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MERCURY SPORT

The Mercury, Tuesday, December 8, 1987

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Subbuteo soccer moves out west

While Australia's national soccer team is preparing to launch its campaign to be in Italy for the 1990 World Cup, another team is also setting out on the first steps to a similar objective.

Australia's table soccer players are moving into gear in a bid to find the best senior and junior players to represent us in Rome in 1990.

The Australian Subbuteo Association has begun a membership drive to bolster its numbers and develop a larger wealth of talent for competitions.

Pronounced "Sub-bew-tee-oh" the game has already captured the hearts and minds of more than five million players around the world, from England and Scotland, to Greece and Italy, to Panama and Singapore.

In an international market flooded with sports games, Subbuteo has been able to stand alone as a game of skill and excitement.

Unlike other table soccer games, Subbuteo does not rely on rods, springs, dice or chance.

Players use miniature figures to control a light

celluloid ball around the 5ft x 3ft green baize pitch in a game that is all action, with simultaneous play - the pace of the game depends solely on how the players approach it.

"It's incredible how action packed a game can be," said the president of the Australian Subbuteo Association, Gary Hosie.

Gary, 27, who has been playing for more than 15 years, is head of an association that has only recently decided to stretch its arms outside Sydney.

Now that there is a big push to get the game into the Australian market, he and the 100 or so devotees actively playing the game are on the lookout for more members right across Australia.

Their chief aim is to establish a network of clubs and club competitions around the country with a view to organising Australian junior and senior titles during the Bicentenary.

"Already we have established contacts in every capital city, and some of the regional ones," he said.

"Our long term goal is to compete in the World Cup in 1990 in Italy. But first we want to crawl before we run, and we feel that a solid base of club competitions is the most important thing."

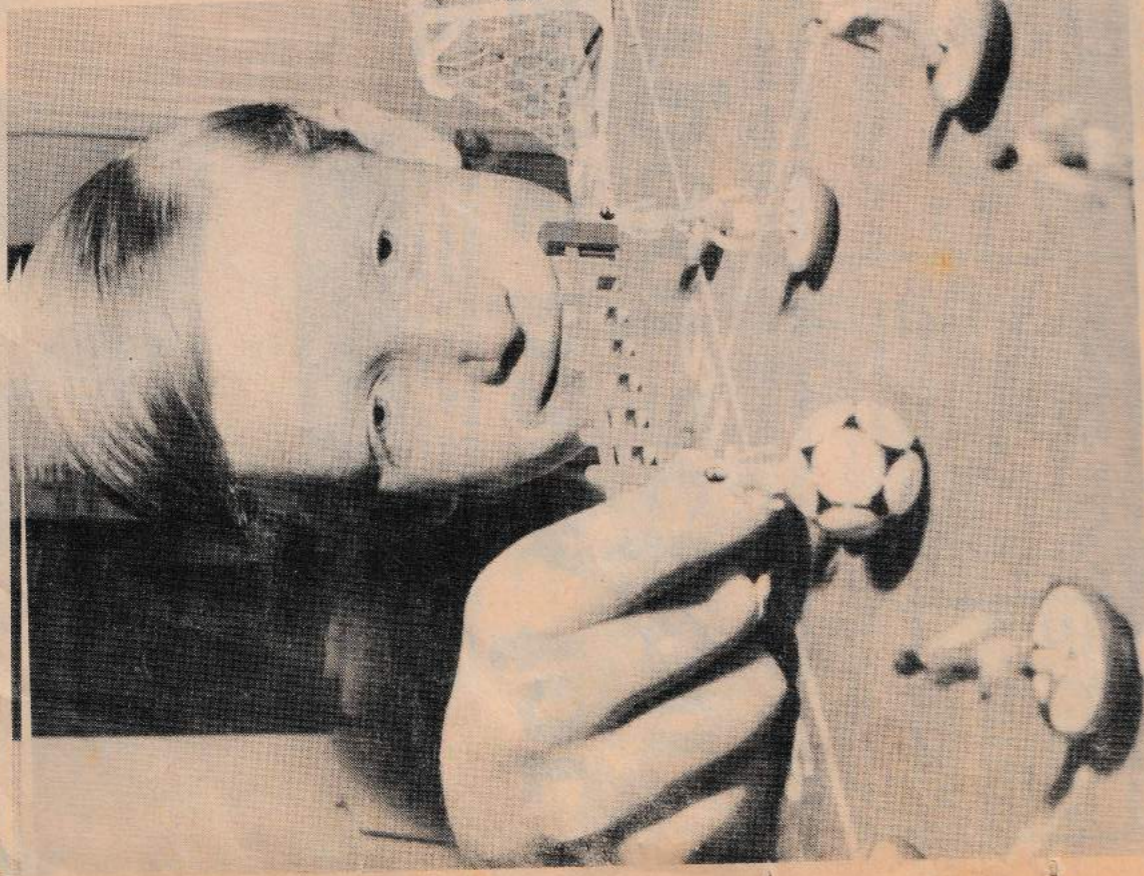
Gary said that clubs

were already springing up all around Sydney, in Toongabbie, Bexley, Randwick and the inner west and northern suburbs.

"The format of Subbuteo allows the skills, tactics and action of real soccer to be reproduced on the table," he said.

"Shots, chips, passes, tackles, saves, corner kicks, throw ins, free kicks - they are all possible.

Further information: Australian Subbuteo Association, PO box 634, Leichhardt, 2040.



SUBBUTEO soccer fanatic Daniel Brown of Toongabbie shows his style.

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