

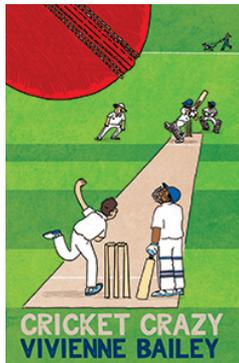
ABC - Author's Book Corner

Ōtaki Mail's Vivienne Bailey has published her first book, carrying on a great tradition by Ōtaki Mail journalists.

This delightful little book is pitched to the younger reader, specifically boys, always a hard audience to attract to the joys of reading.

Cricket Crazy is the story of eleven year old Tom and his adventures with the school cricket team confronting a new woman in his widowed father's life who doesn't like his dog, the horrors of school competitions, emerging hormones, and a new friendship with Izzy the star all-rounder.

Tom has dreams. Playing at the Basin Reserve, making the junior rep team, meeting New Zealand cricketers, but his magic bat disappears. Tom's confidence is thrown just ahead of his most



important game, and he still has to face Menace Mitchell, the bowler from hell. Armed with his dad's old bat he struggles to find his form again.

The story was sparked some years ago by a comment from that champion of children's literature, John McIntyre (The Children's Bookshop, Kilbirnie). "We need some sports-based books, stories about kids playing sports." Vivienne combined that spark with her experience as a children's librarian, and as a mother and grandmother of cricket-crazy kids. "There wasn't much around to offer a kid who liked sport, apart from a few elderly books about football, usually set in England", she says.

Vivienne has had a long career with the Kapiti Coast libraries, combining that experience and knowledge of what kids like, and in writing she has produced a book every cricket-crazy kid would enjoy. "I wanted to write a story about girls and boys playing sport, although *Cricket Crazy* is not solely focused on that," explained Vivienne.

Zach Heenan's Review of *Cricket Crazy*

Who better to add his thoughts to the review of the book than Zach Heenan, a 13 year old cricket player.

The book is about a boy who lives with his Dad and dog, and

"It's about Tom finding his strengths, regaining confidence, and overcoming obstacles."

Not only has Vivienne written for the Ōtaki Mail for many years but has also worked as a freelance journalist and writer. She is a member of Kapiti Children's Writing Group.

Her award-winning short stories have appeared in online journals and in anthologies such as *Fresh Ink: A Collection of Voices from Aotearoa NZ*

Cricket Crazy by Vivienne Bailey published by Ahoy (an imprint of The Cuba Press, available from Paper Plus Coastlands, the Cuba Press (www.cubapress.nz).

Cricket Crazy was launched by noted children's author Mandy Hager at appropriately, the Paraparumu Cricket Club to the sound of players practicing. A friendly crowd cheered Vivienne on, after Mandy had spoken about the book in glowing terms. Paraparumu Paper Plus, always a supporter of local authors, was in attendance for sales.



who loves to play cricket.

It is full of cool twists, some heart-break and some close friendships.

When one boy gets injured, and

his friend gets sick, they both don't know if they will play cricket again.

But through perseverance and practise they train and get back into the team.

This book was enjoyable and easy to read.

I would give *Cricket Crazy* a rating of 4 out of 5 stars.

Zach