

about current changes in our leisure. More and more of our free time now involves consumption, and culture industries are the major providers in this area. Culture industries employ large numbers of people and their economic significance is growing. So, too, is their cultural impact: the manufacture of experience shows how difficult it is to assume that pleasure or fun are purely spontaneous or individually based. More and more, these sorts of experiences are produced by industries organised for pleasure.

This is not to say that the consumption of leisure makes us

passive puppets, easily manipulated into laughing in all the right places. While the production of pleasure at Wonderland may be extremely disciplined, the consumption of it is much harder to control. Individual consumers at Wonderland use the place in different ways, and bring their own meanings to bear on the experiences and the pleasures it offers.

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functions, in effect, as a trade union.

In the post WSC year in Australia a Players' Association was formed, but Ian Chappell recently commented that:

"Apart from the fact that they are getting paid better I'd go so far as to say that (the players) are back to 1977. That really disappoints me. I think it is a pity the players didn't grab hold of the game more than they have ... the Players' Association (now the cricket committee) has been a paper tiger really."

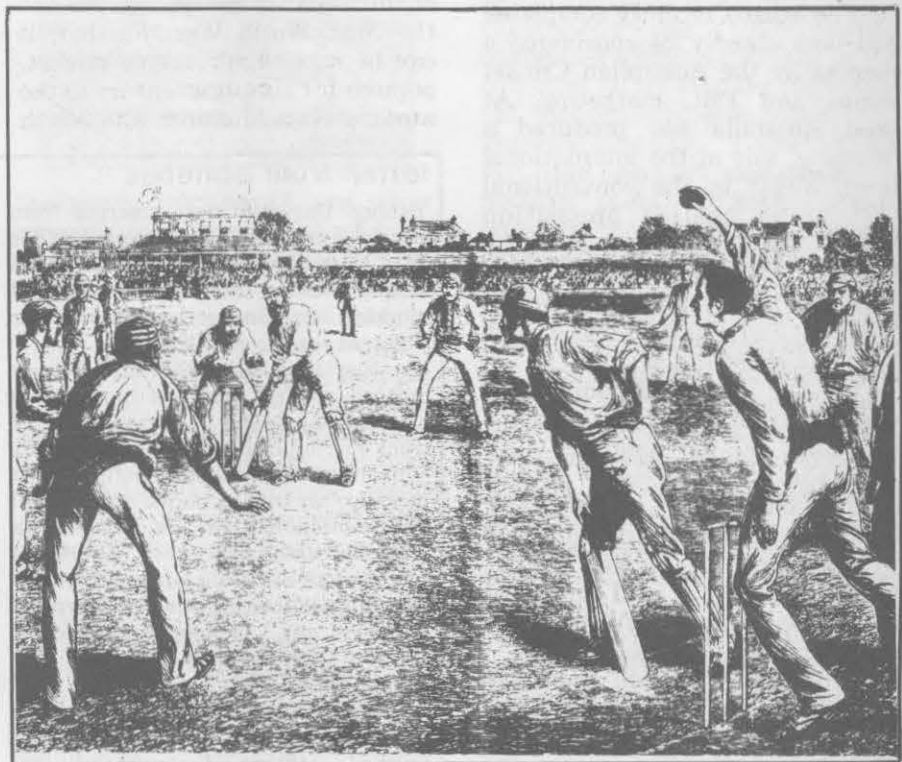
For first-class cricketers in Australia the non-existence of an effective players' association could prove to be a major weakness. In England the professionals have achieved a greater voice and improved conditions only through

## Sticky Wickets

**W**hat is the future of first-class and international cricket in Australia? It is now more than a decade since the World Series Cricket 'revolution' and it is worth asking whether more fundamental changes are likely.

My own opinion is that, other than the South African controversy the present period in Australian cricket history is one of stability and consolidation — both on and off the field. In his excellent latest book, *Street Fighting Years — An Autobiography of the Sixties*, Tariq Ali writes that post 1975 period in Europe can be described as one of "history's enforced pauses, designed to make us think and reflect before the next wave". If revolutionary change is slow, fundamental shifts within cricket are even more pedestrian.

The advent of World Series Cricket in 1977 shattered the international cricket establishment. It was a watershed with few comparisons. In England the 'restraint of trade' court action won by Tony Greig and other and World Series Cricket in the English High Court was one crucial factor in changing the working conditions of cricket professionals. After that landmark



decision cricketers were free to sell their labour, like any other workers, to the highest bidder. The second decisive influence has been the growing strength of the Cricketers' Association which organises all first-class professionals in England and

self-organisation. The important point is that in Australia the game is becoming more professional and will continue to do so over the next few years. Leading state and test cricketers increasingly view cricket as their profession. Indeed, the demands of Sheffield Shield and

international cricket make that inevitable. Moreover, this also means that the players, in turn, have to find work during the winter, and in small but growing numbers they are travelling to England to play county and league cricket during the northern summer.

