

August 1st is now the date when cricket is hoping to return. It doesn't leave an awful lot of time for anything resembling a proper fixture-list to be completed so will we be told that each county will play a few county championship matches, a full Twenty20 competition and a revamped Royal London Cup?

If Premier League football has a planned re-start on June 17th, why is cricket being delayed until August? Could it be that owing to the extortionately large amounts of money in football the various protagonists have come up with a way of getting the game up and running that might not suit everyone but is better than what the alternatives were; Paying back to the TV companies on average £35 million per club! (a smidgeon less than an 1875 original paperback)

Whatever fixture list is put together for cricket the reality is that there will be seven weeks available, that is only 42 days. If all games are behind closed doors then the stumbling block to a re-start might be the reluctance of the TV companies to share viewing with the terrestrial channels. The extensive testing programme for football may well have been allowed once a decision had been made to allow almost half of the matches still to be played to complete the Premier League season to be on free-to-air. There is no suggestion as of now that cricket will be on free-to-air TV.

So what can be achieved in 42 days. Forgive me but I cannot see any point in 4 or 5 county championship matches per county. Some have suggested running two competitions simultaneously. With no spectators, what would be the point of, for example, Lancashire v Nottinghamshire with teams being a mixture of first and second team players and the one-day specialists playing a Vitality Blast match or two on one or two of the evenings of a county match. If by August 1st spectators were allowed, maybe only 25% of capacity allowed, then maybe there is something in the four-day and limited over two squad plan. But the reality is that it would be sensible to say now that there will be no 2020 County Championship.

In fact I would also argue that unless all parties agreed to put whatever games were played on free-to-air TV, then scrap the season. Harsh I know, but it is unrealistic to assume that allowing six people to meet up safely and with social distancing is going to change into allowing four thousand people to meet up at a cricket ground, in the space of 8 weeks...and if its not on free-to-air TV, what possible good can come of it?

Back in December the 'Furmedges' May 2020 plan looked fabulous. We had a weeks holiday in Ireland, around a family wedding, then a four day festival and then, for Lorraine and I, a week-long walking holiday in Northumbria with four friends...after not doing any of those things, we have tried to do whatever we could to keep ourselves active, busy and safe, and it has been hard. It has been difficult for millions of people.

Our latest extravaganza was a 10-mile family walk on Sunday. Lorraine and Abbey were the guides, Libby and I just turned when told to and it dawned on us when we finished that we, as a family, had never walked for ten miles together. It was beautiful and next weekend, come rain or shine, we have another one planned. On our walk yesterday, through glorious countryside, we only saw three other people and we didn't argue once!

Clan Furmedge (but mostly, Bill)

My first response to a question that I have been asked is in this edition of the VW. It is on the 1971 almanack and the reasons why it is so expensive. Thank you to all of you who have sent in questions and I will answer a selection in future VWs. One that has cropped up in various forms has been on the lines of which Wisdens would I recommend for a collection. So in the next VW I am going to list a number of Wisdens that I feel any collector should consider.

I hope you enjoy this edition is of interest and thank you all for your continued support.

In many conversations I have said that in terms of volume, normally the busiest time of the year for me, Wisdenworld is the November to December period. Since the pandemic began I have been constantly, wonderfully busy and every part of me acknowledges how fortunate I am, so thank you to all of you who have supported me with a purchase or two during this horrible time.

Thank you to everyone who sent in your replies to the little question I posed recently.

Who is/was the 'entertainer' (or 'entertainers' if a double-act) that makes/made you laugh out loud. Past or present who gives you a real old fashioned belly-laugh.

Here are the top 5

Morecambe and Wise	191
Tommy Cooper	114
Dad's Army	71
Only Fools and Horses	57
Billy Connolly	54
Blackadder	37

One vote each for Lee Evans, Ben Elton, Benny Hill, Russell Howard, John Bishop (*that wasn't me, Bill*), Mike and Bernie Winters, Frank Carson, 'Anyone running cricket.'

