

## Union College Union | Digital Works

---

Honors Theses

Student Work


---

6-2009

# Growing Cricket in Tasmania: A Cross-Cultural Comparison

Elizabeth Ann Stanford  
*Union College - Schenectady, NY*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalworks.union.edu/theses>

 Part of the [Anthropology Commons](#), [Leisure Studies Commons](#), and the [Sports Studies Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Stanford, Elizabeth Ann, "Growing Cricket in Tasmania: A Cross-Cultural Comparison" (2009). *Honors Theses*. 1427.  
<https://digitalworks.union.edu/theses/1427>

This Open Access is brought to you for free and open access by the Student Work at Union | Digital Works. It has been accepted for inclusion in Honors Theses by an authorized administrator of Union | Digital Works. For more information, please contact [digitalworks@union.edu](mailto:digitalworks@union.edu).

GROWING CRICKET IN TASMANIA:  
A CROSS-CULTURAL COMPARISON

By

Elizabeth Stanford

\*\*\*\*\*

Submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for  
Honors in the Department of Anthropology

UNION COLLEGE

June, 2008

## **ABSTRACT**

STANFORD, ELIZABETH Growing Cricket in Tasmania: A Cross-Cultural Comparison.  
Department of Anthropology, June 2008.

Sports are an integral part of life in societies throughout the world. Cricket is one of Australia's two major sports and is a significant aspect of its culture, in a fashion similar to baseball being America's "national pastime." Despite its isolation, Tasmania, the small island state of Australia, shares the same mania for cricket as mainland Australia. While in Tasmania for ten weeks interning with the Tasmanian Cricket Association (TCA), I studied the role of cricket in the day-to-day lives of Tasmanians, from the pervasive television, newspaper, and the radio coverage, to pick-up cricket games as a popular leisure time activity. I also looked at the structure of Tasmania's cricket development program. The TCA has many programs set up to attract both the devoted cricketer, and the non-traditional, casual player -- beach cricket, disabled cricket, and street cricket, among others. This paper will also briefly compare how Australian cricket and American baseball differ from one another and how they are similar to one another.

## **Table of Contents**

### **CHAPTER I:**

#### **Introduction:**

- What is cricket?
- Who plays Cricket?
- Class and Gender in Cricket
- Different Forms of Cricket
- A Brief History of Cricket in Tasmania
- Cricket in Australia Today

#### **Literature Review**

#### **Methods**

### **CHAPTER II:**

#### **Cricket in Everyday Life**

- Television
- Newspaper
- Radio
- Informal Cricket
- Cricket Sponsorships and Merchandise
- Cricket in the Everyday Life of Two Tasmanian Families
- Youth Obsession with Cricket
- Future of the game

### **CHAPTER III:**

#### **Structure of Cricket in Tasmania**

- Development program
- Role of TCA Employees
- A Game Development Manager
- Club Cricket
- Grassroots/Community Cricket
- Youth League Cricket
- Grade Cricket
- Professional Cricket
- Senior Cricket and Retired players

#### **Structure of Baseball in the United States**

- Little League Baseball, Inc.
- Babe Ruth League, Inc.
- High School and College Baseball
- The Draft and Path to the Major Leagues
- The Major Leagues
- Life of a Teenage Baseball Player

### **CHAPTER IV:**

#### **Cricket and Baseball- A Cross-Cultural Comparison**

- Practice Time verse Leisure Time

- Money in Sports
- Pathway to the Top
- Club Sports verse School Sports

**Conclusion**

**Acknowledgements:**

Thank you to everyone in Tasmania who made this thesis possible, including: The Colrains, The Dooleys, the TCA (Scott, Ben, Jason, Nick, Ricey and Kristen), the Tasmanian Tiger's,

and countless others. Also, a special thanks to George Gmelch, my great advisor, and Sharon Gmelch for all of her support.

## **-CHAPTER I-**

### **Introduction**

“Cricket is definitely more than just a game, it is nearly a religion,” said Susan, a mother of a twelve year old cricket player. “Cricket is an everyday sport here, you know” was the response I received from Harry Banks, a ten-year-old Tasmanian boy. When asking Tasmanians about cricket, it was made clear to me right away that cricket is not just a sport that is played, or watched on the television occasionally; it is a way of life.

Sports are found everywhere, all over the world. All societies have different forms of sports, yet sports are usually overlooked and not often studied as commonly as other aspects of life (Brownell 2000:43). Because sports are viewed as play and therefore not serious, sports have been overlooked for more serious academic topics of the mind, religion, and economy. Over the past 30 years, the study of sport has become a more widely studied aspect of culture. Catherine Palmer stated it best when talking about the importance of sport: “As a cultural phenomenon that evokes passion, drives economies, shapes politics, highlights inequalities, and underscores nation, regional and ethnic identities, sport has long been a key constituent of social life” (2002:253). Australians are strong believers in the importance of sport and much of their daily lives revolve around sports; sport is viewed as characteristic of being Australian (Adair, Vamplew 1997). The role of sport in Tasmania, a state of Australia, is no exception. In Tasmania, cricket is one of the main athletic attractions, competing with Australian Rules football, and has a large number of eager fans (Sportal 2007).

The main objective of this thesis is to examine cricket in Tasmania—the role of cricket in Tasmanians daily life, and the structure and lifecycle of the cricket program in Tasmania. Because cricket has many similarities to baseball in the United States,

comparisons between baseball and cricket will also be made throughout the paper and explanations for their similarities and differences will be examined.

### **What is cricket?**

Cricket is a sport in which there are eleven players on the field at one time for the fielding team, with nine fielding, one bowling, and one wicket keeping. The nine fielders are spread out around the oval in different formations, while the bowler and wicket keeper are on either end of the pitch, which is situated in the middle of the oval. The pitch is a small rectangle that is about twenty-two yards long and two meters wide. The condition of the pitch is extremely important in how the ball bounces when bowled, most people prefer an extremely hard pitch that is not too dry or cracked. At both ends of the pitch, there are wickets, which are wooden structures about a meter tall and twenty-five centimeters wide. The size of the oval varies between different cricket grounds, with no set size or dimensions, similar to a baseball field. The other team has two players on the field; these players are referred to as batsmen. The batsmen stand on opposite sides of the pitch, similar to the bowler and wicket keeper. Each batsman takes turns getting bowled to and batting; in order to score a run, the batting pair has to run between the wickets. If the ball is hit over the boundary of the oval (typically a rope on the ground), six runs are automatically recorded. If the ball is hit and rolls over the boundary, four runs are recorded. Runs can also be rewarded for balls, which are bowled outside of the wickets; such a bowl is deemed a “no-ball” or a “wide ball,” similar to a ball in baseball but much more rare. There are also runs rewarded for through bowls in which the wicket keeper does not catch the ball. A batsman can be



dismissed, like being out in baseball, by being caught out, by being run-out, by being bowled out, by being stumped out, or by blocking the wickets with their body.

There is no set time in which a batter can bat in a match; he is allowed to bat until he is dismissed. There are many different ways to be dismissed, as well as many batting, bowling, and fielding techniques. There are also four different match types, a test match for international teams, which is five days long, a four-day match for inter-state competition, a one-day match, and a 20/20 match. The day matches have a break for lunch and tea, but last throughout the day. The 20/20 match is when each team receives twenty overs and then the match is complete. An over consists of six bowls by one bowler, and a new bowler then comes out and bowls six balls from the other end, completing the next over. Bowlers change from over to over, but can be used repeatedly throughout a match. There is a lot of tradition that goes along with the game of cricket, stemming from its very long history and stages of development.

### **Who Plays Cricket?**

Today, cricket is most popular in Commonwealth countries, but it is played in many countries all over the world. Traditionally, cricket was viewed as a sport for wealthy, upper-class men with a great deal of free time on their hands. It is a long, somewhat leisurely game, which can be fairly expensive to play. Over time however, the game has progressed into many different forms and it now played by a wide spectrum of people, similar to baseball in the United States. Cricket is viewed as one of Australia's major sports and a large part of their culture, just as baseball is viewed as "America's favorite pastime." Tasmanians from all different income levels and backgrounds now play cricket, with the majority of players being

young boys. Cricket is very expensive at higher levels, and there is still somewhat of a “rich-kid” association with the sport. Baseball at higher levels has the same stigma; it is very expensive to be on traveling teams and to pay for baseball equipment. Baseball can be played anywhere with many variations and by a wide variety of people, just as cricket has many different forms.

### **Class and Gender in Cricket**

The sport of cricket is found all throughout Australia, played in every small town and along countless beaches. Because cricket was originally a gentlemen’s sport, it is typically played at an organized level by people with mid to high household incomes. Many other forms of cricket are played by people from various income levels. Because the game is very expensive to play at a competitive level, a great deal of money is needed to support a cricket player. Many people call cricket a game for “rich people” and that the lower classes are left to watch on television or play with their plastic set in the backyard. The fact that the wealthier tend to play cricket is also seen in the Tasmanian school system. Most public schools do not have a cricket team, while almost all private schools have a cricket team. Even though cricket is more commonly played at a club level than in high school, it is apparent that income does create a divide in who plays cricket.

It has also become apparent in my studies of cricket that men dominate the organized level of the sport with only eleven percent of all cricketers in Tasmania being female. Women’s cricket in Tasmania does not have its own state level team and is still in the growth process. When attending a match, it is apparent that men rule the sport because there are ten male spectators to every woman at the oval. Even though most women are knowledgeable

about cricket and will watch casually, they do not have the same connection to the game seen in men.

Even though cricket is embedded in the lives of people all over Tasmania, those who are actually playing competitive cricket generally follow a specific development path. People usually end their cricket career by the age of forty, with the majority of players between ages twelve and fifteen. The sport is very popular for young boys, and the number of boys playing is constantly growing. Cricket is a part of everyday life for a great amount of Tasmanians, but those who are actually playing organized cricket fit into a mainly middle to upper class group of young men.

### **Different Forms of Cricket**

There are many different forms of cricket found in Tasmania. There is traditional cricket, which is played at a professional level and club levels. The professional level mirrors Major League Baseball, and the minor league and lower levels of baseball are similar to the higher levels of club cricket. The cricket clubs of each Australian state act as a feeder to the professional team for that state. There is also an extensive cricket youth league, with many different levels based on age and skill. Tasmania has youth leagues with modified rules, similar to Little League Baseball and Babe Ruth League baseball commonly found in the United States.

Cricket is also played in the backyard and on the beach by Australians of all ages. Most families have a plastic cricket bat, a plastic set of wickets, and a tennis ball to get a game going anywhere. Many unusual things can be used as wickets, such as “eskies” (coolers), “rollie bins” (trash cans), chairs, boxes, trees, or any stationary object that is tall

enough. This mirrors whiffle ball in the United States, using a plastic bat and a less dense ball for a fun game of baseball. In the United Kingdom, Doug Williamson developed a cricket program for the disabled called table cricket, in which people use modified bats and balls on a ping-pong table, allowing for even more people to play cricket. Cricket is a major part of life for Australians and is growing at a constant rate all over Australia.

### **A Brief History of Cricket in Tasmania**

Cricket was first played in Great Britain, and arrived in Australia shortly after its settlement. Australia has a fairly recent history, first being settled in the late 1700s by Great Britain, and not becoming a nation until 1901. Today, the world's major cricket players are all-British or are from former British colonies. Cricket was first brought to Australia in 1803 when a small cricket match was played between some soldiers coming off of a ship in Port Jackson. The army was the major influence in spreading cricket all over the British Empire (Hornadge 2006). Cricket first appeared in Tasmania in 1824, and since then, cricket has grown and progressed rapidly. The first club cricket team appeared in Tasmania in October of 1832, and over the next twenty years, membership grew rapidly and new clubs opened in the area (Young 2005). When the club first formed, there were different teams within the club who played friendly pick up games against one another. As more clubs formed in the area, the different clubs would compete against one another, and the competition and rivalry between clubs grew.

