



## Tourism and cricket: travels to the boundary

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## BOOK REVIEW

**Tourism and cricket: travels to the boundary**, edited by Tom Baum and Richard Butler, Bristol, UK, Channel View Publications, 2014, xviii + 184 pp., £79.95 (hbk), ISBN-13: 978-1-84541-453-5 / £24.99 (pbk), ISBN-13: 978-1-84541-452-8

Howzat: a new book examining relationship between tourism and cricket?! Baum and Butler have collated an interesting selection of chapters outlining some of the connections between tourism and cricket. As the editors of the book and several authors point out, it is a logical fit. In fact, as Wheeler and Maitland point out (p. 24), given that cricket books account for half of all books written on sport it is surprising that a book like this has not come sooner. Moreover, as several authors note, cricket players travelling abroad for matches are known as ‘tourists’.

At only 184 pages, the book is the literary equivalent of a 50-over match, as opposed to a five-day Test match. It is an easy read. The editors have divided the book into three sections. The first section, ‘The Development of Patterns’, provides a historical and geographical setting of the development of cricket. The second chapter in this section focusses how cricket has contributed to England’s destination image and popular culture over time.

Of particular interest to readers of this journal will be the chapters in the second section of book, ‘The Homes of Cricket’. While this section is somewhat more descriptive in nature, it provides interesting insights into how cricket has created tangible and intangible heritage and these, in turn, have become tourist attractions or have motivated tourism. In Chapter 3, White examines the historic town of Sunbury in Victoria, and Rupertswood Mansion in particular, which is the birthplace for the Ashes: the trophy played for between Australia and England in Test cricket. Heritage tourism scholars will also enjoy Cardwell and Ali’s chapter on nostalgia. The authors seek to understand how significant cricketing events at Lord’s Cricket Ground in London have reinforced the nostalgic value of the ‘home of cricket’ as Lord’s is commonly referred to. In Chapter 5, Parrett highlights that the challenge for many sports grounds is the balancing act that needs to be maintained to achieve economic viability and environmental sustainability while providing cricket club members and the wider community with a facility to be proud of: one that keeps its architectural integrity with the surrounding neighbourhood. Her chapter focusses on Hampshire County Cricket ground’s Rose Bowl.

The final section in the book, ‘True Costs’, presents a more sociological view of cricket and tourism. It is in this section that Pearce investigates the issue of culture shock among cricketers on tour and applies his travel career pattern model to cricketers on tour (Chapter 7). Other notable issues dealt with in this section include Beech et al.’s (Chapter 8) reflection on how sport tourism and cricket in particular can mediate countries in conflict. In the case of India and Pakistan, they conclude that while the 1955 Test series between these nations failed to aid reconciliation, the 2004 series between the same nations was more effective. They go on to argue that cricket built on the improved political relations between the countries. Cultural tourism scholars will be interested in the chapter on the ‘Barmy Army’, England’s costume-wearing, chorus-chanting travelling spectators, and their south Asian counterparts, the Swami Army. Beech et al. in this chapter discuss the commoditisation of cricket tourism, including branding and self and group identity.

The book will of course appeal to scholars and researchers who are cricket enthusiasts, either for their own personal interest or for their research. The book might also be of interest to academics and students who are involved in sports management courses. Various chapters could be used as case studies in these types of courses. The edited collection touches on many disciplines from tourism history and heritage to psychology, sociology and culture. Depending on the reader’s interest, a cricket enthusiast could incorporate a chapter or two into any number of tourism courses.

Still there are many other issues that could be explored within the nexus of tourism and cricket, especially in the area of heritage tourism. As noted by editors in the preface, despite International cricket having 10 full members, 36 associate members and 60 affiliate members, the geographic spread of the book is rather narrow with Australia, England, India, Indonesia and New Zealand. As an example, this reviewer has been on 'tour' with cricket teams all over the world including 'non-cricketing' countries such as Canada, China, Fiji, Hawaii, Hong Kong, Malta, Malaysia and Singapore. Each of these destinations has its own history and culture of cricket and a relationship with tourist that could be further explored. Other research, only briefly touched on in the chapter on the Barmy Army, might explore the contrast and comparison between cricket supporters (who are perceived as good natured and fun) and football fans (who are sometimes like warring tribes). Lastly, further research could investigate the changing demographic of watching-cricket tourists as cricket administrator have expanded into new formats (such as T20, e.g. the Indian Premier League and the Big Bash) to appeal to a wider audience. As such, research on the relationship between cricket and tourism might warrant a second volume, or in cricket parlance, a second innings.

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