The eight names drawn out have been told.

It Happened in June (Pt 1)

1860

The University match at Lord's has gone down in history as 'Cobden's Match.' With Oxford having scored 175-7 when needing 179 runs to win, F.C. Cobden proceeded to take a hat-trick off the last three balls of his over, after having conceded a single off the first ball. Cambridge thus won the match by 2 runs. Earlier in the day W. Yardley of Cambridge scored the first century in the University match.

1896

J.T. Hearne sets a cricket record for the earliest date, 12th of June, of taking 100 first-class wickets in a season.

1899

English cricket icon W. G. Grace starts 22nd and final Test against Australia at Nottingham; Test debut of Wilfred Rhodes and Victor Trumper.

1907

George Dennett, aided by Gilbert Jessop, dismisses Northamptonshire for 12 runs, the lowest total in first-class cricket.

1909

Representatives from England, Australia and South Africa meet at Lord's and form the Imperial Cricket Conference.

1932

Sutcliffe and Holmes make 555 opening cricket stand for Yorks v Essex.

1972

Australian bowler Bob Massie takes 16 wickets (8-84 & 8-53) on Test cricket debut vs England.

1920

J. B. Hobbs scored 110, 134, 101 and 112 for Surrey in four consecutive innings in four separate matches.

1960

In the second Test match at Lord's. G. Griffin became the first South African to achieve a hat-trick in a Test match. His achievement was marred however by his being called eleven times for throwing by umpire F. S. Lee. After the early conclusion of the match in England's favour, an exhibition game was played and Griffin was called for throwing four balls out of five by J. S. Buller, finally having to complete the over by bowling underarm. He did not bowl again on the tour.

1937

J. C. Clay took 17 wickets (9-66 & 8-146) for Glamorgan v Worcestershire at Swansea. That was the middle game of a spell which brought him 40 wickets in three matches. Against Warwickshire at Pontypridd, 6-85 & 5-67 in the previous game and 6-78 & 6-102 v Somerset at Newport in the following game.

1974

In the second innings at Lord's, England bowled India out for 44.

2019

England cricket captain Eoin Morgan smashes a ODI world record 17 sixes against Afghanistan in his side's 150-run World Cup victory at Old Trafford; Morgan, 148 from 71 balls.

1993

Ian Botham and Alan Lamb played their last day of Test match cricket in the second Test against Pakistan at Lord's.

1899

At the age of 50 years and 320 days W.G. Grace played his last day of Test cricket on the 3rd June.

1952

India started their second innings against England in the first Test at Leeds by losing four wickets in fourteen balls before a run had been scored. P. Roy was out second ball, D. K. Gaekwad in the second over and then M. K. Mantri and V. L. Manjrekar to consecutive balls. V. S. Hazare batting at number 6 went in to prevent the 'hat-trick.' England fell to 26-5, before Hazare and D.G. Phadkar scored half centuries in a final total of 165.

1861

Joseph wells, father of H. G. Wells, added a new record to first-class cricket by becoming the first bowler to take four wickets with consecutive balls. Playing for Kent v Sussex at Brighton, he dismissed J. Dean, S. A. Leigh, C. H. Ellis and R. Fillery with the last two balls of one over and the first two of the next.

1912

J. B. Hobbs playing for Surrey v Lancashire at Manchester, gave a brilliant display of batting when opening the innings in the face of a total of 430. Hitting 16 fours, he scored 111 out of 135 for the first wicket in 90 minutes with T. Hayward (24).

1919

G. E. V. Crutchley scored a century (181) for Free Foresters against Cambridge University at Cambridge, suffering from lameness and batting with the aid of a runner. This was the first instance of a hundred being achieved with the aid of a runner.

1944

For the first time since the outbreak of war cricket was played at Old Trafford when on June 3rd, Western Command played a Royal Australian Air Force XI. The ground had suffered considerable damage during the air raids of 1940.

