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Australian Story: Nugget of Gold

**Airs Monday, February 15 at 8pm on ABC & iview –
introduced by cricketing legend Adam Gilchrist**

This week's program returns to the remarkable story of Barry "Nugget" Rees who for nearly six decades has been revered and nurtured by Australia's cricketing elite.

Nugget Rees' story was first revealed on *Australian Story* nine years ago. From the most unlikely circumstances he rose to become the trusted confidante and companion of cricket's biggest names – led by every Australian captain from the Chappell brothers, Steve Waugh, Ricky Ponting, Michael Clarke through to the current team under Steve Smith and David Warner.

"The first time I met him, I was like, who is this guy that's in the rooms and everyone was like, what do you mean, what are you talking about. This is Barry "Nugget" Rees. He's a legend. He's been here for years and it was great hearing a couple of stories about how long he'd been around and the amazing things he brings to the team." - **Steve Smith, captain Australian cricket team**

"You'd come off the field and you're bleeding from your toes and Nugget would take your shoes off for you and have a cold drink ready and you could joke with him and against him. It was the full package. The guy is just a legend to us players." - **Dennis Lillee, former test cricketer**

"It's a wonderful story of how cricket and cricketers, and footballers too, have taken to Barry and greatly enriched his life. But equally, Nugget has enriched the lives of all those first class cricketers." - **John Inverarity, former test cricketer and chairman of selectors**

"It's very hard to describe who Nugget is to people who aren't in the cricket sanctum. It's one of those rarities that you would just have to meet Nugget to understand. For us he's a cricket icon." - **Dave Warner, vice-captain Australian cricket team**

Nugget has toured at least once a year with the Australian and South Australian teams. He wears the team's uniform, stands for the National Anthem alongside the captain and has been there on the inside for many of the greatest moments in Australian cricketing history.

When Steve Waugh padded up for his last test, Nugget was flown in specially to be at the game. And while Waugh was batting for the final time, it was Nugget who had the honour of walking the drinks onto the field decked out in cricketing whites and the famous baggy green.

"I really wanted him to be there. I wanted him to share in my last test match and to be a part of it." – **Steve Waugh, former captain Australian cricket team**

When much-loved team-mate Phillip Hughes was killed in a tragic cricket accident 15

months ago, coach Darren Lehmann immediately called on Nugget to assist with the team's healing.

"He's got a sixth sense of what's going on behind the scenes. His feelings are way above ours, his intellect is way above ours, he knows how you're feeling.... and Nug was fantastic at that time", said Lehmann.

"When you saw Nug's face you automatically felt a sense of relief," said vice-captain Warner. *"If Nugget was happy, everything was going to be okay and you know, we could heal together."*

Adam Gilchrist describes Lehmann's actions in bringing Nugget on board at this time as a "masterstroke".

Now in his seventies, Nugget still joins the teams when they are in Adelaide and participates in all their activities.

"Every player that comes into a South Australian or Australian team, they are desperate to be a part of the legend of Barry "Nugget" Rees. He's just got that big a reach and that big a history in Australian and South Australian cricket that they can't wait to be a part of it." - **Adam Gilchrist, former vice-captain Australian cricket Team**

Current coach Darren Lehmann is leading a push to have a spectator stand at Adelaide Oval named after Barry "Nugget" Rees in honour of his contribution to both AFL and cricket.

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