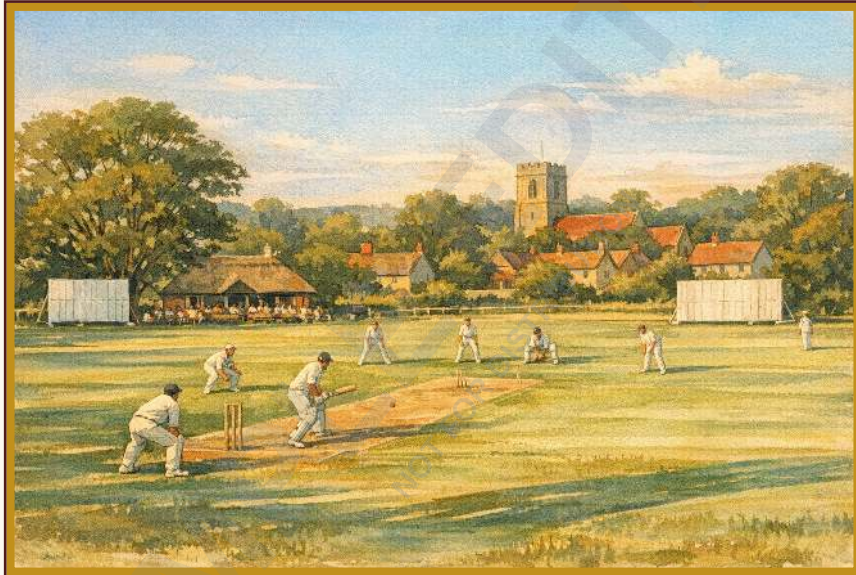


OFFICIAL EVENT EDITION

The Summer Festival of Cricket

Oakfield CC



The Wisdom of Cricket — The Cricket of Life and the Life of Cricket

PRESENTED BY SPORTSMART4LIFE

A word from the organisers



Oakfield Cricket Club

A word from the organisers

Dear Sample Reader,

This copy is yours. Your name is on the cover, and it is inside on the pages too, because it was made for you and for nobody else. No two copies of this book are the same.

We wanted to give you something that outlasts a fixture list. Kit wears out. Medals go in a drawer. But cricket gives you a whole day to learn something about yourself, and that is worth writing down somewhere you will find it again.

What follows are the real voices of this sport — players, coaches and writers, most of them talking about the parts nobody puts on a highlight reel. There is a section on pressure, and what the people who handle it best actually do differently. One on trust, and why a group that trusts each other beats a group that is merely talented. One on losing, which is the section we would ask you to read twice, because everyone in this sport has lost and everyone worth knowing came back. There is a section on joy, which is the reason any of us started. One on mastery, and the unglamorous patience it asks for. One on rivalry, and the respect that runs underneath it. And one on belonging — on being part of something whether or not you are the one on the field.

You do not have to read it in order. Keep it in the kit bag. Open it the night before a hard one. Let it fall open at whichever page finds you, and if a line is worth keeping, keep it.

The game has taught you things already — about nerve, about other people, about getting up. These pages are simply the same lessons in other people's words, gathered in one place so they are there when you need them.

Thank you for everything you give to this. It is noticed, and it matters more than the results ever say.

— The Committee, Oakfield Cricket Club

Foreword

Cricket is the game that takes its time — and in taking time, it teaches. A match that lasts a day, or five, has room for everything life will later bring you: patience and panic, collapse and recovery, the long unglamorous spell and the hour when everything you practised is suddenly needed at once. Wherever the game is played, from Test arenas to a driveway with a wheelie bin for stumps, it says the same things: play the next ball, run for your partner, walk back with dignity, protect your joy, do the work in the nets, honour the contest, and stay for the whole day.

This collection gathers the voices of the game — the batters and bowlers, the captains and keepers, the commentators and the great writers who loved cricket best — arranged around seven themes that belong as much to life as to the game. Each chapter opens with an image and an idea, then hands the floor to the voices themselves.

Read it the way you would watch a Test: patiently, with attention, knowing that the quiet passages are where the match — and the meaning — are truly built.

Ways to Walk with This Book

A collection like this is not meant to be read once and shelved. It is meant to be lived with — kept close, opened often, and put to work. Seven ways to begin:

- **The daily voice**
open anywhere each morning and take one voice with you into the day.
- **The reflection pause**
choose the theme your week is testing, read its essay slowly, and write one honest line of your own in response.
- **Match-day ritual**
before the big broadcast, read the theme the fixture will examine — rivalry before the derby, pressure before the final.
- **The team talk**
captains, coaches, teachers, parents: one voice a week is enough to open a changing room, a classroom or a dinner table.
- **The hard-week medicine**
when life tackles you, the defeat chapter is waiting. It was written for exactly that week.
- **The gift of a voice**
photograph the quote a friend needs today and send it with their name on the message.
- **The long read**
one theme per Sunday evening — a handful of weeks, properly kept.

However you use it, let it stay within reach of wherever you watch.

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THEME 1 OF 7

Mastery & Practice

The nets at dawn, the same ball bowled ten thousand times — the long apprenticeship behind every effortless stroke.



The cover drive that looks like poetry is actually arithmetic — ten thousand mornings, one stroke at a time.

Mastery & Practice — in the game, in life

Cricket is a craftsman's game pretending to be a pastime. The cover drive that draws applause for its effortlessness is the least effortless thing on the ground: it was assembled over years in the nets, one morning at a time, from grip and stance and stride and elbow, drilled until the choice to play it stopped being a choice and became a reflex with a signature. Bowlers serve even longer apprenticeships. A bowling action is built like a cathedral — slowly, with corrections — and a single delivery worth the name involves wrist, seam, fingers, angle and years. Spin bowling may be the most patient craft in all of sport: a decade to learn what the fingers must do, another to learn when to do it, and a lifetime to learn the courage to toss the ball up and be hit. What makes cricket's mastery so instructive is its honesty about failure as tuition. Every net session is a public negotiation with your own flaws. The ball beats the bat and the bowler smiles and says nothing, and the batter files the lesson. Technique, cricketers learn, is what remains under pressure — under lights, on a wearing pitch, with the field crowding in, all style evaporates and what is left is whatever was drilled deepest. The ball does not know your reputation. It responds to preparation, and to nothing else. Most things worth doing in life are cricket in disguise: the language, the surgery, the trade, the difficult craft of patience with people. Find your nets. Book your unglamorous mornings. Count your repetitions privately, because the crowd only counts the boundaries. And when they call your work effortless, accept it graciously — it is the name given to effort nobody watched.

