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A “Second Class” MegaMediaSport Event? The International Cricket Council Cricket World Cup

Dominic Malcolm, Loughborough University (UK)

Thomas Fletcher, Leeds Beckett University (UK)

Introduction

2015 was the least eventful men’s International Cricket Council (ICC) Cricket World Cup (CWC) of the 21st Century.[1] Its single ‘major’ controversy came when ICC President, Bangladesh’s Mustafa Kamal, threatened to resign from his non-executive post if an umpiring decision which, he felt, led to his nation’s exit from the tournament was not investigated. Subsequently, he was excluded from the trophy presentation ceremony and retaliated by threatening to reveal "mischievous things" taking place in the politics of international cricket (ICC President, 2015, March 30).

There is, of course, some irony in the portrayal of this CWC as uneventful for these quadrennial events are frequently marred by controversy. The 2011 CWC was awarded to a joint India-Pakistan-Bangladesh-Sri Lanka bid that was submitted late. After being de-selected as co-hosts due to security concerns, Pakistan initiated legal proceedings against the ICC (Samiuddin, 2009). During the tournament, Bangladesh fans attacked the West Indian team bus and fought police following victory over England (Bandyopadhyay, 2013). Four years before that the CWC, staged in eight different Caribbean states, was dogged by speculation that the Pakistani coach, the former England cricketer, Bob Woolmer, had been murdered (Malcolm et al., 2010). In 2003 England and New Zealand forfeited matches due to security concerns in Zimbabwe and Kenya; in England’s case, in diplomatic protest at human rights abuses in Zimbabwe (Holden, 2010). One of the world’s leading players, Australia’s Shane Warne, also failed a drugs test.

To those unfamiliar with cricket, these events will jar with the ideological conceptions of the game as genteel and civilised (Malcolm, 2013; Fletcher, 2015). However, citing these events also alerts the reader to the importance of context in understanding the CWC as a ‘megamediasport’ event for “mediatisation is … not at all a uniform socio-cultural change following the same paths across different fields” (Frandsen, 2014,

p.530). Rather, certain elements of cricket are vital to understanding both the game in general and the 2015 ICC CWC in particular. Consequently, this chapter begins with an overview of cricket's structural and cultural context. Following Frandsen (2014), it then provides a historical perspective to the commercialisation and mediatisation of the game, before examining the implications of context and development for the structure and presentation of the event. Specifically, an analysis of the institutions/production and content/text of the 2015 ICC CWC suggests that mediatisation reinforces--rather than ruptures--this sport's traditions and conventions. Thus, the chapter argues that the media-sport relationship does not have an essential logic whereby the former comes to overwhelm the latter, but is structured by the contextual specificities of a sport and its personnel.

The structural and cultural context of cricket

Fundamental to an understanding of cricket are three interlinking features: the game's complexity and statistical orientation, the structure of its international competition, and its multiple, co-existing, game forms.

1) The game's rules are notoriously elaborate. Its 42 Laws (and five appendices) encompass 116 pages (MCC, 2010). Contributing to this complexity is an extreme form of quantification. The average edition of *Wisden Cricketers' Almanack* - the annually published 'bible' of cricket - contains approximately 1000 pages of numerical data and 50 pages of text. Records embrace the minutiae of the game (e.g., the highest partnership for a particular wicket against a particular team at a particular venue). This statistical complexity bolsters the game's enigmatic, esoteric and essentially English character. Cricket is a 'visually distinct manifestation of Englishness, but at the same time that everybody can see it, like a cryptic crossword, only certain people have the 'code' required to make sense of it' (Malcolm, 2013, p.163).

