



17-18 August 2023
Parramatta City Campus



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Acknowledgement of Country



This artwork was made collaboratively by the School of Business at Western Sydney University with Trevor Eastwood and Jason Douglas from DALMARRI (info@dalmarri.com.au).

We acknowledge the Dharug nation as the traditional custodians of the lands we work and live on today. We pay respect to elders past, present and emerging.

"Matta" meaning meeting place, 2019

Co-created with colleagues from the School of Business at Western Sydney University this artwork, "Matta", represents the lands and communities where the Parramatta City Campus is located.

The word Parramatta comes from the Indigenous word "Baramada" or "Burramatta". Burra, meaning meeting eel, and matta, meaning meeting place, come together to mean 'place where the eels lie down'.

The Burramattagal people belong to the Dharug nation. Before colonisation the Burramattagal people lived and prospered in this area and had a close connection with the river and forests. The river was a rich source of eels, fish and other food. The burra, or eels, roamed along these rivers, grew large and became plentiful along the banks of the Burramatta River. The green and blue waterways run through the artwork as the burra moved ever so gracefully up and down the inlets. The artwork shows the bubbles, the currents and plentiful fish running through what today is known as Parramatta. The shoreline depicts the edge of land as the waters head out to Sydney Harbour and the ocean.

The colourful sections within the artwork represent all the towns surrounding Burramatta. Inside those towns are circles belonging to multicultural families now living on Dharug country. The dot lines and tracks were once walking tracks of Dharug people now, turned into roads and railway lines.

In creating this artwork, we pay respect to the past and to the land where we work today. We also celebrate the diversity of the area which is reflected in the students and staff of the School of Business at Western.

Introduction

The International Women in Sport Symposium will be held on the 17th and 18th August 2023 in Sydney, Australia, at Western Sydney University Parramatta City Campus.

The Symposium aims to bring together leading experts and practitioners from around the world to discuss the latest research and best practices in advancing gender equality and promoting the participation of women in sport.

The symposium is strategically scheduled to take place during the week leading up to the final match of the Women's World Cup, to provide an opportunity for international scholars visiting the city to share their research within the international forum. The symposium aims to provide a platform for the latest research and best practices in advancing gender equality and promoting the participation of women in sport.

The symposium will feature a keynote presentation from Professor Jean Williams, panel discussions, and interactive sessions on a wide range of topics, including the role of sport in empowering women and girls, the impact of media representation on women's sport, and the challenges and opportunities for women in leadership positions in sport.

In addition to the presentations and panel discussions also included is a formal dinner as part of the symposium fee. The dinner will be held at the world-class Commonwealth Bank Stadium in Parramatta, providing participants with an opportunity to network in an iconic and prestigious setting. The dinner allows attendees to engage with fellow participants and speakers in a relaxed and informal setting, fostering connections and collaborations that can continue long after the symposium has ended.

The symposium will provide a valuable platform for exchanging ideas and fostering collaboration among researchers, educators, and practitioners from various countries and disciplines. Overall, the event plans to play a crucial role in promoting gender equality and the inclusion of women in the sport industry.

Sponsors

We wish to thank and acknowledge our key sponsors for the International Women in Sport Symposium.

Thank you to our **Platinum Sponsor**, [Parramatta City Council](#).

Parramatta City Council's commitment to promoting gender equality and empowering women in sports is commendable. Their unwavering support for initiatives that foster inclusivity and opportunities for women in the sporting world has played a crucial role in shaping a more equitable and diverse landscape. Through their sponsorship, Parramatta City Council has demonstrated their dedication to championing the rights and achievements of women in sport, making a positive impact on both the local community and the broader sports industry.



Thank you to our **Gold Sponsor**, [Parramatta Eels](#).

We would also like to express our deep appreciation to the Parramatta Eels Rugby League Club for their significant sponsorship of the symposium. As a prominent sporting organization, the Eels have recognized the importance of providing equal opportunities for women in all aspects of the game. Their generous support reflects their commitment to empowering female athletes, coaches, administrators, and enthusiasts, and fostering an inclusive sporting culture.



The sponsorship from the Parramatta City Council and the Parramatta Eels Rugby League Club has been instrumental in enabling us to organize and execute a truly remarkable symposium. Their financial support, coupled with their shared vision of promoting gender equality and women's empowerment in sports, has allowed us to bring together renowned experts, athletes, and stakeholders from around the world to engage in meaningful discussions, share insights, and inspire change.

Program: Day 1 (Thursday 17th August)**Opening: Conference Room 3, Level 9 – Parramatta City Campus**

| Time | Item | Presenter |
|----------------|----------------------------|---|
| 10.00 -10.05am | Welcome (MC) | Dr Jess Richards |
| 10.05-10.10am | Acknowledgement of Country | Professor Meg Smith |
| 10.10-10.25am | Opening of symposium | Professor Deborah Sweeney |
| 10.30-11.30am | Keynote | Professor Jean Williams with Jacqueline McAssey |

11.30-12.00 (Morning Tea Break): Foyer, Level 9 Parramatta City Campus**Session 1 (12.00pm-1.30pm)**

| Time | Stream 1: Conference Room 1, Level 9 Parramatta City Campus | Presenter |
|----------------|--|------------------------|
| 12.00 -12.15pm | Working Overtime to Grow the Game: Women Athletes' Inspirational Labor | Dr Tarlan CHAHARDOVALI |
| 12.20-12.35pm | Gendered cyberhate in Australian women's sport: Effects and impacts | Dr Caitlin MCGRANE |
| 12.40m-12.55pm | Is turnover is hurting the management of women's football? Exploring the creative process engagement for relevant stakeholders | Dr Natalie SMITH |
| 1.00 -1.15pm | The dressing room doors are still locked: exploring intergenerational perspectives of women in sports journalism in Australia | Kirby FENWICK |
| Time | Stream 2: Conference Room 2, Level 9 Parramatta City Campus | |
| 12.00 -12.15pm | Indo-Fijian women as space invaders: Challenging hegemonic masculinities in dominant sporting spaces in the global south | Dr Rohini BALRAM |
| 12.20-12.35pm | Behind the numbers: Women Australian Rules footballers' lived experience of performance monitoring | Dr Paul BOWELL |
| 12.40-12.55pm | More than a game: Australian women's hockey – Feminism and practical feminism | Janet BEVERLEY |
| 1.00 -1.15pm | Lived experiences of migrant women football players in Australia | Sarah KARLIK |

1.15pm-2.00pm (Lunch): Foyer, Level 9 Parramatta City Campus

Session 2 (2.00pm-3.30pm)

| Time | Stream 1: Conference Room 2, Level 9 Parramatta City Campus | Presenter |
|--------------|--|--------------------------------------|
| 2.00 -2.15pm | Gendered experiences of interpersonal violence and disclosure in Australia community sport | Dr Aurélie PANKOWIAK |
| 2.20-2.35pm | Social capital development for migrant background women and girls through community sport: extending the discourse with an applied intersectional lens | Dana YOUNG |
| 2.40-2.55pm | <i>Leveraging sporting mega events for sustainable fan engagement</i> | <i>Corey CUTRUPI</i> |
| 3.00 -3.15pm | Promoting healthy and active living: pilot study to better engage women from CALD backgrounds in a community health-based program in Melbourne's West | Associate Professor Camilla BROCKETT |
| Time | Stream 2: Conference Room 2, Level 9 Parramatta City Campus | |
| 2.00 -2.15pm | The contribution of school sport to the development of women leaders | Lisa BROWN |
| 2.20-2.35pm | One day better: Collective team identity bolstering and temporal identity work in response to threat | Donna DENYER |
| 2.40-2.55pm | The Impact of the menstrual cycle on athletes' perceived performance: A narrative review and outlook | Chelsea OESTER |
| 3.00 -3.15pm | It doesn't happen by magic: creatively exploring the process of changemaking in sport by capturing the magic in the voice of the change makers. | Dr Kasey SYMONS |

3.15pm-4.00pm (Afternoon tea and close): Foyer, Level 9 Parramatta City Campus

Program: Day 2 (Friday 18th August)

Opening: Conference Room 3, Level 9 – Parramatta City Campus

| Time | Purpose | Presenter |
|----------------|----------------------------|--------------------|
| 10.00 -10.05am | Welcome (MC) | Dr Jess Richards |
| 10.05-10.10am | Acknowledgement to Country | Dr Jess Richards |
| 10.10-10.55am | Panel Discussion | Dr Michelle O'Shea |

11.00-11.30 Morning tea

Session 3 (11.30am-12.30pm)

| Time | Stream 1: Conference Room 1, Level 9 Parramatta City Campus | Presenter |
|----------------|--|-----------------------|
| 11.30-11.45am | Towards improving the safety and wellbeing of women in sport | Professor Alex PARKER |
| 11.50 -12.05am | Meta-synthesis of women's experiences of gender-based interpersonal violence in sport | Dr Kirsty FORSDIKE |
| 12.10-12.25pm | Sport and First Nations women: exploring a strengths-based approach to women's sport | Dr Hazel MAXWELL |
| Time | Stream 2: Conference Room 2, Level 9 Parramatta City Campus | |
| 11.30-11.45am | The 2023 Football Women's World Cup and Australia's sporting ambitions: Mobilising gender equality in the "Decade of Green and Gold" | Dr Andrew GRAINGER |
| 11.50-12.05pm | The Growth of women's sports analytics and statistics: impacting gender equity and social change | Alyssa LONGMUIR |
| 12.10-12.25pm | Addressing gender-based violence in and through rural and regional sports communities | Dr Kirsty FORSDIKE |

12.30- 1.30 (Lunch): Foyer, Level 9 Parramatta City Campus

Session 4 (1.30pm - 2.30pm)

| Time | Stream 1: Conference Room 3 Level 9 Parramatta City Campus | Presenter |
|---------------|--|--------------------|
| 1.30-1.45pm | Shredding Conventions: Women and Non-Binary skateboarders growing sustainable futures and cultures of caring | Dr Indigo WILLING |
| 1.50-2.05pm | Inclusive, inviting, inspiring—Insights into the experiences of women's football fans in Australia and Germany | Dr Kasey SYMONS |
| 2.10pm-2.25pm | Developing elite trans sport policy: gender inclusive sport and how to get there | Dr Ryan STORR |
| 1.50pm-2.05pm | Breaking menstrual taboos: blood work and elite women's sport advocacy | Dr Michelle O'SHEA |

2.30pm-3.00pm (Afternoon Tea): Foyer, Level 9 Parramatta City Campus

Session 5 (3.00-4.00pm)

| Time | Stream 1: Conference Room 1, Level 9 Parramatta City Campus | Presenter |
|----------------|--|---------------------------|
| 3.00-3.15pm | The Underrepresentation of women's sport in sports economics literature | Dr Edward MARIYANI-SQUIRE |
| 3.20-3.35pm | Obstruction: The archetypal Australian netballer as a barrier to social change. | Bess SCHNIOFFSKY |
| 3.40-3.55pm | Professional development for women coaches: A case study of a women's only performance pathway coaching course | Kate PERRY |
| Time | Stream 2: Conference Room 2, Level 9 Parramatta City Campus | |
| 3.00 – 3.15 pm | Tackling tradition: Investigating the evolution of women's rugby league in the eyes of fans | Dr Jess RICHARDS |
| 3.20-3.35pm | The field includes the office: The six pillars of women in sport | Alana LEABEATER |
| 3.40-3.55pm | Never surrender: Women playing Australian football against the odds in Western Sydney | Dr Georgina HIBBERD |