“When considering the stature of an athlete or for that matter any person, I set great store in certain qualities which I believe to be essential in addition to skill. They are that the person conducts his or her life with dignity, with integrity, courage, and perhaps most of all, with modesty. These virtues are totally compatible with pride, ambition, and competitiveness.”

— Don Bradman

Mastery & Practice

Sit with the voice that speaks to you today.

"I should like to say that good batsmen are born, not made; but my long experience comes up before me, and tells me that it is not so."

— W.G. Grace

"When I was 23, I wasn't overly ambitious about being a captain, so a lot of my captaincy and leadership is learnt."

— Stephen Fleming

"There ought to be some other means of reckoning quality in this the best and loveliest of games; the scoreboard is an ass."

— Neville Cardus

"A true batsman should in most of his strokes tell the truth about himself."

— Neville Cardus

"If you want to earn respect in world cricket all over, take up Test cricket, give your heart and soul to it and earn the respect from legends."

— Virat Kohli

"It is impossible for forward play to be quite as safe as back play, because there must be a moment when the ball is out of sight."

— K.S. Ranjitsinhji

"The great thing in hitting is, not to be half-hearted about it; but when you make up your mind to hit, to do it as if the whole match depended upon that particular stroke."

— W.G. Grace

"There's no secret to what I've done. It's just working hard. When I made my debut I thought I was very lucky, but then I realised it was about doing as much work as you can, the right way."

— Kumar Sangakkara

Mastery & Practice

Sit with the voice that speaks to you today.

“That's how much I value Test cricket. That's how much I love Test cricket.”

— Virat Kohli

“Catches win matches.”

— Anonymous

“The key to umpiring is people skills.”

— Simon Taufel

“If I had to describe myself as an umpire, I'd like to say I was honest and fair. I treated everybody on the field as human beings and as professional cricketers. If I had the respect of the players, then marvellous.”

— Dickie Bird

“There was a 50% chance that I'd hit the stumps if I threw, and a 100% chance of hitting the stumps with ball in hand. The fastest way I could cover the last metre and a half was head first. It was just the right thing to do at the time.”

— Jonty Rhodes

“Ability only takes you so far. There are tens of thousands of talented sports people who never realise their full potential because it is ability plus opportunity that generally equals sporting success.”

— AB de Villiers

“So I just run in, hit the deck, aim at top of off stump.”

— Glenn McGrath

“Everyone nowadays seems to want to bowl the inswinger. This is absurd, for my experience is that this particular ball is not so dangerous as the one which goes away from you. It has led to what I should call 'negative cricket'.”

— Jack Hobbs

Mastery & Practice

Sit with the voice that speaks to you today.

“Part of the art of bowling spin is to make the batsman think something special is happening when it isn't.”

— Shane Warne

“Anyone can step out and hit a six, of course, but you need to know whether you can pull it off on that particular day. As soon as the ball hit the bat, that shot gave me a lot of confidence.”

— Harmanpreet Kaur

“I promised myself I would become the best batsman in the world.”

— AB de Villiers

“Aye, but whoever does it will be bloody tired.”

— Fred Trueman

“Carlos Brathwaite is a good all-round cricketer, remember that name.”

— Ian Bishop

“Data is information and the important thing is how you use that information.”

— Andy Flower

“I understood when I was vulnerable and I applied a certain technique towards that period. I understood when I was in a 50-50 battle and I understood when I was in a battle where I was in total control.”

— Brian Lara

“I usually tried to stay in the net for 45 minutes, half an hour longer than most batsmen would stick at the county nets. It was a conscious effort to make myself concentrate for long periods of time in circumstances as close to the real thing as I could make them.”

— Geoffrey Boycott

THE SUMMER FESTIVAL OF CRICKET

More from Mastery & Practice



The thousandth repetition.

“Fast bowling is not all about fitness and power; it is not about big, dumb men with biceps and triceps. You need to be able to analyse the weaknesses of the batsman, read the conditions, use the conditions.”

— Wasim Akram

A few more from Mastery & Practice



Hard-won, quietly.

“If I keep somebody in the sun for three or four sessions, they’re the ones supposed to get tired. I’m the one that’s just expressing myself in the best way possible.”

— Brian Lara

“Only when you know yourself can you know how to bat. A high level of talent does not ensure success, nor does a high level of skill.”

— Kumar Sangakkara

“My mantra is: put your brain into gear and if you can add to what’s on the screen then do it, otherwise shut up.”

— Richie Benaud

THEME 2 OF 7

Pressure & Nerve

The walk to the crease, the last over of the day — what the loneliest moments ask, and how the brave answer.



Ten teammates stay behind on the balcony. The walk to the middle is made alone — and everyone watching knows it.

Pressure & Nerve — in the game, in life

Cricket isolates its moments of pressure with a cruelty no other team game quite matches. The batter walks to the middle alone, past fielders who know his weaknesses better than his family does, to face a contest where a single error — one — ends everything. There is no second tackle, no next phase, no teammate to pass to. The bowler at the top of his mark is no freer: the field is set, the plan is public, and every spectator can see exactly where the bad ball goes. That nakedness is why cricket's people have thought harder about nerve than almost anyone in sport. And their answer is nearly unanimous: shrink the game. You cannot bat for a day — you can only play the next ball. The great ones build a ritual between deliveries — mark the crease, walk away, look at the sky, come back — a little ceremony that empties the mind of the previous ball and the next hour, until the innings becomes a chain of single, survivable moments. Watch a set batter and you are watching someone win the same tiny battle three hundred times. Life bowls its own long spells at all of us: the month of interviews, the treatment plan, the mortgage year, the exam season. The cricket answer holds. Do not play the whole innings in your head at once; it will get you out in the car park. Build your between-balls ritual — the breath, the walk, the reset. See off the good spells, and score off the bad ones. And when a moment does beat you, remember the oldest law of batting: getting beaten is not getting out. Take guard again.

