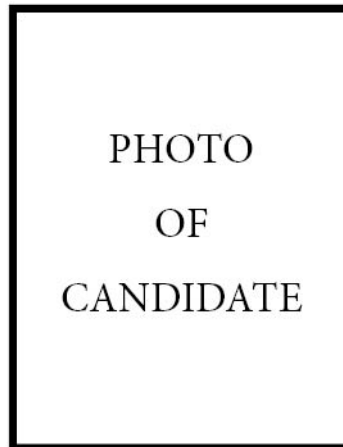


# *media release #6*



## **GREG McMAHON**

**INDEPENDENT SENATE CANDIDATE for QUEENSLAND  
FEDERAL ELECTION - 2 JULY 2016**

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### **Queensland sporting greats, Allan Smith and Sam Trimble ... and a Senate candidate**

Robert Craddock's recent article on football great Allan Smith has helped one candidate for the Senate election to remember an item for his CV as an advocate for Queensland.

Greg McMahon wrote a book on the history of the career of cricketer Sam Trimble.

"It started out as a book on cricket statistics – I called it *In the Shadow of Bradman* – but it turned into an argument about whether Sam Trimble should have been selected to play for Australia.

The statistics showed a significant gap between the high performances by Sam and the good but still lower performances by his peers who also failed to be selected, and by several of his peers who received the 'Cap' denied to Sam. I then gave the book *The Greatest Never* as its title."

Here are some of the statistics that amazed Greg and caused him to change the title – you need to be old enough to remember two of the greatest fast bowlers to bowl in Australia, John Snow (England) and Wes Hall (West Indies):

- Batting average against John Snow in International Games: 177.00
- Batting average against Wes Hall in International Games: 121.00
- Batting average as Captain in all International Games: 115.00
- Batting average in Unofficial Tests: 84.00

And in 1963/64, Sir Garfield Sobers played the Australian Sheffield Shield season with South Australia, and had a success rate that enthralled Australians. The season performances for Sobers and Sam Trimble during that season were:

- Sobers: 13 Innings, nil not outs, 973 runs with 5 centuries, for an average of 74.84
- Trimble: 13 innings, 2 not outs, 950 runs with 5 centuries, for an average of 86.36

What has that got to do with a rugby league footballer and current Queensland Rugby League selector, Allan Smith?

“Allan has always been a sure thing for winning a beer bet at the pub, with the question – Who played five-eight for Queensland in the first State of Origin game? Most will say Wally Lewis, but it was Allan Smith,” Greg McMahon said.

“Allan got into the chapter of the 'Trimble' book that discussed the fairness of selections in Australia's sporting history, across many sports – athletics (remember Joan Henrickson), cycling (remember the Tucker brothers), swimming (remember Noel Reynolds) – all Australian champions not selected for the Commonwealth Games/Olympics.”

For both of the Rugby codes, Mr McMahon plotted the proportion of players selected from each state for Australian teams, against the proportion of points scored by each state in the annual QLD vs NSW interstate games.

The graphs showed a strong bias against selections from Queensland.

What was remarkable, Mr McMahon said, was that the quantum of the bias matched almost exactly the ratio of selectors from each State, on the selection panel for that sport.

In Rugby Union, Queensland had one selector to two from NSW, and the Queenslanders received each year, on average during 1899 to 1980, one half of the representatives that they should have received based on the relative points scored in the interstate series of that year.

In Rugby League, Queensland had two selectors to three from NSW, and the Queenslanders received each year, on average during 1908 to 1978, two thirds of the representatives that Queensland should have received based on the relative points scored in the interstate series of that year.

Mr McMahon added: “Allan Smith was the case example that brought interest to those statistics. In 1979, he scored four tries for Queensland in one game against NSW.

“The NSW team, that year, became the Australian team that played three tests against England. Allan Smith was not selected for Australia in any of those games. The whole of the England team, in those three tests, managed a total of only two tries against the Australian (nee NSW) team. Allan Smith had scored four against them in one game ... but he wasn't selected for the Australian side, even as a reserve on the Bench!”

The story of that chapter of the book went further.

In 1983, Greg McMahon made a submission to the Commonwealth Inquiry into Assistance for Sport and Recreation. He argued that the Australian government should not provide public funds to the

development of sports that did not provide equal opportunity to all Australian citizens, and the Inquiry agreed.

“Remember when Ian Thorpe fell in the pool before the start of the 2004 Australian 400metres Freestyle Swimming Final, and he was disqualified. He was not then selected for the Olympics”, Mr McMahon said.

“That was because the rule was introduced into Australian Olympic selections ensuring that the winners of the Australian championships now represent Australia, and they are not replaced by less well performed or injured or disqualified competitors for any event. Olympians now select themselves by winning the Australian Championships, and there is even an International Court of Arbitration for Sport to which aggrieved sportspersons can appeal.”

Back to football, Greg McMahon said with a political grin: “From Allan’s omission from the Australian team that year, to Mal Meninga’s omission from the Immortals, it is a wonder that we treat the Blues as well as we do. We even made one a Senator for Queensland!”

“I reckon another Sam, Sam Thaiday, regathered that ball and scored that try in the second State of Origin Game in 2014. We have won ten in a row on my books,” this ex-Rugby Union fullback and ex-Rugby League referee claimed, with one eye closed.

(PS: Greg McMahon, as an officer of field rank in the Australian Army, became an anti-discrimination campaigner and whistleblower advocate in the Australian Defence Force. He holds six degrees from the University of Queensland, is a practising engineer and management consultant, a Fellow of the Australian Institute of Management and of the Institution of Engineers Australia, and is standing as an Independent candidate for the Senate in Queensland in the 2 July election.)

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**Home/Business: 22 Kersley Road, Kenmore, QLD, 4069**

**Mobile: 0411 757 231**

**Email: [mcmahonqueensland@gmail.com](mailto:mcmahonqueensland@gmail.com)**

**Webpage: <http://www.gregmcmahon.com.au/>**