1899

Victor Trumper scored his maiden Test century for Australia v England at Lord's.

1937

Len Hutton made his Test debut for England v New Zealand at Lord's. J. Cowie bowled him in the first innings for 0 and had him caught by H. G. Vivian in the second for 1.

The Bowlers Holding the Batsmans Willey

Bizarre Dismissals

W.H. Scotton was described by Wisden as 'England's best professional left-hand bat in 1884 and 1886.' As an opener he shared several large partnerships with W. G. Grace for his county and proved an excellent foil for Grace's aggressive style.

In August 1884 Scotton opened against Australia at The Oval and saved the game for England with a 5 1/2 hour changeless 90 until he was the last man to be dismissed.

Consistently featuring in the national averages, Scotton played for a number of teams - Notts, England and M.C.C. - throughout the 1870's and 1880's. He was employed as M.C.C.'s groundsman in 1874, moved to The Oval for the 1875 season, and returned to M.C.C. in 1876, where he remained on their ground staff for 17 years. He found further batting success on tours of Australia with England, but it was in a representative match that he found notoriety.

While playing for a Smokers XI against a Non-Smokers XI in Melbourne in 1886, Scotton played the last ball of the match at his feet and, keen to have it as a souvenir, picked it up before the umpire had officially ended play by calling 'over'. The Non-Smokers team appealed and poor old Scotton was given out, handled the ball.

He was never quite the same after that. He received little praise for his stoic performances for club or country. A later Wisden entry says 'he carried caution to such extremes that it was often impossible to take any pleasure in seeing him play.' William Scott lost his England and Notts places and, suffering from acute depression, took his own life on July 9 1893.

Evidence is to hand that cricket is a popular pastime among prisoners-of-war in Germany. In a vivid description of how the game is carried on despite all obstacles, a correspondent writes: "We have had some amusing cricket in the different camps; in the moat of a castle with splendid hazards and catching off buttresses; among tree stumps on a wicket of peat; and now, very aristocratic, with two strips of concrete which we laid ourselves and covered with blankets and sacking. Two matches take place every weekend, LOCAL RULES: Minus 4 for balls hit into the wire, 6 and out for those over the wire and no-balls for anything pitching in the sand between the concrete. We have RED and WHITE coats for fielding balls in the danger area where we would otherwise get shot.

Tests at Stammlager 383

In October 1943, William Hickey of the Daily Express, devoted his column one day to a triangular tournament between England, Australia and New Zealand at Stammlager 383, heading it "Ashes Result." Sgt. Keith H. Hooper, of Hull, p.o.w. number 10,504, sent the details on a postcard.

Results: Australia (286 and 24-0) beat New Zealand (161 and 148) by 10 wickets. England (370) beat New Zealand 154 and 111) by an innings and 105 runs.

FINAL: Australia (259 and 241) beat England (186 and 116) by 200 runs and won the Ashes.

Apparently two days were devoted to each match. In the deciding game, the Australian captain G. O'Brien scored 53, A. King 65 not out and A. Storrer 51. J. Wakeman took four wickets for 77 and five for 37. Two players with Kent qualifications did best for England in this vital match, J. W. Martin obtaining four wickets for 92 and four for 87, and J. Parson, when England went in to bat to get 315 to win, hit 65 before the first wicket fell. At this stage the story reveals that the pitch had not been prepared with the care that "Bossier" Martin would have bestowed on a Test Match wicket, for it became worn and such a rot set in that the last six wickets went down for eight runs.

I notice that the Daily Express linked up J.W. Martin with the Kent County player, but since then news has come to hand that he has been wounded in Italy. As there are at least ten J. W. Martin's holding commissions the confusion is understandable.

Cricket in Germany during WW2. (The Cricketer Annual 1943-44)

"Bodyline bowling has assumed such proportions as to menace the best interests of the game, making protection of the body by the batsman the main consideration."

"This is causing intensely bitter feeling between the players, as well as injury."