“I honestly believe that we should do away with the concept of mental toughness and replace it with something that is more real and relevant to most people. It has to be authentic to the individual and something he or she can relate to.”

— Paddy Upton

Pressure & Nerve

Sit with the voice that speaks to you today.

"I'd been feeling I was putting pressure on myself and taking on more than I could handle."

— Nat Sciver-Brunt

"Inzy, don't think about anything else, just think how you are going to play this game."

— Imran Khan

"It was a significant achievement as far as I am concerned because of the situation we were in. And also I was not fit enough to play that Test match."

— VVS Laxman

"The break was something I felt I needed because of the six to 12 months before that. It did get on top of me a little bit."

— Nat Sciver-Brunt

"I found peace even before I came back. That's the only reason why I even decided to return. The break was good. It did a lot for me mentally."

— Deandra Dottin

"I'll tell you what pressure is. Pressure is a Messerschmitt up your arse. Playing cricket is not."

— Keith Miller

"Of course, it's always there. But you actually want that. I like having that pressure. It's as close to getting back to playing as you can possibly get."

— Ricky Ponting

"I am a tough cricketer, and I play my best under pressure."

— Faf du Plessis

Pressure & Nerve

Sit with the voice that speaks to you today.

“Consistently high performers have the source of their motivation within themselves, thus they are less influenced by external situations, expectations, or pressure, whether high or low.”

— Paddy Upton

“Remember, Wes, if you bowl a no-ball you'll never be able to go back to Barbados!”

— Frank Worrell

“Throughout this whole campaign in a lot of my press conferences I have spoken about uncontrollables and there were a couple today that were pretty hard to swallow.”

— Kane Williamson

“When the team is losing, I want to be the catalyst for change.”

— Younis Khan

“It's never nice to see or hear someone going through it, but the more we can normalise it by talking about it, hopefully it might help - even if it's one person, it's something.”

— Sophie Devine

“Don't let fear hold you back.”

— Shane Warne

“You have to face a lot of pressure and criticism. You cannot blame anyone else. You have to be held accountable.”

— Misbah-ul-Haq

“Some play to win and some play because they are afraid of losing.”

— Mike Horn

Pressure & Nerve

Sit with the voice that speaks to you today.

“The most relieving thing was that we won. If we'd lost, I probably would have asked for leave or taken a month or two off cricket.”

— Jofra Archer

“Pressure can do funny things to both individuals and teams.”

— Jeremy Snape

“The pressure is always there when you bat. I enjoy the responsibility.”

— Babar Azam

“You almost have to just accept that sometimes you're going to go for runs, and you shouldn't worry about the outcome.”

— Kagiso Rabada

“It's really important to maintain a certain level of balance in everything you do. Be able to find that balance between not getting too excited when you succeed and not getting too disappointed when you fail.”

— Rahul Dravid

“Cricket is a most precarious profession; it is called a team game but, in fact, no one is so lonely as a batsman facing a bowler supported by ten fieldsmen and observed by two umpires to ensure that his error does not go unpunished.”

— John Arlott

“Fight like cornered tigers, because nothing is more dangerous than a cornered tiger.”

— Imran Khan

“One thing I would have loved is to be seen as just another cricket player. Just a young guy who simply had a passion for the game, who worked hard enough to make his dream a reality.”

— Temba Bavuma

THE SUMMER FESTIVAL OF CRICKET

More from Pressure & Nerve



The moment before it starts.

“It is only when your will to win is bigger than your fear to lose that you can win.”

— Mike Horn

A few more from Pressure & Nerve



Nerve is not the absence of fear.

“It helps hugely to have played the game at the highest level, because you understand the pressure that each player is under.”

— Gary Kirsten

“In my early years as South African captain, everything was a pressure point. You are 22 years old and in charge of turning South African cricket around. It's impossible to have all the answers.”

— Graeme Smith

“It's easy for people to comment after seeing TV replays... But we did not have the luxury of TV replays at the ground and I will never regret the decision I made.”

— Kumar Dharmasena

THEME 3 OF 7

Teamwork & Trust

Batting in pairs, fielding as eleven — the lonely game that can only be won together.



A run is a promise made at full sprint: I am calling, you are trusting, and we are both committed before either of us can see the future.

Teamwork & Trust — in the game, in life

Cricket looks like a solo sport wearing team clothing — until you watch it properly. Every run is a contract between two people sprinting in opposite directions, sealed by a single shouted word, with a run-out waiting for any misunderstanding. Every partnership is a small marriage: the senior partner farming the strike to protect the junior one, the conversation in the middle of the pitch after a beating, the touched gloves that say we are still here. And every wicket, the scorebook's proudest lie, credits one bowler for a dismissal that took eleven people — the captain who set the trap two overs earlier, the fielder who dived to save the boundary that kept the pressure on, the wicketkeeper whose chirped encouragement kept the bowler running in on a flat afternoon. Cricket's teamwork is quieter than rugby's shoulder-to-shoulder kind, and in some ways more demanding, because so much of it is invisible and unrewarded. The twelfth man carrying drinks with full commitment. The nightwatchman sent out to absorb the most dangerous hour so a better batter can sleep. The tail-ender blocking heroically for a draw he will get no credit for. The game keeps a private ledger of these gifts, and so do teammates — long after averages are forgotten, players remember who ran for them, who stayed with them, who took the tough overs uphill into the wind. Life runs on the same quiet ledger. Call clearly and early for the people running with you. Farm the strike when your partner is struggling. Take your overs into the wind without being asked. The scorebook may not record it. The people will.

“Desmond and I often shadowed each other. If things were going well for him, he took the lead. If it was my day, I pushed on while he dug in. Sometimes we didn't even bother calling. We just knew when to run and when not to.”

— Gordon Greenidge

Teamwork & Trust

Sit with the voice that speaks to you today.

"It's something that we need to take very seriously and, like the rest of the world is doing, make a stand."

— Lungi Ngidi

"The best leaders I've played under always made me feel empowered, brought the best out of myself and made me feel a sense of freedom."

— Pat Cummins

"Nobody gave us a chance but every game somebody stepped up and took responsibility."

— Darren Sammy

"This team was desperate to achieve greatness."