2) The structure of international cricket is riven with exclusionary mechanisms. Cricket's 105 member nations are structured into a fairly rigid three-tier hierarchy: Full (10); Associate (38); and Affiliate (57) Members (ICC, no date). In *practice* membership status is closely linked to a nation's relationship with the former British Empire. Full members have greater voting rights on the ICC Executive Committee,

greater access to competitions like the CWC and, once attained, ‘Full’ member status has never been revoked. Complicating the organisational structure is the variability of members’ constitutions (the West Indies is a multi-state confederation; the side always referred to as ‘England’ formally represents the England and *Wales* Cricket Board), and the fluidity of player ‘nationality’. The England cricket team, in particular, has appropriated the playing talent of other member nations as a consequence of its centrality to Empire. Indeed, England’s captain at the 2015 ICC CWC, Eoin Morgan, first played international cricket for Associate member, Ireland. Many of the emerging nations (e.g. Scotland, Canada, USA) are highly dependent on migrant labour. We would assert that no other sport is so deeply embroiled in post-colonial politics (Malcolm & Waldman, forthcoming; Fletcher, 2015).

3) International cricket is played over multiple game forms. Initially, international cricket contests consisted of two innings of indefinite length per side but within an overall duration normally restricted to five days. Due to playing inequalities, early games frequently entailed teams with different numbers of participants. Consequently, to distinguish between these and contests between sides with an equal number of players, the terms ‘Test’ and ‘First Class’ match were applied. Below the international level, shorter versions of cricket have always been the norm.

Whilst many sports have variants, the relationships between cricket’s multiple game forms – namely ‘Test’ or ‘First Class’ cricket , one-day internationals (ODIs) usually consisting of one 50-over innings per side, and most recently Twenty20 cricket, consisting of one 20-overs innings per side – is distinct. First, equipment is not standardised between the different game forms. Second, the hierarchy of game forms in other sports is much clearer. Whereas the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) produce (for each sex) a single table ranking football playing nations, the ICC produce (for each sex) a table for each of the game’s three formats. Third, the international cricket programme is highly complex and differentiated. The ICC CWC exists alongside the ICC World Twenty20 (a biennial, 20-overs, 16-team tournament) and the ICC Champions Trophy (quadrennial, 50-overs, 8-teams) as well as the ICC Intercontinental Cup and ICC World Cricket League Championship (competitions for Associate and Affiliate members competed over five and one days respectively). A system called the ‘Future Tours Programme’, which obliged all Full members to play home and away Test matches against each other once every four

years, has recently been abandoned, as have proposals for a quadrennial World Test Championship (Wilson, 2014, January 13). It is an anomaly that the premier cricketing competition uses a format which cricket nomenclature implicitly defines as 'Second Class'.

Commercialisation and mediatisation of cricket

These three interlinking features need to be understood in light of commercial and media-related developments, for although the trajectory of contemporary cricket is very different from the path pursued for the last 100 years, the conflict between cricket as an ideal and cricket as an industry actually predates most contemporary sports forms. Since codification (mid-1700s) cricket has witnessed numerous incarnations in the name of progress and modernisation. However, perhaps not surprisingly, the sport-media complex has been at the heart of cricket's recent (r)evolution. In this most traditional of sports, it would take until the 1960s for the game's administrators to make major concessions to foster a more accessible and entertaining consumer sport (Wright, 1994). Subsequently, the game's longest and most prestigious format, the Test match, has become an endangered species as commercial investors and the public have shown a determined preference for shorter competition formats.

The speed of cultural change is contingent on prevailing definitions of culture and the demands and expectations of multiple parties. It is widely considered that the commercialisation of cricket in England experienced a step change in 1963 with the introduction of the first one-day competition, the Gillette Cup (Wright, 1994). The Gillette Cup was a knockout competition for the seventeen 'First-Class' English counties (anomalously including Glamorgan of Wales) and consisted of a preliminary eliminator, three rounds of midweek matches, and a Saturday Final at Lords in London (the 'spiritual home' of cricket). These five days of cricket were spread over four months. Over the next fifty years, one-day games would increase in both frequency and concentration. The sale of broadcasting rights to this format, plus the intensive marketing and globalisation of the game, enabled cricket to become a 'mediasport'.

