



**SHORTLIST ANNOUNCED FOR THE
CRICKET SOCIETY AND MCC BOOK OF THE YEAR AWARD 2018**

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- Three cricketing biographies, an account of 1939's "Timeless Test", and books from Australia and India form the short list for the coveted Cricket Society and MCC Book of the Year Award 2018.
 - The winner of the £3000 prize will be announced on Tuesday 17th April in the Long Room at Lord's. Writer and editor Emma John will give the keynote address.
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The 2018 Cricket Society and MCC Book of the Year Award shortlist is announced today. From Learie Constantine to Jonny Bairstow via Geoff Cope: cricketing careers from the 1930s to today fill three of the six-strong list. An Australian book about cricket photography, one about Indian cricket history through the lives of eleven of its protagonists, and an account of the 1939 Durban Test complete a cosmopolitan selection.

Chair of judges Vic Marks said: "It has been an unusually tricky process to decide upon this year's short list. Finding a winner may not be any easier. But this year we have some fresh judges to help us. Mike Selvey and Robert Winder are now part of the panel after the departure of David Kynaston and Stephen Fay, who have been locked away in some dark corner writing a cricket book rather than reading several."

The competition, run by the Cricket Society since 1970 and in partnership with MCC since 2009, is for books nominated by MCC and Cricket Society Members, and is highly regarded by writers and publishers. Last year's winner was Mark Nicholas's *A Beautiful Game: My love affair with cricket*. Simon Lister won in 2016 with *Fire in Babylon: How the West Indies Cricket Team Brought a People to its Feet*.

The £3000 for the winner, and certificates for all the shortlisted books, will be presented at an awards evening in the Long Room at Lord's on Tuesday 17th April. A sell-out audience of 200 people will comprise Members of the Cricket Society and MCC, the shortlisted authors, publishers, and some of today's finest cricket writers and journalists.

Notes for editors

The six books on the shortlist (alphabetically by author):

Jonny Bairstow and Duncan Hamilton, *A Clear Blue Sky*, HarperCollins

Stephen Chalke, *In Sunshine and in Shadow: Geoff Cope and Yorkshire Cricket*, Fairfield Books

John Lazenby, *Edging Towards Darkness*, Bloomsbury

Harry Pearson – *Connie: The Marvellous Life of Learie Constantine* Little, Brown

Christian Ryan, *Feeling is the thing that happens in 1000th of a second: a season of cricket photographer Patrick Eagar*, Riverrun

Rajdeep Sardesai, *Democracy's XI: The Great Indian Cricket Story*, Juggernaut

The other ten books considered (alphabetically by author):

Mike Brearley, *On Form*, Little, Brown

Michael Burns, *Russell Endean: A South African Sportsman in the Apartheid Era*, Nightwatchman Books

Jeremy Lonsdale, *A Game Taken Seriously: The Foundations of Yorkshire's Cricketing Power*, ACS

Douglas Miller, *Raman Subba Row: Cricket Visionary*, Charlcombe Books

Andrew Murtagh, *Gentleman and Player: The Story of Colin Cowdrey, Cricket's Most Elegant and Charming Batsman*, Pitch Publishing

Chris Overson, *All Ten: The Ultimate Bowling Feat*, ACS

Steve Neal, *Over and Out, Albert Trott: The Man who Cleared the Lord's Pavilion*, Pitch Publishing

Mark Rowe, *Brian Sellers: Yorkshire Tyrant*, ACS

Mike Thompson, *The Lord of Lord's: The Life and Times of Lord Frederick Beauclerk*, Christopher Saunders

Peter Wynne-Thomas, *Arthur Carr: The Rise and Fall of Nottinghamshire's Bodyline Captain*, Chequered Flag

Sixteen books – nominated by either Cricket Society or MCC members (not publishers) – were accepted for the long list and whittled down to six by a panel of judges independently chaired by writer and broadcaster and former England and Somerset cricketer Vic Marks. The other judges are Robert Winder and Mike Selvey (MCC) and John Symons and Chris Lowe (The Cricket Society). Nigel Hancock, Chairman of The Cricket Society, is the competition's administrator.

The Cricket Society – www.cricketsociety.com and Twitter @CricketSociety – encourages a love of cricket through playing, watching, reading and listening. It supports young cricketers, makes annual awards, holds regular meetings, publishes an acclaimed *Journal* and *Bulletin* and has its own cricket team.

MCC – www.lords.org and Twitter @homeofcricket - is the custodian of the Laws and Spirit of Cricket, an innovative independent voice in world cricket, and a passionate promoter of the game. It is also the world's most active cricket-playing club and the owner of Lord's – the Home of Cricket.

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For further information on this story please contact:

Vic Marks – 07771 958845 or vic.marks@guardian.co.uk

Nigel Hancock – 07885 733320 or nigelhancock@cricketsociety.com

Neil Robinson – 0207 616 8559 or neil.robinson@mcc.org.uk