— Gary Kirsten

"I don't do it to win trophies. I do it to add value to people's lives, so I can help a group of people move forward in terms of where they are."

— Gary Kirsten

"When there's instability, players play for themselves because they're just doing enough to get into the next Test."

— Mickey Arthur

"No one gave us a chance. The key to IPL was, the first thing, you have to win people's hearts, you have to win the players' hearts."

— Shane Warne

"I wasn't interested in my own success. As long as we got a win and we were part of a very good team, that was the most important thing."

— Enid Bakewell

Teamwork & Trust

Sit with the voice that speaks to you today.

“We always knew Marizanne was going to be the next big thing when it comes to women's cricket in our country. She took to international cricket like it was nothing; she just belonged there.”

— Dane van Niekerk

“The boys just kept fighting, they kept believing.”

— Rahul Dravid

“I certainly preach around we care more about you as a person than as a cricketer, and sometimes I have to take my own advice. If I'm going to ask players to put themselves first, I need to do the same.”

— Sophie Devine

“For me, Black lives have mattered since I was born. If me taking a knee helps to educate others, and makes the lives of others better, I am more than happy to do so.”

— Quinton de Kock

“If you step away and ignore their vast experience, their leadership and everything else that it brings to the table, it is a foolish approach. You have to take advantage of the qualities that are around you.”

— Tom Moody

“We didn't know that there was prize money. We were only aiming for the trophy.”

— Arjuna Ranatunga

“The idea is that you are helping your team get across the line, and the only thing you can perhaps think of at this point in time is what more I could have done when the margin is so small.”

— Kane Williamson

“To be able to partake of these rituals and traditions has meant you have been awarded the highest honour in Australian cricket — you have been selected to play for your country.”

— Steve Waugh

Teamwork & Trust

Sit with the voice that speaks to you today.

“The 2003 semi-final was a great achievement for the Kenyan team and myself as a captain and beating the West Indies at Pune is also one of the highlights.”

— Steve Tikolo

“The skipper, Eoin Morgan really believed in me, even after the six. A lot of captains could have had their head in their hands, but he was really calm and really understanding.”

— Jofra Archer

“We just need to make sure we've got soul in this group.”

— Ellyse Perry

“I genuinely feel that I had a particular role to play to bridge that generation with the current generation. You need someone to play that role, and perhaps my journey was that.”

— Mithali Raj

“We had Allah with us as well. I spoke to Adil, he said Allah was definitely with us. I said we had the rub of the green. It actually epitomises our team. It has quite diverse backgrounds and cultures.”

— Eoin Morgan

“All these things before the tournament just brought this team together.”

— Darren Sammy

“Honesty is a crucial value. If we're going to develop you've got to have honesty with each other, professionalism, humility, learning and your mates.”

— Justin Langer

“A talented individual without the right attitude can't be a long-term sustainable winner. A person with great attitude but with limited talent could still be a great champion member of the team.”

— Anita Bhogle & Harsha Bhogle

THE SUMMER FESTIVAL OF CRICKET

More from Teamwork & Trust



Nobody does this alone.

“Till today I say, it's not my car. That car belongs to the country, belongs to the Indian cricket team.”

— Ravi Shastri

A few more from Teamwork & Trust



Trust, built in the ordinary weeks.

“So you don’t need a leadership tag or a captaincy badge to be the leader at that moment.”

— Stephen Fleming

“I’ve always said to people that you’re there to try and win games of cricket. I wanted to declare to give us a chance to win because we’d won the first Test and if we’d won that Test we would have won the series.”

— Mark Taylor

“Thinking about the team probably dragged my batting down a bit.”

— Ricky Ponting

THEME 4 OF 7

Defeat & Bouncing Back

The duck, the dropped catch, the long walk back — and the next innings that always comes.



Cricket gives every failure a walk of honour — the long lonely journey back that every great in history has also made.

Defeat & Bouncing Back — in the game, in life

No game stages failure quite like cricket. The duck is public, personal and complete: out first ball, and the walk back to the pavilion takes a full minute, alone, in front of everyone, with your own long shadow for company. The dropped catch is worse in its way — the whole ground groans, and there is nowhere to put the ball or the shame. And cricket's scale makes its heartbreaks enormous: five days of toil can be lost in one session; a season's form can vanish without explanation and stay gone for months. Yet this is exactly why cricket produces such durable people. The game's structure preaches its own sermon: there is always a second innings. The batter who bagged a duck in the first innings walks out in the second — same bowler, same field, same walk — and the game genuinely does not care what happened before lunch on Thursday. Form, cricketers learn, is weather; class is climate. The discipline is to keep your method through the storm — keep leaving the wide ones, keep watching the ball, keep trusting a technique that has stopped paying — because the runs return to those who do not flinch into panic. Watch how a good side treats the man who dropped the catch: the captain claps, someone jogs past with a word, and the next ball is bowled. The failure is absorbed by the team so the player can keep functioning. Do that for your people, and for yourself. When your duck comes — and it will — walk off with your chin level, watch your dismissal once, honestly, and then pad up for the second innings. The game does not remember your worst ball. It remembers whether you batted again.

“I wonder if you see the ball very clearly in your last Test in England, on a ground where you've played some of the biggest cricket in your life and where the opposing side has just stood round you and given you three cheers and the crowd has clapped you all the way to the wicket.”

— John Arlott

Defeat & Bouncing Back

Sit with the voice that speaks to you today.

“Always remember, if you decide to allow your frustrations to rule, the next day will be even tougher. The world, moving at its own pace, barely cares about your sentiments.”

— Sourav Ganguly

“Where does West Indies cricket go from here?”

— Tony Cozier

“We're pretty gutted right now, but I'm so incredibly proud of this team. To have reached this stage and not gone through to the final is painful because I know more than anyone how hard they have worked to get here and how badly they wanted it.”

— Dane van Niekerk

“Giving up is always an option. It's always there at the back of your mind, but something kind of holds you on.”

— Temba Bavuma

“I hope in time I can earn back respect and forgiveness. I've been so privileged and honoured to represent my country and captain the Australian cricket team.”

— Steve Smith

“While the emotions are raw it is pretty hard to swallow when two teams have worked really, really hard to get to this moment in time.”

— Kane Williamson

“It was a pretty tough pill to swallow when we were looking pretty likely with Trent bowling really, really well — one of those things.”