By the 1850s, cricket was the only sport in which Tasmanians played other colonies in inter-colonial competitions. More clubs were then starting to form all over Tasmania, particularly in northern towns like Launceston. Cricket was growing and becoming widely

played all over Tasmania from the 1850s onward, gaining a number of supporters and fans. Southern Tasmania formed the Southern Tasmania Cricket Association (STCA) to control development of new clubs and matches. The north of Tasmania followed suit, creating the North Tasmania Cricket Association. During the 1880s and 1890s local cricket competitions in Tasmania grew, while international cricket matches were still not widely played because few countries would make the trek to Tasmania when touring around other parts of Australia due to its distance from the mainland. Tasmania's separation from the mainland made it so that its cricket talent was often overlooked and finding inter-state or international competition was difficult. At this time, women also started playing cricket and forming teams for competition of their own (Young 2005).

By the early 1900s, Tasmania became more active in interstate competition, but despite their enthusiasm for the game, they were not able to compete well against other states, and were often left out of major competitions. In 1905, the Tasmanian Cricket Association was formed when the STCA renamed itself the TCA and took control of cricket in Tasmania. Around 1910, Tasmania had a few international cricket matches against touring teams, usually losing or ending the game in a draw. By 1911, World War I had made a large impact on sports in Tasmania. Cricket saw its numbers dwindle as military training for men became compulsory. By 1914, almost all sports in Tasmania fell away drastically and throughout Australia cricket matches were soon brought to a halt. By the 1920s, sports were up and running again and people wanted to be back on the cricket pitch. Competition resumed with Tasmania still struggling to make an impact at the inter-state level. By 1925, the TCA initiated a coaching program for young players to try to bring more talent to Tasmanian cricket. By the 1930s, Tasmania's team was the best it had been since the war;

they were ready to compete, but soon floundered again as World War II took many of the best young players to fight for Australia (Young 2005).

Tasmanian cricket was yet again rebuilding in the wake of World War II, trying to put together a team that would lead to inter-state success. Tasmanian players suffered as they only played a few first-class cricket matches a year from 1946 to 1974 and were unable to train as much as other major cricketing states due to the small population. By the mid 1970s, all of the pieces were in place for Tasmania to prosper in cricket with strong coaches and good facilities, but the drive in the players was lacking due to previous failures in inter-state and international cricket matches. In 1977, Tasmania was allowed into the Sheffield Shield, a major inter-state cricket competition in Australia, which it had not been invited to play in the past eighty-five years of the competition's existence. By the end of the 1970s, cricket in Tasmania was finally improving to a respectable level at which it could compete with other states. Over the next thirty years, Tasmanian cricket saw many ups and downs, but overall, became more competitive in international and inter-state competition. Also in this time, youth, women's and club cricket started to grow immensely, as well as alternative forms of cricket such as indoor cricket (Young 2005)<sup>1</sup>.

### **Cricket in Australia Today**

Cricket is entrenched in the Australian culture and is the nation's main summer sport when looking at "participants, spectators, media coverage and contribution to the economy." In a 2007 census taken by Cricket Australia, there were 4,155 cricket clubs, 36,628 club and school cricket teams and 560,554 participants in Australian cricket competitions and

---

<sup>1</sup> This account of the history of cricket in Tasmania relies heavily on Young's work, *Sporting Island: a history of sport and recreation in Tasmania*.

programs. Of the 560,554 people actually playing cricket, eighty-nine percent were male. The participation of females may be low, but it has been increasing over the years as women's interest in cricket has grown and with the development of more women's cricket leagues. Most of the people playing cricket in Australia play on traditional club teams, composing fifty-five percent of cricket played in Australia. The amount of people playing cricket is increasing every year, with nearly a 5% increase of people playing cricket in the past four years. Five percent of people from the age of five to thirty-nine in Australia are playing cricket in an organized setting, at a competitive or structured level (Australian Cricket Census 2006/2007 2007).

The number of cricket participants in Australia is currently increasing at a rate of 1.3% a year, which is slower than Australian Rules football, which is increasing by over 4% every year. Because the population of Australia is constantly increasing, it is important to Cricket Australia to constantly be trying to increase the number of people playing cricket. There are an increasing number of programs reaching out to communities to promote interest in cricket. When looking at whom to target to increase the numbers of people playing cricket and being actively involved in cricket, the opportunities for further growth in participation in cricket need to be developed in recognition of the major demographic changes that are taking place in Australia. Such changes include reduced fertility rates, smaller household sizes, more females in the workforce, the huge bulge in the population moving into retirement and old age, and the increased overseas migration from Asia and Africa (Australian Cricket Census 2006/2007 2007).

The TCA is recruiting ex-cricket players as volunteers to coach younger kids, act as umpires, host various events, and overall actively participate in cricket programs. The TCA is

also trying to increase the number of immigrants who play cricket by selling cricket as part of Australian culture and as a great way to “become Australian” and meet other Australians. The TCA is also targeting day cares and after school clinics to encourage younger children to play whose working parents may not have time to drive them to practice or play cricket with them in the backyard. The main reason that the TCA is trying to increase their numbers is because they are a business, and the more people that are playing or involved in cricket, the more money they make.

Cricket in Tasmania is governed by the Tasmanian Cricket Association, which is governed by Cricket Australia. Cricket Australia governs cricket throughout the whole of Australia, and has much control over the TCA. The TCA’s main goal, with support from Cricket Australia, is to make cricket the number one sport in Tasmania. Cricket, Australian Rules football, and soccer are the major sports played in Tasmania, and seasonally, the number one sport changes. The TCA wants to increase the number of people playing cricket of any form, the talent of Tasmanian cricket players, and the overall participation in cricket related events. To do this, the association is broken up into a game development task force and a marketing task force. The game development sector is in charge of not only increasing participants in cricket, but also developing talent to play for Tasmania’s higher level teams.

Cricket Australia and the TCA share the belief that the support and growth of cricket at a low level is important to the future of cricket for Australia. Cricket Australia and the game development sector of TCA both see the importance of three main levels of cricket: traditional and non-traditional club cricket, traditional and non-traditional school cricket, and entry level cricket programs. The three main entry level programs are “Have a Go,” Kanga Cricket and CricHit. Have a Go is a structured cricket program that introduces the game of



cricket to young kids. Kanga Cricket is run as more of a promotional activity in Tasmania, not as a major learn-the-game event. CricHit is a girl's cricket program that acts as an introduction to the game, but it is not found in Tasmania (Australian Cricket Census 2006/2007 2007). Over 1700 kids in Tasmania participate in the Have a Go program.

Tasmania is the smallest state of Australia and has just 489,000 residents. Currently, there are over 13,000 people playing organized cricket in Tasmania. The TCA is working hard to interest more people in playing cricket; it has increased participation in the game by 4.6% over the past four years. As a state, Tasmania represents 2.7% of all people playing cricket in Australia, while Tasmania only represents 2.4% of the country's total population. Most of the people playing cricket are playing traditional cricket at a club level. Making up the club level, 46.5% were junior participants, 51.8% were senior, 1.8% was a veteran, and 1.5% was female. At this point in time, there are 164 cricket clubs in Tasmania and 617 teams playing traditional club cricket. Almost 15% of all boys in the five to 12 year old age bracket play organized, club based cricket (Australian Cricket Census 2006/2007 2007).

The hub of cricket in Tasmania is in the Hobart area, with 44.4% of participants coming from the Hobart metropolitan area, while the other 57.6% are from the rest of the state. There is a high concentration of cricketers in the Hobart region where many cricket tournaments are held and where there is a high level of competition. The state is broken up into three main cricketing regions, the southern region (which includes the Hobart area), the northern region, and the northwest region (Australian Cricket Census 2006/2007 2007:78). The majority of private schools have a cricket team, while less than half of public schools have a cricket team. This is due to the high expenses of having a cricket team and public schools can not afford to sponsor teams.

The total numbers of participants in cricket at various levels are shown in table 1.

**Table 1: Total Number of Cricket Players in Tasmania, 2006/07**

	<b>Traditional Club</b>	<b>Non-Traditional Club</b>	<b>Traditional School</b>	<b>Non-Traditional School</b>	<b>Entry Level</b>	<b>TOTAL Players</b>
<b>Metropolitan</b>						
Hobart/Southern	4,007	590	857	110	714	6,278
Sub Total	4,007	590	857	110	714	6,278
<b>Country</b>						
Launceston/Northern	2,514	90	620	620	505	4,349
North West	2,508	76	106	70	397	3,157
Sub Total	5,022	166	726	690	902	7,506
<b>Total</b>	<b>9,029</b>	<b>756</b>	<b>1,583</b>	<b>800</b>	<b>1,616</b>	<b>13,784</b>

(Australian Cricket Census 2006/2007 2007:79)

## Literature Review

Even though sports are highly involved in the cultural fabric of the world today, sports are still viewed as fantasy and are not taken seriously. In the past 30 years, sports have been more widely studied. By studying sports, one can see different cultural and social patterns and effects due to the impact of sports. Howard Nixon and James Frey, two sports sociologists, discuss how cross-cultural perspectives enable the understanding of social structures and processes of not only other countries, but also your own country (Nixon and Frey 1996). By comparing and contrasting cricket in Tasmania and baseball in the United States, I will not only learn more about the sport of cricket, but also more about Tasmania's social norms and the people of Tasmania. There have been numerous studies of sports carried out in different cultures recently reflecting on different aspects of sports and how they are intertwined with specific cultures.

A large majority of people in Tasmania can be considered spectators of the sport of cricket, but are they truly fans? Daniel Wann, a sports psychologist who studied sports

fandom, has found that there is a large difference between a fan and a spectator. Fans follow a team or athlete closely while spectators witness sports through varying forms of media, not necessarily intentionally. Many people can be huge fans of a team or sport, sometimes even revolving their day today activities around the sport, while spectators enjoy the game on a more passive level. (Wann et al. 2001). This is similar to Tasmanians and cricket; almost all Tasmanians are spectators of cricket because of how pervasive it is in everyday life, while a smaller percentage are actually fans of the sport. Many times people are fans of a specific team because they grew up playing and watching that team, hoping to one day make it “big” (Ingham and McDonald 2003). The Tasmanian Tigers has a roster of thirty-one players, of that, twenty-one were born and grew up in Tasmania (Sportal 2007). Many of the players are recruited from local sports clubs to play for the Tigers, giving hope to many of the children playing cricket in Tasmania presently.

Wann’s research also offers clues about other motivations people have for becoming members of a sports community. One of the major the influences is one's parents. Wann found that those people who are highly involved in sports and consider themselves huge fans often do so because their parents were fans of that team. Wann (2001) found that parents tend to be influential in the teams that their children root for. Noel Dyck goes a step farther to claim that “children’s and parent’s experiences of sport are constructed in terms of the overriding organizational interests” (Dyck 2000). Most children are pushed to get involved with a sport based on whether their parents play and based on how prominent that sport is in that area (Dyck 2000). It was also found that those who get involved in sports at a younger age are more likely to continue to stay involved in that sport and be a fan in their later years. While doing research in Tasmania, I found a similar trend, almost all of the kids I talked to

had parents who played cricket, or had a parent who was highly involved in driving them around or even coaching.

There have been a number of studies of sports in other cultures by anthropologists. For example, Paul Bergin examined the role of sports in the cultural identity of New Zealand Maori migrants living in Australia (Bergin 2002). The various sporting seasons are reflected in membership of different local clubs; the clubs allow for feelings of unity and belonging within the culture (Bergin 2002). Many times people join these clubs to play a sport they watch or follow in an effort to mirror some of their biggest inspirers. This is true in Tasmania today, with many kids choosing which club they want to be involved with based on where their idol play's (Bergin 2002).

Alan Klein, another noted sports anthropologist, looked at the globalization of sports, specifically baseball. American baseball teams are reaching out to foreign countries and players as a way to increase the talent pool, and the development of baseball in different countries. Klein looked at different attempts of Major League Baseball to spread the game of baseball worldwide as the interest and talent in the game are slowly declining. Klein looked at the Los Angeles Dodgers, the Kansas City Royals and the Commissioner's Office, and their varying approaches to globalization. Klein also explores the Major League Baseball International (MLBI), which is responsible for generating revenue on the world stage for the various baseball franchises in the United States. The Tasmanian Cricket Association is doing this on a smaller scale by trying to reach out to various people who do not play cricket (the "cricket tragic") in order to increase the talent of the Tasmanian Tigers and to increase revenue.