"In our opinion it is unsportsmanlike. Unless stopped at once it is likely to upset the friendly relations existing between Australia and England."

The situation escalated into a diplomatic incident between the countries as the MCC – supported by the British public and still of the opinion that their fast leg theory tactic was harmless – took serious offence at being branded "unsportsmanlike" and demanded a retraction.

Many people saw 'bodyline' as fracturing an international relationship that needed to remain strong.. Jardine, and by extension the entire English team, threatened to withdraw from the fourth and fifth Tests unless the Australian Board withdrew the accusation of unsporting behaviour. Public reaction in both England and Australia was outrage directed at the other nation.

The Governor of South Australia, Alexander Hore-Ruthven, who was in England at the time, expressed his concern to British Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs, James Henry Thomas, that this would cause a significant impact on trade between the nations.

The stand-off was settled only when Australian Prime Minister Joseph Lyons met with members of the Australian Board and outlined to them the severe economic hardships that could be caused in Australia if the British public boycotted Australian trade. Given this understanding, the Board withdrew the allegation of unsportsmanlike behaviour two days before the fourth Test, thus saving the tour.

Extracts from the first cable sent by the Australian Cricket Board of Control to the MCC, January 18, 1933 (The Cricketer 1934)

The Rebels Who Took The Plunge

On Sunday February 28 (1982) it transpired that twelve English cricketers had signed to play in three four-day Test matches and four one-day matches in South Africa.

Individual fees were thought to range up to £45,000, and contracts for further tours were apparently available. The players were: Dennis Amiss, Geoff Boycott, John Embury, Graham Gooch, Mike Hendrick, Alan Knott, Wayne Larkins, John Lever, Chris Old, Les Taylor, Derek Underwood and Peter Willey. Geoff Humpage and Bob Woolmer later joined the touring party.

A company named Oxychem Ltd, was set up a month before England's Test tour of India and Sri Lanka got under way last autumn, and the enterprise was shielded by the codename Operation Chess Match.

South African breweries were the main sponsor, and the



'middlemen' were Martin Locke and Peter Cooke, both English-born.

Ian Botham, David Gower, Keith Fletcher, Mike Gatting, Geoff Cook, Bob Willis, Graham Dillie and umpire Dickie Bird are known to have declined invitations to join the tour. Alan Lamb, the South African-born Northamptonshire player, also refused terms. He is widely tipped to make his Test debut for England later this year.

South Africa's team, the members of which are being awarded full colours by the SACU, was: Mike Procter (captain), Jimmy Cook, Ray Jennings, Stephen Jefferies, Peter Kirsten, Alan Kourie, Garth Le Roux, Graeme Pollock, Clive Rice, Barry Richards and Vincent van der Bill. The major matches were scheduled for Johannesburg (March 12-15), Cape Town (March 19-22) and Durban (March 26-29).

Geoff Boycott was the chief recruiting agent but Graham Gooch was invited to captain the English team. Condemnation of the enterprise was heard in many parts of the world, and in England there were heated exchanges in the House of Commons.

The governments of Jamaica, Antigua and Barbados announced that none of the players would ever be allowed into those countries.

The TCCB executive committee discussed the matter on March 5, but postponed further debate until March 19.

The Plan That Shocked

The edition of Wisden Cricket Monthly in April 1982, edited by David Frith, was dominated by the announcement of a rebel tour to South Africa.

Latest figures show South Africa is one of Britain's most important trading partners. Exports are currently at

£1000 million a year and imports total £756 million.

Anthony Smith, Daily Star.

They are selling themselves for blood-covered krugerrand.

Shadow Environment Secretary, Gerald Kaufman.

'I've got nothing on my conscience, I'm just here to play cricket'
- Peter Willey

If any of those players at presenting South Africa are elected for any England team or any county team against India, the tour will be called off immediately.

Judge Kanmadikar, Indian Cricket Board secretary

What have the TCCB done to encourage the South Africans to think that one day their efforts at emancipation will be rewarded? Nothing... This time next year a side of Australian Test cricketers could well be making up a triangular tournament.

