

The 5th Tom Brock Lecture will be delivered by Tony Collins as part of the sporting Traditions Conference, on Friday, 4 July 2003 at 6.30 pm.

**“Ahr Waggy”: Harold Wagstaff and the making of
Anglo-Australian rugby league culture**

Abstract:

'Why has rugby league been such an enduring link between Britain and Australia? The 1914 'Rorke's Drift' test match set the tone for all subsequent Anglo-Australian rugby league clashes; at the centre stood British captain Harold Wagstaff. More than anyone else Wagstaff embodied rugby league's self-image: working-class, democratic, antagonistic to authority and convinced of its superiority to all other codes of football. It is this cultural link, and Wagstaff's role in creating it, which is responsible for the sporting bond that exists between Keighley and Kogarah.

About the Speaker:

Tony Collins is a Research Fellow at International Centre for Sports History and Culture at De Montfort University, Leicester and is the archivist of the Rugby Football League. His publications include Rugby's *Great Split*, a social history of the origins of rugby league. He is currently working on a history of league and union in the twentieth century.

About the Tom Brock Bequest:

The Tom Brock Bequest, given to the Australian Society for Sports History in 1997, consists of the Tom Brock Collection supported by an on-going bequest. The Collection, housed at The University of New South Wales, includes manuscript material, newspaper clippings, books, photographs and videos on rugby league in particular and Australian sport in general. It represents the finest collection of rugby league material in Australia. ASSH has appointed a committee to oversee the Bequest and to organise appropriate activities to support the Collection from its ongoing funds.