Eldon Snyder and Elmer Spreitzer, two sports sociologists, did a study in which they looked at the differences between baseball in Japan and the United States. Their study looked at how there were many differences in baseball in the two countries because of the difference in culture. In Japan, managers are not fired year to year, games can end in a tie, and overall, the game is much more ceremonial and serious. Japan places a lot of value on the character of the player, not just the performance of the player. Snyder and Spreitzer claim that there is such a large difference in the sport because of the personality traits and cultural values of Japan compared to the United States (Snyder and Spreitzer 1984). In my study, even though I am looking at two different sports, I am looking at what different aspects of each culture (Tasmanian and American) have driven the sport to be the way it is. There have not been any recent studies done on the differences between cricket and baseball development, nor on Tasmanian culture versus American culture.

Peggy McCann and Martha Ewing from the Institute for the Study of Youth Sports discuss the impact of sports on children in their paper “Motivation and Outcomes of Youth Participation in Sport.” Their study looked at adults, adolescents and children and their value of sport and sports achievement. Many youths are involved in sports from a young age because sports are seen to develop strong people: physically, mentally, and emotionally. Many times parents are encouraging their children to play, coaches push kids to work and play harder, or school systems are trying to encourage sportsmanship and character development (McCann and Ewing 2006). Both the TCA and the many baseball organizations in the United States claim their first goal is to build better people before building better players. Both development programs do not initially focus on winning, but on having fun,

good sportsmanship, and being strong citizens. Even in two very different countries, the development programs are still very similar.

Sports are often perceived as a reservoir of cultural richness, reflecting many of the values and norms of a culture, and reaching out to a wide-range of people (Palmer 2002). Jeremy McClancy, an anthropologist, has expanded on this general consensus to state that sport can express values associated with the society and allow for people to bond through their similar love for the game (McClancy 1997). Initially, a sport is not associated with a set of meanings or social values; over time however, meanings are generated which are constantly contested and changed (McClancy 1997). As people become supporters—participants and fans—a sport evolves to hold a set of meanings that bond a group of people, and begins to play a role in the day to day life of its supporters.

## **Methods**

Knowing that I would be spending a period of three months in Tasmania, I wanted to do research on a topic that I enjoyed. Being an athlete myself and always having a love for sport, I looked into major sports in Australia. I quickly learned that the main summer sport in Tasmania is cricket. Living in the United States my whole life, not growing up in a Commonwealth country, I knew little about cricket. I had gone through one small obsession with cricket, the foreign played sport with flat bats, when I was ten, but besides that brief encounter, I knew next to nothing about cricket. When arriving in Hobart on January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2008, I knew I had a lot of work ahead of me if I was going to be able to write anything at all about cricket. Besides doing a brief literature review about sports in cultures before leaving

for Tasmania, I didn't have much of a background or much of a clue of what to do in Hobart upon my arrival.

On my first full day exploring Hobart, coincidentally, I was exploring a local park and found a promotional cricket event going on. Being the eager, diligent anthropologist that I was, I took out my steno pad and wrote down everything. I decided that I should try to make some initial contacts and see if there was anyway that I could get more involved in cricket. I happened to meet the head of game development at the Tasmania Cricket Association, Ben Smith. Ben Smith was extremely helpful, and provided me with his email as a contact if I needed one, and I did. I quickly emailed him once settling down in Hobart and he worked out an internship for me. I officially became the first outsourced intern of the TCA, and enjoyed every bit of my role.

Being an American and knowing little about cricket, everyone was eager to help me, and I quickly got a tutorial on the rules of cricket. I met many of the Tasmanian Tigers, the professional cricket team in Tasmania, as well as many other employees of the TCA. I did a lot of my internship with Scott McNaughton, a twenty-three year old Tasmanian. He was in charge of non-traditional cricket in Tasmania, hosting many events throughout the Hobart area and the State. Being a cricketer himself, as well as an employee of the TCA, he enabled me to meet many other key people throughout my research, and he became my key-informant. I attended cricket matches at all levels, youth clinics, youth camps, youth select team training, and many other promotional events. I met many professional cricket players, amateur players, retired players, famous past cricketers, and many others associated with cricket. By being around the TCA three or four days a week for six or more hours a day, I

was constantly making new contacts with people and most were eager to share their cricket knowledge with me.

I had many informal conversations with people about cricket, their experiences with cricket, and their thoughts about cricket. I was also able to schedule a variety of formal interviews with people involved at many different levels of the cricket world, including young kids, professional players, coaches, retired players, TCA employees, mothers and many more. The variety of people I was able to meet was directly related to the work I was doing at the TCA. I observed many different events and scribbled down field notes, as well as many times participated in events to gain an insiders perspective. Working at the TCA helped me get many interviews, as well as a lot of data—censuses, handbooks, guides, books and much more. All of this played a key role in my research.

When not at the TCA, I read the newspaper and cricket websites, and watched cricket on the television to gain more information. Cricket is everywhere in Tasmania, and by living in Tasmania for ten weeks, I was constantly surrounded by cricket information. Also, I was staying with a family that is fairly into sports and enjoys cricket. They play beach and backyard cricket and always watch cricket on the television. I was able to use them as key informants on the effect and influence of cricket in their lives. They were also able to introduce me to many of their friends who were involved in cricket to have an even larger network of people to gather data from. I felt as though I was constantly gaining more and more information from each person I met and that each person would tell me of someone who I had to meet. A day later, a person would call, wanting to speak to me about cricket. It was as though everyone was eager to help me, which was quite nice.



I think that being American helped me a lot in doing my research. People were shocked that I did not know anything about cricket and were eager to teach me more about cricket. By being an outsider, people were willing to share everything because they knew that anything they said would be useful. Being an American may have been a disadvantage because people would try to tell me basic things that I had already learned, but people quickly learned that I did know the basics and would tell me more of their own cricket story.

When interning at the TCA, I would usually dress in sporty apparel, many times wearing the TCA gear that they gave me. When conducting formal interviews, I would wear khakis and a shirt with a cardigan, trying to be on a more professional level. I would use a digital tape recorder with all formal interviews, which I would then download onto my computer and transcribed key parts. I used the Data Notebook application made by FieldWorks to record all of my observations and interviews. This program allowed me to organize my notes and easily transcribe all of my handwritten notes. I took all of my notes while out in the field in a small notebook and would go home at night and would record them into Data Notebook.

## **-CHAPTER II-**

### **Cricket in Everyday Life**

Cricket is found in every little cranny of Australian life. Whether people enjoy cricket or are indifferent to it, there is no way to escape. Its presence can be felt almost everywhere.

#### **Television**

One prominent way cricket seeps into the fabric of Australian life is through television. The media right to air all of the cricket games on a network costs 55 million dollars a year, making televised cricket a huge industry. All international and many national games are filmed and aired on the television, this year, on the WIN network (a major

Australian television network). The games that are aired are usually live and have many different commentators, special effects, and player information. There are three types of games, five day matches, one day matches and 20/20 matches. A five day international game will be aired on the television five days in a row, for all eight hours each day. A cricket game will take over the network and all other shows and programs will be pushed aside.

The reason that the media rights are so expensive is because of the vast amount of Australian viewers for each game. Most Australians, including Tasmanians, will watch some part of all Australian games. It is common to see a cricket game playing in the background at any house over the summer. Many people will start to focus and tune into the match towards the end. The number of viewers throughout Australia is enormous; most Australians claim, “everyone will watch a little cricket, even if they don’t like it all that much.” Watching cricket on the television is a huge part of summer days, and many people especially tune into the big game aired on Boxing Day (December 26<sup>th</sup>) every year. It is thought that of the eighteen million people in Australia, eight million watch cricket at some point throughout the summer.

Cricket matches are not the only programs found on the television relating to cricket, there is also the news and commercials. The news usually has a five minute cricket round up on a day to day basis in which the matches or cups going on will be discussed, the health of various athletes, any controversy that is going on, and any other major cricket news. If someone does not watch an actual game, they will get their “daily dose of cricket” from the news. I also found that when watching the television there are two major types of cricket commercials that are aired. There are the commercials in which professional players try to sell certain merchandise, such as a lawn mower or a cricket bat. Professional players are

known and recognized by all Australians, so a professional cricketer is many times used as a spokesperson to promote and sell an item. There is also the other type of commercial run by Cricket Australia, which encourages more people to get out and play cricket. I saw one in particular when Adam Gilchrist, a big cricketer in Australia, was dressed in his uniform and talking about how cricket was a huge part of Australian culture, and that playing cricket helps with coordination, exercise, and is a way for people to interact. He then went on to guarantee a good time for all of those who play cricket. The large amount of cricket on the television exposes almost all Australians who watch television to cricket, whether they are cricket enthusiasts or not.

## **Newspapers**

Cricket is also reported in all newspapers in Australia. Many people who love cricket immediately turn to the back of the paper and read all about cricket. This is quite similar to baseball, when many people will pick up the paper, turn to the sports section and look to see the results of “last night’s game” and to see who is “leading the AL East, the Yanks or the Sox.” In *The Mercury*, the local Tasmanian paper, the back ten or so pages is the sports section. Cricket stories usually make up half of all stories that are run in the sports section when it is cricket season. There will be stories about international cricket cups and the Australian team, as well as coverage of the national cups, with many stories about the Tiger’s and how they are playing. The newspaper also has local coverage of grade and club cricket, with all the scores and statistics that any cricket enthusiast would love to read. When there is a big cricket story going on, cricket could be on the front page of the newspaper.

During the off-season, there is still coverage of cricket players and how they are performing in international play or how they are doing with their training.

Many people, especially males, always pick up the newspaper and turn immediately to the sports section. They will buy the paper just to see the scores and make sure they know what is going on in the cricketing world. People who do not care about the scores or statistics still commonly read the sports section to stay in the know about what is going on in the cricket world, which is important in many casual conversations. Many times there will be stories about cricketers' personal lives, especially of major cricket players who play for Australia and are treated as royalty. The more personal articles about cricket are mainly aimed at women to get them more interested in cricket. Reading the newspaper is a typical part of many people's days, and is another part of a person's day in which cricket is present.

## **Radio**

Cricket is also commonly talked about on the radio, and is another place that cricket pops up in day-to-day life. There are many radio shows, which are centered only around sports, and in the summer, mainly on cricket. On these stations you will get constant updates on scores and players, as well as predictions and causal talk about cricket all over the world. Before big games there are usually pre-game shows in which strategies are discussed, players are picked apart, and the condition of the pitch is examined. Also, all games are typically broadcasted on the radio, with many people listening while at work, in the car, or any circumstance in which they are away from the television. Cricket is not only present on sports stations though. There are usually sports breaks on all major stations in which they give the score of the major matches being played. Cricket is often openly discussed,

especially controversy in the game and any juicy gossip on the players during early morning talk shows.

### **Informal Cricket**

Another way that cricket is intertwined with the daily lives of Australians is by the vast numbers of people playing cricket, in many different varieties and settings. Beach cricket is the most common form of cricket played in Australia, especially in Tasmania. Tasmania has many inviting beaches in which people frequent year-round. Beach cricket is a common past time for people at the beach; most people own their own beach cricket set and typically bring one with them to the beach. When going on a camping trip with my host family and another family, both families had a beach cricket set with them, and seven out of nine groups on the beach had their own beach cricket set also. Diane Dooley, a Tasmanian who claims to hate cricket, even plays beach cricket, saying, “well of course I play beach cricket, everyone does.” Beach cricket is similar to whiffle ball in the United States, using a plastic cricket bat, a plastic wicket set, and a tennis ball to get the game started. Beach cricket is considered a “pick-up” game, and people of all ages are seen playing. Boundaries are many times drawn in the sand or not drawn at all. The rules are modified from organized cricket, and each group of players or family usually have their own rules in which they play by. Beach cricket is usually not very competitive and is a common past time for beach goers.

