

# Harry's one of 'gentlemen'

Joe Barton

**HARRY** Werner truly loves cricket.

He watches it on TV, reads about it in the papers, has his favourite players, rooms stacked with cricket paraphernalia and, at every opportunity, rushes into the backyard of his Seaforth home to have a hit.

But unlike the many 14-year-olds who have Michael Clarke as their hero, Harry has autism and the game of cricket does not come quite as naturally to him.

"This means that language, communication, social skills and learning new things are challenging for him and often frustrating and disheartening," mum Andrea said.

"We had watched Harry's passion and absolute love for cricket grow and grow and thought that the dream of playing the game would never be his."

But this friendly teenager, who knows all the stats back to front, has found a home with the Cromer under-14s – who this week won the Manly Warringah Cricket Association's Spirit of Cricket award.

The award is judged on a team's performance under the values of the spirit of cricket, including fair play and sportsmanship.

"This award is a tribute to the boys' attitude towards others," coach Peter Mullane said.

"It reflects their understanding that it's a team game and winning is not the



most important aspect of playing – more friendship and healthy activity."

Harry has inspired 14-year-old teammate Sean Tingcombe, who is walking 750km to raise money and awareness for Autism.

Having already walked 150km in three days, from today Sean will walk the full 500km from Armidale to the peninsula.

"We have the evidence that the game of cricket is still a gentleman's game and these wonderful young men are going to be the gentlemen of the future," Andrea said.

■ To sponsor young Sean on his walk, go to [www.originwalk.com.au](http://www.originwalk.com.au).

Autistic cricketer Harry Werner lives and breathes the sport and (inset, front left) with the Cromer under-14 team.

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