**4.00pm -5.00pm (Conference Close and Award Ceremony): Foyer, Level 9
Parramatta City Campus**

ABSTRACTS

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|--------------------|--|
| Title | Indo-Fijian women as space invaders: Challenging hegemonic masculinities in dominant sporting spaces in the global south |
| <i>Presenter</i> | Dr Rohini BALRAM |
| <i>Affiliation</i> | Western Sydney University |
| <i>Email</i> | r.balram@westernsydney.edu.au |
| <i>Abstract</i> | <p>Whilst other sporting narratives of women from the Global North and Black vs. White binary are well known, the sporting trajectories and social changes relative to Brown migrant sporting women in colonial settler spaces in the Global South (Fiji), has not been explored. This presentation derives from my ethnographical doctoral research entitled: Indo-Fijian women as subversive bodies in Fiji's sporting arenas: An arts-based study.</p> <p>Using my Global South voice, I explore the Fijian sporting context and illuminate the complexity of the colonised, historical, political and social dynamics which shape the present-day divergence of the privileged Brown native vs. marginalised Brown Indo-Fijian settlers (Decedents of Indian slaves) in the Fijian sporting scenes. In Fiji, physicality is highly racialised and gendered, and Indo-Fijian women are marginalised to a triple degree in the country's sporting platforms: they face gender inequalities emanating from a patriarchal society; secondly, they are marginalised in terms of race and ethnicity, thus not having access to the same sporting opportunities that their <i>iTaukei</i> (Fijian natives) counterparts do. Finally, Indo-Fijian girls are economically disenfranchised, living in the peripheries of the Global South, where they struggle with lack of funding, inequitable policies and an unstable political climate.</p> <p>This triple layer of marginalisation deprives Indo-Fijian girls/young women of real opportunities and rights in the sporting fields to play sports for better health and fitness as equal Fijian citizens. The paper employs an intersectional lens and makes visible the social, cultural, historical and political layers of complexity that influences the sustained patterns of under-representation of this particular cohort of sporting actors.</p> <p>The findings reveal that patriarchy and emphasized Indo-Fijian femininity have maintained male dominance and Indo-Fijian women are perceived as physically weak and placed at the bottom of the Fijian masculinity/physicality continuum. However, the findings also unveil that athletic Indo-Fijian women have the potential and often actually subvert traditional gender and racial orders, social structures and stereotypes to invade <i>iTaukei</i> (native Fijian) sporting spaces – a place (physical, spiritual social and also literal and imagined as places of political power) where racial, gendered and class-based politics are reproduced and also 're-hegemonised'. Therefore, tensions and paradoxes arise when Indo-Fijian women negotiate many historical, social, political, cultural and spatial hurdles and enter the Fijian sporting platforms that are exclusive to <i>iTaukeis</i>; there, athletic Indo-Fijian women experience a social conquest which allows them to put into practice their basic human rights as equal citizens of Fiji, as articulated in CEDAW. These space invaders via their sporting agency are able to transform exclusionary and oppressive spaces into spaces in which they feel a sense of belonging, and where they feel comfortable with the other bodies (males, <i>iTaukeis</i>, mixed-race groups) and therefore experience some form of liberation and transformation.</p> |

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| Title | More than a game: Australian women's hockey – feminism and practical feminism |
| <i>Presenter</i> | Janet BEVERLEY |
| <i>Affiliation</i> | The University of Queensland |
| <i>Email</i> | janetbeverley14@yahoo.com |
| <i>Abstract</i> | <p>Hockey was the first women's team sport to establish itself in Australia; however, it is almost invisible within the Australian sport historiography. Four state associations came together in 1910 to form the All Australian Women's Hockey Association (AAWHA) in Sydney – New South Wales, South Australia, Tasmania, and Victoria. Western Australia joined in 1921, Queensland in 1925, the Australian Capital Territory in 1976, and the Northern Territory in 1979. This presentation engages explicitly with the concepts of feminism and practical feminism, and their influence and impact on women's hockey in Australia since 1896.</p> <p>Feminism is a movement focussing on achieving equal rights and opportunities for women. At the same time, feminists actively and willingly work toward achieving those rights and opportunities, either through an explicit or implicit agenda. Feminist sport scholar Rafaelle Nicholson argued in her examination of women's cricket in England that “historians of women, and of feminism, need to pay more attention to those women who are situated on the outskirts of the feminism movement.”¹ Throughout her work, Nicholson cited seven critical attributes and values of feminism that led to her conclusion that women's cricket was a site of feminism. Following Nicholson's lead, these criteria are the primary tool to determine whether Australian women's hockey was a site of feminism.</p> <p>Additionally, Jean Williams used the term practical feminism to explain the “new opportunities of a personal and professional kind” English hockey administrators provided members of English teams that toured overseas during the inter-war years.² This presentation utilises an expanded concept of practical feminism, covering opportunities that facilitated and improved participants' experiences throughout hockey and life, rather than restricting its application to national team activities. Throughout the 125-plus years of women's hockey in Australia, examples of practical feminism are drawn from all levels and all participants—players, coaches, umpires, hosts, and administrators.</p> <p>The impact of practical feminism and feminism across a cross-section of hockey genres is analysed demonstrating the personally transformative and empowering experiences that sometimes challenge social norms. In addition, these opportunities offer an understanding of how feminist objectives were pursued and realised without an explicitly feminist agenda or identity, as contentious as that label was for some hockey participants and leaders.</p> |

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|----------------------|---|
| Title | Behind the numbers: Women Australian Rules footballers' lived experience of performance monitoring |
| <i>Presenter</i> | Paul BOWELL |
| <i>Affiliation</i> | Swinburne University |
| <i>Email</i> | 102962568@student.swin.edu.au |
| <i>Collaborators</i> | Professor Emma Sherry ¹ , Dr Paul Scifleet ¹ , Dr Katya Pechenkina ¹ <i>1 Swinburne University</i> |
| <i>Abstract</i> | <p>This paper will present findings from our study investigating women Australian Rules footballers' experiences of club produced digital-driven performance monitoring. Increasingly elite sporting clubs, and their athletes, are prioritising digital self-tracking such as Global Positioning Systems (GPS) monitoring to evaluate performance and measure fitness (Page 2015). However, the athlete's experience of these tracking practices are not widely known (Rapp & Tirabeni 2018) – especially in emerging professionalised women's sports like Australian Rules. Previous academic research into digital self-tracking among women Australian Rules footballers has been limited to quantitative in-game performance monitoring (Clarke et al. 2018; Cust et al. 2019). These approaches fail to account for the players' subjective experiences and understandings of their club produced self-tracked metrics.</p> <p>A growing body of academic work has positioned digital self-tracking within organisational settings – like workplaces – as having the potential to alienate and disenfranchise workers, while also resembling methods of surveillance (Moore 2018; Newlands 2021). The plight of digitally tracked employees can be an uncertain one and is not dissimilar to elite athletes who are subjected to similar levels of club-based performance monitoring. The link however, between the two has yet to be made within the sport management/sociology literature; this study seeks to address this gap. Past research has found that elite athlete concerns over performance monitoring include the lack of context and ownership attached to their tracking data (Baerg 2017; Hutchins 2016). Considering the scarcity of prior research and the organisational pressures like power imbalances and precarity that footballers encounter at their clubs (Kerr & Barker-Ruchti 2015), understanding women footballers' experiences of club-produced performance monitoring is critical.</p> <p>This research generated new insights into how elite women Australian Rules footballers' experience club produced and circulated digitised performance metrics. This line of inquiry addressed questions like: is the purpose of club-based performance monitoring clear to the players and how do they understand and interpret the tracking? For example, do the players find performance monitoring at their clubs, to be authoritarian and invasive – are they ambivalent to it – or is it motivating and embraced?</p> <p>An interpretive qualitative methodology of digital ethnography (Pink 2014; Pink et al. 2016) was operationalised to investigate the research questions. The women footballers involved in the study completed a three-tiered data generation approach of interviews; qualitative reflective surveys (Braun et al. 2020); and video re-enactments (Leder Mackley & Pink 2013). Interviews were also conducted with club high performance managers and strength and conditioning coaches to offer an organisational perspective to performance monitoring. The findings demonstrate that while the footballers see value in having their athletic performance monitored by their clubs, the purpose and reasoning of collective data sharing was unclear and a driver of stress and</p> |

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| | <p>anxiety, which impacts how they see themselves and their bodies as footballers. This research presents opportunities for emerging women's sporting organisations – through a framework of practice – to ensure that performance monitoring is equitably applied, which can benefit all stakeholders involved.</p> |
| <i>References</i> | <p>Baerg, A 2017, 'Big data, sport, and the digital divide: Theorizing how athletes might respond to big data monitoring', <i>Journal of Sport & Social Issues</i>, vol. 41, no. 1, pp. 3-20.</p> <p>Braun, V, Clarke, V, Boulton, E, Davey, L & McEvoy, C 2020, 'The online survey as a qualitative research tool', <i>International Journal of Social Research Methodology</i>, pp. 1-14.</p> <p>Hutchins, B 2016, 'Tales of the digital sublime: Tracing the relationship between big data and professional sport', <i>Convergence: The International Journal of Research into New Media Technologies</i>, vol. 22, no. 5, pp. 494-509.</p> <p>Kerr, R & Barker-Ruchti, N 2015, 'Women's artistic gymnastics in Australia and New Zealand: A Foucauldian examination of the relationship between sport governance and consumption', <i>Journal of Sport and Social Issues</i>, vol. 39, no. 5, pp. 396-411.</p> <p>Leder Mackley, K & Pink, S 2013, 'From emplaced knowing to interdisciplinary knowledge: Sensory ethnography in energy research', <i>The Senses and Society: Engaging the Senses in Ethnographic Practice</i>, vol. 8, no. 3, pp. 335-353.</p> <p>Moore, PV 2018, <i>The quantified self in precarity: Work, technology and what counts</i>, Routledge, Oxford, UK.</p> <p>Newlands, G 2021, 'Algorithmic surveillance in the gig economy: The organization of work through lefebvrian conceived space', <i>Organization Studies</i>, vol. 42, no. 5, pp. 719-737.</p> <p>Page, T 2015, 'Applications of wearable technology in elite sports', <i>i-manager's Journal on Mobile Applications and Technologies</i>, vol. 2, no. 1, pp. 1-15.</p> <p>Rapp, A & Tirabeni, L 2018, 'Personal informatics for sport: Meaning, body, and social relations in amateur and elite athletes', <i>ACM Transactions on Computer-Human Interaction (TOCHI)</i>, vol. 25, no. 3, pp. 1-30.</p> |