Another popular way to play cricket that is also not part of an organized team is "backyard cricket." Backyard cricket is usually played with a plastic bat and wickets like beach cricket, or a real wooden bat and wickets can be used. The ball can vary from a tennis ball to a real cricket ball. The rules will also vary from household to household. Backyard

cricket is typically played by younger kids, or growing cricket devotees, many times bringing a whole neighborhood of kids together to play cricket. It is also an Australian tradition to play a big game of backyard cricket with the whole family after eating Christmas lunch on Christmas day. A mom or dad may play with their children after work or on the weekends also.

Yet another informal version of the sport is "street cricket." Street cricket is played all over Tasmania, but mainly in more rural areas. Many of the cricketers who live in the country will play cricket in the street with their neighborhood friends. They typically have rolling wickets, which they can roll on and off the road when a car comes. Street cricket was also used as an initiative in Brighton, Tasmania, to bring the community together, raising awareness of children playing in the street, and to slow down drivers. The street cricket initiative got a lot more people playing cricket who would not have been playing otherwise, and helped to change community relations.

Because of the high immigration rate into Australia, Cricket Australia and the TCA have formed a "linguistically diverse background" cricket program, for people from non-English speaking countries originally. This program targets people who may have never been exposed to cricket in their country of origin and want to learn about a big part of Australian culture. The team is composed of boys' aged 12 to 15 and allows for people from different backgrounds to come together under the cricket umbrella. It is also used to help promote race relations by having the linguistically diverse background cricket team play against teams of other boys their age and hosting a barbeque or event after the match. Another major goal of the program is to encourage more people who may not be traditional cricketers to pick up a cricket bat and play.

Yet another form of cricket that reaches out to even more people in Tasmania is table cricket for people with disabilities. Table cricket is aimed at those people who would not be able to stand up and run from wicket to wicket, but who still have a love for the game. There are special modified bats, which are much shorter, and the game is played on a ping-pong table. There is a set of rules to go along with table cricket, but the aim of the alternative form is to give more people the opportunity to play cricket. All of these different forms of cricket, beach, backyard, street and table, make cricket accessible to many different people and make it so that people who are not typical cricket players have the opportunity to play.

### **Cricket Sponsorships and Merchandise**

Even if cricket is not your "cup of tea," it may be your cup of hot chocolate or your cereal in the morning. Another intrusion of cricket into everyday Australian life is through the volume of advertising featuring cricket stars. Adam Gilchrist, a talented cricket player for Australia, appears on Milo packets (a hot chocolate brand in Australia), Ricky Ponting, a great Tasmanian and Australian Cricket player, is seen batting on the Weet-Bix cereal box (a cereal brand in Australia). Milo is a major sponsor of all youth cricket in Australia and Tasmania, leading to many young children running around in Milo cricket hats and eating Milo ice cream. Many famous cricketers are also linked to certain clothing brands and other random products, such as mulch fertilizer. The amount of sponsorship between the cricketing world and the market is huge, making cricket appear in many households, whether intentionally or not.

There is also a large amount of cricket memorabilia. There is the cricket Monopoly set, as well as other cricket related board games, which can be found in many stores and the



occasional cricket loving household. I have seen many framed cricket posters in households, as well as cricket trading cards and their matching binder. I have also encountered David Boone talking bobble head dolls, similar to baseball bobble heads, in many households, even those that claim to “not be into cricket.” Because of the high amount of cricket related sponsorships and merchandise related to cricket, it is hard to escape the influence of cricket in the day to day life of many Australians.

### **Cricket in the Everyday Life of Two Tasmanian Families**

In order to better understand the impact and role of cricket in everyday life, I selected two families as case studies. I chose one family that I knew to be cricket fans with two sons, and another family who claimed to not be interested in cricket with two daughters.

During my 10 week stay in Tasmania, I lived with the Colrain family; the Colrains consist of Andrew (age forty-three), Gill (age thirty-nine), Sean (age ten) and Joe (age 7). Upon first meeting them and telling them I would be studying cricket, they were all, especially the boys, very excited to explain the game of cricket to me. Andrew, an all-around sports lover, was the first to sit down with me and tell me about the ins and outs of cricket. He told me the rules, spoke of major past and present players, explained controversies of the game, and reminisced of his experiences with cricket. Sean, who is in grade five, does not play cricket on a team, but is always playing in the backyard and on the beach. He has many cricket trading cards all organized into binders, a framed picture of the Australian team, an Australia game jersey and an Australia cricket hat. He was also eager to explain the game to me, show me his bat, and to take me outside to play. Joe, being the younger brother, would follow Sean and I around, eagerly participating in all pick-up cricket matches.

Not only was cricket a large part of a lot of our conversations, but it was also a large part of our daily activities. I attended two cricket matches at the Bellerive Oval with Andrew, Sean and Joe, and have watched countless matches on the television. When not watching cricket, many times we were playing cricket. We would walk down to the beach and play a game of beach cricket, often including other families around us. We would also set up little games in the backyard, when one person would bat while the others took turns bowling and fielding. Everyday, Andrew or Sean would tell me a new little tidbit about cricket and were eager to hear about my own cricket experiences. Sean plans to play organized cricket next year, but right now he is mainly focused on soccer. Andrew has never been a cricket player himself, but loves sports and has always been a fan of the cricketing world.

I commonly caught Andrew listening to cricket matches on the radio while doing work around the house, and whenever we were on a family outing while a cricket match was being played, he would rush to the car to listen for the score. Andrew also read the sports section of the newspaper and checked out all of the scores of the state and international matches. Andrew was not a huge follower of club cricket, but knew all about the Tasmanian Tigers and the Australian National team. Gill, Andrew's wife, is not as big of a cricket fan as the rest of her family, but she still has her fair share of cricket wisdom. Gill watched the ends of big matches on the television and claimed to "enjoy the social aspects of cricket." Gill also loved to spend a day at the oval catching up and conversing with friends, not focusing as much on the game as the social aspect. She also loved to read gossip on cricket player's wives, and could easily name all of the children of the major cricket players. She knew where most players were from and who had the cutest haircut.

I tried to quantify the impact of cricket on each member of the Colrain family. I designated a week in the end of January and each night I asked each of them to look back and reflect upon their day and to tell me about any part of their day that had to do with cricket. They could tell me about playing it, watching it, reading about it, hearing about it, talking about it, seeing it in a commercial or basically anything that had to do with cricket. Andrew had the most interaction with cricket throughout the week. There was a five day test match going on, and Andrew watched and/or listened everyday. The day preceding the match, he had listened to two radio shows about the upcoming match and who would be the victor. He also claimed to have discussed with some of his mates the upcoming match and specifics about the India team and the Australia cricket strategy. Andrew also played cricket at the beach twice during the week with Sean and Joe, making his week chock full of cricket.

Gill had slightly different cricket encounters throughout the week. She read about the India-Australia conflict in the newspaper two of the seven days of the week. She also read in *Women's Day* about Ricky Ponting, his wife and the baby that they may be expecting. Gill also pointed out that several commercials she had watched throughout the week had cricketers selling or promoting goods on them. She also watched a little bit of competitive beach cricket on the television when flipping through channels one day. Even though Gill wasn't actively watching or playing cricket, she still crossed paths with cricket many times daily.

Sean and Joe also had their fair share of cricket throughout their week. Sean and Joe actually played cricket four out of the seven days of the week. They played two games of beach cricket and then played cricket together in the backyard on two different days. They were both on summer vacation during this week, but claimed that they typically play cricket

during recess at school as well. In addition to playing cricket, Sean also got a new pack of cricket trading cards and organized them in his collector's binder. They both watched the end of the five day cricket match and were excited to see Australia win. Additionally, the boys also noticed that there were professional cricket players on the Weet-Bix box that they eat breakfast from everyday, as well as collector's cards on the inside. They also pointed out that the Milo they drink has pictures and autographs of Australian cricketers on it as well.

It is clear that cricket is really everywhere in the Colrains day to day life. They all appreciate if not enjoy cricket, and are proud of their Australian cricket team. Cricket has infiltrated the day to day life of the Colrains, specifically in the summer, and is therefore a big piece of their lives.

After collecting data on the Colrains, I believed that I may have had a biased view of cricket in the life of typical Tasmanians, so I also met with and interviewed another family, the Dooleys. Jeremy is forty-four and is a grade eleven and twelve teacher. Di is forty-two and works in a doctor's office as a medical assistant. They have had two girls together, Georgia who is eleven and Annie who is seven. By talking with a family who has two girls instead of boys and two parents who claim to "not be interested in cricket" and claim that "cricket is not part of our daily lives," I would have more well rounded data.

I first interviewed Jeremy and Di together asking a series of questions about cricket in their lives. I first asked about how they viewed themselves as cricket fans and supporters. Di spoke about how her father was a professional cricket player and how she grew up with cricket. She has therefore been "cricketed out" and does not enjoy it anymore; she is "over cricket." Jeremy claimed that cricket was fine, but he is more into "footy," also know as Australian Rules Football. They both said that cricket is not a major part of their lives and

that they did not *love* cricket like many of their fellow Tasmanians. Di often watches a one day match on the television but “wouldn’t sit here for hours on end like a lot of people” but would “watch the remaining twenty balls or the end of a close match.” Jeremy says he watches a lot of matches on the television, especially the major ones. He also said that he ventures to the Bellerive Oval for all of the big games. Di will occasionally go down to the oval, but for the social aspects, not the sport aspects. Even though neither Di nor Jeremy love cricket, they both love to play cricket on the beach. Beach cricket is a “big thing,” and “if you go to the beach with friends, you generally play beach cricket.”

The family does own a cricket set, and the girls use the cricket set in the backyard from time to time. Jeremy thinks that if they had boys instead of girls, cricket would be a much bigger part of their lives because the boys would play in the backyard all of the time. He believes that “girls aren’t as sport orientated.” The sports the girls participate in are based on what sports they have at their school. Cricket is new this year so they will see if the girls enjoy it. Jeremy believes that overall “most girls are not interested in cricket.” Di thinks that the TCA is really starting to focus on girls and trying to increase the number of girls who play cricket. Because of the lesbian stigma attached to girls playing cricket, according to Di, “many parents shy away from encouraging their girls to play cricket.”

Both agree that cricket is embedded in Australian culture and that almost all Australians have an understanding of and small interest in cricket. Di thinks that most Australians as a whole would know “what is going on in the cricket world” and thinks about 80% watch cricket at some point during the season on the television. Jeremy “reckons [only] half watch because of the large immigrant population who are not interested in cricket.” Even though they both think cricket is embedded in the culture, they both think of Aussie

rules as “more Australian,” with cricket as a second. Di claims that “cricket is everywhere now, but in the winter it is all about football and all cricketers are gone to England.”

Georgia and Annie both think that cricket is very popular and commonly see people playing at recess. Georgia thinks that mostly boys play cricket, but she wants to play at some point. Georgia and Annie both agree that cricket is all around them but they do not know much about the game. They do own a cricket set though and will play around from time to time. Georgia and Annie may not be as involved in cricket as Sean and Joe, but they do see and hear about cricket “all the time,” especially during the summer.

Even though playing or watching cricket is not Di or Jeremy’s favorite pastime, it is still evident that cricket is a large part of their lives. They will play at the beach, watch occasional games on the television, keep track of how Australia is doing in cricket, and both admit that cricket is embedded in Australian culture. As a family, the Dooleys may not be the biggest cricket fanatics, but it is still prevalent in their day to day lives.

### **Youth Obsession with Cricket**

For the younger population in Tasmania, cricket is not just a sport they watch on the television, but the people playing the game are their heroes. Ricky Ponting is who they want to be when they grow up, or they hope that they can one day bowl like Brett Lee. In the lives of many young boys, cricket is life. They collect cricket trading cards, they wear all cricket clothing, and they know the names of all of the cricket players for Australia and Tasmania. They brag about what club they are part of and what great players came from their club. They all want to be professional cricket players and are constantly playing. Their bedspread is cricket, the posters on their walls are of cricket teams, all the books they read are about

cricket, and they don't miss a game on the television. In the life of a young fan, kids "eat, sleep, and play cricket," or others say, "cricket then school, but don't tell my mom that." The infatuation of cricket may fade with age, and the bed spread may become something that the women of the household picks out, but I have also encountered many grown men who know all about every cricketer, still read novels on cricket, and tend to only read the sports section. For some people, cricket is life and their life does revolve around cricket.

