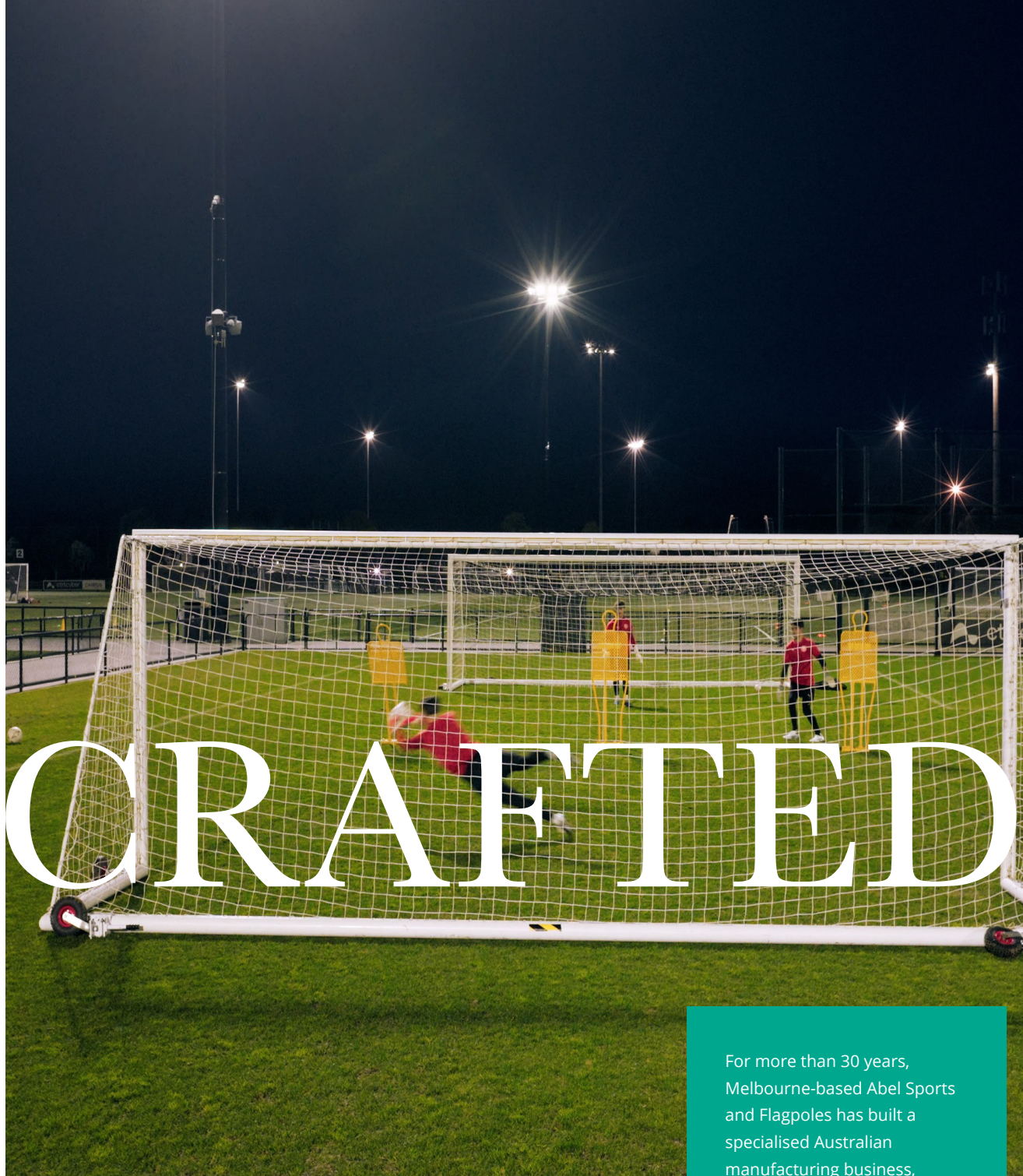




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For more than 30 years, Melbourne-based Abel Sports and Flagpoles has built a specialised Australian manufacturing business, producing flagpoles and sporting infrastructure for local grounds, community spaces and some of the country's most iconic stadiums. With Australian-made aluminium and a strong local supply chain at the heart of its operations, the business continues to manufacture products designed to perform and stay in service for years.

