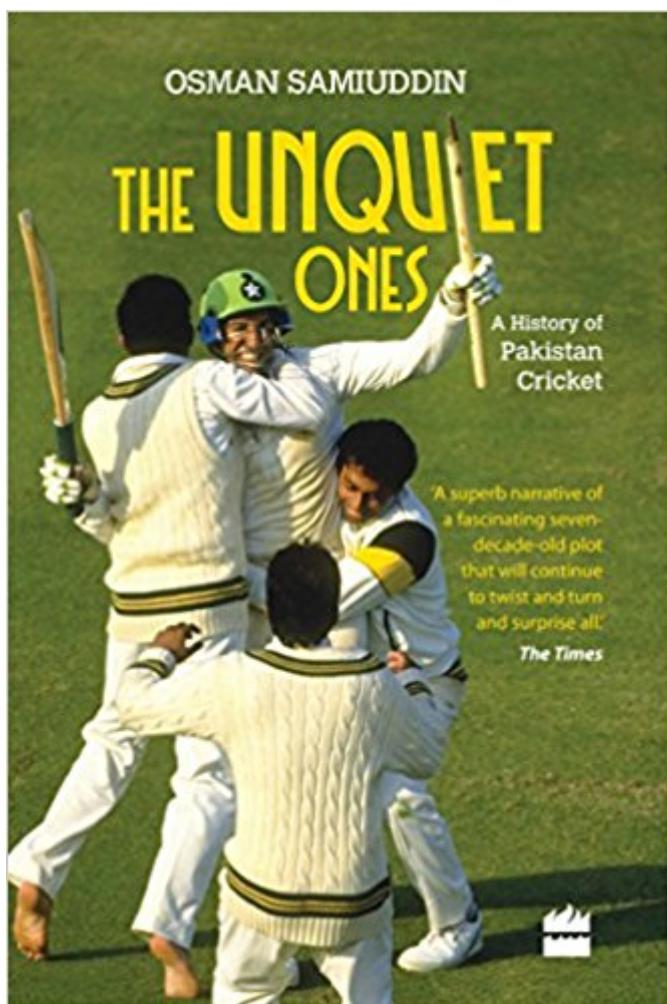


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# The Unquiet Ones: A History Of Pakistan Cricket



## Synopsis

The definitive history of a cricket team the world loves to watch, but is at a loss to explain The story of Pakistan cricket is dramatic, tortured, heroic and tumultuous. Beginning with nothing after the Partition of 1947 to the jubilation of its victory against England at the Oval in 1954; from earning its Test status and competing with the best to sealing a golden age by winning the World Cup in 1992; from their magic in Sharjah to an era-defining low in the new millennium, Pakistan's cricketing fortunes have never ceased to thrill. This book is the story of those fortunes and how, in the process, the game transformed from an urban, exclusive sport into a glue uniting millions in a vast, disparate country. In its narration, Osman Samiuddin captures the jazba of the men who played for Pakistan, celebrates their headiest moments and many upheavals, and brings to life some of their most famous - and infamous - contests, tours and moments. Ambitious, spirited and often heart breaking, The Unquiet Ones is a comprehensive portrait of not just a Pakistani sport, but a national majboori, a compulsion whose outcome can often surprise and shock, and become the barometer of everyday life in Pakistan, tailing its ups and downs, its moods and character.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Osman Samiuddin is a sports writer with The National in Abu Dhabi. He is a former senior editor at ESPNcricinfo, where he still contributes as a columnist and editor of the site's digital magazine, The Cricket Monthly. His work has appeared in a number of publications, including the Guardian, Daily Telegraph, Wall Street Journal, India Today, the Wisden Almanack, The Age (Australia) and Dawn.

Disclosure: I've always been fascinated by Pakistan, the cricket team and also, the country. Even

