

# The Australian Women's Register

---

**Entry type:** Person

**Entry ID:** AWE4905

## Reid, Heather

---

**Occupation** Chief Executive Officer, Soccer player, Softball Player, Sports administrator, Sportswoman

---

### Summary

Heather Reid has been instrumental in forming, developing and promoting opportunities for women and girls in sport and physical activity, predominantly through football (soccer) since 1978. She has a sound knowledge of the cultural, social and political complexities of the Australian sport industry.

In 2004, she was the first woman appointed as CEO of a State football federation, at Capital Football. Since then she has led the integration of all aspects of football in the ACT – for male, female, junior, indoor and outdoor players along with referees and coaches.

She has won numerous awards in recognition for her outstanding service to sport in Canberra and at a national level. In 2006, she won the Australian Sports Commission's Margaret Pewtress Memorial Award for her contribution to women in sport.

## Details

Heather Reid is the daughter of migrants from Scotland who spent most of her childhood growing up in the Snowy Mountains, as the Snowy Mountain Hydro-electricity Scheme grew up around her. As a result, she gained an understanding of cultural diversity long before many Australians in cities experienced its pleasures. She also gained an appreciation for the game that Australian Rules Football and Rugby obsessed Australian's called soccer, but the rest of the world calls football. With all those European close at hand, it was impossible not to.

Reid showed leadership potential at school and was named School Captain at Tumut High School in 1973. Upon completing school, she worked in Canberra as a public servant and enjoyed periods of extensive travel overseas, where she connected with family in Scotland and another branch who migrated to Canada. She always enjoyed playing competitive sport and Canberra was the right place to be for someone so inclined. Public service units established regular competitions and Reid was an enthusiastic participant in softball and football teams.

Reid decided to take her enjoyment of football a step further when she became a foundation member of a club and then a state association that started organized football competitions for women in 1978. She has had continuous involvement in the sport since then and has seen the development of the sport from 10 teams in 1978 to 62 teams in 2005, with girls participation growing at a rate of about 18% per annum. If there has been a significant development in women's soccer in Canberra, indeed nationally, Heather Reid will have been involved in some capacity. She held the position of National Executive Director of Women's Soccer Australia between 1986-1993. She introduced state representative teams for women in 1980, coached the first ACT Under 15 teams in 1983, pioneered the establishment of a women's world cup and successfully lobbied for the inclusion of women's soccer in the Olympic Games. In 2003 she was appointed to the position of General Manager of Women's Soccer Canberra and in 2004 she was appointed CEO of Soccer Canberra (now Capital Football) thus becoming the first woman to lead a State football association. Since 2005, she has led the integration of all aspects of football in Canberra – male, female, junior indoor and outdoor players, referees and coaches into this one organisation. She is in charge of an organisation that administers the needs of 18,000 players, 450 referees and hundreds of coaches. In 2008 she was instrumental in obtaining the licence for Canberra United Football Club to compete in the Westfield W-League, the Football Federation of Australia's national competition for elite women.

To say that Heather Reid has a passion for creating opportunities for women to participate in sport of all kinds, not just football, is an understatement. She has been involved in several committees and advocacy organisations on a volunteer and professional basis. Between 1990-1992 she was a Director of Womensport ACT, National Executive Director of Womensport Australia 1994-1998 and was a member of Australian Womensport and Recreation Association 2007-2012. She was the longest-standing member of the ACT Sport and Recreation Council when she resigned in 2002, having joined in 1991. Between 2003-2008 she was a member and chair of the ACT Advisory Council on Women and Sport and was a member of the ACT Sport and Recreation Council in 2008-2012. Heather has also worked for the Australian Sports Commission, as a consultant to the Women and Sport Unit 1999-2001 and as a project officer, Ethics and Women's Sport between 2002-2003.

Numerous reports and recommendations on the state of women's sport have been completed under her guidance. In 1993 *Gender Equity in ACT Sport – Not Just a Women's Issue* was the culmination of a review of development plans for 33 sports conducting on behalf of the ACT government. Many initiatives arising from the report are still in operation. *Mentor as Anything – guidelines for implementing a mentor program* came out of a national project examining the training and leadership requirements to increase women's opportunities to take on leadership roles in sporting organisations.

Heather Reid has been recognised for her outstanding service to sport in Canberra and at a national level. In 2000 she was the ACT Sport Star of the Year in the administrator category and in 2001 she received an Australian Sports Medal for her contribution to soccer and community sport. In 2006, she won the Australian Sports Commission's Margaret Pewtress Memorial Award for her contribution to women in sport.

## Published resources

### Resource

Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

### Site Exhibition

From Lady Denman to Katy Gallagher: A Century of Women's Contributions to Canberra, Australian Women's Archives Project, 2013,  
<http://www.womenaustralia.info/exhib/ldkg>

The Encyclopedia of Women and Leadership in Twentieth-Century Australia, Smart, Judith and Swain, Shurlee (eds.), 2014,  
<http://www.womenaustralia.info/leaders>

### Report

Gender equity in A.C.T. sport - not just a women's issue!, Reid, Heather, 1993

Mentor as anything! : guidelines for developing and implementing a mentoring program for women in the sport and recreation industry, Reid, Heather, 1999

## Archival resources

### National Library of Australia, Oral History and Folklore Collection

[Heather Reid interviewed by Nikki Henningham \[sound recording\]](#)

#### Author Details

Nikki Henningham

**Created** 14 February 2013

**Last modified** 16 April 2019

## Digital resources



**Title:** Portrait of Heather Reid during an oral history interview with Nikki H

**Type:** Image

**Date:** 3 May, 2023