Various iterations of the game's shorter form have come and gone over the last 50 years. Kerry Packer's 'World Series Cricket' was the earliest sustained attempt to turn cricket into a mediatised spectacle (Harriss, 1990; Cashman, 2011). This limited-overs

competition was contested by players wearing coloured clothes (rather than the traditional whites) and played under floodlights with a white ball. The events, widely denigrated as raucous ‘circuses’ and ‘pyjama cricket’, were heavily resisted by cricket’s authorities (Sturm, 2015b). While Packer’s stylisation subsequently achieved a degree of acceptance, even shorter alternatives have emerged in pursuit of a commercially lucrative formula. In New Zealand, for example, ‘Action Cricket’ was played in 1992–93. This 20-overs format allowed two games to take place on the same day. Subsequently ‘Cricket Max’ (1996–2003), a three-hour format where teams would twice bat for 10 overs was introduced with the unique selling point of the ‘max zone’; an area at either end of the pitch where, once the ball entered, the score for the shot was doubled. Similarly, in Australia, ‘Super Eights’ (1996-97) reduced teams from eleven to eight players. A hybrid ‘Cricket Super Max Eights’ also met with limited success (Sturm, 2015a).

Ironically, given England’s perceived role as guardian of the traditions of cricket, it was here that the format that many now see as the game’s greatest potential for future growth, Twenty20, was introduced. Such was the immediate commercial success of Twenty20 that a number of domestic-based and internationally resonant Twenty20 competitions have come and gone over the last decade. Current iterations are the ‘Indian Premier League’ (IPL), Australian ‘Big Bash’, ‘Bangladesh Premier League’, ‘Caribbean Premier League’ and Pakistan Super League (established 2016). Despite having established the format and witnessed its commercial success elsewhere around the world, the UK’s current Twenty20 competition is perceived to lack comparable global appeal, leading to speculation that a UK city-based competition is imminent (Ammon, 2015, July 15).

Of all such competitions, the IPL has unquestionably had the greatest commercial and cultural impact. Introduced in 2008, it is based upon a city franchise system and has an annual televised player auction. The current eight squads are each a mix of Indian (minimum 14) and overseas (maximum 10) players. Up to four foreign players are allowed in any starting eleven. When the event began in 2008 the original eight franchises were bought for US$724 million and broadcasting rights were sold to Sony for US$1.94 billion over a 10-year period (Gupta, 2010). As of 2014, the IPL is estimated to be worth in excess of US$7 billion. Financially, the IPL dwarfs anything else in cricket, making more money each year than two CWCs combined (Rumford,

2011); evidence of the shifting power relations that underpin the 'post-Westernisation' (Rumford 2007) of cricket. As a consequence, the IPL poses a direct challenge to the status of the CWC as cricket's premier global event.

The IPL, and Twenty20 in general, has become emblematic of the mediatisation and commercialisation of the game. Twenty20 is an exemplar of cultural change in a sport that has "run the gamut from colonial symbol with arcane and, for many, unteachable rules to a spectacle aimed at lay audiences and markets" (Axford and Huggins, 2010, p.1328). While it is not uncommon for sports to adapt to suit the needs of television, sponsors and other stakeholders (Frandsen, 2014), the extent to which cricket has changed to suit commercial interests – changing rules, playing at night and fundamentally restructuring competitions - is unprecedented. While Twenty20 incorporates the game's fundamental elements (i.e. the game is still contested between eleven wo/men on a 22 yard strip of grass involving bat and ball), viewers experience a simulacrum of the sport, a 'hyper-cricket' (Axford and Huggins 2011).