John Woodcock, The Times.

Some of them undoubtedly believe, from first-hand experience of coaching in South Africa or playing there in the Currie Cup or on private tours, that what they are doing is for the good of all cricketers in South Africa... When South African cricket was becoming non-racial in the 1970's, the TCCB condoned the taking of private teams to South Africa by Derek Robins. Now, when non-racial cricket has been achieved, a private side is condemned.

Michael Melford in the Daily Telegraph.

I thought the day I read the news of Packer's coup was my saddest. I was wrong. This is much worse.

Jim Laker in the Daily Express.

Traders can do remunerative business with South Africa. Holidaymakers can go to soak up the sun. Families can emigrate to the land of apartheid, so why shouldn't batsmen, especially those nearing the end of their first-class careers, take their chance to knock up a quick £40,000 or more.

Daily Mail editorial.

We do not have the power to prevent our sportsmen and women from visiting South Africa, or anywhere else. If we did we would no longer have a free country.

Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher.

It gave me the opportunity to play international cricket at top level again

Dennis Amiss

I said no for a number of personal reasons.

Geoff Cook

They have, of course, every right to accept the gold of the state that practises the evil gospel called apartheid. But in doing so, they cannot be said to be principled defenders of freedom.

Sun editorial.

Over To You South Africa

In the same edition of Wisden Cricket Monthly as *The Plan That Shocked*, the editor David Frith wrote the following.

Notwithstanding the fact that a dozen years of Test cricket isolation has forced no perceptible change in 'real' apartheid; and not withstanding the fact that the International Cricket Conference has wretched on its early promise to readmit South Africa when racial barriers in sport were lowered; and not withstanding the fact that, as we are so often reminded, *every man has his price: the tour of the 'dirty dozen' is unlikely to serve any good purpose.*

A glance at the accompanying 'quotes' (see previous VW page) will soon show how complex its matter and how varied are the opinions. Yet even to the most obtuse cricketer's mind it should be clear that a fragile world sports structure can only be weakened by the tour. It is not that the long-threatened split into black and white zones looms nearer, for Australia has firmly aligned itself with West Indies, India and Pakistan in these matters. And it is hardly material that Sri Lanka, the newest Test nation, is willing to play against South Africa just as it trades with that country.

It is that the 'ripple effect' of this tour could bring down Test cricket, Commonwealth Games, Olympics, soccer World Cups, reducing sport to its mid-19th century scale, from which position it would take decades to rebuild. Those who despise sport's sometimes wildly dangerous nationalistic fervour, and who refuse to acknowledge its fellowship and bridge-building powers, would doubtless greet such a diminution with deep satisfaction.

The overwhelming odour of course, is of hypocrisy. Where is the world pressure group aimed at persuading the Botha Government to relax its iniquitous racial laws by means of commercial sanctions? It reeks also of cynicism and jealousy, for many will be more resentfully concerned at certain players adding £40,000 to a bank account already swelled by fat county benefits as well as Packer money.

Only grudgingly will it be acknowledged that the matches will be watched with fascination by people of various races - granted that, as Hassan Howa leader of the uncompromising SACBOC organisation, has pointed out, numerous non-whites will view it all as a catastrophic setback to their cause of total abandonment of apartheid and nothing less.

It was inevitable. Plans have been afoot for months, not weeks. There will always be cricketers near the end of their careers ready for the golden handshake - and those lacking in confidence about their continuing presence in the Test XI, where there is now big money.

It is, too, a mark of a free society that they be not forbidden from going. But in the grand scheme of things they have to pay their dues. Packer players, in England and Australia at any rate could not enjoy the pickings from both camps, at least until the 'war' was over.

The South African conflict will not end so swiftly and those who have chosen - innocently or otherwise - to take in the Springbok sunshine cannot expect to take the field in 'legitimate' cricket, least of all against opponents whose genuine disgust cannot be concealed.

