‘TAKING THE NEXT STEP’: THE ROLE OF SOCIAL CAPITAL IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF WOMEN’S FOOTBALL PLAYERS IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA

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Presented in fulfilment of the requirements of the
Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

March 2011

TABLE of CONTENTS

Summary **6**
Declaration **7**
Acknowledgement **8**
Chapter 1 ..... **9**
Introduction: social capital and the development of women's football players in South Australia **9**
1.1 Study background 15
1.1.1 Governance of South Australian women's football 16
1.1.1.1 Main implications of recent restructuring 20
1.1.2 'Taking the next step' 23
1.2 Conceptual framework and approach 28
1.2.1 Conceptualisation of social capital 31
1.3 Concluding remarks 33
Chapter 2 ..... **36**
Methodology **36**
2.1 The project design 36
2.1.2 Defining the field 37
2.1.3 Quantitative and qualitative research methods 39
2.2 Gathering and analysing data 41
2.2.1 SAWSA database 43
2.2.2 Interviews 44
2.2.3 Questionnaire survey 50
2.3 Summary 53
Chapter 3 ..... **54**
Literature review: a theoretical framework for social capital and development in sport **54**
3.1 Social capital 55
3.1.1 Main conceptualisations 55
3.1.1.1 Bourdieu 56
3.1.1.2 Coleman 58
3.1.1.3 Putnam 59
3.1.2 Approaches to social capital 60
3.1.3 'Bonding' and 'bridging' social capital 62
3.1.4 Negative social capital 64
3.1.5 Social networks 65
3.1.6 Measuring social capital 67
3.1.7 Applications of social capital 68
3.1.7.1 Community 69
3.1.7.2 Public health 70
3.1.7.3 Education and learning 71
3.1.7.4 Economic development 71
3.1.7.5 Career success 72
3.2 Sport studies 73
3.2.1 Sport geography 75
3.2.2 Sport and identity 77
3.2.3 Talent development and identification in sport 79
3.3 Social capital and sport 80
3.4 Summary 83

Chapter 4 ..... **85**
The South Australian women's football community and system **85**
4.1 The South Australian women's football community 86
4.1.1 The imagined women's football community 88
4.1.2 The virtual women's football community 90
4.1.3 Factors of inclusion and exclusion 92
4.1.3.1 Ethnic, cultural and sexual factors 93
4.1.3.2 Socio-economic factors 97
4.2 The South Australian women's football system 98
4.2.1 The school system 100
4.2.2 The club system 102
4.2.3 The state system 106
4.3 Concluding remarks 109
Chapter 5 ..... **112**
Beyond recreation: from informal and school football to women's football clubs **112**
5.1 Personal networks 113
5.1.1 Influence of family members 114
5.1.2 Influence of acquaintances 119
5.2 Communal networks 123
5.2.1 Club networks 123
5.2.1.1 Intra-club networks 124
5.2.1.2 Extra-club networks 127
5.2.2 Institutional networks 129
5.2.3 Local community networks: the example of Mount Gambier 132
5.2.3.1 Local schools 136
5.3 Concluding remarks 138
Chapter 6 ..... **142**
From club to state women's football **142**
6.1 Club networks 143
6.1.1 Extra-club networks 144
6.1.1.1 Networks among players 146
6.1.1.2 Networks among coaches 149
6.1.2 Intra-club networks 153
6.1.2.1 Bonds within club squads 155
6.2 State networks 157
6.2.1 Bonds within state squads 158
6.2.2 Networks between football institutions 160
6.3 Family and community networks 164
6.4 Concluding remarks 167
Chapter 7 ..... **170**
From state to national women's football **170**
7.1 Bonds within squads 171
7.1.1 Bonds within state squads 172
7.1.2 Bonds within national squads 178
7.2 Cross-system networks 181
7.3 Concluding remarks 186
Chapter 8 ..... **189**
Conclusions **189**
8.1 Summary of findings 190
8.1.1 Positive effects of social capital 191