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|----------------------|--|
| Title | Promoting healthy and active living: pilot study to better engage women from CALD backgrounds in a community health-based program in Melbourne's West |
| <i>Presenter</i> | Associate Professor Camilla BROCKETT |
| <i>Affiliation</i> | Victoria University |
| <i>Email</i> | camilla.brockett@vu.edu.au |
| <i>Collaborators</i> | Michelle Attard ^{1,2} , Alyce Vella ² , Catherine Dell Aquila ^{2,3} <i>1 Institute for Health and Sport, Victoria University, 2 Western Bulldogs Community Foundation, 3 Movember</i> |
| <i>Abstract</i> | <p>The Western Bulldogs Community Foundation's Daughters of the West (DOTW) is a gender-sensitised, place-based primary prevention program for women. It involves 10 weekly 2-hour sessions, including an hour of interactive evidence-based health education covering a range of physical- and mental health-related topics and an hour of physical activity tailored to participants' fitness levels.</p> <p>Traditionally, the program has engaged a cohort of middle-aged women of which half are from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) backgrounds, however research shows a "one-size-fits-all" approach to engaging CALD communities in health initiatives is detrimental. Women from CALD communities can be reluctant to access health services due to barriers such as language, lack of representative service providers, and stigmas in discussing topics such as mental and sexual health, cultural differences, and beliefs. These barriers underpin existing health disparities and health service accessibility for many of these communities. With Melbourne's west being one of the fastest-growing and most culturally diverse areas in the state, a critical need was identified to better engage women from CALD communities in DOTW as a step towards more equitable access to healthcare.</p> <p>The primary aims of the study were to: (1) identify key barriers and enablers to DOTW program participation; (2) pilot a place-based DOTW program that reflects cultural and community values for a target cohort; (3) determine the health, wellbeing, and lived experiences of participants pre- and post-program, and (4) recommend guidelines for future CALD-focused community health programs.</p> <p><u>Methods</u></p> <p>A mixed-methods, design-thinking approach was adopted to engage a target community throughout program development, delivery and evaluation. A tailored version of the 10-week DOTW program was co-designed with, and for, women from East African community groups. Quantitative and qualitative data were collected using surveys and focus groups before and after the program to gain an understanding of participants health and wellbeing, as well as their expectations and experience of the program.</p> <p><u>Results</u></p> <p>A total of 51 women participated in the CALD-tailored DOTW pilot program. Average age was 49 years; average weekly attendance was 28 participants; and 47% identified they had one or more chronic health concerns before the program. Positive changes were recorded for physical activity, mental wellbeing, and health self-efficacy. In addition, 70% reported greater group</p> |

connection, 69% learnt about local health services, 92% shared health education information with others, 85% would consider attending a future DOTW, and 85% reported lifestyle changes / impacts including diet, physical activity, healthcare access and confidence.

Thematic analysis from the post-program focus group identified five core themes: impact of program environment; experience of health education; sense of connection; health improvements; and barriers / opportunities for future programs.

Conclusion

This exploratory study identified a number of important factors for CALD participant engagement including: (1) having representative bilingual facilitators, (2) delivering health education and education resources in language, (3) choosing accessible venues, (4) working with existing community organisations and groups for pathways in and out, and (5) creating a safe space for participants to develop and maintain positive health habits, social networks and mental resilience.

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| Title | The contribution of school sport to the development of women leaders |
| <i>Presenter</i> | Lisa BROWN |
| <i>Affiliation</i> | Western Sydney University |
| <i>Email</i> | 20619259@student.westernsydney.edu.au |
| <i>Abstract</i> | <p>The aim of this program of research is to investigate how girls' participation in school sport may advance their leadership skills; the results can illuminate ways where we engineer educational environments to deliberately and intentionally develop leadership capability during the formative adolescent years. This goal will ultimately increase the proportion of women seeking out leadership opportunities, thus fostering women's political empowerment and economic participation.</p> <p>The purpose of this project is to investigate how early sport interventions during school years can influence the leadership skills of girls and young women, and foster their political and economic participation. According to the World Economic Forum, the global average completion to achieve gender parity is currently sitting at 68%, down -0.6% from 2020, which has been attributed to the impact of the COVID-19 global pandemic. The distance to parity is measured based on four factors: Political Empowerment, Economic Participation and Opportunity, Educational Attainment, and Health and Survival. While the gender gap in political empowerment remains the widest gap across the four factors, it is the gap in economic participation and opportunity, which maintains the second greatest distance to achieve parity. There seems to be an opposing trend in this gap. While the proportion of women among skilled professionals continues to increase, there is a persistent underrepresentation of women in leadership roles, with women accounting for only 27% of manager roles, globally. Contrast this with the most successful of the four factors, educational attainment in which the gender gap is almost closed at 95%. This suggests that, despite more women than ever attaining educational qualifications and skilled professional status, few are taking the step into leadership roles. The numbers specific to the Australian context are dire, with Australia achieving the number one ranking globally for educational attainment, yet it is ranked seventieth for economic participation and opportunity (World Economic Forum - Global Gender Gap Report 2021).</p> <p>Before assumptions and sweeping claims about this data can be made, however, there is a key concept that must be addressed. As discussed by leading contributor to the field of gender research R. W. Connell (1983, 1987, 2005, 2021), gender is a combination of personal life, social relations and culture; it is not merely the dichotomous view of gender many of us form through the stereotypes typical of the global North perspective of a man and a woman (Connell, 2021). This perspective of gender is important to understand before we can research and analyse the current state of play in gendered leadership. This understanding will inform measures intended to reduce the gender gap.</p> <p>The concept of gender theory will help to interpret data and explain the limitations of gender gap research. An understanding of the intersectionality paradigm, and the relationship to gender studies will highlight the limitations of viewing gender as a single category (McCall, 2005). Viewing the leadership literature through the lens of gender theory will ensure that a comprehensive understanding of the intersecting influences on women as leaders and becoming leaders is appreciated.</p> |

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| Title | Working Overtime to Grow the Game: Women Athletes' Inspirational Labor |
| <i>Presenter</i> | Tarlan CHAHARDOVALI |
| <i>Affiliation</i> | University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC, USA |
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| <i>Collaborators</i> | Christopher M. McLeod <i>University of Florida, Gainesville, FL, USA</i> |
| <i>Abstract</i> | <p>Previous sociological research on women's labor in sport has largely focused on women's work behind the scenes to support family members' participation in sport (Boyle & McKay, 1995; Messner & Bozada-Deas, 2009; Thompson, 1990, 1999a, 1999b). However, the labor of women athletes, especially their unpaid and underpaid work off the field of play, remains a relatively understudied subject. This is an oversight because elite sportswomen are often tasked with participating in unpaid or underpaid community appearances, youth camps, and clinics to market their games, promote their teams, and inspire the next generation of athletes.</p> <p>The expectation to invest in the future of one's sport for the benefit of others is a gendered process—requiring athletes to employ different forms of labor in addition to their athletic labor. Drawing from the literature on future-oriented labor (Duffy, 2015; Kuehn & Corrigan, 2013) and immaterial labor (Hardt, 1999; Hardt & Negri, 2000; Hochschild, 1983), this study demonstrates how the sport industry is structured to extract value from what the authors refer to as women athletes' "inspirational labor." Inspirational labor is defined as a time-consuming, yet un/underpaid form of labor that often goes unnoticed because its value is not easily measurable, and the work itself is taken for granted as part of women athletes' broader job responsibilities.</p> <p>Inspirational labor is a timely subject for sociological inquiry because popular culture increasingly refers to women's professional sport in inspirational terms. There are three main reasons why it is critical to understand women athletes' inspirational labor. First, movements for fair pay across many elite sports will be strengthened by in-depth understandings of the work lives of women athletes, including descriptions of the extra work they perform. This is because, at least in the United States, most efforts toward achieving fair pay for women in sport have relied on the notion of "equal pay for equal work" as stated in the Equal Pay Act of 1963, which requires that men and women be given equal pay for equal work in the same workplace. Nevertheless, an analysis of women athletes' un/underpaid work, in this case, their inspirational labor, reveals that women are not just receiving less pay for the same work as their male counterparts but that women also have different job expectations and responsibilities, which renders "fair pay," rather than "equal pay," a more accurate call toward narrowing the gender pay gap in sport. Second, added expectations for unpaid work take time, effort, and energy away from training, recovery, and other income earning activities—making them impediments to elite athletes' professional development. Finally, women's unpaid work accentuates hypocrisies related to broader underinvestment in women's sport.</p> <p>Interviews with 29 past and current women athletes and 15 managers in professional softball and soccer in the United States are used to illustrate the ideological and economic structures of inspirational labor. Specifically, this study research aims to understand what it means to labor in emerging women's sport markets—where the burden of investing in the future of one's sport, for the benefit of others, is put upon women in the absence of organizational structures that should carry such responsibilities.</p> |

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| Title | Leveraging sporting mega events for sustainable fan engagement |
| <i>Presenter</i> | Corey CUTRUPI |
| <i>Affiliation</i> | University of Technology Sydney |
| <i>Email</i> | Corey.Cutrupi@uts.edu.au |
| <i>Collaborators</i> | Professor Nico Schulenkorf ¹ , Associate Professor Katie Schlenker ¹ , Dr Stephen Frawley ¹ <i>¹ University of Technology Sydney</i> |
| <i>Abstract</i> | <p>The substantial long-term growth experienced by women's football globally has recently resulted in a familiar phase of stagnation, as attendance numbers struggle to remain consistently high and broadcast demands not being met (Meier, 2020). This has also been evident in Australia where the women's national team, the Matildas thrives while the semi-professional A League Women has struggled to grow in regard to game attendance and spectator engagement (Football Federation Australia, 2019). In this presentation, we investigate how the leveraging of a sport mega event – the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup – can contribute to sustainable fan engagement of women's football in Australia.</p> <p>The hosting of the FIFA WWC 2023 in Australia and New Zealand in July/August 2023 presents a significant opportunity for Football Australia and its stakeholders to advance women's sport into a position that ensures a prosperous and sustainable future. However, while we know about the leveraging intentions of event organisers to achieve economic and socially driven outcomes (Chalip & Leyns, 2002; Chalip, 2004; Chalip, 2006; D'Hoore et al., 2022) – and how significant fans are to value growth (Kolyperas & Maglaras, 2018; Allison, 2013) – we know very little about sport organisations and how they view leveraging events as a tool to achieve sustainable fan engagement (Smith, 2014; Schulenkorf et al., 2016; Singleton, 2017) – especially in women's sport. Moreover, existing literature has indicated that much of the research conducted within the fan engagement space has primarily focused on men's sporting teams and events, with limited data available on women's sporting leagues (Toffoletti, 2017; Delia, 2020; Clarke et al., 2022). Taken together, there is a lamentable gap in the space of event leverage and sustainable growth in women's sport that deserves to be examined from an organisational perspective (see Sant, 2015; Wasser et al., 2022; Dionisio et al., 2022).</p> <p>In this presentation, we offer preliminary findings from a larger research study on event leverage for sustainable fan engagement around the WWC 2023. Specifically, we look back at previous sport event leverage attempts and assess key strategies that have been successfully implemented by sporting organisations in their respective leveraging efforts. Moreover, we provide structured social media data that we collected in the lead-up to the event and discuss how social media can be used as a tool to maximise event-related opportunities. In doing so, we make two critical contributions across practice and theory. First, we illicit a number of socio-managerial strategies for event organisers and sport organisations to use in their leveraging efforts; and second, we propose a new event leverage framework that goes beyond current conceptualisations by focusing specifically on (sustainable) fan engagement as a core outcome.</p> |

