

AUSSIE RULES

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A new world of football

It is hardly to find a place in the world in which the concept of football is as friendly and diverse as it is in Australia because there are 4 different ways to describe about Australian football depend on who you are talking with and which state you are in Australia. It could be Aussie Rules (Australian Football League: AFL), Rugby with Rugby Federation (Separated from Rugby Union in the early 20 century, holding the National Rugby League tournament from March to October) or Rugby Union and soccer but most Europeans call as 'football.'

So, while in most of the world's languages, the word 'football' is used the same as 'soccer', in Australia, 'football' and 'soccer' are described two completely different sports. 'Soccer' is for football as we commonly known: the game on the ground with a round ball, players are only allowed to use their feet (except goalkeeper). On the other hand, 'football' is football or footy in Australia.

Aussie Rules developed in Melbourne in the 19 century. It is the leading sport in Australia so as in Victoria, it is almost like a religion, and Melbourne (state capital of Victoria) where there are 10 professional teams. The city is known as 'the home of footy'. Aussie Rules is also very popular in other places such as Sydney, Adelaide, Perth and Brisbane and there are teams that are supported by AFL. The federation contains 16 teams who will play 22 home and away matches from March to September every year. The final four weeks is one of the biggest sporting events in the country. This is also the federation which has the largest number of participants in Australia.

Basically, Aussie Rules is very similar to Rugby (Vietnamese name of football) because they both use oval ball and two teams compete for the ball with high degree of collision, violence, fast movement speed and excessively high ratio. In fact, Aussie Rules has its own rules:

- Each game has 18 players with the same position as defender, midfielder, forward but the stadium is oval with each side plugs 4 vertical poles which means that each team will have 3 goals.
- Each game consists of 4 quarters. Quarters are 25 minutes plus time on. Time on refers to clock being stopped when the ball is out of play meaning that an average quarter could last for 27 to 31 minutes. Therefore, each game can last for 3 hours (including time break).
- 6 points is scored when the ball is propelled through the goal posts, 1 point is scored when the ball passes between a goal post and a behind post. The team that has scored the most points at the end of play wins the game. It is very rare when the game ended with score draw
- Aussie Rules allow players to use both hands and feet to pass the ball. When passing the ball they will have to use holding hand like volley ball style or open hand tap. With a long pass, they can kick the ball. This style helps players reach the goal faster. In addition, in order to prevent opposition players, they may bump or tackle the competitive players to obtain the ball, more technical, they may use high jump to win the ball. Therefore, Aussie Rules is similar to Rugby but less violent and much more attractive.
- Another interesting point is that in footy, the ball can be propelled from any direction.

The sexiest sport for men

Aussie Rules can attract viewers from beginning to end. It contains characteristics which ensure that viewers will not feel bored. The thrilling extends into the final seconds. The game also has extreme surprise element together with the continuously change minute by minute of the ratio. Besides, the unique shape of the ball also made it is difficult to predict the trajectory which means that players will have to make decisions in heartbeat. In Aussie Rules, there is no concept of boredom, the players have to keep running and the ratios constantly change until the last minute. Even if one team has been led very far but still can win the game, just a few scores of six points will reverse the situation.

Men sports also need to strong and aggressive to demonstrate the brave of the men. Aussie Rules provides all of the above demand. For instant, when a player has the ball, the opposing team will do everything to stop the player by bumping of tackling. In order to get though this, the player has to be skilful and coordinate efficiently with teammate. It is the challenge of will, strength, courage and determination.

Aussie Rules also create crowd effects, friendly and cheerful colour atmosphere. In Melbourne, there are 2 big stadiums which are Telstra Dome and MCG with a capacity of more than 80 thousand people. Besides, Aussie Rules teams usually choose animals as their mascots. For example, the mascot of Sydney swan (2005 champion) is a swan, Geelong (2007 champion) is a cat, Hawthorn (2008 champion) is a hawk. Fans also name affectionately their team by their mascots. The final game of the AFL is a real festival of football when thousands of peoples flock to the stadium and a great number of people watch the match at home or through screen at central squares. That is really a festive occasion with beer, wine and singing. During weekends, the festival atmosphere becomes vibrant than ever. The area around the stadium is full of people. The deluge poured of fans force bus and train companies to increase the frequencies. People come to the stadium wearing all kinds of clothing, hat, scarf and jewellery, bringing colourful banners and singing traditional songs of their team all the way.

However, the valuable characteristic of the sport is that it provides 'sex appeal'. First of all, because of the strength and speed requirement, all of Aussie Rules players have a perfect shape. Besides, the tight fit uniform of the game helps to show the powerful muscles of the players. Because of that, Aussies Rules players are always very attractive in women's eyes. However, a man can still attract women when showing his real sport spirits and seriously engaged in at least one sport.

If you are interested in the game, please join the community of Vietnamese Aussie Rules players, Vietnam Swan <www.vietnamswans.com>, all of the club's activities is regularly updated on the website.

Aussie Rules have expanded to Hanoi, Ho Chi Minh City Vung Tau and Nha Trang now. Training is usually on the afternoon Thursday and Saturday every week at Xuan La stadium (Lac Long Quan Street, Tay Ho, Hanoi) or at RMIT Sai Gon Campus.

In order to register and receive notification of specific date and place of training, email to: [adrian.enright @ gmail.com](mailto:adrian.enright@gmail.com).