There is a solution; but how likely is it? South Africa, in appreciation of the 'gesture' by the 'dirty dozen', could set about dismantling apartheid. That would prove the ultimate embarrassment for the more unbudging critics. Pigs might fly. Our 'thirteenth man' would have been Basil D'Oliveira.

David Frith, Editorial, Wisden Cricket Monthly, April 1982

A small selection of letters from the pages of *The Wisdener*.

Sir,

I was wondering if members would be amused, by the following conversation taken from Stephen Fry's novel, *The Liar*.

"You wont cheat will you, sir?"

"Cheat? Good heavens. This is an amateur cricket match amongst leading prep schools. I'm an Englishman and a schoolmaster supposedly setting an example to his young charges. We are playing the most artistic and beautiful game man ever devised. Of course I'll...cheat."

Norman Kinney

Sir,

Something has been baffling me for quite some time. In the days prior to central contracts and when the County Championship was one division and in excess of twenty matches were played by each side, it was commonplace for batsmen to accumulate 1,000-plus runs and bowlers to take 100-plus wickets. It was not common for umpteen coaches (batting, bowling, fielding), masseurs, physios, dieticians, nutritionists, fitness trainers, psychologists and an abundance of other well-meaning and I gather well-paid experts to be anywhere near a cricket team. So why with less cricket and more help do players become tired, stressed and leave the game in their early thirties?

Mark Jones

Sir,

I am not one to use any of the online auction sites but I do like to have the odd look. I spotted a 1916 hardback on one recently with a starting price of £4,000. It seemed in very good condition, so I contacted the seller to ask whether, if convenient for both, I could have a look at the book prior to bidding. The seller responded, "I have had so much interest that if I set up appointments with everyone my family would never see me". An honest enough reply, I thought. I then asked that if I won the item, would I be able to collect it and pay upon arrival, to which I was told, "The only method of payment for this superior edition is by moneygram, which is the safest and most reliable form of payment". At which point I ended the correspondence. Moneygram is also the payment method with no recourse of action to the seller.

Tom Healy

Headingley 1981

I was not originally selected for the Leeds Test of 1981.

Recovering from a chest infection and watching Warwickshire's

Championship match with Surrey,

I was rung on the Saturday morning by Alec Bedser, who said that the new captain, Mike Brearley, did not feel I was fit enough to take part in a five-day test. Mike Hendrick had been selected instead, and they were sorry.

They were sorry...and I was flabbergasted. The only reason I had sat out Warwickshire's game at The Oval was so I could be fit for the Test on Thursday. I managed to persuade Alec (chairman of selectors) to let me prove my fitness in a 2nd XI match on the Monday, and he phoned the Derbyshire secretary to intercept Hendrick's invitation.

I came through my exertions with no ill-effects and joined the England squad at Leeds on the Wednesday afternoon. Brearley was slightly edgy after a couple of tabloid stories about his objections to Dennis Lillee changing his shirt during sessions of play. 'TEST WAR' was one headline I remember, and relations with the press were strained after their part in Botham's downfall as captain. The team were probably more hostile towards the media than to the Australians.

My fitness was put immediately to the test as Australia amassed 401-9 declared. We did not bowl well, and the captain told us so on both the first and second days. The pitch was uneven in bounce and many deliveries moved disconcertingly off the seam.

My own 30 overs were wicketless, so after talking myself into the



team, the pressure was certainly going to be on in the second innings....if they were going to have a second innings. Every England player knows that two poor Test-match returns in a row in a

home series usually means the chop, and I could envisage the second Australian innings determining the shape of the remainder of my career.

We were in trouble as soon as we batted, and the Willis Test appearance looked in danger of coming to an abrupt halt. By Saturday evening we were following on and we had lost Graham Gooch second time around. Most of us adjourned to the Botham residence for the regular Headingley Test barbecue reflecting on the probability that it would be our last, in a playing capacity anyway.