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| Title | One day better: Collective team identity bolstering and temporal identity work in response to threat |
| <i>Presenter</i> | Donna DENYER |
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| <i>Collaborators</i> | Professor Leanne Cutcher ¹ , Dr Mattia Anesa ¹ <i>¹The University of Sydney</i> |
| <i>Abstract</i> | <p>Despite an increase in team-based organizations, with teams and teamwork being key components of organizing in many contemporary organizations, research on identity and identity work in organizations has largely neglected the study of teams, instead focussing predominantly on the individual and organizational levels.</p> <p>As meeting with the expectations of ‘outsiders’ has been shown to be important for team survival, external stakeholders such as the media not only play a role in collective identity construction but also have potential to pose a salient form of team identity threat, such as through critical or negative reporting. Team leaders or middle managers are likely to be more sensitive to such external identity threats given their strategic focus and in practicing at the interface with external stakeholders. A limited number of studies on the construction of organizational identities have drawn attention to the interplay between multiple claims made by leaders, members, and the media about the identity of the organization.</p> <p>Professional sports teams serve as rich settings in which to examine issues affecting groups and teams in organizations and are well suited to addressing research questions concerning identity work. Using multimodal discourse analysis, we explore how the Australian national women’s football team (known as the Matildas) responds to an identity threat arising from popular media by examining how over time the team manager responds to a publicly salient threat to collective team identities. In doing so we show the implications of externally driven threats for a team’s collective identity trajectory and the different strategies that managers may draw upon in response, including discursively enacting identity change. Further, whilst the importance of temporality in processes of identity construction has been generally acknowledged, few studies have applied a temporality lens to responses to identity threats and collective identity change. We address this shortcoming by showing how temporal resources in the form of the past, present and future are utilized and deployed within team and managerial discourses to transform and develop collective identity. Through our multimodal analysis, we also show how the media used emotions embedded in textual narratives and represented visually in photographs as a discursive resource for identity work.</p> |

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| Title | “The dressing room doors are still locked”: exploring intergenerational perspectives of women in sports journalism in Australia |
| <i>Presenter</i> | Kirby FENWICK |
| <i>Email</i> | kirbyfenwick@gmail.com |
| <i>Abstract</i> | <p>Australia—the nation and its people—has long been defined by its relationship with sport. But sport does not become such a central part of our collective identity without the sports journalists. However, like women as athletes, fans and administrators have had to fight for every opportunity and struggle within oppressive systems and structures, so too have women working in sports journalism. Research consistently, and disappointingly, finds that women sports journalists are in the minority with sports journalism a ‘male domain,’ (Franks et al 2016, p. 475). <i>Where do you think you’re goin’, Lady?</i> is the title of pioneering Australian sports journalist Debbie Spillane’s 2007 memoir. In 1984 Spillane was employed by the ABC as a sports broadcaster, the first woman hired by the ABC in the role full-time. Her choice of title for her book, while likely tongue in cheek, illustrates the ways in which women and their relationship with sport have been questioned, challenged, and doubted.</p> <p>The research into the experiences of Australian women sports journalists is thin. The last significant study specifically on women in Australian sports journalism was Katrina Baird’s 1994 <i>Attitudes of Australian Women Sports Journalists</i>. Baird’s (1994) aim was to “develop a set of statistical indicators of female journalists’ demographic characteristics” (p. 240) as well as collecting “anecdotal evidence of... experiences” (Baird, 1994, p. 240). Building on the foundation of Baird’s research, this research explores the historical position of women in sports journalism in Australia alongside the contemporary experience of women in sports journalism not to provide a linear history or origin point of their marginalisation but to unravel the conditions of possibility that have created that marginalisation.</p> <p>Using a genealogical methodology and drawing on twelve semi-structured interviews with women at different stages of their careers in sports journalism (emerging, established and pioneers), this research explores the challenges experienced by women in sports journalism in the sports ecosystem. In addition, it explores the development of sports media and engages Acker’s theory of gendered organisations to bring clarity to that development. Furthermore, the project seeks to consider what possibilities there are for change in the pursuit of gender equity in sports journalism in Australia.</p> |

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| Title | Addressing gender-based violence in and through rural and regional sports communities |
| <i>Presenter</i> | Dr Kirsty FORSDIKE |
| <i>Affiliation</i> | La Trobe Business School |
| <i>Email</i> | k.forsdike@latrobe.edu.au |
| <i>Collaborators</i> | <p>Dr Erica Randle², Alex Donaldson², Lauren Fawcett³, Dr Jess Ison⁴, Dr Nicola McNeil¹, Professor Simone Fullagar⁵, Associate Professor Leesa Hooker</p> <p><i>1 La Trobe Business School, La Trobe University 2 Centre for Sport and Social Impact, La Trobe University 3 Sports Focus, Bendigo 4 Judith Lumley Centre, La Trobe University 5 Department of Tourism, Sport and Hotel Management, Griffith University 6 Rural Health School, La Trobe University</i></p> |
| <i>Abstract</i> | <p>Gender-based violence in sport is a pervasive but under-addressed issue. Prevalence rates of interpersonal violence experienced by women and girls in sport range from 26% to 74% across psychological, physical, and sexual violence. This is despite sport being championed as a site for women's empowerment and equality, and as a key setting for addressing the drivers of gender-based violence. Those working in sport acknowledge that sport organisations have a role to play in early intervention, identifying individuals experiencing violence, protecting them from harm and preventing escalation of violence. But they perceive many challenges in responding, including poor understanding of gender-based violence, responding to disclosures, limited capacities to act, and sport culture. Responses in rural and regional communities are particularly fraught. Whilst sport is often perceived as the glue holding these communities together, the intimate networks are also unique challenges when victims and perpetrators are often deeply ingrained in recreation, health, and justice services in their working and social lives.</p> <p>Our study examined community sport in rural and regional Victoria, Australia. Using a mixed method approach, we assessed the readiness of sports communities to respond to gender-based violence and how the broader rural regional community can work together to develop effective and context-specific response initiatives through sport based on differing levels of readiness. We report the findings from an exploratory mixed methods approach including data from a survey, a concept mapping exercise, and a World Café Forum that facilitated collaborative co-design of response initiatives. The triangulation of the mixed methods tells a compelling story of the existence of violence against women occurring in our regional sports, the recognised need for action, but also significant challenges in engagement in the issue, addressing ingrained attitudes and cultures, and effecting positive change. Following collaborative co-design, we propose a model for action in responding to gender-based violence in regional Victoria that supports our community sport through networked support from sport and local specialist services using tailored and context specific resources.</p> <p>When developing interventions, the study shows the need to understand our rural and regional communities and their starting points in terms of understanding and readiness to respond to gender-based violence. Most importantly, tailored initiatives developed collaboratively support a whole of community approach to addressing gender-based violence in and through sport in regional communities.</p> |

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| Title | Meta-synthesis of women's experiences of gender-based interpersonal violence in sport |
| <i>Presenter</i> | Dr Kirsty FORSDIKE |
| <i>Affiliation</i> | La Trobe University |
| <i>Email</i> | k.forsdike@latrobe.edu.au |
| <i>Collaborators</i> | Dr Fiona Burgemeister ^{2,3} <i>2 Judith Lumley Centre, La Trobe University, 3 Department of General Practice, The University of Melbourne</i> |
| <i>Abstract</i> | <p>Introduction: Violence against women and girls in sport is a pervasive issue, with prevalence rates of interpersonal violence ranging from 26% to 74% across psychological, physical, and sexual violence. This is despite sport being championed as a site for women's empowerment and equality, and as a key setting for addressing the drivers of gender-based violence. Whilst prevalence studies show a high rate of interpersonal violence, they rarely examine gender-based violence beyond sexual violence, and often focus on elite or youth sport populations. There is a need to examine all forms of gender-based violence in sport and to seek to understand women's diverse lived experience to inform appropriate policy and practice responses. Our meta-synthesis reviewed and synthesised qualitative studies that had explored women's experiences of gender-based interpersonal violence in sport.</p> <p>Methods: We searched five databases across four categories of search terms: gender-based violence/abuse/harassment; sport/exercise; woman/female; qualitative. We followed a meta-ethnographic approach. We developed an interpretation of a selection of studies, using reflexive thematic analysis to create a new interpretation (third-order construct) beyond the individual studies reviewed. We applied a feminist socio-ecological lens to our analysis, remaining cognisant of gendered power as it runs through and between the socio-ecological levels.</p> <p>Results: We included 25 records representing 24 studies. Participants experienced many forms of gender-based violence: sexual, physical, psychological, economic, drug and technology facilitated, perpetrated by coaches, intimate partners (sometimes one and the same), peers and their own family. These often appeared as composite forms of abuse, intersecting and overlapping. We co-constructed five themes: the normalisation of abusive behaviours in the sports context; sport family violence; women's status in a patriarchal system; women's safety work; and organisational impotence and hostility.</p> <p>Discussion: Women described a variety of forms of abuse, often composite and over time, perpetrated by a broad range of abusers that included people from within and outside of sport. Across the studies, women's experiences of abuse could be mapped within and across the individual, relational, organisational and cultural levels of the socio-ecological model, with (lack of) power being a central factor in women's experiences within each level as well as flowing between the levels. We also constructed a fifth level pertaining to the context of gender-based violence in sport – that of the sport family. This sits between the relational and organisational levels as the sport context provides both intense familial relationships as well as a patriarchal familial organisational structure that facilitates and silences the abuse. These foundational insights will be key to developing appropriate prevention and response initiatives to gender-based violence in sport.</p> |

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| Title | The 2023 Football Women's World Cup and Australia's sporting ambitions: Mobilising gender equality in the "Decade of Green and Gold" |
| <i>Presenter</i> | Dr Andrew GRAINGER |
| <i>Affiliation</i> | Western Sydney University |
| <i>Email</i> | A.Grainger@westernsydney.edu.au |
| <i>Collaborators</i> | Associate Professor Adam Beissel ² , Dr Ashleigh-Jane Thompson ³ , Assistant Professor Julie E. Brice ⁴ , Dr Verity Postlethwaite ⁵ <i>2 Miami University of Ohio, USA, 3 La Trobe University, Bendigo, 4 California State University, Fullerton, USA, 5 Loughborough University, UK</i> |
| <i>Abstract</i> | <p>Beyond its significance for women's football in Australia and the wider Asia-Pacific, the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup (FWWC) is an important component of the so-named "Decade of Green and Gold" for Australian sport. Stretching back to the 2018 Gold Coast Commonwealth Games, and culminating with 2032 Summer Olympics in Brisbane, the next decade will see Australia host at least 16 major international sporting events (ISEs), with further bids in the pipeline. In this paper, we explore the socio-political and geopolitical forces driving this Decade of Green and Gold and discuss its influence on how the 2023 FWWC is framed, organized, and, potentially, experienced. More specifically, we examine how leveraging of the tournament is seen to dovetail with both wider gender equality efforts within Australian sport as well as the rhetoric, aspirations, and strategy of the Decade of Green and Gold. A common trend among hosts of women's international sporting events is to tout the opportunity to positively impact women's and girls' sporting and physical activity practices. Yet, many scholars have shown that such 'trickle down' effects from the event to society are seldom realised, at least within the context of men's and multi-sport ISEs. With organisers continuing in their attempts to leverage ISEs to produce a range of positive impacts, we use the 2023 FWWC as a case study for considering the potential prospects, pitfalls, and challenges involved in attempting to leverage major events to improve societal and sporting opportunities for women and girls. Drawing upon strategy, planning and policy documents, press releases, and media coverage, we adopt a critical discourse analysis approach to understand how tournament leveraging aligns with wider efforts at the state and federal level to develop women's football and 'empower' women and girls through sport more generally. While remaining optimistic about the potential benefits of the 2023 FWWC to catalyse sporting and social change, we consider how the desire to be seen as a 'world leader in women's sport,' potentially depoliticises the issue of gender equality and downplays the power relations that ultimately underpin inequality in Australian sport. When the discourse of 'gender equality' is mobilized as a justification for public investment into elite sport, it is critical to put claims to leadership in advancing women's sporting equality into context and explore whether current championing of women's sporting equality in Australia goes beyond the commodification of feminist ideas to address the broad societal level gender inequalities and structural conditions that preclude women and girls from participating in sport.</p> |