— Kane Williamson

“I have failed at times, but I have never stopped trying. It is why I leave with sadness but also with pride.”

— Rahul David

Defeat & Bouncing Back

Sit with the voice that speaks to you today.

"I would give the bus driver my bag and say to him, 'I'll meet you at the ground'. The same thing on my way back, I would give the bus driver my dirty clothes and say to him, 'I see you at the hotel. I will run all the way back to the hotel'."

— Makhaya Ntini

"As much as the Aussies were saying we were chokers in the field, we never made it our thing. We just said we've got to keep going and be relentless, and the harder we knock, the doors will open."

— Temba Bavuma

"It hurts to think of all of them, and we so badly wanted to take that trophy back home, but I guess life moves on."

— AB de Villiers

"Eight times out of ten, failures happen because of surrendering mentally. A negative mindset will only bring in negative results."

— Sourav Ganguly

"It was a failure of leadership — of my leadership."

— Steve Smith

"If you were in our changing room right now, you would probably start crying as well."

— Dane van Niekerk

"I don't believe in surrendering. This job was given to me when I didn't really expect it and I'm not a person that believes in surrendering. I'm giving it my best shot and that's what it's all about."

— MS Dhoni

"Eventually I accepted that it would be a part of my life forever, that for as long as I was around I would have to explain it, over and over again... and that I would always have to say 'I'm sorry'."

— Lance Klusener

Defeat & Bouncing Back

Sit with the voice that speaks to you today.

“Not playing Test cricket isn't a tragedy, losing a son is.”

— Barry Richards

“First game we got absolutely hammered by Delhi... There are guys crying... We lost a cricket game, but we have still got 13 more games. We are okay.”

— Shane Warne

“Left knee, three operations; right knee, one operation; back, stress fracture - it's better now but still gives some trouble - some shoulder problems; ankles, damaged ligaments twice.”

— Mashrafe Mortaza

“I could have got a hundred hundreds. There is no doubt about that. That is probably a bit of a regret when I look back.”

— Barry Richards

“I no longer have the spark or the motivation to do what needs to happen at this level and so for me it is time to move on.”

— Meg Lanning

“At least I can now go home with the thought that I tried my best.”

— Anil Kumble

“Overwhelmed by all the support of everyone after a disappointing last over... So proud to have represented my country in a World Cup final.”

— Ben Stokes

“No matter what you may read to the contrary, this is definitely my last Test match ever. I am sorry my personal contribution has been so small.”

— Don Bradman

THE SUMMER FESTIVAL OF CRICKET

More from Defeat & Bouncing Back

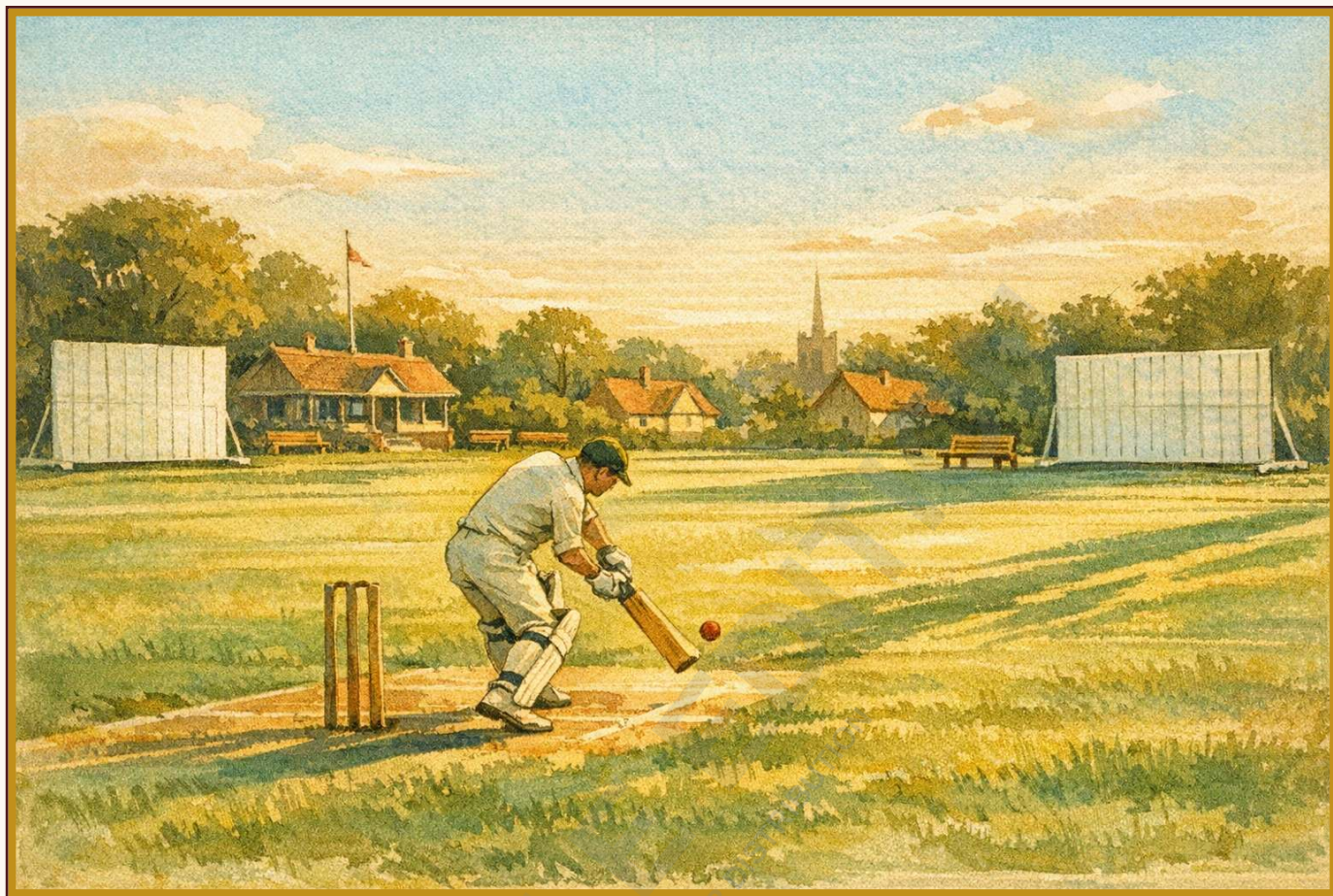


The walk back.