Yet, ironically the sport remains deeply conservative. Graeme Wright (a former editor of *Wisden Cricketers' Almanack*), has argued that 'modern' formats offend the sensibilities of cricket purists. In pointing to the apparent appetite for "simplicity, an impatience with the long view and, instead, a demand for instant gratification and a disdain for what was subtle" (1994, p.17), he epitomises the view that the game is betraying its inheritance in order to further short-term commercial goals. Indeed, for many traditionalists, the opportunities made possible by one-day cricket – especially Twenty20 – are accompanied by a series of threats which emanate from the rapid commercialisation and mediatisation of the game, and the unresolved tensions between different formats (Rumford & Wagg, 2010; Axford & Huggins, 2011). The ECB was the only national governing body to prohibit its national players from competing in the IPL's launch season, despite their protestations over potential financial losses (Mehta et al., 2009), but the IPL continues to generate tensions in particular between the West Indian Cricket Board (WICB) and West Indian players.

Specifically, Rumford and Wagg (2010, p.7) question whether the commercial imperatives of cricket can be sustained across three different formats. They note that Twenty20, and the IPL in particular, "does not dovetail into other cricketing structures; it competes with (and threatens) them". Consequently, the sustainability of ODIs/50-

overs cricket is questionable, especially in a context where India so overwhelmingly dominates the market and so clearly favours Twenty20 cricket over other forms (Mehta, 2009; Rumford, 2011). Consequently, the current and future status of the CWC as the premier cricketing competition is in doubt. The CWC is not only 'second class' in name, but also in terms of income-generation and audience numbers.

The 2015 ICC CWC stands at the convergence of these developmental trends. It is a form of the game originally and purposefully designed for mediated consumption and the flagship event of the international cricket calendar. Yet, concurrently, it is also firmly locked into the structural logics of the traditions of cricket, remaining enigmatically complex and exhibiting peculiar international dynamics. It stands in constant comparison with both a more prestigious (Test match) and more popular/commercial (Twenty20) variant. In the next two sections, we explore how these things impact on both the structure of the tournament, and the content of its mediated presentation.

The ICC men's Cricket World Cup: a megamediasport event?

In light of the above, it is important to consider the extent to which the CWC is in fact a 'megamediasport event'. The characteristics of mega-events are well-established. Mega-events are "large-scale cultural (including commercial and sporting) events, which have a dramatic character, mass popular appeal and international significance" (Roche, 2000, p.1). Mega-events are deemed to have significant consequences for the host city, region or nation in which they occur, and attract considerable media coverage (Horne, 2010). For Roche (2008), mega-events are short-term events with significant long-term pre- and post-event impacts on the host nation.

Sports mega-events can further be classified by scale, scope and reach (Roche, 2000). According to Horne (2010) 'First-order' events include the Summer Olympic and Paralympic Games and the (men's) FIFA Football World Cup. 'Second-order' events include the Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games, the (men's) Union of European Football Association (UEFA) Championships, and the International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF) World Championships. Finally, 'third-order' events include the Asia and Pan American Games, the African Cup of Nations and the America's Cup in sailing.

Where does the CWC sit within such a typology? CWCs are demonstrably large-scale events. The combined television audience for the 2011 version was a reported 2.2 billion people (Sturm, 2015b) and this persuaded ESPN and STAR to purchase the television rights for ICC events (estimated to have cost US$2.2 billion over 8 years), thus integrating the sport with global media giants *Disney* and *News Corporation*. The 2015 version was broadcast in seven languages across 220 territories. In all, 1,400 members of the media attended the event (ICC Cricket, 2015, March 28). The tournament's finale, contested between the co-host nations, became the most-watched cricket match ever in Australia, with national viewing figures peaking at 4.218 million (Sinclair, 2015, March 30). Earlier in the tournament, a match between India and Pakistan became the most watched cricket match in history, with an estimated global television audience of over 1 billion (Sarkar, 2015, February 15).

