

The authoritative book on the life of Tom Wills: a great Australian story

TOM WILLS: FIRST WILD MAN OF AUSTRALIAN SPORT Greg de Moore

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MEDIA RELEASE

First wild man of Australian sport or genius? Champion cricketer or rabble-rouser? Charismatic leader of men or drunken scoundrel? Tom Wills was all of these things.

As Australian Rules football celebrates over 150 years of existence, we look at the real life story of one of the game's creators.

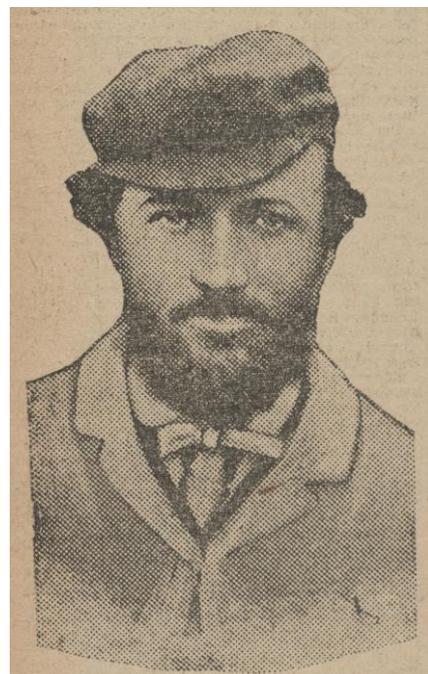
There are many versions of the origins of our indigenous game, but all of them include T.W. Wills in some way. A champion cricketer, he had been exposed to the game of rugby when he was at Rugby School in England. In Melbourne in 1858, with several other men, he organised the first football match, thinking the sport was a great way to keep fit between cricket seasons. The rest is history.

But the Tom Wills story goes way beyond the sporting field. His father was killed in outback Queensland during the largest massacre of Europeans by Aborigines. Yet five years later, Wills was coaching Aboriginal cricketers who became the first Australian cricket team to tour England. He seemed fearless, strong-willed and indestructible, a man who had it all.

At 44 years of age, Tom Wills took his own life. He had nothing left to live for. Greg de Moore's meticulous research provides a completely new perspective on the dramatic life of this extraordinary man.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Greg de Moore is a consultant psychiatrist at Sydney's Westmead Hospital. His ten years of research has unearthed original medical records, letters, text books and notes that were previously believed to have been lost or destroyed.



from Allen & Unwin

Thomas Wentworth Wills (19 August 1835 – 2 May 1880) was an Australian sportsman who is credited with being Australia's first cricketer of significance and a founder of Australian rules football. Born in the British penal colony of New South Wales to a wealthy family descended from convicts, Wills grew up in the bush on stations owned by his father, the squatter and politician Horatio Wills, in what is now the state of Victoria. As a child, he befriended local Aboriginal people, learning their Tom Wills is recognised as Australia's first multi-sports superstar, for he dominated cricket and was the primary catalyst behind the sport of Australian rules football.[1][2] Born in 1835 in the British colony of New South Wales and raised in Victoria, Wills was sent to England in 1850 to attend Rugby School, where he became captain of the school cricket team and played a nascent form of rugby football.[3][4] Returning home in 1856, Wills revolutionised Australian cricket and captained Victoria to repeated victories in intercolonial matches.[4] In 1858 he called for the formation of a &...Â Tom Wills: First Wild Man of Australian Sport. Allen & Unwin. ISBN 978-1-74237-598-4. by Greg de Moore : Tom Wills: First Wild Man of Australian Sport ISBN : #1742375987 | Date : 2011-11-01 Description : PDF-cebad | The definitive biography of the visionary sportsman who brought us Australian Rules football This is the story of Tom Willsâ€”flawed genius, sporting libertine, fearless leader, and agitator, and the man most often credited with creating the game we now know as Australian Rules football. Sent to the strict British Rugby School in 1850 at 14, Tom returned as a worldly young man whose cricket prowe Tom Wills: First Wild Man of Australian Sport. Free eBook Tom Wills: And then there is Tom Wills, the man now credited as the primary inventor of Australian rules football. There are statues in Willsâ€™ honor, commemorating his work as a drafter of rules, a player, and an umpire in the mid-19th century. But as Greg de Moore discovered when he set out to learn about this distinctly Australian sport, the circumstances of Tom Willsâ€™ life have been largely unknown. To start, Greg learned that Wills had taken his own life, in a horrific manner, by plunging a scissors into his chest. As an academic psychiatrist with a research interest in suicide, he set off to investig