*“I needed therapy to get over it. I couldn't watch it. I couldn't talk about it. But I got over it.
It's become part of me.”*

— Allan Donald

A few more from Defeat & Bouncing Back



And then you come again.

“When we arrived here we were ranked 8th, and now we are the champions.”

— Sarfaraz Ahmed

“The more they fail, as long as they reflect upon it and recognise these are the shortcomings and this is what you need to improve on. That's our job, to make them aware of the things they need to work on and become better players.”

— Rahul Dravid

“As long as they learn, I don't care about much else. Even if you fail, if you go back with the right feedback, you're better off than having succeeded and not reflected on it.”

— Rahul Dravid

THEME 5 OF 7

Joy & Love of the Game

A tennis ball, a wheelie bin for stumps, one hand one bounce — playing because playing is the point.



Before the whites and the anthems there was a driveway, a taped tennis ball, and an argument about whether that was out.

Joy & Love of the Game — in the game, in life

Every Test career in history began with improvised stumps. A wheelie bin, a paint tin, three sticks, chalk on a wall. The rules were local scripture — over the fence is six and out, one hand one bounce, the tree is automatically caught behind — and the arguments about them were half the joy. Cricket's first language is play, and its sound is unmistakable: the smack of a taped tennis ball on a driveway, the shriek at a direct hit, one more over before dark that lasted forty minutes. The professionals never quite lose it, and the crowd can always tell when it surfaces. The reverse sweep played purely for the cheek of it. The tail-ender swinging joyously at everything with the match already safe. The outfielder playing catch with the crowd during a rain break. These are backyard moments wearing whites, and they draw the loudest happiness of the day, because thirty thousand people are all remembering the same driveway. The players who endure — through form slumps, long tours, the grind of professional summers — are the ones who guard that original feeling like a wicket. The ones who still love the sound of ball on bat at practice, who would still play a beach game on their day off. There is a rule of life in this, and it is not decoration. Duty is a fine engine and a terrible fuel; the stamina for your hardest seasons comes from the play you refuse to give up. So protect your version of driveway cricket — the piano, the fishing rod, the kitchen dance. Do it badly, do it laughing, argue about the rules. The day it stops being play, you have not matured. You have only mislaid the point.

“Whenever I was in the field as a player and the score was 111, I would do a little jump but no one really knew I was doing it except one or two friends... It did, I did my little jump and there was a titter in the crowd.”

— David Shepherd

Joy & Love of the Game

Sit with the voice that speaks to you today.

"I've always been very passionate about cricket and I believe you have to be passionate about what you're doing in order to get the best out of yourself."

— Shaun Pollock

"Now I know how Neil Armstrong felt when he stood on the moon."

— Clive Rice

"The ability to work hard at something because I loved it was the key to my success."

— Jonty Rhodes

"I didn't have much of an answer for him. 'Sorry, mate. Bad luck.' Then we both laughed. There was nothing more either of us could think of to say."

— Shane Warne

"To be honest, I'm not able to think about this right now. Maybe, I will realise after a few months what we have achieved. What we have given our country. I can't process this right now."

— Harmanpreet Kaur

"As he comes into bowl, Freddie Titmus has got two short legs, one of them square."

— Brian Johnston

"It's all happening!"

— Bill Lawry

"As part of the coaching staff, I feel really grateful because we're getting to enjoy these moments because of what they have done in a pressure situation."

— Rahul Dravid

Joy & Love of the Game

Sit with the voice that speaks to you today.

“You can work hard and still have fun, it's how you get the best out of someone.”

— Suzie Bates

“Winning the World Cup is the proudest moment of my life. I couldn't control my tears of joy.”

— Sachin Tendulkar

“My dear old thing.”

— Henry Blofeld

“It is a game. I play cricket because I love it.”

— Jonty Rhodes

“The British tradition soaked deep into me was that when you entered the sporting arena you left behind you the sordid compromises of everyday existence.”

— C. L. R. James

“If someone throws rubbish at me, I don't ask why, I have to see what reaction I give. That is why I smile so much, I smile at myself, at other things, sometimes even I wonder what I'm smiling at.”

— Younis Khan

“If you remain humble, people will give you love and respect even after you have finished with the game.”

— Sachin Tendulkar

“The joy, the tension, the exhilaration and the happiness those Sundays brought into our lives served as a cushion, I am sure, for the sterner life which was ahead for all of us.”

— Learie Constantine

Joy & Love of the Game

Sit with the voice that speaks to you today.

“It's not easy being captain of South Africa but all the sacrifices, all the disappointment, feel worth it.”

— Temba Bavuma

“The Biggest Party in Sport.”

— Caribbean Premier League

“There can be no summer in this land without cricket.”

— Neville Cardus

“Pace came naturally to me since I was a kid. I liked speed in everything I did.”

— Dale Steyn

“First spell no good, second spell good.”

— Lasith Malinga

“I was just thinking of playing my natural game.”

— Shahid Afridi

“It was our first ever Test win on Australian soil. It was a significant game in the history of New Zealand cricket, and for me personally it was possibly the best I've ever bowled.”

— Richard Hadlee

“He just didn't quite get his leg over.”

— Jonathan Agnew

THE SUMMER FESTIVAL OF CRICKET

More from Joy & Love of the Game



Why anyone starts.

“Carlos Brathwaite! Carlos Brathwaite! Remember the name!”

— Ian Bishop

This copy belongs to: Sample Reader

The Summer Festival of Cricket · Joy & Love of the Game

A few more from Joy & Love of the Game



The part nobody has to be told to love.

“My life, between 22 yards for 24 years, it is hard to believe that that wonderful journey has come to an end.”

— Sachin Tendulkar

“This day is incredible, we couldn't have dreamed of this.”

— Meg Lanning

“They are dancing in the aisles in Sharjah!”

— Tony Greig

This copy belongs to: Sample Reader

The Summer Festival of Cricket · Joy & Love of the Game

THEME 6 OF 7

Rivalry & Respect

Bat against ball, nation against nation — the contests that sharpen us, and the applause that keeps it sport.