What Axford and Huggins (2010) call the (tele)mediatisation of cricket was evident in the way consumers could interact with and through cricket's 'new' media technologies, e.g. via texting, blogging, Tweeting, contributing to online proto 'communities', online gaming, and in-game betting. The ICC claimed that the tournament website attracted 26.25 million unique visitors, and 227 million page views overall, and that the tournament app became the market leader in a total of 48 countries (ICC, 2015, March 28). Two Twitter-based controversies arose during the tournament. In the first, a fan's call for West Indian batsman Chris Gayle to be dropped was re-Tweeted by the president of the WICB, Whycliffe Cameron (Premachandran, 2015, February 24). In the second, Scotland's Majid Haq was sent home after sending a tweet implying that his de-selection was racially motivated (Madeley, 2015, March 12).

CWCs can also be considered mega-events in terms of their impact beyond the confines of the tournament itself. Preceded by extended qualifying tournaments which structure the international fixtures of Associate and Affiliate members, the 2015 tournament was also notable for forcing the 2015 IPL to be put back a few weeks later than its traditional timeslot, and for the delayed release of a number of Bollywood films (Shah, 2015, February 18). The legacy of the tournament was evident during subsequent cricket contests, as journalists speculated about how the 2015 CWC had instigated a fundamental re-stylisation of both ODI and Test match tactics. Most enduringly, the event helped brand New Zealand, which "seemed to be granted especial attention with cliched and hyperbolic praise as 'perfect hosts', for embodying

the spirit of the CWC, and for collectively embracing the event as a nation" (Sturm, 2015b, p.236). In this respect, therefore, the 2015 CWC was a significant cultural and political event shaping conceptions of cricket in general and New Zealand nationhood in particular.

However, despite the CEO of the ICC describing it as "the most sought after prize in cricket and one of the greatest tournaments in world sport" (cited in Horne, 2010, p. 1556), the CWC is outside the first-order of mega-events. A fundamental reason for this is the geo-political position of cricket, which, in turn, derives from the game's English and Imperial traditions. Seven of the ICC's ten Full members, and five of the eleven CWCs, have been staged in what could be described as 'developing countries' (see Table 1).

Table 1 About Here

The challenges of hosting mega events in the developing world have been noted, as history shows that such events are frequently mired by organisational deficiencies, poor budget management, unstable national politics, and local poverty (e.g. Horne, 2010; Lorde, Greenidge & Devonish, 2011). Moreover, despite increasing claims for cricket's globalisation (Rumford & Wagg, 2010), it remains the case that the CWC event is *quasi*-global, with participants invariably limited to members of the former British Empire. Although claimed to be the third most watched sports event in the world (Strum, 2015b), the CWC compares unfavourably with other first order mega-events on account of its restricted geographical appeal and, consequently, its limited commercial market (particularly in Europe, South East Asia and the Americas). Indicative of this are the commercial links the CWC attracts, for although global companies including Pepsi, LG, Hyundai, Castrol, Moneygram, Emirates Airways and Reebok were official 2015 sponsors, two further sponsors (the Reliance Group and MRF Tyres) are essentially national (Indian) organisations.

Underpinning questions about the CWC's status as a megamediasport event, therefore, is the sport's peculiar international structure. As Table 1 illustrates, CWCs manifest ongoing tension between global reach and meaningful competition; between tournament size and quality. Initially tournaments were held in England and took about two weeks to complete.[2] The 1975 competitors were ICC Full members (England, Australia, West Indies, New Zealand, India, Pakistan) plus Sri Lanka and a composite

‘East Africa’ side (an explicit example of juggling globalising and competition imperatives). Tournaments initially consisted of fifteen, 60-overs per side, matches played in traditional white outfits and with a red ball. The 50-overs per side format was introduced for the 1987 CWC due to the shorter daylight hours in India and Pakistan but, by this point, tournaments consisted of 27 matches extended over four weeks. The steady increase in the number of competitors, matches played, and tournament duration is fundamentally structured by the traditional hierarchy of member countries, as ‘Full member’ nations are joined by a varying number of ‘Associates’. Tournament formats have been ‘tweaked’ from simple group and elimination phases (1975-1987), to a round-robin format (1992), ‘super-sixes’ (1999-2003) and ‘super-eights’ (2007) (essentially two interlinking sets of round-robin matches) as a way of providing opportunities for emerging countries while protecting the participatory and commercial interests of the established. Many suggested that the CWC had become too protracted, especially the group stages of the competition (Rumford, 2011), but, baulking trends in the tournament’s development, the 2015 event featured just 14 teams. There are proposals for the 2019 event to be reduced further to 10 teams.

