

Bruce Stannard, *The Triumph of Australia II. The America's Cup Challenge of 1983*. Landsdowne, Sydney, 1983. Illust., pp.128. \$19.95.

This is a very attractive production which expertly blends a brief text with a large collection of well-chosen, often quite evocative, illustrations. It is well-written, relatively informative, and it enables the reader to gain some perspective of the marvellous events of 1983, despite being unashamedly patriotic in its portrayal of the challengers: Alan and Eileen Bond, for example, 'remained staunchly, refreshingly, down-to-earth and utterly unaffected Aussies' (89), the crew members were 'a typically gregarious mob of Aussies' (90), while after their third defeat the Australians 'never flinched' from seeking to race again the next day (109). It is an enjoyable read.

I finished the book, though, with a feeling of frustration, due largely to the brevity of the text, but also because of a failure to meet the reader's expectations. The sub-title of the book is quite misleading, for quite a high proportion of the book (28 of 105 pages that have text) is devoted to historical chapters which do not add very much to our understanding of the 1983 events. Another interesting, but essentially wasteful, chapter is the one dealing with social life at Newport. When it came to the actual challenge, then, there was little room for more than the briefest of accounts, and the reader is forced to rely on background knowledge gained through the media at the time to fill out the story. It is nowhere as useful as Levitt and Lloyd's recently-published *Upset: Australia Wins the America's Cup* (Hodder & Stoughton). I suspect a reader will find it much harder to follow in ten years or so when the memory of the 1983 victory has faded.

One for the coffee table rather than the academic shelves.

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