Twenty-two yards apart, all afternoon — and at the century, the first man applauding is the one who tried hardest to prevent it.

Rivalry & Respect — in the game, in life

All of cricket is a duel wearing a team game as a coat. Twenty-two yards separate two people whose jobs are perfectly opposed, and everything else — the field, the tactics, the crowd, the series — is scaffolding around that single confrontation. The great rivalries of the game, between nations and between individuals, are simply this duel sustained across years: the fast bowler and the master batter who measured each other summer after summer, the old enemies whose meetings mark the calendar of the whole sport. And the game is candid about what rivals are for. They are the examination you cannot cram for. A batter never truly knows his technique until the best attack of his era has spent a day probing it; a bowler never knows his heart until a great batter has taken him for a hundred and he must run in again. Rivals find our exact edges and lean on them until the edges move — which is why the honest ones admit, years later, that they were made by their opponents as much as by their coaches. But cricket's signature is the applause. When the century comes, the fielding side claps. The bowler who has been driven all day nods at the batter, because the hundred certifies the quality of the contest they built together. Bat and ball are opponents; they are also collaborators in the day's meaning. Life will hand you rivals — the colleague whose brilliance stings, the peer whose progress needles you at midnight. Use them as cricket does. Envy studies a rival's scores; wisdom studies their nets. Compete without needing the other side to be villains. And when their century comes, be the first to clap. It costs nothing, and it certifies you both.

“I'd like to be remembered as one of England's greatest competitors. And I'd like people to think that I was very consistent, that I gave everything that I had in the way I played and the way I went about it, that I was a fighter.”

— Katherine Sciver-Brunt

Rivalry & Respect

Sit with the voice that speaks to you today.

“It's difficult to play against her because she knows me so well.”

— Marizanne Kapp

“‘Australianism’ means single-minded determination to win — to win within the laws but, if necessary, to the last limit within them.”

— John Arlott

“As far as I was concerned, cricket was war and I was at war whenever I played.”

— Javed Miandad

“But if they're down, they grovel, and I intend, with the help of Closey and a few others, to make them grovel.”

— Tony Greig

“In an England cricket eleven, the flesh may be of the South, but the bone is of the North, and the backbone is Yorkshire.”

— Len Hutton

“I always wanted to tackle the big kids.”

— Shane Warne

“We never made it easy for batsmen and they knew they had been in a battle against us.”

— Curtly Ambrose

“That was something I could not do because that is how I was brought up... I just could not do it without a warning. As a youngster, the spirit of the game meant a lot to me.”

— Courtney Walsh

Rivalry & Respect

Sit with the voice that speaks to you today.

"I'll be apologising to Kane for the rest of my life."

— Ben Stokes

"For Lara, keep two gullies and bowl outswingers; with Tendulkar, don't bowl on the leg, because he will cream you."

— Wasim Akram

"I'm desperate for an Ashes win. It's the most important thing there is to me. I love the World Cup, world tournaments, any series between us and Australia, but the Ashes for me is just the pinnacle."

— Katherine Sciver-Brunt

"I thrive on proving the doubters wrong."

— Marnus Labuschagne

"I thought of myself as someone who was going to take the fight to the bowler."

— Gordon Greenidge

"I've been through all sorts of downs with my team, but this time I thought we had a bloody good chance to win. I was prepared to be as ruthless as it took to stuff you."

— Allan Border

"Cricket owes much of its appeal and enjoyment to the fact that it should be played not only according to the Laws, but also within the Spirit of Cricket."

— MCC

"When I walk out to bat, I feel the guy with the ball in his hand wouldn't be there unless he's very good."

— Brian Lara

Rivalry & Respect

Sit with the voice that speaks to you today.

“There are two teams out there. One is trying to play cricket and the other is not.”

— Bill Woodfull

“Far from marking the end of nationalism, the IPL is the ultimate triumph of that principle: a global tournament in which the same nation always wins.”

— Gideon Haigh

“I try to hit a batsman in the rib-cage when I bowl a purposeful bouncer, and I want it to hurt so much that the batsman doesn't want to face me any more.”

— Dennis Lillee

“I often joke that, in particular outside of the game of cricket, I'm actually a really sore loser. I hate losing.”

— Alyssa Healy

“I never bowled to injure a man in my life. Frighten them, intimidate them, yes.”

— Harold Larwood

“That's not cricket.”

— Anonymous

“I didn't wear a helmet because I wanted to show that the bowler wasn't intimidating me, and also that's just the way I liked to bat.”

— Viv Richards

“It doesn't bother me to be perfectly honest. I know I've got the support of the guys in the room and for me that's all that really matters.”

— Steve Smith

THE SUMMER FESTIVAL OF CRICKET

More from Rivalry & Respect



Opponents, not enemies.

“I was hurt, disappointed, angry at our own government and at world cricket's ruling authority. An international sportsman can't wait to have a go at opposition of equal stature, to test his mettle at the highest level.”

— Mike Procter

A few more from Rivalry & Respect



Respect, earned the hard way.

THEME 7 OF 7

Watching & Belonging

The full day at the ground, the radio in the kitchen, the scorecard kept by hand — why we gather and why we stay.



Cricket does not ask for ninety minutes of your attention. It asks for the whole day — and gives you the day back, shared.

Watching & Belonging — in the game, in life

Cricket asks more of its watchers than any other game — whole days, sometimes five of them, for a contest that can still end in a draw — and that extravagant demand is precisely its gift. A day at the cricket has room in it. Room for the match to breathe, for lunch on the grass, for the conversation that wanders from the field to your life and back, for a child's first paper scorecard filled in with a grandparent's pencil. Football gives you an event; cricket gives you a day — and the people you spent it with are half of what you remember. Its fandom has a domestic register no other sport matches: the radio commentary murmuring through a kitchen all summer, the score checked at work with a glance that tells the whole office everything, the transistor smuggled under a school desk in an era every cricket country remembers. The game soaks into ordinary life the way its afternoons soak into evening. And when cricket does convulse — a last over with everything on it, a tail-end stand that stops a nation's productivity — the shared suffering is exquisite because it was purchased with hours of shared calm. Nobody who was watching forgets where they were; more precisely, nobody forgets who they were with. That is the secret the long game teaches. Belonging is not manufactured in highlights; it accumulates, over slow shared hours, like an innings built in singles. So find your embankment — the ground, the book club, the parkrun, the congregation — and give it whole days, not clipped minutes. Keep the scorecard. Teach a child to keep it. The match will end; the belonging is the part you carry home.