FROM LOCAL GROUNDS TO ICONIC STADIUMS

Abel Sports and Flagpoles has built a specialised Australian manufacturing business, producing aluminium flagpoles and sporting infrastructure for local grounds, community spaces and some of Australia's most iconic stadiums.



On any given weekend in Australia, thousands of people will watch a game of football without giving the goal posts a second thought. John from Abel Sports and Flagpoles is not one of them.

For more than 30 years, Melbourne-based Abel Sports and Flagpoles has been making the poles that are part of the landscape of Australian communities, from flagpoles at schools, council grounds and public spaces to sporting infrastructure found at local ovals and some of the country's most famous stadiums.

The business began primarily with flags and flagpoles before expanding into goal posts, a category that has grown substantially over the past decade. Today, sporting infrastructure represents around 70 to 80 per cent of the business, with Abel Sports and Flagpoles goal posts installed at the MCG, SCG, Allianz Stadium, the Gabba, Adelaide Oval and Perth Stadium.

John describes the business simply as "an aluminium pole business", but behind that description is considerable specialisation.

A flagpole installed at a school or council facility faces different demands to a goal post standing exposed on a sporting field. Wind loading, strength, impact and the ability to install and



remove equipment all influence the design, particularly at major sporting venues where grounds may transition between codes.

"At the MCG, for example, the AFL goals might have to come down for another code of football," John explains. "Literally overnight, that ground can be redesigned."

It means infrastructure that is rarely the focus of attention still needs to perform reliably when required. "I don't think goal posts are an issue till they're not

there," John says. "Suddenly one breaks or the tractor runs into the point post and suddenly they've got an issue."

For Abel Sports and Flagpoles, aluminium provides an effective combination of strength, low weight, appearance and corrosion resistance for products that can spend years exposed to Australian conditions. The company has also expanded its use of aluminium into 10-metre barrier net poles positioned behind goals, where the lighter material makes poles easier to handle when nets need to be raised and removed around games.

But the finished product is about more than the aluminium extrusion itself.

Abel Sports and Flagpoles works with local businesses for steelwork, welding, base plates and other components, bringing those elements together at its Melbourne facility. Production manager Noom oversees an experienced, I team responsible for assembling the finished products, many of whom have been with the business for several years.

That network of local capability is an important part of how Abel Sports and Flagpoles competes.

"We don't pretend to be cheap," John says. "Our big strength is we're Australian Made, and that's what we promote."

Being local also gives the business the ability to respond when something does go wrong. Abel Sports and Flagpoles carries significant stock because, as John explains, a damaged post at a stadium cannot necessarily wait for the next shipment from overseas.

"If anything goes wrong, anything happens, we'll replace it, we'll fix it," he says. "We're with these guys for the lifetime."

Capral forms part of that local manufacturing network, supplying the aluminium extrusion used across Abel Sports and Flagpoles products and working with the business to develop the custom dies and tooling required for its designs.

"We go to them with our requirements and then we work together to get the dies and the tooling made," John says. "That's probably why it's good having a local company to deal with. We can communicate with any issues, so it becomes a very personal relationship."

John says the relationship with Capral extends back more than a decade and



has grown alongside the sporting side of the business.

"We know we get the quality we want. We have never had any issues with quality," he says.

At a time when Australian manufacturers continue to compete with imported products, John believes Abel Sports and Flagpoles has found strength in knowing exactly what it does and building a dependable local supply chain around it.

"We're local. We've got local product. We've got local suppliers," he says.

It is a relatively simple philosophy behind a highly specialised Australian manufacturing business. From the flagpoles standing outside schools and public buildings to the goal posts and barrier nets framing some of the biggest moments in Australian sport, Abel Sports and Flagpoles has spent more than three decades building a reputation on products made here, supported here and designed to stay in service for years.



Watch the Abel Sports Crafted with Capral case study to learn more about Abel Sports and their long-term partnership with Capral.