These issues formed a major strand of the 2015 ICC CWC narrative. The ICC’s CEO David Richardson was quoted as saying that the world governing body would like to create “a bigger, better, global game” particularly involving the US (Wigmore, 2015, February 25). Conversely Tony Irish, Executive Chairman of the International Players’ Union, argued that the proposed future exclusion of ‘minnows’ defied the ‘global view’ the game needed (Booth, 2015). The Western press attributed the potential changes to the failure of India to qualify for the latter stages of the 2007 CWC and the subsequent lost revenue, but future amendments were portrayed as “effectively making it less a World Cup than a continuation of a members’ club … the ICC is alienating the smaller countries that it should be cherishing” (Brenkley, 2015, P6). The logic that fewer teams equals more competitive equals more spectator-friendly events, was problematised during the 2015 ICC CWC by Ireland’s victories over two ‘Full members’ (the West Indies and Zimbabwe), England’s elimination following the group stages, and the view that “some of the closest and most engaging matches at this World Cup have been between Associate nations” (Brenkley, 2015, P9). The logics of global expansion were compromised by commercial interests and complicated by cricket’s historical legacies.

While some aspects of the media critiqued this sense of cricket being a private members club (Booth, 2015; Brenkley, 2015), others serve to replicate the status quo. In keeping with the peculiar structure of international cricket, broadcasters shared output and in so doing drew on an unusually non-partisan pool of commentators. During the tournament it was not unusual for a combination of Indian (Sanjay Manjrekar), English (Michael Atherton), Australian (Shane Warne) and New Zealand (Ian Smith) commentators to be deployed for a single match. Uniquely perhaps, the anchor presenter for the host Australian broadcaster (Mark Nicholas), is a former player from their greatest rivals, England.

Discussions about the format of future tournaments continue. A central dynamic is commercial revenue and the value the media can extract from particular types of fixture involving particular teams. However all such debates remain contoured by the hierarchical structure of the international game which itself stems from cricket's Imperial past.

Presentation of the 2015 ICC men's Cricket World Cup

Contrary to previous concerns over the sustainability of a 50-overs format, the 2015 ICC CWC offered a degree of redemption, producing "a more entertaining spectacle" (Sturm, 2015b, p.236). The success of the event was attributed to exhilarating on-field performances. A significant number of new records were set: the highest team score (417: Australia); the fastest score of 50 (18 balls: Brendon McCullum, New Zealand), and fastest 150 (62 balls: AB de Villiers, South Africa); the two highest individual scores (215, Chris Gayle, West Indies; 237, Martin Guptil, New Zealand); the first player to score four consecutive CWC centuries (Kumar Sangakara, Sri Lanka); the first team to post consecutive scores in excess of 400 (South Africa). What we saw at the 2015 CWC were tactical innovations that were perceived to transplant the 'best' aspects of Test match (attacking bowling) cricket and the flair of Twenty20 batting into the 50-overs format. Such records suggested that this format could continue to improve.

These statistical achievements were intertwined with the success of the mediatised representation. While one of the media's key advantages is to "bring the mass audience closer" to the individuals and action (Frandsen, 2014, p,535), the fine

margins adjudicated in cricket make the sport particularly amenable to mediatisation. For example, Sturm (2015b) has detailed how matches would typically utilise approximately 30 cameras and microphones positioned at fixed locations within and outside the stadia, around the perimeter/boundary, and even within the stumps at the centre of the playing area. However, the event also made use of more mobile cameras: steadicams operated from Segways, spidercams suspended on wires above the playing area, and cameras mounted on drones. These, and the deployment of innovative framing and technologies, transported the viewers into the heart of the action and "navigate the spaces and competitors of live sport in a fluid and free-floating manner." (p.237). For Sturm the 2015 CWC demonstrated, "a marked shift and stylistic orientation towards navigating the cricketing terrain … furnishing exploratory, roaming and free-floating visual representations of diverse aspects of cricket and its surrounds." (ibid.)

