

## BOOK NOTES

Robert Gate, *The Struggle for the Ashes. The History of Anglo-Australian Rugby League Test Matches*. The author, Ripponden, 1986. Illus., records, statistics, pp.xvi+187. \$15 hard back. \$10 soft cover including air mail postage from author, Mount Pleasant Cottage, Ripponden Bank, Ripponden, Sowerby Bridge, Yorkshire, England HX6 4JL.

This is a valuable reference work. This Test-by-Test account includes many useful statistics of each game: venue, players and their club affiliation, referee, gate takings and crowd.

There are some intriguing figures in the end summary. Australia has averaged 43,964 per Test compared with an England crowd figure of just 22,596. The record Test crowd turned up at Sydney on 6 June 1932. Test crowds have dropped markedly over the past decade. In the period covered thirty-six players were sent off: twenty-one Britons versus fifteen Australians and twenty-nine forwards as against only seven backs.

There are also some useful notes. Until 1924 the term 'Australasia' was often used because New Zealanders found places in Australian tests and touring parties. The English side was not styled 'Great Britain' until the 1948-49 series: before that teams were known variously as 'The Northern Union' or simply 'England'.