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PRIME MINISTER

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**TRANSCRIPT OF THE PRIME MINISTER
THE HON JOHN HOWARD MP
PRESENTATION OF THE AUSTRALIA POST BRADMAN STAMPS SERIES
ALBERT PARK - MELBOURNE**

E&OE.....

Well thank you very much Mr Maiden, to Swan Richards, to Mr Jacobs, to Dr John Lill, and all the other very distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen.

There's really no need to say thank you to me for anything associated with cricket. You talk about your labour of love over the last six months in working with Sir Donald Bradman, who now with the death of Leo O'Brien, is the last survivor of the bodyline series of 1932/1933.

For me, the opportunity of playing today has given me the best Friday I've had since I've been Prime Minister. The score wasn't too flash. I've reached that stage of my cricketing career where I'm broad-minded about my performance and I think it's very safe to do so.

But can I just take the opportunity of congratulating the Crusaders on their 20 years of promoting the game that we all love so much. And all of us in this room, whatever our occupations, whatever our politics - and I'm delighted to be a member of a parliamentary team that has members of the Liberal Party, the Labor Party and the National Party and a few aspiring politicians who are also sometimes fast bowlers - the only condition that which he agreed to play was that there were representatives of all the parties so he could preserve his politically neutral character, and good on him. But it is a delight to be part of a team that dissolves the party political barriers for a day. And we all come together because we're bound together by a higher affection than our political differences and that affection, of course, is a love of cricket and all that cricket has meant to us during our lives and all that it means as part of the Australian psyche and the Australian way of life.

I do want to congratulate and thank Australia Post for the tremendous work it does, particularly in relation to cricket in the rural areas, the country areas of Victoria. It does a tremendous job. And on occasions like this the role of sponsors should never be ignored. And I know that CUB, whose managing director has turned out today for the Crusaders, also has made a tremendous contribution to cricket in Australia and the sport generally.

So to Australia Post, to you Mr Maiden, can I just say thank you for the kind words about the launch of the Australian Legend Stamp. I understand it's gone rather well. And that of course has everything to do with the fact that it was superbly promoted, but it also has a lot to do with the fact that it is a tribute to the greatest living Australian. And that is, of course, something that is said with great feeling and I know is said with the support of all the Australian people.

So it's a very nice occasion this. And Swan, thanks for your energy in putting it together. And it's one of those great occasions. And if you let my diary secretary know in the next few weeks when you plan to have it next year I'll certainly make sure that other things are moved. Well, you've got to take advantage of the office for something. Yeah, that's right, I'll be accused of graft and corruption I suppose having said that. Anyway, I think I'd better conclude this speech. Thank you.