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| Title | Never Surrender: women playing Australian football against the odds in Western Sydney |
| <i>Presenter</i> | Dr Georgina HIBBERD |
| <i>Affiliation</i> | University of Technology Sydney |
| <i>Email</i> | <u>Georgina.Hibberd@uts.edu.au</u> |
| <i>Abstract</i> | <p>In late 2019 and early 2020 I spent a season with the GWS Giants women's team. I was given access to their "inner sanctum" to write a book. I watched them train, prepare for and review games and rehab injuries. I travelled with them, shared meals and sat in the sheds before and after matches. I gained insight rarely granted to those outside of football clubs. In the highly controlled and media-managed world of AFL football, the Giants were uncharacteristically open. By the end of my time at the Giants, I realised they did many things differently.</p> <p>There are many ways to play Australian football. There is no one way to engage in the game that absorbs so much time, attention and money in this country. Every team interprets the game in their own way.</p> <p>The football public has only recently been exposed to the way in which female players, and teams, express the game. The Giants women's team were then and remain football outsiders, even more so than their counterparts in Victorian AFLW teams. Not only are they females playing a sport dominated by men, they play it in a state where it is largely ignored. Media coverage for them, let alone the game at large, is scant. Their club is more often maligned or ignored than loved.</p> <p>Despite this, they put aside careers, families and their future security to play a game.</p> <p>When I started at the Giants, I had one question: why do they do this?</p> <p>In this presentation I will explore the experience of the Giants players and their determination to play football despite being misunderstood and ignored by their city and at times, the league itself. I will also touch on the experience of getting the resulting book – Never Surrender – into the world. When no publisher showed interest, the book and its journey became emblematic of the experience of the Giants women.</p> |

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| Title | Lived experiences of migrant women football players in Australia |
| <i>Presenter</i> | Sarah KARLIK |
| <i>Affiliation</i> | Swinburne University |
| <i>Email</i> | skarlik@swin.edu.au |
| <i>Abstract</i> | <p>With the professionalization and globalization of women's football, the number of players leaving their home country to play in a foreign country has increased significantly (FIFA, 2022). A total of 257 migrant women football player transfers were completed in January 2022; an increase (43%) compared to January 2021. Migrant women football players live and play in a country under a visa. However, most migrant women players do not arrive in a foreign country as athletes under a sporting visa, rather, often as international travelers entering a country under different visa categories such as student or working holiday. With no central repository that records migrant women football player movement and the visa they enter Australia under, it is difficult to determine the number of migrant women football players and how they are entering the country.</p> <p>The pursuit of playing football in another country for remuneration and other non-financial benefits is commonly referred as "Sport Labor Migration" (SLM). SLM is not a new concept; Maguire (1999) classified sport labor migrants into five typologies (pioneers, settler, mercenaries, nomadic cosmopolitans, and returnees), and subsequent studies have expanded on these original typologies of sport migrants (Agergaard, Botelho, & Tiesler 2014; Agergaard, 2008). While the research literature on SLM is male dominated, particularly in men's football (for review see: Magee & Sugden, 2002; Lanfranchi & Taylor, 2001; Maguire & Stead, 1998), there is an under-representation in research literature on SLM women in sport (Skogvang, 2019; Botelho & Agergaard, 2011).</p> <p>The primary objective of this study is to investigate and document the lived experiences of migrant women football players in Australia. This presentation will show preliminary results undertaken in an Australian context. Key preliminary findings include: 1) the total number of migrant women football players is small in comparison to the total playing population in Australia, 2) there is no central repository on the number of migrant women football players or the visa they enter Australia under, and 3) professionalization and globalization of women's football has led to an increase in geographical and cultural diversity of migratory patterns. Further analysis to better understand the phenomenon of SLM for women football players is ongoing. Taken together, these key findings will conclude with a discussion on my research documenting migrant women football players.</p> |

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| Title | The field includes the office: The six pillars of women in sport |
| <i>Presenter</i> | Alana LEABEATER |
| <i>Affiliation</i> | La Trobe University |
| <i>Email</i> | a.leabeater@latrobe.edu.au |
| <i>Collaborators</i> | Dr Anthea Clarke ¹ , Dr Alexandra Roberts ¹ , Dr Clare MacMahon ¹ <i>1 La Trobe University</i> |
| <i>Abstract</i> | <p>In the past 25 years, there has been an exponential growth in women's sport, particularly women's elite sport. Alongside this, there has been a concerted academic focus on the sex data gap in sport and exercise science (Cowley et al., 2021) and a call for increased female participants and female-specific research studies (Bruinvels et al., 2017). However, this myopic attention on women as sportspeople neglects the numerous other "non-playing" positions which women may occupy in both men's and women's sport – including coaches, officials, academics, and support staff – which are equally threatened by the sex data gap in research. Given the history of women in sport, these social and cultural changes demonstrate that 'there has been no better time to be a female athlete' (Lampoon Group, 2021, para 11). Despite this, the idea of 'women in sport' is often narrowly represented as female athletes, particularly elite female athletes. This myopic attention on women as sportspeople neglects the numerous other "non-playing" positions which women may occupy in both men's and women's sport – including coaches, officials, academics, and support staff – which are equally threatened by the sex data gap in research. It is important to acknowledge that while there has been significant advancement in "women's sport", there has been a stagnation of "women in sport" (Palmer, 2019). To comprehensively raise the profile of women in all areas of sport, we must consider the broader realms of their involvement, aside from, or in addition to, their involvement as athletes.</p> <p>The theory and practice of 'whole system working' described by Pratt, Gordon and Plamping (2005) encourages a shift from thinking about the different 'parts' of an organisation or issue, to thinking about the connection between parts and therefore the 'whole'. Similarly, we should approach the advancement of women in sport from a whole system perspective, recognising and drawing upon the experiences of coaches, officials, academics, and support staff, as well as athletes. In this paper, we propose a six-pillar framework of sport to conceptualise the six key areas that women (and men) can contribute to within a sporting organisation or business. These pillars include participants (athletes and research participants of all levels, from grassroots to elite); coaches (all levels and domains of the sport); officials (umpires, referees, ground staff); performance staff (sports scientists, analysts, researchers, and talent scouts); operations (internal management and board members) and business staff (media and marketing staff). We discuss the current state of female representation within each of these pillars and the implications of a lack of diversity within and across sporting organisations. In doing so, we call on researchers, practitioners, and sporting organisations to carefully consider and evaluate the barriers and facilitators influencing women's involvement across six pillars of sport. This change in perspective offers practical value as a form of public sociology, contributing to an improvement in the equity of sport as a whole (Donnelly, 2015).</p> |

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| Title | The growth of women's sports analytics and statistics: Impacting gender equity and social change |
| <i>Presenter</i> | Alyssa LONGMUIR |
| <i>Email</i> | aklongmuir@gmail.com |
| <i>Abstract</i> | <p>The Growth of Women's Sports Analytics and Statistics: Impacting Gender Equity and Social Change</p> <p>The utilization of data-driven decision-making in sports management and coaching has experienced significant growth in recent years. While sports analytics became prominent in the early to mid-2000s, its expansion into women's sports has been comparatively slower. Despite the potential for significant impact on promoting gender equity and empowering women in sports, the growth of women's sports analytics and statistics has been limited. This presentation explores the role of sports analytics and statistics in promoting gender equality and social change in the world of sports.</p> <p>The emergence of sports analytics can be traced back to the early to mid-2000s, largely thanks to the success of Billy Beane and the film Moneyball. Over the past two decades, sports analytics has become an integral part of sports management and coaching.</p> <p>Despite the rapid growth of sports analytics, its adoption in women's sports has been sluggish. This disparity can hinder the progress of gender equity in sports and the empowerment of women. To address this, it is crucial to explore the potential impact of analytics and statistics in women's sports.</p> <p>Women's sports receive less investment and resources compared to men's sports, which impedes the growth of sports analytics in this domain. Moreover, the underrepresentation of women in sports analytics and statistics poses a significant challenge. Insufficient data collection and analysis on women's sports also contribute to this issue, as publicly accessible information and player statistics are often scarce.</p> <p>Data and analysis play a fundamental role in sports, shaping narratives, fan culture, and the overall fan experience. Without robust statistics and analysis, teams struggle to optimize their rosters, journalists face difficulties covering historic seasons accurately, and fans find it challenging to compare players across eras and engage in debates about greatness.</p> <p>Furthermore, data and statistics provide valuable leverage for players during salary negotiations and serve as essential facts for commentators.</p> <p>To foster the growth of women's sports analytics and statistics, several actions are necessary. Firstly, there is a need for a diverse and inclusive workforce that includes more women in sports analytics and data science roles. Secondly, improved data collection methods specific to women's sports are required to provide more comprehensive and accessible statistics. Finally, education and outreach efforts should be undertaken to raise awareness about the importance of women's sports analytics and encourage its integration into the broader sports landscape.</p> <p>Women's sports analytics and statistics have immense potential to advance gender equity and promote social change within the sports industry. However, several challenges, including limited resources, underrepresentation, and inadequate data collection, need to be addressed. By fostering diversity,</p> |

improving data collection methods, and promoting education and outreach, we can pave the way for a more inclusive and data-driven future in women's sports.

This presentation would see the address the above topics, while also providing insight into what the future of statistics and analytics in women's sports could be.