A second key feature of this presentation was what Sturm (2015a) calls the repositioning of the viewer as an '*idealised omniscient observer*' (p.86). In addition to the multiple perspectives offered, omniscience was generated via the extensive use of televisual technology employed in the adjudication of umpiring decisions. For the 2015 ICC CWC the decision review system (DRS) 'tools' consisted of various slow motion and ultra-slow motion replays, 'Hawk-Eye' ball-tracking technology and modelling software which predicts the potential path of the ball, and the 'real time sound' system which uses an audio recording to indicate impacts between bat, ball and body. The 2015 ICC CWC did not employ the widely used 'hotspot' (thermal imaging which detects friction-induced heat caused by the impact of the ball or bat), but innovated with 'the Flashing Wicket System', in which red lights indicate separation of the bails and cricket stumps, to enable viewers to judge run-out and stumping decisions.

While Sturm (2015b) argues that a central consequence of this technological deployment is the democratisation of the game in many ways they also reaffirm the complexity of cricket. Indeed, mirroring the game's traditional veneration of statistics, it was not unusual for the televised coverage to display no less than thirteen pieces of information at any one time including: each batsman's total runs and balls faced, which batsman is 'facing' the bowling, the bowler's number of wickets, runs conceded and speed of last ball, whether the game was in a 'power play' (periods of mandatory

fielding restrictions), the score and number of overs bowled, the current rate at which runs had been scored, and the number of runs needed to win. Other graphic displays included the sequences of runs a batsman had scored, a count of the total number of 'sixes' in the tournament, the distance the last 'six' travelled, a 360 degree image ('wagon wheel') of where the ball had been hit during a batter's innings, the 'Manhattan' bar graph showing the rate of runs per over as the innings progressed, and the 'worm' which compared the scoring trajectories of the two sides. While all are designed to provide the viewer with 'infotainment', the quantity and complexity of media represented data makes the game impenetrable to the uninitiated viewer.

This level of complexity was epitomised by the technologies employed to clarify umpiring decisions. For example, as part of the deployment of DRS on Leg Before Wicket (LBW) decisions, Hawkeye is used to establish whether or not the ball would have hit the stumps (had the batsman's legs not intervened). However, partly in recognition of an inherent margin for error, but partly also due to the traditions of the sovereignty of the umpire, the system employs an 'umpire's call' clause such that in marginal cases the umpire's initial decision overrides the technologically derived evidence. Similarly confusing is the partial use of DRS (e.g. teams have a limited number of reviews and umpires can only review certain types of decision) such that, at times, viewers can see that the umpires have mistakenly called a player (not) out. This occurred during a quarterfinal when the umpire's decision to declare India's Suresh Raina not out was shown to be erroneous. Indeed, the DRS regulations are so complex that, during the England-Australia fixture the umpires used it incorrectly. Finally, in one incident the flashing wicket system indicated that the bails and stumps of an Irish player (Ed Joyce) had separated. However, as the bails re-landed on the stumps without human interference, by the laws of the game he remained 'not out'.

The technology introduced to 'infotain' spectators had considerable potential to create confusion rather than simplify proceedings; it could merely expose the viewer to more complex aspects of the game's laws and nuances. Thus while media technology has been deeply integrated into the game--and has to a large extent been driven by commercial imperatives--the contextual logics of cricket continue to define the way the game is played, viewed and consumed.

