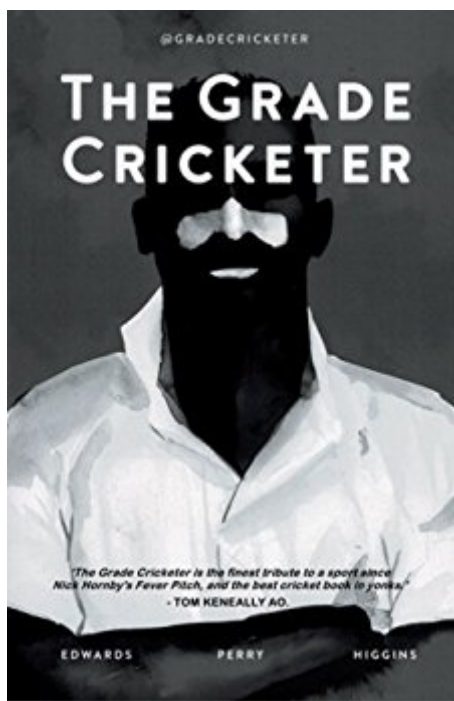


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The Grade Cricketer



Synopsis

Welcome to the world of The Grade Cricketer. Described as the most original voice in cricket, The Grade Cricketer represents the fading hopes and dreams of every ageing amateur sportsman. In this tell-all 'autobiography', The Grade Cricketer describes his cricketing career with unflinching honesty and plenty of humour, in turn providing insights into the hyper-masculine cricket 'dressing room'. This one-time junior prodigy is now experiencing the lean, increasingly existential years of adult cricket. Here, he learns quickly that one will need more than just runs and wickets to make it in the alpha-dominated grade cricket jungle, where blokes like Nuggsy, Bruiser, Deeks and Robbo reign supreme. Through it all, The Grade Cricketer lays bare his deepest insecurities - his relationship with Dad, his fleeting romances outside the cricket club - and, in turn, we witness a gentle maturation; a slow realisation that perhaps, just maybe, there is more to life than hitting 50 not out in third grade and enjoying a few celebratory beers afterwards. Or is there? * * * The Grade Cricketer book is based upon the popular Twitter account, @gradecricketer, which has received critical acclaim for its frighteningly honest portrayal of amateur cricket. Now, the time has finally come for this middling amateur sportsman to tell his story in full. 'The Grade Cricketer is the finest tribute to a sport since Nick Hornby's Fever Pitch, and the best cricket book in yonks. It's belly-laughing funny but it's also a hymn to the grand and complex game delivered with a narrative pace and ability I'm afraid most Test players don't have. For anyone who ever dreamed of excelling at a sport but never quite made it but still gave it your life, this is the story. A great read!' - Tom Keneally AO.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Like all comedy, there is a tragedy playing out here. It's just funny because it's happening to someone else. The Grade Cricketer might look at the life of a weekend warrior but it offers insights into life as a weekend worrier - a young man as unsure about his place in the world as he is about his spot in the team. As such it makes for uncomfortable reading at times and can leave you feeling a little sad for all involved, including yourself. It's kind of like the Muriel's Wedding of amateur sport, illuminating the unquiet desperation of life in the suburbs. The laughs are awkward and unsettling because they are a little too close to home. In that way it reminded me, in parts, of another fictional memoir. The Durian Effect, by Richard Tong. You haven't lived it but the authors makes you feel like you lived through it. You can relate to it perhaps a little too well even though you're not like that, are you? Well played, lads. Well played.

For those of us who have played cricket at suburban levels in Australia, there is much to identify with in this book. The authors capture the culture of cricket clubs from nicknames to stories to boozing to its alpha male centre. It contains an underlying story of the narrator's career and development. For those who enjoy what happens at suburban cricket clubs might get a laugh out of this. It's very blokey..

We're all familiar with the story of Grumpy Cat, the Arizona feline that shot to prominence as an internet meme in 2012, then " thanks to some canny management " diversified into books, a movie and iced beverages. Now, following a similar path, we have the Grade Cricketer, which began as a cult Twitter account and has now coalesced into a novel, in time for the 2015-16 cricket season. Where Grumpy Cat offered mainly visual humour, though, The Grade Cricketer book is rich with pointed, often-hilarious observations about amateur cricket culture and its discontents. Like any good novel, it comes with its own vernacular: the words "chop", "champed", "pipes" and "rig" dot the pages like freckles on an Australian forearm. Using this artillery of slang and some astute character sketches, the three authors track our narrator's adventures as he revels in " and occasionally resists " the claustrophobic world of grade-level cricket. These features of

the book elevate The Grade Cricketer from the two dimensions and 140 characters of a Twitter feed to a fully-realised character, one that all amateur sports people and their long-suffering significant others will relate to. Amongst the insights, there are enough gags to have you chuckling away the next rain delay, and some descriptive prose that brings the sleepy game of cricket to life. If the Grumpy Cat empire is any guide, more items in the Grade Cricketer franchise can't be far off: perhaps another book, then a movie, then a Gray-Nicolls tie-in. But while we wait for all that, let's just enjoy this well-paced, nicely-realised debut of a novel.

Well written by obvious cricketing tragics. Would have been more funny but it cuts so close to the bone. A quiet read and a delightful accompaniment to the Twitter account

"It's OK" is the perfect summary - the smart and funny patches are stretched a little thinly to make it good.

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