

Pat Mullins and Philip Derriman, *Bat & Pad. Writings on Australian Cricket 1804-1984*. Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1984. pp. viii + 256. \$19.95.

Anthologies of Australian cricket are usually predictable. I expect to find in them such old favourites as Mailey's dismissal of Trumper from his '10 for 66 and All That', or Blackham, 'with a face as long as a coffee pot', from George Giffen's 'With Bat and Ball', describing the first Test against Stoddart's team in 1894.

But *Bat & Pad. Writings on Australian Cricket 1804-1984* by Pat Mullins and Philip Derriman is far from predictable. It strays from old familiar cricket books to include newspaper pars, broadcasts, unpublished reminiscences, poetry and 'off the cuff' remarks. Derriman pays gracious tribute to Mullins' major role in this publication, for it is Mullins' great library - 'one of the treasures of the cricket world' as Derriman says - that has been the source of this anthology.

*Bat & Pad...* is composed of 12 chapters with such titles as: 'In Days of Old', 'Bodyline', 'Bradman', 'Cricket Fiction', 'Victor Trumper', 'Between the Wars', 'Aboriginal Cricketers'. Entries vary in length from Rodney Cavalier's remark 'Cricket is a landscape of the mind that is forever 1930', to the chapter on Victor Trumper, (8 pages) and M.A. Noble's, 'The Game's the Thing'. The anthology is a delight to dip into for the amusing, the unexpected, the thought provoking entries.

Humour is found in a radio talk by Banjo Paterson who said of the first Australian Eleven, 'most of them had beards but there was not a teetotaller or temperamental man amongst them'. Then there is a newspaper report, 'Bonnor's Tall Tales' where the giant batsman of the 1880s stated that the beauty of his singing voice 'brought tears to his own eyes'. Jack Fingleton tells of a blazing century by Bradman against an Albury team in 1933 after a local worthy had bounced a couple round the great man's ears. 'Don won't stand for this', one of his team said, and this is the heading which Fingleton, with his journalistic touch, used for his article.

Two items which I was pleased to find were Kate Fitzpatrick's warm and perceptive study of Greg Chappell (*Sydney Morning Herald*, Feb. 26, 1983) and David Frith's poignant account, (*The Cricketer*,

Nov. 1983) of finding the aboriginal fast bowler, Eddie Gilbert, in a Queensland mental hospital to which he was admitted in 1949 at the age of 37. These articles had impressed me greatly at first reading and it is good to see them preserved in this anthology.

An example of the unexpected is an item entitled 'Tibby Cotter's Last Bowl' by 'Blue' from the N.S.W. Cricket Association Archives. 'Blue' who was 'Tibby Cotter's cobber in the 12th Light Horse', tells how Tibby was killed beside him in the Beersheba Charge in 1917. This puts to rest the graceless canard, which has appeared in print, that Tibby was something of a simpleton who was shot when he got out of a trench to fix a damaged periscope he was using whilst sniping.

This marvellous anthology leads me to hope that Pat Mullins' library will produce another anthology soon and that, eventually, his great collection will be acquired for the nation.

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