### **Future of the Game**

In order to keep cricket influential in the day-to-day life of Tasmanians, the employees of the game development sector at the TCA are constantly brainstorming for new ways to target people who do not play cricket. This may be kids who do not have any family members who play cricket and would not be exposed in the home environment. This may be girls who are many times discouraged to play cricket because of the social stereotypes. This may be the disabled who think they cannot play cricket or the elderly who think they no longer are capable of being in the cricket world. This may be people who have long ago decided that they hate cricket.

To increase the numbers of people playing cricket, the TCA is going after those who are considered the "cricket tragic," those who do not play cricket and have not yet found their love for the game. Because most of the people working at the TCA play cricket and love the game, it is easy to see how they would view those who do not share their love for the game as "tragic." The TCA is also looking at the growing trends of the Australian population and looking at ways to target people based on those trends.

The fertility rate in Australia is declining and the large baby boomer population is moving into retirement in Australia. In order to get this aging population involved in cricket, there is a volunteer program that all people can take part in, which especially targets older people. The TCA is actively trying to get the retiring generations of cricket players involved in different levels of the game. This includes coaching, score keeping, acting as an umpire, helping out with clinics, giving tours of cricket facilities, and many other opportunities. Volunteers are thought of as the driving force behind retaining participants, so it is this older generation that helps to increase the numbers of people playing cricket and retain players. Cricket Australia invests a lot of money into the volunteer program to not only get more people involved in cricket, but to sustain the cricket infrastructure which is in place at this point in time.

Another demographic shift in Australia is that more females are joining the workforce. This makes getting kids involved in after school programs much more difficult because the old stay-at-home mom who drove her children everywhere no longer has the time. To counter this, the TCA and Cricket Australia have taken a few different actions. They have brought cricket into schools by creating a school curriculum. This curriculum is called “CricKids: Playing in Harmony,” and its main goal is to make sure that cricket maintains its important role in Australian culture. The curriculum covers many learning areas including English, health and fitness, social education, art and design, information technology, and theater. The program also focuses on community and development issues such as racism, teamwork, leadership, bullying, fair play, respecting yourself and those around you, rights and responsibilities, and racism and discrimination. By going into the school, the amount of people learning about cricket and therefore hopefully becoming interested in cricket



increases. The TCA also hosts many clinics throughout the year at as many schools as possible in Tasmania. These clinics replace gym periods at most schools and act as a way to get kids interested in cricket and to learn about the game and how to play.

Another major trend in Australia is that 25% of the population is not native born, and there is a lot of migration of people from countries, which do not have cricket. The CricEd program was formed knowing that “Australia is a diverse and multicultural country” and it is therefore focused on bringing various people together through cricket. There are also different culturally diverse leagues and teams, which are aiming at getting people together through cricket. Cricket Australia is also trying to sell cricket as an Australian entity and as a great way to become involved in the community, become “more Australian,” and have a common interest with those around you to spark conversation. By targeting many of the people who are not playing cricket and looking at population trends to increase participation numbers, it is apparent that cricket will continue to grow and thrive in the Australian culture.

## **-CHAPTER III-**

### **Structure of Cricket in Tasmania**

#### **Development Program**

The game development section of the TCA works hard to have a strong development system in Tasmania. A good development program is important if Tasmania's going to field

strong teams for interstate competition and going to contribute players to the national team. The game development sector of the TCA focuses not only on increasing the number of people playing cricket, but also increasing the talent and skill of those playing cricket. Besides actually playing cricket on a youth or club team, the TCA also has a strong volunteer program, a “CricEd” program to bring cricket and a “living in harmony” message to primary school kids, alternative forms of cricket for the “cricket tragic,” and many other programs, which reach out to various people.

### **Role of TCA Employees**

Game Development has many different people involved in its operations to increase the participation in cricket. The game development mission statement states: “Tasmanian Game Development through a UNIFIED approach will make a POSITIVE contribution to the TCA by providing a QUALITY and ENJOYABLE cricket experience for ALL Tasmanian cricketers.” In order to reach their goals of spreading cricket and increasing talent, they have nine full-time employees and many part time workers, all with different focuses and goals relating to game development. There is the overall manager of game development, a women’s cricket officer, a game development supervisor, officers for each region in Tasmania, and an alternative cricket officer.

Scott McNaughton of the TCA is the game development officer of alternative forms of cricket in Tasmania. He claims that there is a “whole demographic of people who hate cricket and think it is boring.” It is his job to take all of those people and get them interested and possibly involved in cricket at some level. He is also a cricket coach for a club team, holds one-on-one coaching sessions for kids at the TCA, and runs the indoor cricket center at

the TCA. Kristen Beams is in charge of increasing the number of girls playing cricket in Tasmania by increasing the interest in cricket as well as creating a girls cricket infrastructure in Tasmania. At this point in time, there is not a women's state cricket team and there are no high level club teams for girls to play on. As a top female cricket player herself, she has been influential in getting girls in Tasmania to play cricket. Nick Guinane, southern Tasmania's cricket officer, works to create more cricket programs in the southern region of Tasmania and to increase the talent of players in Tasmania. While many other people focus on numbers, Nick's main concern is "having good players who can some day play for Tassie." There are many dedicated people who are actively involved in increasing the talent of players in Tasmania at all levels and increasing the number of people playing cricket.

### **A Game Development Manager**

Ben Smith is the manager of game development for the Tasmanian Cricket Association. He started playing cricket with his brothers in the backyard when he was five and moved up to school cricket when he was still just a "little fella." That was the beginning of a long, cricket filled life for Ben. He moved through the cricket system like many Australian boys, playing grade cricket for many years. He then started working for the South Australian Cricket Association in Adelaide (SAC), "coaching little kids and school teams for some money." He then became a cricket promotions officer at SAC, doing similar work in Adelaide that many of his game development team members are currently doing in Tasmania. After this, he became a cricket officer at SAC, looking after two metropolitan areas in Adelaide. Ben worked to "increase the number of people playing cricket and develop

pathways for the best players to progress on to higher levels,” which is mainly what he is also working toward today at the TCA.

About three years ago, he stepped into the position as the game development manager at the TCA. The game development division can be broken into three sections; the two major sections are participation and quality of play, and a third small section is coaching education. His job is to oversee the development of players so that “the best kids progress through the pathways and play for Tasmania when they grow up.” Another part of his job is to ensure that there are high numbers of kids playing because if “1000 kids are playing, about ten of them will be great cricket players.” One of their major goals is to get the “best kids playing against the best kids” so they can determine whom the promising players truly are, and continue advanced player development for those standout players.

Ben believes that his department is very “futuristic” in that if they “don’t continue to produce good players at a young age, in ten years, the major teams will be awful.” It is hard to see the impact of holding all of the small clinics for five year olds until you look at the broader picture; these five year olds are the next generation of cricketers who will be representing Tasmania, and they need to be strong. They are always battling the “crystal ball,” thinking about what the future holds and how they can make future generations better.

Ben believes that one major aspect of cricket development is that “the kid has a quality experience when playing cricket.” Ben says that if the sport is not “fun, challenging or rewarding, kids are not going to want to play.” Ben is a strong believer that the quality of the experience is everything. Ben claims that the Tasmania Tigers and the Australian cricket team are major reasons that “little Johnny wants to start playing,” saying “without those

blokes providing the role model and the aspirations for kids, it doesn't matter what the quality of the experience is, kids won't turn up in the first place." Ben asserts that cricket is "a huge part of Australia culture" and he is proud to be involved in the cricketing world.

### **Club Cricket**

There are 164 clubs in Tasmania and there are eight major clubs in the Hobart area, which are governed by the TCA. All of the clubs are sponsored by the TCA and host an introductory cricket program such as "Have a Go," a youth league with U9, U10, U12, U13, U15 and U17 teams, and grade cricket teams. People can join any club they choose, and typically pay a membership fee. They also have to pay for the uniform and all equipment they need to play if they are not a sponsored player. If you are a member of the club, you typically play on one of the teams. People generally play for the same club for their whole life, developing through that club's program and hopefully playing grade cricket for that club someday. Tasmania's cricket program is mainly based around club cricket, and generally people have a strong bond to their club. University or college teams are not as highly regarded as they are in the United States; the club team holds more statute.

### **Grassroots/ Community Cricket**

The TCA and cricket clubs run the Have a Go program, which focuses on reaching out to both boys and girls from the age of four to ten. For most of these young cricketers, this is their first exposure to the sport. Many kids have played in their backyard or with friends, but this is typically the first organized cricket these kids experience. They usually meet one day a week, typically on the weekend, for an hour. The kids play with modified rules, and

most competitive aspects of the game are eliminated. The score is not kept; teams change from week to week, and there is no championship or winner at the end of the program. The games usually only last for an hour and are very flexible. All of the kids who participate receive a free plastic bat and a red “safety” ball, provided by Milo, to ensure everyone has cricketing gear, and that Milo is splashed across everything. This level is fun based with an emphasis on basic skills. The TCA’s main focus of the Have a Go program is to get as many kids as possible to participate. They want to get kids playing, and are not overly concerned with talent at this stage of development.

The next step up the TCA and club ladder is Twilight Cricket. Twilight cricket meets one night a week. The skill is a little higher at this level, but it is still fun based with the main emphasis on basic skills. These games are longer with more focus on batting and fielding, but are still a basic introduction to cricket. The games last a little longer, about 90 minutes and the oval is larger than the one used for Have a Go. Twilight cricket is usually played by eight to ten year olds and is also co-ed.

### **Youth League Cricket**

The next level of development is TCA sponsored and club ran youth leagues. The youth leagues are broken up by age, consisting of six levels: U9, U10, U12, U13, U15 and U17. The U9, U10 and U12 teams all play with similar rules. The teams are based mainly on age, but a player may be selected to play in a higher bracket if they are highly skilled for their age. The main focus is still fun, with an emphasis on cricket skills such as batting, bowling, fielding, and of course, maximum participation. There is usually no practice during the week, just a short practice before games on Sundays.

This is the first level in which club teams compete against other clubs. The games consist of 20 overs for each team, with a maximum game length of 150 minutes. As the kids progress from U9 to U12, the field gets slightly larger, ranging from 40 to 45 meters. Also, at the U12 level, the kids are playing with a real leather cricket ball. At this level, the kids start to wear protective equipment, including helmets, pads, gloves, and genital protectors. All of the fielders still rotate so all of the kids get to play all the positions. At this level, the TCA is very careful to not overexpose kids to the game and makes sure clubs are running the youth league in a fair and fun way. They don't want kids to lose interest the game and quit, so they emphasize the fun and enjoyment of the game. They do not want to push the kids too hard, but this is also the beginning of major skill development.

The next level of play is the U13 youth league. This is the first level of play in which the kids have a training session in the middle of the week. The training sessions are usually one to two hours long and focus on variation of bowling, adapting to various bowlers when batting, and aggressive fielding. They also have a focus on the "sense of the game," aiming to get kids to really understand strategy and different ways in which the game can be played. The length of the pitch is now the standard length, while the oval is still smaller than the standard size. The games have a maximum time of 210 minutes. There are some select teams formed by the TCA at this level of play, but the main goal is still to keep cricket fun and to not overwhelm kids.

At this age, the kids are often getting highly involved in cricket. They want to be professional cricketers; they want to be the next Ricky Ponting. They tend to practice a great deal at home, and are constantly playing with friends. When sitting and observing some of the U13 players, I recorded the following observations:

At the clinic this morning, there were seven boys, ages 9 to 12. Before camp started, all of the kids were talking about the Australia-India test match that is going on. It appeared as though they had all been watching, and they were all talking about their favorite catches and wickets of the day. They knew all the names of the players and were talking about who was playing well and who was not. Also, out of the 7 kids, 5 were wearing at least one article of Australia cricket gear, either a jersey or a hat.

Some kids will play a few hours a day, whether it is at recess or in their backyard.