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| Title | The underrepresentation of women's sport in sports economics literature |
| <i>Presenter</i> | Dr Edward MARIYANI-SQUIRE |
| <i>Affiliation</i> | Western Sydney University |
| <i>Email</i> | <u>e.mariyani-squire@westernsydney.edu.au</u> |
| <i>Abstract</i> | <p>This paper addresses two questions: Is women's sport underrepresented in sports economics research? If so, why?</p> <p>First, it is demonstrated that the investigation of women's sport is severely underrepresented in academic discourse on sports economics. This is revealed by a cursory examination of specialist journals, selected handbooks, and textbooks in the subfield of sports economics.</p> <p>Second, the paper speculates on several (potentially rival) explanations for this underrepresentation. These explanations include: the gender imbalance in the economics profession; the alienating masculine representation of sport in society; the androcentric limits of the theoretic and methodological nostrums of the dominant paradigm in economics; and a profane economic incentive structure of the subfield of sports economics itself. These explanations are briefly assessed in turn. It is argued that although none of the explanations are implausible, it is – ironically – a crude economic/materialist explanation of the subfield of sport economics itself lies at the base of the current near invisibility of women's sport in the academic literature.</p> <p>The paper concludes with some brief comments on how these reflections are relevant to women's sport both inside and outside the academy.</p> |

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| Title | Sport and First Nations women: exploring a strengths-based approach to women's sport |
| <i>Presenter</i> | Dr Hazel MAXWELL |
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| <i>Collaborators</i> | Dr Michelle O'Shea ¹ , Dr Sonya Pearce ² , Professor Victoria Paraschak ³ ¹ Western Sydney University, ² University of Technology Sydney, ³ University of Windsor, Canada |
| <i>Abstract</i> | <p>First Nations women in Australia and Canada are often marginalized and excluded from mainstream sport participation and accounts of their athletic achievements often remain unacknowledged. We challenge this situation through the adoption of a strengths- and hope-based approach. This perspective focuses on the strengths demonstrated by Indigenous women as they work to optimize sport participation for themselves and others.</p> <p>The examples presented in our paper demonstrate how Indigenous female athletes leverage their sport participation and accomplishments for reconciliatory agendas and social change.</p> <p>Through a community 'healing' agenda together with acknowledging and contributing to efforts focused on culturally safe integration into mainstream sport systems and/or cultural resurgence via decolonisation, change is emerging. Examples discussed include a critical examination of how recognition of Indigenous histories and cultures through Indigenous Rounds in professional sports leagues might be more meaningfully enabled. Reconciliation Action Plans for major events and tournaments, appropriate Indigenous-centred sporting activities and the promotion of Indigenous athletes as sporting role models are further explored.</p> <p>The actions of Indigenous and non-Indigenous female athletes in these events underlines how through exercising individual agency and a shared responsibility to one another hope can be manifested and inclusive futures realised. It is acknowledged that First Nations women in Australia and Canada have and continue to suffer the impacts of colonisation and the erosion of tribal authority. Reconciliation through sport, between the Anglo-Australian/settler mainstream population in Canada and Australia and Indigenous women can contribute to redressing marginalisation, supporting human rights, and building inclusion.</p> |

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| Title | Gendered cyberhate in Australian women's sport: Effects and impacts |
| <i>Presenter</i> | Dr Caitlin MCGRANE |
| <i>Affiliation</i> | Deakin University |
| <i>Email</i> | caitlin.mcgrane@deakin.edu.au |
| <i>Collaborators</i> | Associate Professor Kim Toffoletti |
| <i>Abstract</i> | <p>Women's sport is increasingly professionalised and visible through traditional and social media. This increased visibility opens up many opportunities—most positive and some negative—for women and gender diverse professional and elite sports athletes. In this paper, we will show how gendered online harassment is affecting professional women's sport athletes in Australia and how they are responding to this abuse. We will make suggestions about what needs to be done to address and prevent it, inviting discussion around this important topic.</p> <p>Research shows that women or gender diverse people who obtain success in public careers or areas traditionally dominated by men can face a great deal of backlash and resistance to their achievements, which can amount to what Jane calls “economic vandalism” (Jane, 2018). Athletes who compete in professional and elite women's sport (who may identify as women or gender diverse) too often experience online harassment that is targeted towards their gender expression or identity. This abuse and harassment can also be intersectional when it is combined with other forms of discrimination including racism, homophobia and transphobia (Litchfield et al., 2018; Toffoletti et al., 2022).</p> <p>While interest in women's experiences of gendered online abuse is growing (Toffoletti et al., 2022), there is a lack of quantitative data about Australian professional and elite women's sports athletes' experiences of gendered online abuse. Much of the existing research has been conducted through discourse or visual analysis of individual sports women (Kavanagh et al., 2019; McCarthy, 2022; Rahikainen & Toffoletti, 2021) or content analysis of social media posts related to women's sport (Pavlidis et al., 2021; Sherwood et al., 2019; Thorpe et al., 2017). These studies show there are gaps in our knowledge about the prevalence of gendered online harassment in women's sport. This paper aims to contribute to addressing these gaps by investigating the experiences and impacts of gendered online harassment on professional or elite women's sports athletes in Australia.</p> <p>The research presented here explores the experiences, impacts and potential responses to gendered online harassment of professional and elite women's sports athletes across Australia. Drawing on survey data, this paper will provide a snapshot of how this harassment is impacting women's sports athletes and suggest some potential approaches to address and prevent such harassment. We invite discussion and deliberation around these proposed interventions to ensure the digital, social and economic wellbeing of women's sport athletes.</p> |

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| Title | The impact of the menstrual cycle on athletes' perceived performance: A narrative review and outlook |
| <i>Presenter</i> | Chelsea OESTER |
| <i>Affiliation</i> | Western Sydney University |
| <i>Email</i> | 22047111@student.westernsydney.edu.au |
| <i>Abstract</i> | <p>In recent years, the participation of women and girls in sports has greatly increased. In high-performance sport, the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games were the first to achieve a 49% rate of female participation (<i>International Olympic Committee</i>, 2021). Despite a recent study indicating that only 6% of the studies done in sport and exercise science research are performed with female participants only (Cowley et al., 2021), an eightfold increase over the last decade in the annual number of publications looking at the impact of the menstrual cycle on athletes has been reported (Hirschberg, 2022).</p> <p>Despite the rise in sports participation, girls and women still tend to drop out more often than boys and men (Eime et al., 2020). Several studies highlighted that sports participation might be influenced by the menstrual cycle (Bruinvels et al., 2021; Datson et al., 2014; Pinel et al., 2022) and women often do not seek help when suffering from debilitating menstrual symptoms, as it is not seen as a legitimate reason for missing any activity (Santer et al., 2008).</p> <p>Research so far has mainly focused on measuring the performance variation during different phases of the menstrual cycle and on the retrospective perception of athletes regarding the impact of the menstrual cycle on their performance. The main findings of these studies are that a high number of athletes perceive to be negatively impacted during certain phases of their menstrual cycle (Armour et al., 2020; Brown et al., 2021; Findlay et al., 2020; McNamara A, 2022; Read et al., 2021), but research objectively measuring performance does not come to a conclusive result (Blagrove et al., 2020; Carmichael et al., 2021; McNulty et al., 2020; Meignie et al., 2021).</p> <p>This narrative review is part of a PhD project and explored the findings of studies investigating the effects of the menstrual cycle on perceived performance in an athletic population and highlighted their limitations. In total, 20 studies with a total of 3773 participants were included in the review. Of them, 16 looked at the perceived impact of the menstrual cycle on athletic performance and four only looked at the menstrual cycle symptoms experienced by athletes.</p> <p>Across the 16 studies looking at the perception of athletes, 29% up to 100% of the athletes perceived that their menstrual cycle or menstruation impacted their performance. This large differences between studies can be attributed to the study design used (longitudinal vs. retrospective and survey vs. semi-structured interviews), level of competition (Tier 1 to Tier 5), sport, sample size (12 – 1086 participants), and cultural differences.</p> <p>To optimize performance and increase participation of female athletes, longitudinal studies to identify a robust benchmark as to the extent to which the menstrual cycle impacts sports performance and participation is required. This benchmark will allow to determine the impact of any future intervention strategies.</p> |

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| Title | Breaking menstrual taboos: blood work and elite women's sport advocacy |
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| <i>Collaborators</i> | Dr Hazell Maxwell ¹ , Dr Kylie Steel ¹ <i>1 Western Sydney University</i> |
| <i>Abstract</i> | <p>While the continued professionalisation of women's sport has cast an important light on the performance, health and wellbeing of female athletes', their high-performance training protocols have and often continue to be modified off the back of research centred on male subject participants (Emmonds, Heyward & Jones 2019). This tendency is problematic as it does not consider the changes both physically and psychologically that female athletes may experience at each phase of the menstrual cycle (Areta, Taylor & Koehler 2021; Brown, Knight & Forrest 2021 & Armour et al 2020). Notably, some effort is being made at a domestic and international level with growing interest in research grounded on female participants (Smith et al 2022). In the domestic context the Australian Institute of Sports (AIS) 'Female Performance & Health Initiative' is contributing to the advancement of system wide knowledge aimed at progressing evidence-based framework for female athletes' performance and their wellbeing (AIS 2019). From the grassroots through to high performance pathways a roadmap is being carved out that no longer casts female athletes as small men (Pitchers & Elliot-Sale 2019). One key aspect of this initiative and the focus of our research in progress is relevant to menstruation.</p> <p>Growing focussed research and directed funding is illuminating the complex issues relevant to elite female athlete health, performance, and menstruation (Forsyth 2022). Often athletes elect to use birth control products to manage their periods and often only use the pills that suppress bleeding. Cessation of periods (Amenorrhoea) owing to the rigours of intense training while once considered normal by coaches and indeed a 'badge of honour' among female athletes themselves is being questioned. These views and practices have been perpetuated through elite sport cultures and their long-term physiological and psychological health impacts are continuing to emerge (Gimunová 2022; Holmes 2021; Schofield 2020; Armour et al). Through tracking female athletes' menstrual cycles important findings are emerging relevant to injury and conditions such as Relative Energy Deficiency in Sport (RED-S). A condition that can affect elite and non-elite athletes and characterised by low energy availability due to a calorie deficit is often tied to disordered eating (Langbein 2021) and can lead to irreparable damage when untreated.</p> <p>Cultural changes prioritising female athlete health and well-being together with data and information networks are building knowledge and enhanced agency among female elite athletes. Albeit an additional labour many are drawing on this knowledge through awareness raising and advocacy in ways that are breaking silences, shame and taboo within and beyond the sport landscape. The need for continued research and awareness raising is currently confounded by the inadequate resources devoted to educating women and girls about menstruation through their life course (Armour et al 2019; Curry et al 2022) and an issue that needs to be further understood through a consideration of female athletes' diverse cultural and religious beliefs (Ussher et al. 2012). It is here that we position our analysis of the</p> |

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| | media discourse to understand how and why elite female athletes are advocating and advancing menstrual knowledge and to what end. |
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| Title | Gendered experiences of interpersonal violence and disclosure in Australia community sport |
| <i>Presenter</i> | Dr Aurélie PANKOWIAK |
| <i>Affiliation</i> | Victoria University |
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| <i>Collaborators</i> | Professor Mary N. Woessner, Dr Emma Kavanagh, Dr Sylvie Parent, Tine Vertommen, Professor Rochelle Eime, Professor Ramon Spaaij, Dr Jack Harvey, Professor Alexandra G Parker |
| <i>Abstract</i> | <p>Introduction: Australia is a leading nation in youth sport participation with over 60% of children (under 18 years) participating in organized sport or physical activity outside of school at least once per week. While research demonstrates the mental, physical and social benefits of sport participation for children for these benefits to be actualized the sport environment must be emotionally and physically safe. Failures to safeguard children from violence in sport is a poignant and pressing issue in sport, and the limited available evidence suggests the experience of violence in sport is gendered. Elucidating the gendered experience of violence (both in terms of frequencies of violence and frequencies disclosing those experiences) could further inform targeted prevention efforts and positively influence girls' sport participation.</p> <p>Method: The Violence Towards Athletes Questionnaire (VTAQ) was administered online to a convenience sample of Australian adults (>18 years) who were asked to retrospectively report their experiences of violence during childhood community sport in Australia. The survey allows for the identification of experiences of all forms of violence (psychological, physical, sexual and neglect) as well delineation of perpetrators (peers, coaches and parents). Those that indicated having experienced violence were then asked if they disclosed that experience to an adult, and, if so, which adult.</p> <p>Results: Our results indicated that 82% of respondents had experienced violence during childhood participation in sport. Women respondents reported significantly higher rates of both sexual violence ($p=0.039$) and sexual harassment ($p=0.027$) as children in sport compared to men. Women also reported higher rates of neglect specifically from parents or coaches ($p<0.001$) and sexual harassment and sexual abuse with contact from a coach ($p<0.05$) compared to men. Individuals identifying as gender diverse had higher rates of most types of violence compared to both men and women combined. Disclosure rates for any type of violence across both genders were low (<45%). For girls the rate of disclosing to a coach in the case of either peer violence (39.1%) or parent violence (8.1%) was significantly lower than for boys (both >50%).</p> <p>Conclusion: The results of this study highlight some key considerations for researchers, sport stakeholders and policy makers. Many respondents reported experiences of IV in sport, and while the rates of overall violence were similar between genders, there was a gendered experience in the type of violence experience and to whom this was disclosed to. Our study suggests that it is important for prevention and response policies to take into consideration the gendered experience of IV, considering interventions and initiatives that speak to the specific experiences of girls in sport (higher rates of sexually based violence) and target parents as key first-responders to disclosures of experiences of violence in sport</p> |

