

Fred Atkins

Portfolio

- Journalism
- Editing
- Copywriting
- Ghostwriting
- Design
- Books

Fred Atkins: Portfolio

Born: 16 May 1973

Education: Oakwood Park Grammar School,
Sussex University (2:1 Politics with French),
Strasbourg University

Employers and clients: Associated Press, England
& Wales Cricket Board, NSPCC, Lashings All-Stars
Cricket Team, Kent Regional Newspapers, Kent
Messenger

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Short biography: I was born in Maidstone in 1973 and spent much of my formative years at Maidstone United's Athletic Ground. I attended Oakwood Park Grammar School, Sussex University and the Institut d'Etudes Politiques in Strasbourg.

After graduation I spent three years as an English teacher, mainly in Greece, before stumbling into journalism with the Maidstone News. I subsequently became sports editor of the Kent Messenger and went on to work for the



Associated Press, covering the England cricket team for five years, including two Ashes series and the 2009 Twenty20 World Cup.

I now work as a copy writer and as the media manager and website editor for the Lashings All-Stars cricket team. I'm also the author of four books and I edited "Stuck In A Moment" by Stewart Taylor, which was longlisted for the 2014 William Hill Award. My first novel, "Welcome to Kent" was published in 2017 season. I live in Allington with my wife Wendy and daughter, Sylvia.

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I became a journalist by accident at the age of 27 in the year 2000, having previously worked as an English teacher at a number of locations in Greece and at summer schools across the south of England.

The newly-formed Maidstone News were looking for a sports reporter and I sent a speculative email, thinking I stood no chance of getting the actual job but offering to cover Maidstone United matches in the hope it might lead to something more.

The editor, seeing that I contributed to a fanzine, decided to take me on and within four years I'd become the sports editor of the Kent Messenger, then the UK's biggest selling regional weekly.

After covering the 2007 Tour de France I went freelance and spent much of the next five years covering the England cricket team for the Associated Press. I also covered the Ashes in 2009 and 2013, the Twenty20 World Cup in 2009 and the English Premier League (I'm pictured , left, at The Emirates Stadium in 2008).

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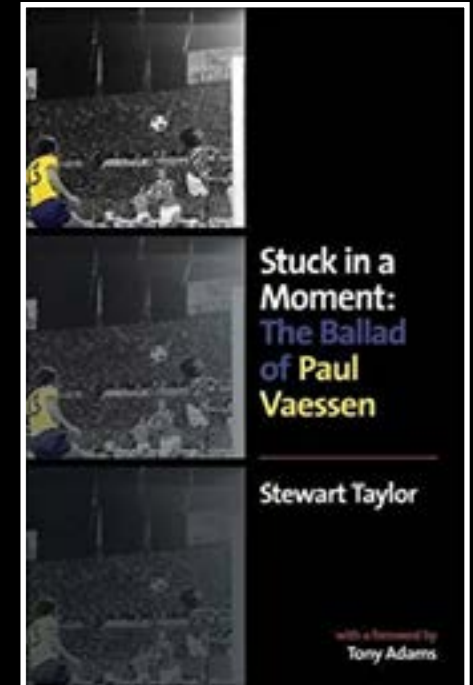
CROSS
SPORTS
book awards

From the moment I started work as a sports reporter it became obvious that at least 50 percent of the job was slashing, polishing and cleaning up submitted copy.

I regularly saw my own copy butchered by sub-editors who seemed to be on a mission to clamp down on anything interesting and resolved to do things differently.

This was the “churnalism” era and on average I would edit around 60 to 80 reports per week, in addition to contributing stories and designing pages.

This was poor copy that needed to be turned around quickly. When I finally had the luxury of a whole week to edit a book, I found it hardly needed editing at all. In 2014 I edited Stewart Taylor’s book “Stuck In A Moment”, longlisted for both the William Hill Sports Book of the Year and a Times Sports Book of the Year Award. In reality I checked it for errors but didn’t make any changes to the text because it was an outstanding piece of work.



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Sports journalism and editing led me naturally to ghost writing, starting with local football managers and progressing to international cricketers.

With some of them it was easy: they were natural story tellers and transcribing their thoughts was seldom difficult. With others trying to cobble together 400 words without resorting to platitudes was like trying to nail jelly to a wall.

Newspapers wanted me to make their clients sound more interesting. Corporations wanted me to make their clients sound less interesting.

Matthew Hoggard (left) was always ready to provide an interesting quote, but his employees at the ECB were anxious to avoid any avoidable controversies. Between us I think we managed to find a middle ground, making “The Hogg Blog” consistently entertaining without it ever becoming asinine.

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I moved into copywriting after becoming the media manager for the Lashings All-Stars cricket team.

This was initially a job that involved producing a steady supply of press releases but it evolved into something more corporate.



Lashings needed to attract and nurture sponsors: my job was to help convince interested parties to invest, by selling them the idea that they could meet, socialise with and sometimes even play alongside their childhood heroes.

“We’ll play you anywhere from your village green to Lord’s” was a simple but effective slogan that helped ensure a record number of bookings in the 2015 season.

Over the last decade we’ve succeeded in attracting a host of corporate sponsors, exposing their brands to audiences largely ignored by the professional circuit.

Of my other clients the best known is probably the NSPCC. I’ve contributed to their Speak Out, Stay Safe programme and have redrafted a number of documents, stripping them of jargon and stressing the clarity of the message.



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As sports editor of the Kent Messenger I had to design, plan and sub up to 40 newspaper pages per week, first using Quark Express, then Adobe InDesign.

For Lashings I specialise in Marketing presentations and more straightforward advertising posters.

I'm not a natural born coder, but the advent of Adobe's Muse software has enabled me to design websites, including www.lashings.co.uk

Some web designers prefer to use templates, but I enjoy the flexibility Muse provides because it's now possible to design an eye-catching website without knowing a single line of code.

THE OFFICIAL LASHINGS ALL STARS WEBSITE



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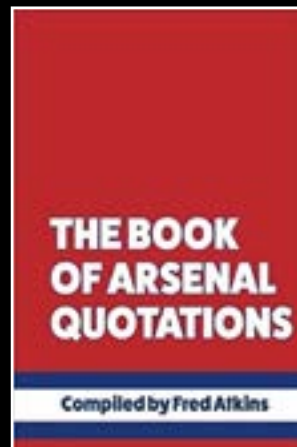
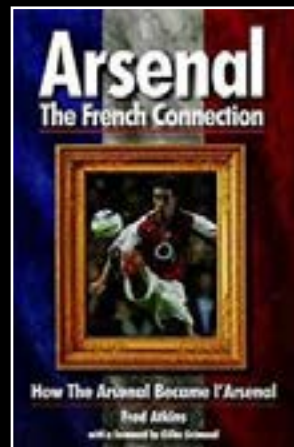
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I'd wanted to be an author from an early age and my first book was published by Breedon Books in 2009. Tour de Kent was the story of the day two million people watched the world's biggest bike race in my home county.

In 2012 I followed this with "Arsenal: The French Connection", published by GCR books, a collection of biographies of Arsene Wenger and the French players who'd transformed Arsenal since his arrival in 1997.

Two more sports books followed (The Book of Arsenal Quotations and Exodus: Maidstone United 1988-2012) before my first novel was published in 2017. "Welcome to Kent" is an allegory of hacking scandal set in a floundering local newspaper that subsists on a regime of stories about killer pot-holes and out-of-date pasty scandals.



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AP Associated Press



NSPCC

 **KENT ON SUNDAY**

Please click on the icons for examples of my work. For further samples contact me on 07944411783 or email fredinkent@hotmail.com