*“For the field is full of shades as I near a shadowy coast, / And a ghostly batsman
plays to the bowling of a ghost, / And I look through my tears on a
soundless-clapping host / As the run-stealers flicker to and fro, to and fro: / O my
Hornby and my Barlow long ago!”*

— Francis Thompson

Watching & Belonging

Sit with the voice that speaks to you today.

“To be fair, it's been quite good fun; I've enjoyed it and enjoyed the banter with the crowd.”

— Stuart Broad

“Tendulkar has carried the burden of the nation for 21 years. It was time we carried him on our shoulders.”

— Virat Kohli

“Winning that World Cup was a seminal moment for women's cricket in India. It was bigger than one trophy. Most importantly, it brought belief and showed young girls that the highest stage is not out of reach.”

— Harmanpreet Kaur

“Bengaluru is closest to my heart and will always remain that way.”

— AB de Villiers

“This is the team I'm going to play for till the last day I play the IPL.”

— Virat Kohli

“The only happiness for them is cricket — the only thing which gives them an opportunity to celebrate in life is cricket.”

— Rashid Khan

“I am requesting to all of the countries: you must come to Pakistan. Everybody knows law and order is not good but it is not our fault.”

— Younis Khan

“It will be a day to remember for the nation of Afghanistan, its cricketers and all the people of Afghanistan.”

— Rashid Khan

Watching & Belonging

Sit with the voice that speaks to you today.

"It was incredible to walk off with everyone cheering like that. To ride the wave of the crowd as the game unfolded was really special."

— Beth Mooney

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

— C. L. R. James

"To have done it in a proper South African way — it was not simple nor easy — shows something unique to this group and that is that we embrace everything of what it means to be South African."

— Temba Bavuma

"Here's an opportunity for us to — as divided as we are at times — forget all of that, rejoice in this moment, and just be one."

— Temba Bavuma

"The Indian cricket fan is best understood by remembering the sentiment of the majority, not the actions of a minority."

— Rahul Dravid

"Cricket, lovely cricket, at Lord's where I saw it... with those two little pals of mine, Ramadhin and Valentine."

— Lord Beginner (Egbert Moore)

"Cricket in India now stands not just for sport, but possibility, hope, opportunities."

— Rahul Dravid

"It is the only sport that incorporates meal breaks. It is the only sport that shares its name with an insect. It is the only sport in which spectators burn as many calories as players — more if they are moderately restless."

— Bill Bryson

Watching & Belonging

Sit with the voice that speaks to you today.

"The game of cricket existed long before I was born. It will be played centuries after my demise. During my career I was privileged to give the public my interpretation of its character in the same way that a pianist might interpret the works of Beethoven."

— Don Bradman

"Fifty years from now Britain will still be the country of long shadows on county grounds, warm beer, invincible green suburbs, dog lovers and pools fillers."

— John Major

"I remember doing a full 360, thinking, 'Holy hell, there's that many people here.'"

— Beth Mooney

"I believe Garry Sobers' innings was probably the best ever seen in Australia. The people who saw Sobers have enjoyed one of the historic events of cricket, they were privileged to have such an experience."

— Don Bradman

"I know that there are a lot of people in my country who only have cricket to look forward to. They like seeing the national team playing against England or Australia. It gives them pride in their country, and they get some relief from watching sport."

— Heath Streak

"Rachael was one of our sport's true pioneers and it is no exaggeration to say that she paved the way for the progress enjoyed by recent generations of female cricketers."

— Clare Connor

"It was a full house in 2017 and it did really feel like a seminal moment. I remember doing the anthems actually and realising what a historic day it was for the game."

— Heather Knight

"Cricket is an Indian game accidentally discovered by the British."

— Ashis Nandy

THE SUMMER FESTIVAL OF CRICKET

More from Watching & Belonging



Belonging, in the stands.

“In the forty-five years that I have followed cricket, I have seen it threatened from all sides by the horrors of modern life.”

— Stephen Fry

A few more from Watching & Belonging



The people who turn up.

“The vibrancy of the crowd excited me as a player and I enjoyed the challenge of pitting my skills against the Indian spinners.”

— Andy Flower

“If the French noblesse had been capable of playing cricket with their peasants, their chateaux would never have been burnt.”

— G.M. Trevelyan

“We remember not the scores and the results in after years; it is the men who remain in our minds, in our imagination.”

— Neville Cardus

About The Summer Festival of Cricket

Oakfield Cricket Club is a demonstration client, invented to show how a branded edition looks and reads. In a real edition this page carries your own history, your own words, and the details your people would want to keep.

Website: sportsmart4life.co.za

After the final whistle



Until the next one.

Between the Whistles

Stumps is only ever half true. Somewhere a new ball is being shined on a trouser leg — a net session starting, a driveway argument about one hand one bounce, a child asking for one more over before dark. May the voices in this collection walk with you between the innings of your own life.

SportSmart4Life is the intelligent spectator's toolkit — learn the games you love, watch them smarter, and let the wisdom of sport walk into your life. Explore the sports, SpectatorIQ and the Voices of the Game at sportsmart4life.co.za.

Go Deeper with SportSmart

This collection began as a way of watching. If the voices in these pages made you want to watch with sharper eyes — and let more of the game walk into your life — here is where the journey continues.

- **The Cricket Spectator Module**

eight tools that teach you the game itself — read the field, know the laws, follow the season's plots, and grow your Fan IQ match by match.

sportsmart4life.co.za

- **SportSmart4Life Membership**

the intelligent spectator's home — modules across 80+ sports, one member dashboard, and wisdom tools that turn watching into wellbeing.

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- **SpectatorIQ — the Quiz Show**

test your sports brain in our quiz show — ladders, live rounds and power-ups across every sport we cover.

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- **Voices of the Game**

the living library behind this book - thousands of verified voices to explore, sport by sport and theme by theme.

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Every quotation in this collection is real, verified and honestly attributed — that is the Voices of the Game promise.