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| Title | Towards improving the safety and wellbeing of women in sport |
| <i>Presenter</i> | Professor Alex PARKER |
| <i>Affiliation</i> | Victoria University |
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| <i>Collaborators</i> | Dr Michaela Pascoe ¹ , Dr Aurelie Pankowiak ¹ , Dr Mary Woessner ¹ , Associate Professor Camilla Brockett ¹ <i>¹Institute for Health and Sport, Victoria University</i> |
| <i>Abstract</i> | <p>Introduction: There is a critical need to address the significant gaps in data and knowledge about the mental health and wellbeing of women athletes in Australia. Although limited, the available emerging evidence indicates that women athletes are exposed to specific stressors that are different to men athletes. These include a greater exposure to interpersonal violence (psychological, physical or sexual), which can result in a myriad of acute and long-lasting issues; inequities such as pay disparities, under-representation in the media, fewer opportunities in leadership positions; and the challenges associated with family planning, pregnancy, returning to sport and parenting. The primary aims of the research investigation were to i) determine the mental health and wellbeing status of women elite and semi elite athletes (athletes who are financially supported by a sporting organisation or are paid to train and compete in their sport); ii) identify and understand the experienced psychosocial stressors; and iii) report on safety and exposure to violence in sport.</p> <p>Methods: A mixed methods approach of an online survey that included standardised measures, as well as purpose-developed tools, to collect data on sociodemographic, mental health, wellbeing, support and coping, and safety variables, followed by semi-structured interviews with a subset of survey respondents that provided an in-depth exploration of athletes' personal experiences of financial security. Only survey data will be reported here.</p> <p>Results: The online survey of 39 women athletes, with an average age of 24 years, across three major national sports demonstrated a range of mental health and safety concerns. Nearly 60% of respondents reported symptoms of psychological distress that indicated a likely mental health condition, 50% reported symptoms consistent with diagnosable depression, and 60% reported anxiety symptoms that were at least mild in severity. Half of the respondents reported exposure to interpersonal violence across their lifetime of involvement in sport. Of these, 28% reported experiencing physical violence and 27% reported experiencing sexual violence (harassment or assault). Participants who reported exposure to violence reported higher rates of risky drinking, lower satisfaction with life, and higher rates of mental health concerns. A third indicated they had just enough money to make ends meet.</p> <p>Conclusion: While the results of this small study need to be interpreted with caution, the findings demonstrate Australian women athletes experience significant levels of mental health concerns and these are associated with exposure to violence in sport. The survey findings have the potential to inform policies, strategies and programs to maximise the wellbeing and safety of women athletes.</p> |

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| Title | Professional development for women coaches: A case study of a women's only performance pathway coaching course |
| <i>Presenter</i> | Kate PERRY |
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| <i>Collaborators</i> | Roberts ¹ , Lidums ¹ , Morley ¹ , Donaldson ¹ , Huyn ¹ , Rynne ² , Mallett ² , Cotton ³ , O'Connor ³ , and Turner ⁴ <i>1La Trobe University; 2University of Sydney; 3Australian Institute of Sport; 4University of Queensland</i> |
| <i>Abstract</i> | <p>"I've always felt like I'm not enough in the coaching world": A case study of professional development for Australian women pathway coaches.</p> <p>Over the past decade, the number of women in high-performance and performance pathways coaching roles has increased, yet they are still severely under-represented in the Australian system (Australian Institute of Sport, 2023; Leabeater et al., 2023; Roberts et al., 2022). There have been several proposed solutions to the coaching gender gap, and one common suggestion is to provide women-only coach education and development opportunities (LaVoi & Dutove, 2012). The Australian Institute of Sport (AIS) has made a commitment to reaching gender equality in coaching roles by 2032, and one component of this plan is the delivery of women-specific education and development.</p> <p>The AIS Elevate Coach program is a professional development program designed for Australian Performance Pathway Coaches in Olympic, Paralympic and Commonwealth sports. A key feature of the program is that each delivery is different and tailored specifically to the needs of the coaches (National Athlete Categorisation Framework, AIS, 2023). In 2021, a women-only cohort was targeted. This cohort included 27 coaches across 19 different sports, all coaching athletes categorised on the National Athlete Categorisation Framework (AIS, n.d.). The learning outcomes of the course were developed using concept mapping (Morley et al., 2022), and included topics such as Coach as a Leader, Stakeholder Engagement, Performance Psychology, Athlete Development and Coach Wellbeing. Throughout the course, qualitative data were collected through coaches' participation in course activities (including an 12 week action research project) and structured interviews. Data were analysed thematically, with the aim to discuss the effectiveness of an online course in supporting the development of women coaches.</p> <p>This presentation will discuss the barriers faced by women in Australian pathways coaching, and how professional development can be used to better support women in facing these challenges. Coaches in our cohort faced many of the (unfortunately) common challenges experienced by women in coaching, including a lack of confidence and gender opportunity gaps. Many participants articulated that being in an all-women group provided them with a strong ongoing network and provided them with alternative career trajectory modes. It also facilitated a safe environment for participants to expand their boundaries and take on challenges, leading to increased confidence in their daily training environments. The shared experiences of women in the cohort allowed for rapport to develop quickly, with many participants indicating that they valued the women-only approach.</p> |

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| | <p>Participants in the AIS Elevate Coach women cohort reported that they felt comfortable and confident to engage within the online learning environment, and that they valued the connection with other women coaches across sports. The co-creation of content ensured that the learning outcomes were relevant and tailored to the explicit needs and challenges faced by this group. This facilitated both new learning and further confidence building through reinforcement that they are “on the right track”. Future coach development offerings should consider the benefits of women-only groups.</p> |
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| Title | Tackling tradition: Investigating the evolution of women's rugby league in the eyes of fans |
| <i>Presenter</i> | Dr Jess RICHARDS |
| <i>Affiliation</i> | Western Sydney University |
| <i>Email</i> | j.richards@westernsydney.edu.au |
| <i>Collaborators</i> | Associate Professor Daniela Spanjaard ¹ <i>1University of Technology Sydney</i> |
| <i>Abstract</i> | <p>The National Rugby League Women's competition (NRLW) was established in 2018 as a pathway for elite female rugby league players in Australia. Since its inception, the NRLW has grown rapidly in popularity and participation, with more teams and players joining the competition each year. As the NRLW continues to gain traction, it is important to understand the experiences of those involved in and around the competition, particularly the experiences of fans attending live games. This paper aims to explore the perceptions and experiences of NRLW fans, examining how they perceive the value of the sport and what their experiences have been attending live games. By examining the lived experiences of NRLW fans, we hope to shed light on the broader social and cultural significance of women's rugby league and contribute to ongoing efforts to promote and expand the NRLW competition. Given the ongoing challenges faced by women's sports in terms of media coverage, funding, and visibility, understanding fan experiences and perceptions can play an important role in promoting greater support and investment for women's sports more broadly.</p> <p>The sport of Rugby League has been conventionally viewed as a representation of hegemonic masculinity in the Australian context. The establishment of a national women's competition was seen as a potential avenue for challenging the entrenched gender norms within the sport. However, it is noteworthy that the marketing strategy adopted by the National Rugby League Women's (NRLW) competition differs substantially from that of other national competitions such as netball, which emphasizes the values of friendship and a family-friendly image of the sport. In contrast, the NRLW's marketing approach seems to emulate that of the men's competition, with a focus on physicality and masculinity. This strategy suggests that the NRL is applying a consistent approach to the marketing of its men's and women's competitions, which may have broader implications for the gendered culture of the sport.</p> <p>Drawing on sociological theories of fan culture we conducted semi-structured interviews with 30 NRLW fans to understand their motivations for attending games, their perceptions of the quality of play, and their experiences of fan culture within the NRLW community. Our findings suggest that whilst the NRLW was only established in 2018 and is still in its early stages, fans view the competition as an important step forward for women's rugby league and see it as a valuable addition to the overall NRL brand. However, fans expressed concerns about the limited media coverage and visibility of the competition, which they feel limits its potential growth and impact. In terms of live attendance, fans report positive experiences overall, with many highlighting the sense of community they feel within the NRLW fan base. However, fans also noted challenges related to access and inclusion, particularly in terms of the limited availability of NRLW games and the lack of family-friendly facilities at some venues. Overall, this research aims to contribute to the broader discourse around women's sport and fan culture, by providing insights into the experiences and perceptions of fans of a rapidly growing women's sporting competition.</p> |

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| Title | Obstruction: The archetypal Australian netballer as a barrier to social change. |
| <i>Presenter</i> | Bess SCHNIOFFSKY |
| <i>Affiliation</i> | RMIT University |
| <i>Email</i> | bess.schnioffsky@rmit.edu.au |
| <i>Abstract</i> | <p>Netball is in a rare position within the sporting context as a space that has been historically dominated by women. However, as more opportunities open for women in a wider array of sports and activities, netball is no longer seen as the sport for Australian women and girls.</p> <p>In this presentation I consider netball at this turning point, addressing some of the barriers within netball as a truly inclusive sporting space for Australian women. This presentation builds on my PhD project on white femininity in Australian netball, in which I collected data through an historical analysis and interviews with 25 Victorian netballers. Many of the participants identified the image of an Australian netballer as blonde, lean, and (fake) tanned, implicit in this expected image is a socially acceptable version of white femininity in netball. Drawing on both a critical whiteness and intersectional feminist lens, I explore the relationship between gender, race, and sport in Australia. Here, I turn the focus to consider how racial and gendered expectations act as a representation barrier, recalling the adage “you can’t be what you can’t see.” The reproduction and dominance of an unmarked white feminine norm in Australian netball can lead to those few non-white netballers who do succeed describe being exposed to implicit, systemic, and explicit racism within netball and feeling like netball “space invaders” (Puwar, 2004) within a predominantly white and feminine sporting space. In this presentation, I argue that for social change to occur within Australian netball white netballers need to “think through race” (Frankenberg 2002) to be more aware of the systemic racism within the game and their position of structural advantage. Ultimately, I advocate for a re-imagining of who gets to be seen as an Australian netballer.</p> |

