

The affect of *Making the Grade* is to whet the appetite for more on the history of Sydney cricket. It is to be hoped that individual clubs will record their history systematically and stylishly and that we will read more of the Bert Bonser's of the competition.

The contemporary challenge facing grade cricket administrators right around Australia is exactly the same as the one facing their forerunners of a century ago and recorded in this volume: to keep cricket relevant and flourishing in a rapidly changing society.

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Dennis Brailsford, *British Sport: A Social History*. Lutterworth Press, Cambridge, 1991. Illus., index. pp. ii + 146.

Noted British historian of sport Dennis Brailsford has produced the latest in a sequence of histories of sport in the British Isles published in recent years. While this collection is firmly in the camp of sport as an element of social and cultural history, it does not supersede the excellent *Sport and the British* (1989) by Richard Holt. Having said that, Brailsford's book complements Holt's in a number of ways. Brailsford is probably the leading expert on British sport in the early modern period, particularly the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries. This expertise is reflected in the book as the chapters covering these centuries are easily the best, while Holt is more secure in later periods.

Significantly, Brailsford stresses the links between sport in Britain before the Victorian period and that appearing in the latter half of the nineteenth century. He argues successfully that we cannot view modern sport as a new phenomenon, but rather an extension of pre-existing sporting and recreational practices that changed to suit different social, economic and political circumstances. Brailsford demonstrates that sport has been tied to politics at least since the Elizabethan era of the sixteenth

century, if not before. He postulates the following relationship between sport and politics: 'since sport is part of the art of living together - the essence of politics - they are bound to be integrally linked' (p. 35). Rather than condemning the Puritans for their attacks on sport, Brailsford argues that they made sport a subject of serious national debate for the first time. He then, less convincingly, argues that during the first thirty years of the Stuart era (1603 into the 1630s) sport was closer to the centre of the English political stage than it has been since. We can blame the Victorians for trying to divorce sports from the formal political realm, although many laws passed in the nineteenth century, as well as earlier laws, have had a long impact on modern sport.

In addition to well argued sections on early modern sport, *British Sport*, is also a book advocating greater research by sports historians, be they amateur or professional. Each chapter concludes with a section called 'The Living Past' where Brailsford identifies geographic and archaeological remnants of the sporting past observable in the present. He also poses questions and discusses issues that could be researched by both local and national historians. Particularly significant is his call for the use of oral history in the reconstruction of twentieth century sports history. Each section also concludes with bibliographic references to major works covering each period, although these get weaker for recent periods. There is no mention, for example, of the superb work of Stephen Jones on the sport and leisure of the working class in the interwar period.

While the book is valuable for the undergraduate student and those interested in sport and society in Britain, especially for the period to the early 1800s, it falls down in its coverage of the nineteenth and particularly the twentieth centuries where Holt's book is superb. Some of these problems may lie in the book's length. While an excellent piece of synthetic writing, it would be next to impossible for anyone to cover adequately the history of British sport in 138 pages (less the pages given over to illustrations). In fact, sport from the Victorian period is covered in about seventy pages and sport in the twentieth century secures only thirty-five pages.

The text is marred by number of inaccuracies and questionable usages. A few examples will suffice. There is reference to Queen Mary's 1655 Gaming Act (p. 27) which should be 1555. Key figures mentioned in the modern era are spelled incorrectly such as Basil D'Oliveira (p. 124) and Sir Edmund Hillary (p. 135). American readers will cringe at the use of 'coloured' to describe African-American boxer Tom Molineaux while others not aware of differing American and South African usages with regard to racial terms may be confused at that usage followed by 'coloured' in quotes to describe mixed-race South African D'Oliveira. South Africa was expelled from the Olympic movement in 1970 and not 1971 as the author suggests. The frequency of errors, even minor ones, is distracting to those knowledgeable in modern sporting history.

More problematic is the lack of material on women's sporting history. While Brailsford does not neglect women in his account, there is no discussion of how sport served to engender males and females historically. In addition, he glosses over much of what we do know about women and sport from the work of scholars such as Kathleen McCrone, Sheila Fletcher and Jennifer Hargreaves to name a few. There is no mention of netball, perhaps the most successful export among British women's sports and little discussion of other sports played by women such as hockey.

Other issues are not addressed in much detail either. The role of race in twentieth century sport is mentioned but not examined critically. Some social issues are glossed over, most notably, football hooliganism, which has received substantial attention from historians and sociologists of British sport. Most astoundingly, Brailsford (hopefully tongue-in-cheek) suggests that World War II was conveniently delayed until the effective end of the cricket season in 1939 (p. 123). The rise of seaside resorts and mass leisure appears in the text from time to time, but there is no systematic exposition of these developments. Finally, there is no real conclusion to tie the book together and leave the reader with a sense of how all these centuries of sporting history fit together.

In Brailsford's defence, it must be acknowledged that he has limited interest in post- 1945 history. He is of the school which believes that periods too close to the present do not allow for adequate historical reflection. I believe, by contrast, that the past and the present are too integrally linked to limit historical analysis at forty, twenty or even five years ago. Nevertheless, Brailsford at least justifies why recent decades receive less attention.

Despite its faults, I think that *British Sport: A Social History* is the best available introductory history on this topic from the Middle Ages to the early 1800s. It is an invaluable text for undergraduate and postgraduate students as well as for those interested in the links between what we call modern sport and those sporting forms that preceded it. For those wanting more detail on this period, Brailsford's earlier works are invaluable. For introduction to sport and society since 1800, stick with Richard Holt's *Sport and the British*.

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Greta Cohen, ed., *Women in Sport: Issues and Controversies*. Sage Publications, Newbury Park, London and New Delhi, 1993. Illus. pp. 338.

Everything you wanted to know about women in sport ... and more! Greta Cohen's collection of contributed essays examines issues and controversies about women in sport from a wide range of perspectives. I chose to read Cohen's introduction *after* I had read the book, and concur with her aims: a 'comprehensive textbook', a 'broad-based survey of issues relevant to girls' and women's participation in sport (p. xvii)'.

Initially daunted by the thought of reviewing a twenty-seven chapter book, this exercise was, in reality, an indulgence. This book is divided into eight sections, covering 'political, economic, historical,