby union do it pretty well. They have a very strong emphasis on ensuring that their athletes undertake training, professional training, as well. But I think AFL and rugby league and I think soccer don't really do very much. They might say they do but...

David Rowe

Yes, well they certainly say that they all have mandatory policies now that their younger players should be training in something or going to a university or a college.

James Ferguson

They are trying. They are certainly trying to do something, yes. Again it applies in a sport like swimming. You can probably just about make enough money to get through as a top swimmer but your earning potential in your life as a swimmer is very short. So this is an issue I think.

David Rowe

Is there anything I haven't raised with you that you would say is very important that I've missed altogether?

James Ferguson

I think one thing that is interesting is to ask the question why has Australia been so successful in sport? I wrote a book about this years ago.

David Rowe

Yes, you did.

James Ferguson

It turned out to be a slightly different book than what I'd intended because the reason we've done well in sport is not because we've got a good climate and we have a good diet and so on. That applies in lots and lots of countries. It's partly because there's been a cultural element but it's partly because we worked at doing well. We have a system which has been aimed at developing a comprehensive approach to sports development which goes from the bottom to the top and, at each stage, to identify what are the critical success factors at that particular stage of the sports spectrum and working on those particular factors very specifically. So that you can look at very clearly what are the elements that make for a successful elite sport. There's a fair amount of academic work done in that area now.

But that's something that we concentrated on in the Commission. We tried to identify very specifically what were the elements of success and we worked on those and we ensured that the national sporting organisations were working on them with us and we've certainly been very successful. I think we've done exactly the same in music and in the dramatic arts and in ballet. The Australian Ballet School was established precisely on the model of the Institute of Sport. The Institute of Dramatic Art, although it was established prior to the AIS - it was established by Bob Ellicott who established the AIS. It was exactly the same principle.

There's an Australia Institute of Music in Sydney. It's called an Australian Academy of Music in Melbourne. They also were established on the same lines as the AIS. The idea was to provide an opportunity to identify young people with talent and then give them the opportunity to develop that talent to the very highest level using the best techniques, the best coaches, all the best ways in which we could do that. I think it's undoubtedly been successful. We're remarkably successful in music now. Likewise, in dramatic art. Look at the number of Australian actors now who are quite prominent internationally where 30 years ago - well Mel Gibson might have been around 30 years ago, but there weren't very many.

I think that's one of the things that we can learn about about our success in sport and about success in those other cultural elements. If we can do it in sports - sport's a highly competitive international area of activity. If we can do it in sport why can't we do it in any other aspect of our national life? That was the sort of thesis that I was intending to develop when I started to write that book and got side tracked a bit. I think it's one of the important lessons that we can learn as a society and as a community is about how you go about

being a clever country. It's not by accident. It's not just because you're lucky enough to have a few clever people. If you don't have a system and you don't work on it it's not going to work.

David Rowe

So that's an argument against you might say the myth that Australians are naturally good at sport because of the sunshine and the space.

James Ferguson

That's a total myth.

David Rowe

Yes, it has to be based on an organisation planned system of work and...

James Ferguson

Yes.

David Rowe

...research and so on.

James Ferguson

I think we have had maybe one advantage in that it's been very easy for Australians going back a long way to participate in sport. It has always been one of the things that we've recognised as being worthwhile and so we've always encouraged that. We've always probably too much idolised our sportspeople compared to people in other fields, and that's something which is a bit different from other countries. But in terms of - lots of countries have a nice climate and a good diet and good food. We did quite well in the years after the Second World War because Europe was still recovering from the War. But as soon as Europe recovered that changed very quickly.

If you go to a country like Germany, for example, Germany has a lot of sport and people recognise it and they see it as being important, although Germany's a highly cultured country in terms of the arts as well. I think they are able to integrate it a bit better than we've been able to. I don't know why we don't - perhaps it's a British thing. I'm not sure.

David Rowe

On that note because I'm British - it's all my fault! No, thank you. Anything else you'd like to say there Jim or that's it?

James Ferguson

No, I can't think of anything else anyway.

David Rowe

We've covered a lot of ground over the last 90 minutes, over 90 minutes, so thank you.

Thanks very much. I'll just switch off the...

END