8.1.2 Negative consequences of social capital 196
8.2 Theoretical and practical implications 200
8.2.1 Main theoretical implications 200
8.2.2 Main practical considerations 202
8.3 Concluding remarks 204
APPENDIX 208
A.1 Semi-structured interviews 208
A.1.1 Content of documents used to recruit interview respondents 208
A.1.1.1 Opening e-mail to potential interview participants 208
A.1.1.2 Letter of introduction from supervisor to potential interview participants 209
A.1.1.3 Information sheet for potential interview participants 210
A.1.1.4 Consent form for participation in interview process 211
A.1.2 Base questionnaire used for semi-structured interviews 212
A.2 Questionnaire survey 216
A.2.1 Content of documents used to recruit survey respondents 216
A.2.1.1 Letter of introduction from supervisor to potential survey respondents 216
A.2.1.2 Letter of endorsement from SAWSA 218
A.2.1.3 Information sheet for potential survey respondents 219
A.2.1.4 Parental consent form for potential survey respondents 220
A.2.2 Questionnaire survey form 221
LIST OF REFERENCES: 224

LIST of TABLES

1.1: Institutions of women's football in South Australia 20
2.1: Four types of triangulation to verify and validate qualitative analysis 40
2.2: Stages of data collection 41
3.1: 'Resource' and 'civic' approaches to social capital 62
3.2: Summary of sport-related research fields 74

LIST of FIGURES

1.1: South Australian women's football regions 14
1.2: Typical career pathway of South Australian elite women's football players 27
2.1: 'Tree nodes' created with NVivo 49
4.1: South Australian women's football systems and institutional connections 99

LIST of ACRONYMS

AIS	Australian Institute of Sport
FFA	Football Federation Australia
FFSA	Football Federation South Australia
FIFA	Fédération Internationale de Football Association (International Federation of Association Football)
LGA	Local Government Area
SAPSASA	South Australian Primary School Amateur Sport Association
SASI	South Australian Sports Institute
SAWSA	South Australian Women's Soccer Association
SEWFA	South East Women's Football Association
SSSSA	Secondary School Sport South Australia
WBSA	Western Border Soccer Association

Summary

There are several ways to look at the relationship between social capital and sport. While participation in sport can be seen as a vehicle of social capital accumulation, social capital arising from social relationships within a sporting community can be seen as a factor contributing to the development of players. This thesis explores the relationship between social capital and the development of elite South Australian female football (soccer) players. The central hypothesis is that social capital can play an important role in facilitating or undermining the technical development of players and their career opportunities. The aim of the study is to provide examples of how social capital accruing to both players and sporting organisations can ultimately affect the state output of elite players. The thesis contributes to the body of knowledge on social capital by offering a new perspective on the relationship between social capital and sport and a conceptual framework for further research on social capital as a factor of athletes' development. The project is designed as an intensive research project drawing on the analysis of largely qualitative data. Research methods are both quantitative and qualitative, and include database analysis, semi-structured interviews and a questionnaire survey. This work is of interest to sporting organisations wishing to widen their approach to talent development. In particular, its results can find practical applications in policies to strengthen connections and increase the resourcefulness of relationships across and within sporting institutions in Australia.

Declaration

I certify that this thesis does not incorporate without acknowledgement any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any university; and that to the best of my knowledge and belief it does not contain any material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text.

Edoardo G.F. Rosso

Acknowledgement

I acknowledge the great help provided by my principal supervisor, Ass. Prof. Clive Forster, whose guidance, expertise, encouragement and enthusiasm contributed immensely to this project. I also acknowledge the ongoing help and support provided by my secondary supervisor, Prof. Iain Hay, who enthusiastically engaged with the project, helped me for its duration, and completed the best team of supervisors that a PhD candidate could ask for. Thank you very much.

Thank you to the staff and fellow PhD candidates of Geography, Population and Environmental Management of Flinders University, and in particular, Dr. Beverly Clarke and Dr. Jonathan Sobels, who helped me testing ideas and gaining perspectives. Thank you also to Mr. Stephen Fildes, who provided precious help for the realisation of the map included in Chapter 1.

A special acknowledgement must go to all those who participated in the interviews and in the questionnaire that made this project possible. In particular, a great thank you to Ms. Wendy Carter, Mr. Kevin McCormack, Mr. Scott Dickson and Mr. Stuart Birch for their enthusiasm and the help they provided to access further respondents.

Finally, special recognition should go to my wife, companion and immense source of inspiration, Dr. Sara King, who supported me throughout this experience and played a major part in helping me become who I am today.

Thank you all.