

Tourism and Cricket: Travels to the Boundary

Edited by Tom Baum and Richard Butler

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This book is one of a series of books that explores Tourism and Cultural Change, defined as the complex and ever-changing relationship between tourism and culture(s). The series focuses on the ways that places, peoples, pasts and ways of life are increasingly shaped, transformed, created and packaged for touristic purposes. The series examines the ways tourism utilises/makes and remakes cultural capital and the political, economic, social and ethical issues that are raised as a consequence. The Series Editors are Professor Mike Robinson (University of Birmingham) and Dr Alison Phipps (University of Glasgow).

The book is structured around three sections – The Development of Patterns; The Homes of Cricket; The True Costs – and comprises eleven chapters covering cricket from a variety of scales from village to global. As someone with a very strong interest in cricket since school days and having been a very ‘coarse’ club cricketer, the scope of the publication was of interest immediately and proved to be an equally engaging read. Having played at many village grounds in the New Forest – where hitting the oak tree scores 5 – and working at a University which leased the former Hampshire CCC ground of Dean Park, Bournemouth where I managed to hit a six out of the ground I must contest Butler’s assertion in Chapter 11 that *‘cricket is ninety nine per cent boredom, one per cent terror’*. However, both watching and playing cricket offers much time for personal reflection and reference to *The Last Flannelled Fool* (Simpkins 2011) in Chapter 2 by Wheeler and Maitland describes vividly a cricket era with which I am more familiar than the experiences discussed in Chapter 9 ‘On the March with the Barmy Army’!

After the personal reminiscences above, the two Chapters in Part 1 provide an excellent overview of both contemporary world cricket and an insightful historical and literary reflection on cricket in England. Two quotes indicate the focus, namely *‘cricket is a particularly rich sources of stories, of travel spatially but also in time to the past and plays an important role in tourism and tourism representation’* and *‘if we substitute the word “England” for cricket we have a pretty good summary of contemporary debates about national identity’*. Homage to an editor is suggested with the notion of a *‘cricket life-cycle’*.

Part 2 covers cricket and tourism in Australia, London, Hampshire and Bali. Chapters 3 and 4 reflect on how Rupertswood and Sunbury, Australia and Lord’s Cricket Ground, London and home of the MCC, have used heritage and nostalgia to adjust to the ever-changing nature of cricket and sport in the 20th and 21st centuries. Both locations claim to be *‘The Home of The Ashes’* and *‘The Home of Cricket’* and use advertising and promotional materials highlighting historic and symbolic sporting personalities and events.

The reliance on heritage, tradition and nostalgia is becoming more difficult as the International Cricket Council (ICC) has moved from London to Dubai (UAE), reflecting the diminishing influence of these themes. The persistent review of the five-day Test Match format alongside the increasingly favoured marketable and revenue-generating

one-day international matches is viewed as part of the 'post-Westernization' of world cricket – a shift from colonial/Western powers to post-colonial Eastern superpowers.

At a more local level Chapter 5 *Development of the Rose Bowl as a Venue for Cricket and Other Events* provides insight into the commercial challenges facing cricket and many sports in terms of needing to generate revenue throughout the year and not just during a few days during the cricket season. The economic impact, the process of redevelopment, the provision of related facilities and redevelopment issues are examined. The project aimed to '*re-launch the flagship Rose Bowl attraction (home of Hampshire CCC) as a sports tourism resort complex through the addition of a four star Hilton Hotel, spa and championship golf course*'. The Rose Bowl, to be successful, has to offer more than an arena for one sport.

The final Chapter in Part 2 looks at how cricket in Indonesia has grown from a social activity for expatriates to a recognised sport hosting domestic and international tournaments attracting teams from Australia, Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, Philippines, China and India. It is anticipated as tourism demand grows cricket will be a generator of a sports-oriented visitor market segment.

Part 3 examines the role of cricket, cricketers and spectators/cricket tourists around the world and covers a range of topics such as culture shock, sport as a means of reconciliation and individual and group reflections on watching cricket. Chapter 7 highlights a range of issues affecting the modern cricketer on tour – homesickness, missing family, constant travelling between venues and close scrutiny from the media. Many autobiographies highlight that external pressures add to the demands of playing cricket at the highest professional level.

International sport is often cited as having a strong ambassadorial role by bringing nations together. Chapter 8 provides a detailed insight into the role of cricket in helping to reconcile India and Pakistan post -1947 and the 1965 War. Insights into being part of The Barmy Army – a 1000 strong army of English cricket followers in Australia in 2010-12 – provide a view of how a tourism experience has been developed by fans arguably providing a greater sense of authenticity and grass-roots engagement. Tom Baum provides an ethnographic insight into his experiences watching the Fourth Test between India and England at Nagpur in 2012 and offers an appropriate overview of the rationale for the book.

Overall I recommend strongly the book to any reader interested in cricket and how world sport is changing for all stakeholders – players, spectators, governing bodies, tourism product providers and nations. Reading the book will take the reader from a misty-eyed and idyllic view of cricket in the past to consideration of the many issues facing contemporary international sport.

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