Conclusion

Cricket, like most other sports, has become highly mediatised. The overriding principle behind this mediatisation is the technological framing of how consumers engage both with cultural forms and each other, by promoting the value of "speed, immediacy, interactivity, and bespoke consumption as cultural aesthetics" (Axford & Huggins, 2010, pp.1328-29). Indeed, the way cricket is now packaged for television is unrecognisable compared to even a decade ago. This was exemplified in 2015 by the Tui promotion whereby spectators who took a one-handed catch while wearing a T-shirt purchased from the sponsor won a share of up to NZ $1 million. Sturm (2015b, p.240) writes that cricket is packaged as "entertainment, complemented by lavish displays of technology, commerce and (trans)national identities." The term 'infotainment'; acknowledges that while there has clearly been a cultural shift in the way cricket is packaged, delivered and consumed, it still maintains a curious obsession with statistics, a peculiar international structure and a multi-game format that limits its appeal to newcomers. Cricket therefore is an excellent example of the non-uniformity of mediatisation processes (Frandsen, 2014).

Contemporary cricket representations are thus hybrid: an attempt to satisfy both the purist's thirst for information and statistics, and the interloper's quest for excitement and spectacle. These representations are commercially slick and marketable to sponsors but for many, this hybridisation has come at a cost to the overall integrity of the sport. Sturm (2015b) for example, warns how many of the recent technological innovations in cricket, while celebrated for their ability to get audiences 'closer' to the action, are somewhat superfluous to the on-field action taking place. From an audience perspective, while it is clearly interesting to be able to hear directly from our idols on the pitch via microphone, and many cricketers and non-cricketers alike might appreciate experiencing a 90+ mph bouncer from Mitchell Johnson via 'Helmet-cam', in reality, none of these are really aimed at cricket 'purists', but in (perhaps misguided) attempts to appeal to a wider audience. These developments are aimed at audiences who are less invested in the specifics of the competition, reflecting the contemporary transformation of cricket via its "remediation as a mass television sport that emphasises attracting, entertaining and retaining audiences through slick productions, technological innovations and commercial imperatives" (Sturm, 2015, p.82).

Movement towards entertainment and spectacle are not confined to cricket, or even sport in general, rather, according to Axford and Huggins, they are frequently rehearsed in the kind of “cultural pessimism that attaches to a good deal of commentary on the mediatization of social life” (2011, p.1327). They continue, arguing that the main threat to social life posed by new media is their focus on ‘speed’, ‘interaction’, ‘immediacy’ and ‘reflexivity’, and warn that we are entitled to feel anxious about the ‘reductive simplicity’ of media whose primary attribute is speed.

While criticisms of the viability of the CWC should be considered in this light, in a number of respects the CWC will remain a ‘second class’ megamediasport event for the foreseeable future. Despite exponential growth of consumption on the Indian sub-continent, the CWC will not enter the first order of mega-events until it casts off its Imperial legacies and penetrates European and North American markets (or perhaps China). As long as the game retains its peculiarly historical orientation and continues to celebrate traditional and longer forms of the game, the CWC will remain second class in the cricket nomenclature. And while other formats are commercially more profitable and more readily consumed in emerging markets, the CWC will remain second class in terms of income generation as well.

Table 1 Cricket World Cups: Location, competition structure, sponsors

Year	Host	Teams	Matches	Duration (Days)
1975	England	8	15	14
1979	England	8	15	14
1983	England	8	27	16
1987	India-Pakistan	8	27	31
1992	Australia	9	39	31
1996	India-Pakistan-Sri Lanka	12	37	31
1999	England	12	42	36
2003	South Africa-Zimbabwe-Kenya	14	54	42
2007	Caribbean	16	51	46
2011	India- Bangladesh-Sri Lanka	14	49	42
2015	Australia-New Zealand	14	49	43

Source: Data extracted from Arnold and Wynne (2009) and ESPN cricinfo websites.

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Endnotes

1 We recognise the problems of only explicitly gendering the 'ICC Women's Cricket World Cup', but for sake of readability will not consistently refer to the 'men's' competition here.

2 Underlining the peculiarity of the CWC a women's version predated the men's event by two years (Velija, 2015).