Kids will go down to the batting cages to practice batting and bowling to one another. At this stage, a lot more money starts to go into the game. Kids want to have a nice bat, their own gear, and as much cricket stuff as possible. Kids will watch professional cricket on television, go to professional matches, read about cricket in the paper, and collect cricket memorabilia. This is also the stage in which parents start to get more involved in the game. Parents usually come and watch all of their children's games, but it is the parental push at this age, which drives many kids.

Many times a father has played cricket his whole life and wants to help his son play too, constantly playing with his son and encouraging him to bat or bowl a certain way. Mothers also have a large role at this point in time; they are the ones who are many times driving the kids around and are supporting the kids at the games. Susan is the mother of a thirteen year old cricketer named Brett. She used to be "very big into indoor cricket" and loves to see her son play. Susan says that she plays with him sometimes, usually "batting because I am a poor bowler." She watches all of his games, and says that most parents are good about going to support their kids. It is apparent that cricket is not just a pastime for the child who is playing, but also for the parents who are highly involved.

The kids then move onto the U15 and above levels of play. The main focuses of practice are honing specific skills, team work, and game strategies. There are usually one to two practices a week, with one or two day matches on the weekends. Matches are played on



a full sized oval and pitch with a full weight leather ball. At this age, the TCA is really looking at the talent of the kids and who is showing a lot of potential. Those who are highly skilled can be selected to play on the U15, U17 or U19 Tasmanian teams. The competition is now much higher and kids are extremely competitive.

At this stage, there can be up to four hours of training a week. Many of these kids will play additional hours each day to keep their skills up, and because of their love for the game. Luke Andre is a 14 year old cricketer who claims, “Cricket is a huge part of my life, school and cricket-that's pretty much what I do.” He went on to say that during the summer “cricket comes first.” His dream is to one day become a “pro cricketer.” He plays year round, and has started playing cricket a lot more in the past year. The matches on the weekend can be up to six hours long each day, taking up a huge chunk of time. Kids are extremely serious about cricket at this level and it is usually a large part of their life.

### **Grade Cricket**

Club cricket also sponsors grade cricket. The first, second and third grade teams are all highly competitive. All professional players also play first grade cricket for a club. The clubs all compete against each other throughout the cricket season, with statistics and game results recorded in the newspaper and online. The second and third grade cricket levels are also very competitive, and people are constantly working hard to try to play first grade cricket. People from ages fourteen to thirty-nine can be found playing grade cricket, with most ranging from eighteen to twenty-eight playing first grade cricket.

People tend to retire from cricket around the age of thirty-five because of the huge strain and toll cricket takes on the body. Ben Smith (41 years old) claims he had to finally

stop playing at age 36 because of his family, “I had to raise my kids; I couldn’t be gone all weekend. The fact that I had trouble moving my arms for the next few days also lead me to give it up.” At this level, cricket is life to many of these people. They eat, sleep, and play cricket. They will read biographies of cricketers, watch cricket on television, check scores online and in the newspaper, and will generally revolve their lives around cricket. Scott McNaughton is no stranger to this; he claims to “constantly check scores and read stories at work” and looks forward to every Saturday when he gets “to get out on the pitch and bowl people out.” He claims that this is the “best part of my week, Saturday arvo (afternoon).”

### **Professional Cricket**

Professional cricket in Tasmania is also run by the TCA. There is a board of selectors who look at all the men playing first grade cricket throughout the state and select the best twenty-five to play for Tasmania. The TCA offers twenty full contracts and five rookie contracts to players per season. There is also a salary cap for the Tasmanian team, and for all state level professional teams. They have a base-pay for all full contract and rookie players that vary from player to player. If you have played with the Tigers for a long time, you are going to have a larger base-pay and if you are one of the best players, you would also have a higher base-pay. For every match that one of the players actually competes in, they get additional money. There are twenty-five players and only twelve make up the roster for each match so it is highly competitive. For playing in a four day match, the player receives an additional \$3500, and for a one day match, he receives an additional \$1500. Part of their contract also requires them to attend a certain number of public appearances to promote the Tigers.

About 50% of the team is selected from outside the state and then move to Tasmania to play. The players all belong to different clubs in the Hobart area, playing first grade cricket to keep their skills sharp. The Tigers compete in three major competitions, the Pura Milk Cup, which is a national four day competition, the Ford Ranger Cup, which is the national one day competition, and the KFC 20/20 Big Bash, which is the national 20/20 competition. The average career at the professional level is three to four years because of the high amount of competition for spots on the team and the wear and tear on the body. This is similar to the average career of a professional American baseball player in the major leagues, which is also four years. To play for longer, you have to be extremely talented and outplay the younger people around you.

The Tigers practice six days a week, rotating between field workouts and fitness workouts. Each practice is about two hours, and games can range from three hours to four days long. The players will also train with their club team twice a week, as well as going into the cages for extra practice and lifting at the gym. Baseball players tend to practice for a longer period of time. During spring training, baseball players practice all day, from nine to five. During the season, baseball players usually arrive at the field around three pm on a game day and do not leave until 11:00 or 12:00 at night. Cricket players tend to travel to England during Tasmanian winters to play in the English cricket league and participate in additional training. There are large amounts of money in England's cricket league, and people are eager to leave the cold Tasmanian winters.

Australia also has a national team, which is composed of the top players in the country. The players are selected by three men who make up the board of selectors. There is more prestige in playing cricket for Australia than at any other level, and it is usually the

main goal of all cricketers. The main goal of most baseball players is to play in the major leagues, which is considered “making it.” Everyone wants to wear the “baggy green” that is worn by the Australian team. People on the national team are usually a little older, most above the age of twenty-five, who have proved their cricketing skills to the world. The team practices for a week before most major competitions, but does not practice together as a team on a regular basis. Most Australian players have an allegiance to, and still play the occasional game with, their state team. Most players on the Australian team earn over \$500,000 a year playing cricket. The average baseball player makes 2.5 million dollars, five times more than the average cricket player.

### **Senior Cricket and Retired Players**

The TCA also offers senior cricket for older players who can no longer play at the grade level. Senior cricket is usually composed of people who are past their cricketing prime, but still have a love for the game and a desire to play. The rules are very relaxed and the league is not competitive, but more focused on having a good time. Many clubs have senior teams who compete against each other, but there is no practice during the week, just a short two hour game. Another way that some older cricketers play is by participating in country cricket. Country cricket is much less competitive and a lesser time commitment, but still allows quality cricket games for aging players. Jeff Lockhart played on a country cricket team for ten years, until he was 43. He enjoyed “playing with people of all ages” saying that there were “young guys and old men, some fathers and sons on the same team.” When he finally did stop playing cricket he claimed it was because he “needed to spend more time with my daughters, and they just weren’t into cricket.”

After players retire, many still stay active and involved in cricket. The TCA encourages people who have retired from the game to coach. They offer free coaching clinics and are always looking for people who know about the game to step into coaching positions. Many retired players enjoy staying involved and find umpiring to be a nice way to stay in the cricketing world. The TCA also offers some other opportunities for the retired cricketer, such as giving tours of the Bellerive Oval or acting as a curator to the cricket museum at the Bellerive Oval.

### **Life of a Teenage Cricketer**

Liam "Rickey" Rice is a teenager who has been playing cricket in Tasmania since he was 12 years old. He is about 5'9" with the tipped, gelled hair that is commonly found atop the heads of most Australian guys. His skinny frame and pale skin are paired with white sunglasses that complement his TCA uniform of gym shorts and a dry-fit cricket shirt. When asked about his experiences with cricket, he was a little anxious at first, but quickly relaxed when discussing his passion. He had never really thought to play cricket until he was older, being a "little lazy as a kid;" he preferred to play video games. Like many people, his interest in cricket really piqued when he saw his older brother playing, "whatever he did, I wanted to do, so I started playing too." He enjoyed playing in the yard with his brother and neighborhood kids, and decided to play the following season. Rickey did not play a lot of backyard cricket and beach cricket growing up, but as his friends and brother slowly got more involved, so did he. He had always been a fan of the sport, watching it on the television for as long as he can remember. At about the age of seven, Rickey started to really

“understand and appreciate the game.” He admits that cricket was “everywhere growing up” and said, “looking back, I am not surprised that I started playing.”

As Ricey has gotten older, he has seen his life become more involved in cricket. When he joined the Belmont Junior Cricket Club at the age of 12, he instantly fell in love with the game. Anyone can play at the junior level, as long as they are in grade five or six in school, and with some of his friends on the team, he truly enjoyed every aspect of his first season. The following year, he joined the Clearance cricket club and played U15 youth club cricket at the age of 13. His skill developed quickly, and he was soon chosen to play on the U15 TCA state level team. The U15 state team is a selective team that you have to be chosen to play on, representing the best players under the age of fifteen in Tasmania. Ricey obviously had some raw talent in cricket that was quickly being molded by his high involvement in many development teams.

Ricey continued to play cricket and trained diligently almost every day. By the time he was 14, he was playing U17 TCA club cricket at the Clearance Cricket Club. By the age of 15, he had moved up to play third grade TCA club cricket. Now, at the age of 16, he plays second grade club cricket. He has progressed through the system very quickly and has a bright future with the Clearance cricket club. His club team trains two days a week and has one game a week. The game usually lasts from ten am to six pm, with 50 overs for each team. Once a month, he has a two day weekend game, which runs all day Saturday and Sunday. Ricey was also chosen to train with the U17 state team, but was not selected to play in any competitions.

Presently, Ricey is a youth coach for a younger cricket team at Clearance after receiving coaching training through the TCA. He also helps out with many smaller clinics

and camps hosted by the TCA. He is a paid employee of the TCA, and comes to many events and coaches younger kids. He plans to continue coaching and hopes to one day coach at the professional cricket level. Ricey claims that he “like[s] coaching more than playing most days; unless I am hitting sixes, I would rather be coaching.” His future goal is to play for Tasmania, but he does not know if he will ever be “that good,” but he still aspires nonetheless. He believes that cricket will have a “large role in the rest of [his] life.”

Ricey openly stated that during the summer, his life consists of "eating, sleeping, and playing cricket." During the winter, his club team season is over and he only plays cricket once a week. He usually plays by himself or with a “mate” at his clubs batting cage. He watches cricket on the television and reads all the cricket magazines he can get his hands on. He also reads the sports section of the newspaper as often as he can, and is always online checking scores and statistics. When asked if he thought his appreciation and love for the game was different from the other boys his age, he claimed that he was one of many who shared a passion for cricket. He stated “even those who don’t play love cricket. It’s what we do here.”

### **Life of a Professional Cricketer**

Jason Shelton is a twenty-two year old professional cricket player. He has a rookie contract with the Tigers. He was born and raised in Tasmania, not in the “huge” cricketing world of Hobart but in the northern part of Tasmania. He has been playing cricket in his backyard "forever" and claims that some of his earliest memories are cricket related. His dad and brother both played cricket at a high level and he is following in their footsteps. He comes from a large cricketing family, which is very common in the cricket world. Growing

up, Jason says, “I use to play in the hallway in the winter when it got dark;” he was always looking for more opportunities to play. He started playing organized cricket at the age of nine on a U12 club team. He used to play cricket whenever and wherever he could, and he explained to me that you do not need a large amount of space to play cricket. He remembers playing with this brother in his living room all of the time and playing in the hallway in the winter when it got dark out or was rainy.

He was not on a school cricket team because his public school did not have one, but played at the club level all through high school. He would train on Tuesdays and Thursdays with his club team and played in matches on Saturdays. He would practice other days too by "going to the nets with my mates," which seems to be a common occurrence for most cricketers. (The nets he is referring to are nets that are similar to batting cages for baseball in the United States. They usually consist of a turf pitch with moveable wickets that are all surrounded by a large net. Some nets have a bowling machine, which is the same thing as a pitching machine, just set up at a different angle.) Obviously the practice paid off because the Tigers recruited him when he was still playing on his club team in the north. This is hard to do because most people are usually selected from the Tasmanian select teams, but being from the north, he was never on those teams and was selected based on his club performance. Jason claims that all good players go to Hobart if they want to play cricket at a higher level—really good cricket is centralized in Hobart. Once he was recruited, he moved to Hobart to start his professional career. He played one year of U19 Tasmanian cricket before playing for the Tigers.