though I live in a neighbouring country, quality and unbiased reporting on Pakistan has been scarce in the Indian media, print or electronic. The extreme stereotypes have always been pushed to the front, as is usual, and it needs some effort on your part to learn about the average Pakistani and the society in general. This book brings together two of my favorite book genres, Sports and History. But to call it a book on "Sports History" would be a great injustice. Through this book, Osman Samiuddin provides us a window into the various phases of Pakistani society, via the sport of Cricket. Sure, Cricket remains the central theme, but the larger, societal view remains a constant - even if peripheral - feature. And it should be no different, for Cricket in the subcontinent is a microcosm of the Country's prevailing conditions. Maybe it is even more true in Pakistan, where the cricket board has always operated under the control of the government, military or civilian. Thus, it is fair to expect Cricket and society to be inextricably tied to each other. The book is a fairly long read, but for a book that aims to chronicle close to 65 years of Pakistani Cricket, the author has done a very good job. The rigour is notable, esp coming from a young author whose lifetime perhaps only covers about 60% of the period he has written about. He has covered all major phases of Pakistan cricket and done justice to each one of them with fairly detailed accounts. The charm of the book, however, lies in the anecdotes and the relaxed writing style, with a liberal usage of quotes and phrases in contemporary urdu. Historical accounts always seem to bring with them a rather pedantic style of writing, with measured strokes of the pen/keyboard from seasoned pros. Samiuddin, while not being a beginner by any means, brings a certain desi kind of flair to his writing, much as Wasim Akram did to fast bowling. This is where the book scores, in my mind. Books have been written about the subcontinent by Western authors before, but despite their best efforts, it is hard for them to invoke a desi state of mind, to best capture the vagaries of the east. Samiuddin has performed a stellar role in this regard. Separate chapters are reserved for some of the biggest superstars, such as Imran Khan, Javed Miandad and Wasim Akram. Intermittent commentary on the Lahore-Karachi equation is fascinating to read as well, embodied by the Imran-Javed relationship. The book takes flight, much like batsmen in the last 10 overs, in the last few sections, covering the period from the 1992 world cup to the present. Some of the passages in those sections are truly unputdownable. I went through a marathon 7-hour reading session, interrupted only by Dinner, and never once did it feel laboured. It helped that the stories being told were as captivating, if not more, as the writing style. The 1990s were a time when Pakistan team illuminated the cricket field with their performances and in equal measure were marred by corruption scandals off the field. Perhaps only Pakistan can exist in such a dichotomous universe. There's also a chapter on how/why Pakistan has become an assembly line of fast bowlers, and that most of them have been plucked out of relative obscurity and at a young

age. Even if you don't read anything else in the book, the coverage of the 1990s and later is worth your time/money. In summary, a truly compelling read, possessing both a breadth and depth of coverage. For an outsider like me, it is a great account of the enigma that is Pakistan. It wouldn't be wrong to call it a labor of love, and Osman Samiuddin has provided a great insider's view of how Cricket went from being an urban, elitist pursuit to a behemoth that truly pervades Pakistani society and is one of the few unifying factors in a country with rich diversity, but also plagued by internal troubles for a large part of its existence. I wish someone would take inspiration and write something similar on Indian cricket!

Osman Samiuddin is the guru of Pakistan cricket writing. And this book does not disappoint. Even for an ardent cricket fan such as myself, there are stories and surprises that leave me astonished at the depth and intrigue of Pakistani cricket. Furthermore, the parallels drawn with Pakistan's immediate history post independence are fascinating and educational. Sit back and let Osman's words wash over you, this is a must-read for any Pakistani cricket fan.

Have loved reading and savoring this book. I have always been intrigued by how Pakistan cricket finds so many fast bowlers, on what appears to be almost a whim, this book has some excellent info on what makes that happen. Osman Samiuddin's painstaking efforts to glean inputs from yesteryears to provide an intimate view of how Pakistan cricket evolved to what it is today clearly shows in this book. A recommended read for any cricket lover.

Even though Osman curbs the typical flair one has come to expect from his writings, this book is nothing short of a masterpiece. Eminently readable, the insights one gains about Pakistan cricket from this book are immense. The themes are well chosen, the anecdotes well researched and the effects of the country's politics on the game well documented. The book avoids becoming a Pakistani Wisden, and instead focuses equally on the off field sagas and antics of the characters.

The flourish of Osman Samiuddin's writing is subdued which is understandable but still present enough. This is an expertly written book for anyone who wants to understand Pakistan cricket and through it, perhaps Pakistan itself.

This is a well researched the book. It captures the history of Pak cricket very aptly. Would definitely recommend to others trying to figure out eccentricity of Pak cricket.

A very comprehensive book on Pakistan cricket. Enjoyed reading it. Osman has done a great job and service to Pakistan cricket.

fabulous walk through the illustrious history of pakistan cricket. an emotional journey through the rise and fall of a team that has earned its name in history as the undefeatables.

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