

Malcolm Spark (comp.), *The 1947/8 Wallaby Tour: The One That Nearly Got Away* (Darley, England: The Author, 1989). Illus., stats., pp. iii + 258. From the author Graylings, Niddside, Darley, N. Yorkshire, HG3, 2PW, England. A\$33.00 + \$9.76 airmail, \$2.58 surface mail.

The 1947/8 Wallaby Tour was the first post-war Rugby Union tour to the British Isles. After matches in the United Kingdom, the Wallabies continued on to France, Canada and the United States, the tour being of approximately nine months duration. Originally captained by Bill McLean, and after he was injured captained by the legendary Trevor Allan, this proved to be one of the most successful tours in Australian Rugby history.

Malcolm Spark has arranged a compilation of match reports taken from the local British and French press, along with those of the late Tom Goodman who reported on the tour for *The Sydney Morning Herald*. Reproduced with each of the reports is the team sheet for every match in the British Isles. Incorporated with these reports are reminiscences from players who had competed against the Wallabies during the tour. The reports and reminiscences not only give a fascinating blow-by-blow report of the matches, but also offer an

interesting account of the social conditions in Britain shortly after World War II.

The memories of Bill McLean are also of interest, and extracts from the Manager, Mr. Arnold Tancred's, official report on the tour are reproduced. This was the only Australian team to keep its opposition - Scotland, Ireland, Wales and England tryless in all four internationals. This feat is one that the survivors from the tour justifiably feel proud of to this day. The overall record of 41 matches, for 35 wins and only 6 losses, is evidence enough of the greatness of this Wallaby side.

This account of the third Wallaby tour to the United Kingdom has been a long time coming, but for those with a love of Australian Rugby and its history, this account has been well worth the wait.

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[Ed. A slender and speedy 19 year-old, who could step off both feet, was one of the stars of the tout. His name - Max Howell.]