Being on a rookie contract so he does not see much playing time for the Tigers; most rookies don't, they just practice and “wait for their turn” to play. Jason continues to play on



his club team, as all professional players do. Playing first grade cricket when not playing in a match for the Tigers helps to keep one's cricket form up and help with overall skill. He usually practices twice a day, once with the Tigers, and once with his club team. Over the Tasmanian winters, he goes to England to play more cricket and "to make a lot of money." There is a lot more money invested in cricket in England than there is in Tasmania, so over half of Tasmanian players spend time playing in England. On a rookie contract, Jason earns \$50,000 base pay, but because he does not get any playing time, he does not get any additional money for playing in matches. In Major League Baseball, rookie contract pay is \$1,100 a month, with a signing bonus that could be up to three to four million dollars.

Jason wants to keep playing cricket until he cannot play anymore. He says that it can take until you're thirty to get good enough to play higher level cricket and he is willing to put in the time and effort. He feels privileged to be able to play cricket and to play at such a high level; he gets paid to do what he loves. Jason wanted to remind me "cricket is everywhere" and not just everywhere to him, but "everywhere to all Australians." Cricket is on the television, not just games, but cricketers in commercials. Cricket is in the paper, in magazines, and on the radio. Cricketers are on cereal boxes and wickets are drawn on trashcans. He claims that cricket is all over Australia and is a huge part of his and many other Australians' lives.

## **Structure of Baseball in the United States**

It is important to look at the development of a baseball player in the United States to be able to compare the two sports, and see the high degree of similarity in the development programs and structure of the game.

In the United States baseball is a staple in the lives of many Americans, from the time they are young children until they pass away. Men have typically played baseball in the United States, but supporters of the sport include both men and women, young and old. Little girls growing up today are encouraged to play softball while boys are encouraged to play baseball. The players' progression through the different levels of baseball begins with Little League, starting with Tee Ball, then Minor League or Little League, then Junior League, Senior League, and Big League. The Babe Ruth League Inc. runs a similar program, starting with Cal Ripkin Baseball, then the Babe Ruth Junior team, and then the Babe Ruth Senior team. Many kids also play on their high school and college team, and can then be drafted to play baseball at the professional level.

### **Little League Baseball, Inc.**

Little League Baseball is a non-profit organization that was first started in 1939 and has been growing rapidly ever since. The main mission of Little League Baseball is "to promote, develop, supervise, and voluntarily assist in all lawful ways, the interest of those who will participate in Little League Baseball and Softball" (Little League Baseball 2003). By promoting strong leadership and providing guidance, in addition to teaching how to be a great baseball player, Little League aims to build citizenship, teamwork, discipline, and physical well-being of each kid who plays; the main goal is to help form "superior citizens, not superior athletes" (Little League Baseball 2003).

Each Little League program is organized within a community by community volunteers. There are over 7,400 programs throughout the world. In the United States, different towns or adjacent towns have their own programs. Little League is additionally

broken down into district, regional, national and international levels, which allows for higher levels of play and the prestigious Little League World Series. At this point in time, there are over 2.3 million kids playing Little League in over 102 countries throughout the world (Little League Baseball 2003).

Little League baseball is broken down into different divisions based first on age, then on skill. Typically, Tee Ball is for five and six year olds, Minors is for ages seven to twelve, Majors is for ages nine to 12, Juniors is for 13 and 14 year olds, Seniors is for 14 to 16 year olds, and Big League is for 16 to 18 year olds. There is also the challenger division, which is for children with disabilities from ages five to 18. Little League Baseball also sponsors an inner-city program called the Urban Initiative Program to bring baseball to children who would otherwise not be able to play due to economic constraints (Little League Baseball 2003).

Many kids grow up playing Little League, whether it is for ten years, or for one season. Typically, there are both spring and fall seasons for Little League, with a registration fee of less than \$20. All players are given a hat and a shirt to wear and teams within each program compete against one another. Little League tries to keep baseball fun and not too competitive in order to keep children playing and loving the game.

### **Babe Ruth League, Inc.**

The Babe Ruth League is structured similarly to Little League Baseball, with over one million kids playing on over 56,000 different teams in the United States. The Babe Ruth league is also run through volunteers and targets communities for older kids. Typically most

kids play Little League until they are twelve and then start to play in the Babe Ruth League (Babe Ruth League 2004).

The Babe Ruth League is broken down into three main divisions based on age and ability. Cal Ripkin Baseball is for kids aged four to twelve, and is broken down into five smaller subdivisions. T-ball is for four to six year olds, Rookie baseball is for seven and eight year olds, Minors baseball is for nine and ten year olds, Major 60 baseball is for 11 and 12 year olds, and Major 70 baseball, which offers a larger baseball diamond to play on. The next division of play is Babe Ruth for 13 to 15 year olds and then a Babe Ruth division for 15 to 18 year olds (Babe Ruth League 2004).

The Babe Ruth League has not spread its wings as far as Little League Baseball, but it is just as dedicated to the enjoyment of the game and developing not only strong ball players, but also strong people.

### **High School and College Baseball**

A major difference in the organization of sport between the United States and Australia is the absence of sport clubs in the former. Sports clubs vary throughout the world; in many parts of Europe, one club will sponsor many different sports, and many different teams for each sport. Sports clubs in Tasmania are usually centered around one specific sport. Each club has its own cricket ovals, club house, and bar. In the United States, sports clubs are not as prevalent, and sports in high school and college are extremely important. At the varsity level in high school, sports are taken very seriously with a high number of participants. Generally, at the high school level, kids are practicing six days a week and have two to three games a week during the spring season.

Athletes who excel in high school then many times move onto college and play either division one, two, or three college baseball mandated by the NCAA and the NJCAA.

Typically, high school student-athletes will be recruited by the coach from a college that is at an equal level of academic ability as the student-athlete. Typically only a few standout players from a high school team cross over to play at the collegiate level. At college, based on what division sport you play, the commitment to the sport varies, but at all levels you will be practicing for at least two hours a day, six days a week. There is usually additional weight lifting sessions five to six days a week.

### **The Draft and the Path to the Major Leagues**

Standouts, typically coming from division one collegiate programs, can be drafted into Major League Baseball. It is a very rigorous path to play Major League Baseball once being drafted. Each team drafts about 45 to 50 new players every year, with signing bonuses up to one million dollars for the higher draft picks. Each major league team has five or six minor league teams, which make up the minor league or farm system. Of those 45 to 50 players drafted yearly by each team, only ten percent will ever make it to the top of the baseball ladder, the major leagues. There are six different levels of professional baseball that each player has to go through to get to the major leagues (Gmelch 2001).

### **The Major Leagues**

Some kids dream of playing for the majors from when they start playing Tee Ball at age four; others didn't grow to love the game until they are older, but those who make it all share one thing: talent. Making it to the major leagues in baseball is no easy feat and only the

best players will ever see playing time. With players signing multi-million dollar a year contracts, this level of baseball is highly competitive. There are thirty teams at the major league level. Each team fields a team of 25 players for each game. There are some players who stick around for over ten years, and others who only ever see a couple innings of action. The average player only has three to four years at this level before he fades away into retirement (Gmelch, 2008, personal communication). The final goal for players who make it into the farm system is to become one of the major leaguers.

### **Life of a Teenage Baseball Player**

Jude Mason is a 22-year-old from Colorado who started playing organized baseball at the young age of four. He attends Union College, and considers himself a baseball fan, but does not play at the college level. His exposure to baseball was Tee Ball, sponsored by Little League Baseball. He then moved up and started playing in the Minor League, in which the coach of the team pitched to the kids for his first two years. He then started playing in the Little League-sponsored Majors when he was seven, where the kids pitched to one another. His dad was also one of the coaches of the team, with all of the coaching staff being volunteers, and typically the fathers of boys on the team. He played at this level for three years.

When he was ten, he was selected to play for a travel team. He played 30 to 40 games a season, playing against other travel teams in the area. He played on this team for two years, until he was in sixth grade. They competed in many tournaments all over the state and this was when Jude was really gung-ho about playing baseball. He said, "I loved baseball so

much, I used to sleep with my mitt on, and my mom hated it.” He said he used to play catch with his brother or dad all of the time and was constantly watching games on the television.

At the age of 12, Jude started to play on a Babe Ruth team for his town and would travel around to other local towns to compete. He was also on his school team at this point in time and another town team. He was playing baseball five or six days a week for a few hours a day when he was 13 and 14 years old, and loved it. Once he got into high school, he played on the junior varsity team for one season before moving up to the varsity level. In high school, he had practice or a game five days a week. He would also play in the summer on a summer league with both practices and games twice a week.

After the spring season of his senior year of high school, Jude stopped playing baseball because he did not want to pursue the game in college. He no longer dreamed of being a professional baseball player, but wanted to have a social life and do well at school. He was looking forward to trying a lot of new things at school, and baseball was no longer what he was looking for. He claims that he kind of “grew out of it” and that the time he put into it was no longer worth it. He says that after the age of 12, fewer people played every year. Jude claims, “before that there seemed to be more kids coming to play every year, then after middle school, every year one of my good friends would stop playing.” Claiming that it was weird for him, he still enjoyed the game enough to play almost year round.

One of the main reasons Jude started playing baseball was because his father was very big into baseball, as well as his uncle who still plays in a night league in Albany. Growing up, it was a common bond between him and his dad and they would try to go to as many professional games as possible every season. Jude says that he “grew up reading the sports pages” and still looks online at the statistics and standings. Not as actively involved

now, he does not own a lot of baseball memorabilia, but he still has all of his baseball cards and signed baseballs from his childhood in a case in his room.

Jude claims that baseball will always be a part of his life and he hopes that one day he can coach his son in baseball just as his dad did for him. Jude claims “it’s all part of that American dream, be successful, raise a family, play ball with your kids.”



## **-CHAPTER IV-**

### **Cricket and Baseball- A Cross-Cultural Comparison**

Baseball and cricket are similar in many respects but also different in their different histories and cultural settings in which they have developed. The aim of this chapter is to examine the reasons for some of the major differences between cricket and baseball.

#### **Practice Time versus Leisure Time**

When first studying cricket, I was shocked at how little time the teams spent practicing. People playing grade cricket, the highest level before professional, practice only two days a week in almost all Tasmanian Cricket clubs. Cricket is typically only played in the summer in Tasmania, for about a five month period. On the other hand, in the United States, in college, or high school even, teams practice up to six days a week depending on the number of games in a week. Some teams even practice twice a day, up to four hours a day. In college, in a division one program, this could be year round. Why is it that cricket players are not practicing as much? I believe that one of the main reasons for this is because Australians value their leisure time to a very high extent. My other hypothesis is that this lesser amount of practice time is due to the age of players when they retire.

Whether it is vacation time or just free time day to day, it is very important to Australians. The Colrains were constantly planning vacations, little getaways, and constantly looking forward to weekends and time not spent on other obligations. When it comes to sports, I believe that Tasmanians have the get in, get it done, and get out mindset. Therefore, outside of structured and mandatory practice, they do not spend a copious amount of time playing cricket. Many players take it upon themselves to play more, hit around in the cages

or go to the gym, but that is their choice. The players choose how they want to spend their leisure time. It is their choice if they want to spend their free time playing. Many cricketers do choose to use their leisure time to play because they love the game, but it is all about how they choose to spend their time.

In the United States, people also value their free time, but not nearly to the same extent. Americans are known to be hard workers, to constantly be working, to not take free vacation time and to take their work home with them. The American work ethic is a strong one and it overlaps with many aspects of their daily life, including sports. Those who play sports never think twice about playing six days a week. As you progress through the system, you practice more to reach a higher level of play. "Practice makes perfect" is a common saying whose words are commonly lived by. Similar to Tasmanians, when not at practice, Americans also spend their leisure time playing their sport of choice or conditioning to reach that next level.

Also, most men continue to play grade cricket into their early thirties. Grade cricket is not professional and therefore, all of the older players who are out of school are working full time jobs and many times have families. These cricketers can not spend huge amounts of time playing cricket. They need to work to support their family and also spend quality time with their family. Most baseball players in the United States stop playing after high school, some continue to college, and only a small fraction of those players become professional baseball players. In Tasmania, players continue well past their school years and are not able to devote the same amount of time to cricket training.