This raises the question of whether the playing abilities of Australia's leading cricketers will be adversely affected; will the demands of full-time professionalism be too great? Ironically Tony Greig, one of the architects of World Series Cricket, has recently argued against this growing professionalism and urged that Australia should encourage its players to remain part-time. With the continued commercialisation of the game such a call is likely to be ignored.

The season recently completed will undoubtedly be considered a success by the Australian Cricket Board and PBL marketing. At least Australia has produced a 'winning' side at the international level, albeit in the conventional test arena against opposition whose standard was not the highest. The acid test will come over the next year with tours to Pakistan and England and a visit from the West Indies.

For the continued commercial and television success of cricket a successful one-day side was vital. The team's achievements in this regard have been widely and loudly acclaimed, no doubt much to the chagrin of 'purists' such as former test player and journalist Bill O'Reilly and ex-NSW Labor minister Rodney Cavalier.

Provided the side keeps in winning (is it true that Australians only love winners and battlers?), crowds pack the grounds and the Channel 9 ratings remain strong, there will be no changes to the one-day formula. I have to confess that I enjoy international one-day cricket and feel that the lights, coloured clothing and fielding restrictions enhance the occasion. As C.L.R. James wrote in his classic *Beyond A Boundary*,

"Cricket is first and foremost a dramatic spectacle. It belongs with the theatre, ballet, opera and dance."

It is also worth adding that one-day cricket as a form of spectacle and entertainment has a long and respectable tradition going back to the All-England Eleven, the first professional touring team who travelled throughout Britain, from 1846 onwards. Those professionals wore white shirts embellished with red sports or stripes, coloured sashes or snake-clasp belts and an assortment of hats.

The drab uniformity of the professional cricketers' dress was, in part, a consequence of the authorities desire to reassert their control over the professionals and delineate the professionals as second-class players in comparison to the exotically dressed amateurs of the so-called golden age prior to the First World War. Further, it can be noted that League cricket, popular for almost a century in the working-class Midlands and North

of England, has always been centred on one-day matches. One-day cricket has a long and worthy tradition within the history of the game.

The real threat to the stability of international and Australian cricket remains South Africa. Strong rumours persist that another tour of South Africa will be announced in the near future, probably involving a party made up of assorted mercenaries from various countries. Unfortunately, very few players, in virtually any sport, are prepared to take a moral stance and reject apartheid. But if cricketers don't, the fate of international cricket, which provides their livelihood, will hang in the balance. The division of the cricket world into black and whit playing nations remains a possibility.

Ric Sissons

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#### letter from ephebus

Pauline Unsworth both emerged from the election with images enhanced. While Mrs. Unsworth has gradually won hearts simply because she's a decent sort of woman, Mrs. Greiner has had a rather different road to media sanctity.

Not long ago, she mysteriously escaped the full weight of opprobrium and probing usually associated with a drink-driving charge and public profile. Whatever the merits or demerits of that incident, her trial by public opinion poll in the election itself was, arguably, a more disturbing experience. It was also one of those occasions when the shooter finds himself looking down the barrel of his own gun. If people *had* found Kathryn Greiner uppity and a liability to Young Nick before the poll, their sympathies had certainly swung in the opposite direction by the time she'd finished looking long-suffering but dignified and compassionate after TV reporters' gentle question sessions.

Not since Lyndon B. Johnson picked up his pooch by its long floppy ears has public perception of an image changed so swiftly. On the day, Pauline Unsworth and Kathryn Greiner could easily have picked up a respectable number of votes; it's not unlikely that Hazel Hawke could have handily stood

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for Governor General with a similar chance of success.

On reflection, then, what influence did television have on the NSW election? It's very doubtful that the Labor advertising campaign did anything but harm: if anyone is out of touch with the people it has to be John Singleton's agency whose risible octopus and gruesome jingle set the ALP and the ad industry back by at least a decade.

The Liberals were low-key to the point of ineffectuality, but then, with their rivals driving viewers from their sets in their droves, they didn't need to do much other than not patronise. The Pilger footage of Hawke-BondPacker at the trough, on the other hand, was possibly the single most devastating party political broadcast of the decade. But, all in all, what this election probably proves is that Australia is still decades behind the US when it comes to telly-politics. Neither Greiner nor Unsworth is a television performer and, unless Greiner undergoes intensive psychotherapy during the parliamentary recess, it is highly unlikely that he'll become one.

On the other hand, Margaret Thatcher was equally unpromising in 1979, and look what diligence did for her.