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| Title | Is turnover is hurting the management of women's football? Exploring the creative process engagement for relevant stakeholders |
| <i>Presenter</i> | Dr Natalie SMITH |
| <i>Affiliation</i> | East Tennessee State University |
| <i>Email</i> | SmithNL4@etsu.edu |
| <i>Abstract</i> | <p>While the desire to replicate the commercial success of men's football is logical, research indicates excessive mimetic isomorphism lacks the context-specific considerations that engagement in innovation and creativity do (Fortin & Oliver, 2016). Events such as the FIFA Women's World Cup could be a place where those in women's football to exercise their creativity. However, the sport industry has an employee turnover issue (Popp et al., 2022). This is of particular concern for the women's football context because to generate creative ideas, it has been theorized domain-relevant skills and intrinsic motivation are fundamental (Amabile, 2013).</p> <p>Without creativity, implementing new ideas may not effectively consider the unique elements of a specific organization or context (Smith & Green, 2020). Most simply put, creativity within management can be defined as an idea new and useful to the unit of measure, whether that be an individual employee, the organization, or the industry itself (Smith & Green, 2020). While some assume creativity is an innate trait, the production of creative ideas in the workplace has been theorized and empirically-tested as a combination of motivation, relevant skills, and engagement in the creative process (Amabile, 2013). Engagement in the creative process has further been broken up into three stages: problem identification, information searching and encoding, and idea generation (Amabile, 2013). Many have lumped the creative process together (Zhang & Bartol, 2010), but research in sport management indicates they are unique stages that are influenced differently within organizations (Smith & Green, 2020). By better understanding how employees engage with this process, we can assist organizations in improving the efficacy of this process.</p> <p>This project used an integrative mixed methodology (Morgan, 2014). This researcher spent 3 months in one of the host cities, engaging with and interacting with the community and stakeholders surrounding the FIFA WWC. As an expert in creative process engagement and an attendee of six FIFA Women's World Cup, this researcher provided information and co-engaged in the creative process with several relevant stakeholders. Field notes were taken during the process (Emerson et al., 2011) and could be considered a semi-informal action research (Green, 1997). To provide richer data and opportunity to understand the specific organizational creativity framework, the stakeholders were also interviewed (Flanders et al., 2020). This research presentation is the initial findings from a larger research project related creativity and the FIFA WWC. This method is in line with previous sport management research on the creative process as a complex process requiring more in-depth methodologies (Flanders et al., 2020; Smith & Green, 2020).</p> <p>Initial findings indicate networks of support are fundamental to information searching & encoding, but a lack of domain-relevant skills and/or work experience is a determinant to the creative process engagement. Particularly for women's football knowledge holders, turnover hinders the ability for organizations to engage creatively in leveraging events such as the FIFA Women's World Cup. Additional findings and recommendations for sport organizations will be presented.</p> |

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| Title | Developing elite trans sport policy: gender inclusive sport and how to get there |
| <i>Presenter</i> | Dr Ryan STORR |
| <i>Affiliation</i> | Swinburne University of Technology |
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| <i>Abstract</i> | <p>The inclusion of trans athletes in sport has emerged as one of the most widely debated topics in recent years, at the intersection of sport, gender, and human rights. Current elite policy responses to globalised debates are grounded in narratives and paradigms of exclusion, often pitting the rights of transgender women against cisgender women.</p> <p>Given such policies impact sport globally from grassroots to elite levels, stakeholders are calling for alternative interventions that can break through the perceived 'level playing field' and fairness/inclusion dichotomy, and upholding the right to sports participation of transgender women. Polarising debates have occurred in sport policy making circles with claims that fairness cannot co-exist and be balanced with inclusion, and fairness (for cisgender women athletes) will always come first. How sports organisations are grappling and dealing with this issue, and creating trans athlete policies, is not well understood from an academic perspective (Stewart et al, 2021).</p> <p>In this presentation, the current landscape and evidence base surrounding elite trans sport policies will be discussed, within the context of gender inclusive sport. Gender inclusive sport is understood as "sport that is inclusive and affirming of—and safe for—all women and sex and gender minoritized people, regardless of whether their bodies, gender expression, and/or identity align neatly with normative notions of the female/male binary (Becker, Storr et al., 2023). What the new IOC framework on 'Fairness, Inclusion, and Non-Discrimination on the basis of Gender Identity and Sex Variations' means for Australian National Sport Organisations, in both theory and practice will also be explored.</p> <p>Initial observations across global sport have seen some International Federations resist the framework, in adopting blanket bans for all transgender women in elite sporting competition (such as World Rugby, and FINA). Drawing on a multi-disciplinary theoretical analysis, adopting perspectives and frameworks from both sport management (Stewart et al, 2021; Buzuvis, 2021) and sport sociology and social sciences (Pape et al, 2022; Ahmed, 2016; Anderson & Travers, 2017; Burke, 2022), the presentation will explore and analyse how sports organisations in Australia can develop and enact their elite trans policies.</p> <p>The supposed impasse between "women's rights" and the inclusion of trans and gender diverse people in women's sport is challenged and a proposal that it is possible for sports organizations to pursue a win-win gender inclusive (and equitable) vision of sport: sport that is inclusive and affirming of sex and gender minoritized people, coupled with the remaining work needed to end pervasive gender inequality in sport.</p> |

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| Title | It doesn't happen by magic: creatively exploring the process of changemaking in sport by capturing the magic in the voice of the change makers. |
| <i>Presenter</i> | Dr Kasey SYMONS |
| <i>Affiliation</i> | Swinburne University of Technology |
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| <i>Collaborators</i> | Dr Catherine Ordway ¹ ¹ University of Canberra |
| <i>Abstract</i> | <p>Football, the world's most popular sport, carries a legacy of gender exclusion. Women were banned from playing in many jurisdictions and remain largely absent from its leadership. Implicit and/or conscious biases perpetuate the under-development and under-resourcing of the women's game, and the under-representation of women in decision-making roles: "The long-standing lack of women in positions of responsibility in the football community means there have been limited voices to advocate for change" (FIFA Women's Football Strategy 2018). In parallel, allegations of corruption have accompanied football, its officials, and its governing bodies (including the international federation, FIFA) for many years, with limited progress or accountability. In May 2015, the raids and arrest of senior FIFA officials triggered a corruption crisis, which provided the impetus for structural change. In the ensuing chaos, FIFA faced an overwhelming imperative for reform. At FIFA's Congress in February 2016, a number of Statute amendments were approved, reflecting a growing acknowledgement and commitment to women in football.</p> <p>This paper provides an insider's view through co-author, Moya Dodd, one of the first women on FIFA's Executive Committee. During the corruption crisis of 2015, she submitted reform proposals and gave voice to the broader community of support for gender reforms in FIFA. We show the power of including lived experience through autoethnographic and reflective writing practice in formal evaluations of policy change for women in sport. Additionally, we encourage more practitioners to include creative writing practice/s to give voice to those driving change and highlight the process by which progress towards gender equality was, and can be, achieved, as it doesn't happen by magic.</p> |

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| Title | Inclusive, inviting, inspiring—Insights into the experiences of women’s football fans in Australia and Germany |
| <i>Presenter</i> | Dr Kasey SYMONS |
| <i>Affiliation</i> | Swinburne University of Technology |
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| <i>Collaborators</i> | Junior Professor Christiana Schallhorn, Junior Professor Jessica Kunert <i>1Johannes Gutenberg-Universität Mainz</i> |
| <i>Abstract</i> | <p>Despite growing interest in women’s football, limited research exists on its fans. The experiences of men are often privileged in football, thus we present findings from women’s football culture against the background of hegemonic masculinity, demonstrating how the space counteracts this concept. We developed an online survey for fans located in Australia and Germany to explore motivations and perceived differences in the culture of women’s football compared to men’s football in the lead up to the FIFA 2023 Women’s World Cup. Both Australia and Germany’s national women’s teams are experiencing recent success and growing attention, creating an opportunity to compare the fan experiences of women’s football in different international settings against the backdrop of these gains at the elite and grassroots level. We focused on the online (social media, broadcast etc.), experience and offline (in stadium, in-person events) to determine how fans interact and experience their football fandom and what are some of the barriers to expressing fandom. Our findings identified fans value: (1) the authentic character of women’s football, (2) the strong bond between teams, players, and fans, (3) the stadium as a safe space, (4) the friendly atmosphere in the stadium, and (5) less commercialisation, mediatisation and professionalisation.</p> <p>This paper discusses these findings from fans of women’s football in Australia and Germany and contextualises these themes within a women’s sporting environment which is pushing for equality and professionalisation while also navigating the need to protect elements of the sport that fans hold dear.</p> <p><u>Keywords</u>: fans, hegemonic masculinity, women’s football, Australia, Germany.</p> |

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| Title | Shredding conventions: Women and non-binary skateboarders growing sustainable futures and cultures of caring |
| <i>Presenter</i> | Dr Indigo WILLING |
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| <i>Abstract</i> | <p>Skateboarding is rapidly transforming, both as a subculture and now a high-performance sport that includes being in the Olympics. Notably, there is an increase in the participation of women and non-binary skaters.</p> <p>Accompanying these transformations is also a rise in skaters who promote and push for social change. Rather than just asking for inclusion into scenes traditionally dominated by men, ‘non-traditional’ skaters are reshaping and rebuilding skating, drawing on approaches from DIY and alternative cultures, grassroots networks, and community collectives and with critical points of reflection including on intersectionality. While there is growing attention on issues such as equity in competitions, pay parity, media representation and professional skate career opportunities, this paper is interested in a lesser explored but no less important set of issues. The discussion explores community strategies and action-orientated leadership by ‘non-traditional’ skateboarders to promote sustainability and care for the environment.</p> <p>This paper is an occasion to identify some of the main environmental issues plus key figures, approaches, and initiatives for change. Recommendations will also be shared on how skateboarding, and similar lifestyle and action sports, can become ‘greener’ and ‘cleaner’ and a thriving part of sustainable cities we all hope to live in and ensure for future generations.</p> |

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| Title | Social capital development for migrant background women and girls through community sport: extending the discourse with an applied intersectional lens. |
| <i>Presenter</i> | Dana YOUNG |
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| <i>Collaborators</i> | Associate Professor Karen Block ¹ and Professor Lisa Gibbs ¹ <i>¹Melbourne School of Population and Global Health, The University of Melbourne</i> |
| <i>Abstract</i> | <p>Theoretically social capital draws together the concepts of social networks, support, integration, and social cohesion. Globally, research has shown that sports participation has had a role to play in the inclusion and integration of people from migrant and minority ethnic groups in their destination country. Therefore, it is often assumed that participation in community-based sport can facilitate the development of social capital through the mechanism of diverse social interactions and subsequent access to resources and opportunities.</p> <p>Elements of social capital (i.e. social trust, reciprocity, engaged citizenship) are experienced differently however, depending on age, gender, race, ethnicity and class. Taking a mixed methods approach, this PhD research seeks to explore the experiences of women and adolescent girls from migrant and minority ethnic groups in Melbourne, Australia participating at local sport clubs, the characteristics of any social capital developed and the contextual factors that influence social capital generation. This paper will discuss applying an intersectional lens to this research to firstly take stock of the significance of sports participation to the lives of women and girls from diverse backgrounds in Australia; and to consider the impact and influence of overlapping systems of discrimination and power on developing social connections and potential social capital. Data collection methods include interviews, social capital network mapping and a cross-sectional survey.</p> |