At the professional cricket level in Tasmania, players practice four to five days a week, sometimes less or more depending on their match schedule. The practices are still only

about two hours in length, and the rest of the day is off. Sometimes players will have a special one-on-one practice, but besides that, there is not a huge amount of time spent playing cricket in the formal practice setting. Professional baseball is very different. In spring training, players practice for eight hours a day. On non-game days, players have at least four hours of practice, and on game days, players come in and practice before the game starts. These differences may also be due to the different value of leisure time, but it also may be because of the players' pay. Professional baseball players typically do not need a side job in order to get by, while cricket players are not getting paid as much and have to many times work a side job in addition to being a professional cricketer.

### **Money in Sports**

In the United States, a lot of money flows through the sporting world; star athletes are paid million of dollars a year to play baseball, football, basketball and many other sports. That monetary figure does not including all of the other additional endorsements and appearances. Exceptional players coming out of high school are many times pulled into playing professional baseball immediately by huge signing bonuses. Some key players make a large amount of money before they have even seen any time at the major league level. In Tasmania, professional players on rookie contracts make a maximum of \$50,000 for their first year. The best players for Tasmania make no more than \$250,000 a year.

The major reason for the pay differential between baseball and cricket is the number of people watching and supporting the sport. America has a population of over 300 million people, while Australia has a population of 20 million, with Tasmania's population at 500,000 people. Because there are so many more people, there is a lot more money in the

game: more fans, more games, more merchandise and memorabilia, and more expensive media rights. Another major reason for this large pay differential is the value of sport overall in each society. In the United States, people are willing to pay more to see a team play, even if it is just the local team; sport is something that Americans are ready to pay a lot to see. In some sense, money is no object. On big game days, tickets can go for ten times more than the face value of the seat. The same is true for the occasional Australia-India match, but for Tasmania versus New South Whales, good luck getting more than two hundred people to the game. At Fenway Park in Boston, Massachusetts, the ballpark has sold-out every seat since May 2003 (Red Sox Connection 2008). The high population in the United States compared to Tasmania, as well as the willingness to spend money on sports has set baseball and cricket apart on the financial scale.

### **Pathway to the Top**

Baseball and cricket share very similar developmental ideals and structure. Both have a program for very young kids aged four and up, cricket has “Have a Go” and baseball has Tee Ball. Both programs aim to get kids starting to play cricket young and to have fun. Both are not focused on winning, but initial skill development and enjoying the game. They both also have a modified field and modified positions. The similarities continue in development as both cricket players and baseball players move through the program. Both baseball and cricket have a huge focus on the enjoyment of the game and making good people before good players. Baseball and cricket also both have select teams and higher level teams for highly skilled players.

The major difference between the two development programs is that in Australia, Cricket Australia governs all cricket. The TCA is controlled by Cricket Australia, and all cricket players typically follow the same system and development programs. TCA annually reports to Cricket Australia and follows the path laid out by Cricket Australia. Baseball in the United States is governed by a variety of different organizations depending on the age of the baseball player, including Little League Baseball, Babe Ruth League, Try Cobb, American Legion, town programs, individual state mandated high school baseball, and the NCAA mandated college baseball. Not all professional baseball players have followed the same steps to get where they are today. The overall development of a baseball player is not as centralized as the average cricket player's, but actually very decentralized. Some never played Little League and just played in their own recreational league. Some started playing on their school team in junior high and worked their way up the ranks. It would be extremely difficult to force all baseball leagues and teams to follow the same regiment because of the mass numbers of kids playing baseball. Another major difference between cricket and baseball is that when kids around the age of 13, school teams start to form in the United States for baseball, while cricketers still play for a club. School teams practice baseball five to six days a week while the town league team typically only practices once a week. At the age of 14 or 15 in Tasmania, players shift from one to two practices a week, but no more.

### **Club Sports verse School Sports**

In the mid-1800s in the United States, sports clubs existed for the wealthy, white men of many major cities. To be part of one of these sporting clubs, you had to be able to pay an expensive annual fee and have good connections. The various clubs would compete against

one another, including track and field, swimming, and basketball. The clubs eventually faded out as the importance of sports in schools grew. Sports clubs became something for the wealthy as sports shifted to be schools. Sport was deemed extremely important for kids and necessary to promote healthy, intelligent children (Rader 2004). Playing baseball for one's school is how almost all baseball players after the age of 12 play baseball. In Tasmania, by contrast, cricket does not exist in most public schools, only private, and Tasmanians play cricket through a specific club.

Playing a sport via one's involvement in a sports club is prevalent throughout the world, but not to such a great extent in the United States. The major sports competition in the United States is through school, and once one's schooling is done, one's athletics career is many times done. After you graduate from high school, or for the talented, college, your career is over. In Tasmania, this is very different. School and cricket are not tied together so you do not see people stop playing just because they are done with school. Most players continue to play until they cannot physically continue or because of a serious obligation. The club atmosphere also allows for a life-long bond between teammates and not just the four years kids may spend together in high school or college. A person might start playing with a club when he are four and play for that club until he is 30. That is 26 years of playing with the same organization with the same people, forming tight bonds to that club. Cricket has a different group mentality than does baseball because of the cohesiveness that growing up with the players around you gives a team.

Club sports did not work out well in the United States for two main reasons: 1. The importance of sport in school was pushed, giving all kids the opportunity to play initially; 2. Club sports in the United States became based too much on status. In contrast, all cricket

clubs are open to all people in Tasmania. Many people choose the club they are involved with based on where they live or where their favorite cricketer played. All clubs are mandated by the TCA and given the same amount of funding, putting all clubs on an equal footing. Baseball being played in schools when growing up as opposed to in the club setting is one of the major differences between baseball and cricket.

## **Conclusion**

Donald Horne, an Australian writer, places the importance of sport in the lives of Australians in his novel *Australian People: Biography of a Nation* by saying “sport to many Australians is life and the rest a shadow.” After spending three months in Tasmania, I truly believe his words. Sport is a massive part of Australian culture, and the same is true for the state of Tasmania. Whether it is a little boy starting to play Have a Go cricket, the professional cricket-playing mega-star, or the family getting ready to play cricket on the beach, cricket is in the foreground of many people’s lives.

The cricket development program in Tasmania is very similar to the baseball development program in the United States in ideals, but the actual organization is very different. Both start with introductory programs, and as kids age, the intensity of the game increases as the game becomes more competitive. One of the major differences is the organization, cricket in Tasmania being centralized, and baseball in the United States being decentralized. Cricket is organized into clubs while baseball is organized by major organizations until middle school or junior high when it becomes school-based. Cricket also has less training sessions than does baseball, probably due to Australians’ high value of leisure time and because of the organization of cricket into clubs. There is also a lot less

money in cricket in Tasmania then there is in baseball in the United States at the professional level.

The value of sport varies from culture to culture, as does the impact of specific sports. Not all sports in a culture will become as influential and intertwined in the day to day life of people as cricket has in Tasmania. The rich history of cricket in Tasmania, as well as the broad spectrum of people that cricket reaches, has helped cricket develop into the role it holds in Tasmanian culture today.

Another interesting aspect of sport in culture in Tasmania that could be explored is how cricket and Australian Rules football (the major winter sport in Tasmania) vary. Are the time commitments different? Does it reach out to more people? Fewer people? Is it as prevalent in the day to day life? Only being in Tasmania for a three month period during the summer limited my research to cricket. When I was in Tasmania many people told me about how big Australian Rules football is, and I believe it would be interesting to look at both sports. I wonder if they share any commonalities, such as the amount of practice time, the development program, and whether it is mainly a club sport or not.

Cricket in Tasmania has never been looked at from a cultural perspective. The major goal of this study was to look at how important cricket is in Tasmanian culture, the impact of cricket in Tasmania, and why cricket is the way it is today. I found that the impact of cricket was far greater and more prevalent than I originally expected. Cricket not only shapes Tasmanians, but Tasmanians also shape cricket. The influence cricket has on Tasmanians is large and is continuing to spread to more people every year. More money is going into the sport, more people are starting to play, and a greater number of people are devoting their lives to the game. On the other hand, the game and development of cricket has been greatly



impacted by those who play. Things like the amount and length of cricket practice, and the different forms of the game are due to Tasmanians' values. The game of baseball shares some commonalities with cricket, but it is apparent that many aspects of cricket are the way they are due to Tasmanians' influence on the game.

In conclusion, the study of sports in culture is a newer topic in the world of anthropology, but a very important one. Sport can dictate culture and culture can dictate sport. Whether you are hitting sixes in Tasmania or a homerun in the United States, sport is influential and dynamic. Dictating people's lives or morphing to fill various niches, sport is dominating the lives of people all over the world.

## **Bibliography**

Adair, Daryl and Wray Vamplew

1997 Sport in Australian History. Melbourne: Oxford University Press.

Babe Ruth League

2004 History of Babe Ruth League, The Divisions. Website:  
www.baberuthleague.org, accessed May 15.

Bergin, Paul

2002 Maori sport and cultural identity in Australia. *The Australian Journal of Anthropology*. 13(3):257-270.

Brownell, Susan

2000 Why Should an Anthropologist Study Sports in China? *In Games, Sports and Cultures*. Noel Dyck, ed. Pp. 43-79. New York: Berg Publishers.

Cricket Australia

2007 National Cricket Census 2006/2007. Melbourne, Australia: Australian Standard.

Dyck, Noel

2000 Parents, Kids and Coaches: Constructing Sport and Childhood in Canada. *In Games, Sports and Cultures*. Noel Dyck, ed. Pp. 137-161. New York: Berg Publishers.

Gmelch, George

2001 Inside Pitch: Life in Professional Baseball. Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press.

Hornadge, Bill

2006 Cricket in Australia: 1804-1884. Dubbo, New South Whales: Review Publication Pty, Ltd.

Horne, Donald

1972 The Australian People: Biography of a Nation. Australia: Angus and Robertson.

Ingham, Alan G., McDonald Mary G. McDonald

2003 Sport and Community/Communitas. *In Sporting Dystrophies*. Ralph C. Wilcox, David L Andrews, Robert Pitter and Richard L. Irwin, eds. Pp. 17-33. Albany, New York: State University of New York Press.

Klein, Alan M.

2006 Growing the Game: The Globalization of Major League Baseball. Binghamton, New York: Vail Ballou Press.

Little League Baseball

2002 Mission and History, Where the Dreams Begin. Website, [www.littleleague.org](http://www.littleleague.org), accessed May 15.

McCann, Peggy, Martha Ewing

2006 Motivation and Outcomes of Youth Participation in Sport. *In Learning Culture Through Sport*. Sandra S. Prettyman and Brian Lampman, eds. Pp.35-52. Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Education.

McClancy, Jeremy

1997 *Sport, Identity and Ethnicity*. Herndon, Virginia: Berg Publishers.

Nixon, Howard and James Frey

1996 *A Sociology of Sport*. Belmont, California: Wadsworth Publishing Company.

Palmer, Catherine

2003 Introduction: Anthropology and Sport. *The Australian Journal of Anthropology*. 19(3):253-7.

Red Sox Connection

2007 Red Sox Tickets at Fenway. Website: [www.redsoxconnection.com](http://www.redsoxconnection.com), accessed May 20.

Snyder, Eldon E., Elmer A. Spreitzer

1984 Baseball in Japan. *In Sport in Contemporary Society: An Anthology*. D. Stanley Eitzen, ed. Pp.46-50. New York, New York: St. Martin's Press, Inc.

Sportal

2007 Tas Tigers, Tasmanian Cricket Association. Website: [www.tastigers.com.au](http://www.tastigers.com.au), accessed Feb. 2.

Wann, Daniel, Merrill Melnick, Gordon Russell, Pease Dale Pease

2000 *Sports Fans*. New York: Routledge.

Young, David

2005 *Sporting Island: a history of sport and recreation in Tasmania*. Hobart, Tasmania: Tasmanian Government-Sport and Recreation.