Beefy was his usual philosophical if mischievous, self, having no longer to carry the burden of leadership or to face the Press to explain a totally inept team performance. His hospitality and generosity lifted our spirits, but as we wended our way back to the hotel the following afternoon, our prospects in the match were worse than our hangovers. We duly informed hotel reception that we would not require our rooms for Monday evening, and we retired for an early night.

Eight for 43 and all that

Bob Willis writing in Wisden Cricket Monthly in 1989 on the 1981 England v Australia Test match at Headingley.

The new day did not bring new hope. Ladbrokes seemed to have got it right when they offered 500-1

against our chances. Even after Beefy's swashbuckling 149 not out and the supporting efforts of Graham Dilley and Chris Old there was no thought of victory. Australia lost only one wicket in reaching 50 on their way to a target of 130.

I then persuaded Mike Brearley to try me from the Kirkstall Lane end, saying that I was now too old to be bowling up the slope and into the breeze. A ball immediately reared at Trevor Chappell's throat and he ballooned a catch to Bob Taylor behind the stumps. Kim Hughes was brilliantly snapped up by Beefy at slip and Graham Yallop fended a flyer to Mike Gatting at short leg. Three wickets before lunch: we now had a chance.

The 40-minute interval must further have undermined the Australian resolve as Border, Marsh and Lawson quickly departed in the opening overs after the break.

My mind was locked in fierce concentration and effort. I wanted no distractions from this rich vein of good bowling and good luck, and even spurned the ecstatic congratulations at the fall of each wicket. But we were not there yet. Lillee and Bright inched Australia ever closer to their target.

A few boundaries would have changed the course of history when Lillee spooned an on-drive and Gatting took a fine tumbling catch.

The tension was finally released when my Yorker removed Ray Bright's middle stump and we charged off the field in delight. The ball was retrieved by Geoff Boycott and presented to me in the bath., and as I had to get dressed quickly to attend interviews I just tossed it into my kitbag.

I later regretted the timing of my blast at the media in the live TV interview with Peter West and wish I could have savoured the dramatic win more at the time. It was not until the news of our astonishing 18-run victory after following on led the news headlines that evening that it sank in and I realised what we had actually achieved. The players had dispersed quickly after the match, and I had time only for a quick pint with Ian Botham before heading home and back to reality.

We had a NatWest match the next day, and I was horrified to discover the Headingley ball being used for fielding practice when I returned to my kitbag after selecting the team. Fortunately I managed to salvage it, and it was recently auctioned at Christies. The proud new owner (Mike Smith of Kent) of the 8-for-43 ball and 10 medallions paid almost £1300* for the lot, and has a unique piece of cricket history.

I have never been a collector of memorabilia, and take more pleasure in watching Bright's stump going down on video, still not really believing that it all happened to me.

**Approximately £5150 today.*

Sometimes when reprinting details of a match, I include the scorecard - not this time, seek out your 1982 Wisden or the numerous videos/programmes on YouTube and enjoy!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NxSpexmFpMg>

Why is the 1971 so expensive?

I asked if anyone had any questions for me and two different people, Sean Leyton and Tom Freeman asked the same: -

The 1971: Why is it so expensive?

It has been suggested that Basil D'Oliveira was in some way responsible for the 1971 Wisden being somewhat expensive when compared to other contemporary editions. Of course, D'Oliveira was a pawn in a very large political chess game that changed world cricket for decades, and the actions of the cricketing authorities between 1969 and 1970 have directly led to the high price collectors have to pay for the Almanack of 1971.

The cancellation of the South Africa tour to England in 1970 meant that England would have had no overseas visitors for the first time since 1939, so the repercussions for the counties and for the governing body were startling. The counties relied on the tourists to stimulate interest, and the share of revenue from the Test matches went a long way to ease the financial shortcomings of the domestic game.

The decision to invite a Rest of World team to play five Tests against England did not help the counties to a great extent. The loss of TV revenue from the proposed SA tour was substantial and in 1970 none of the seventeen counties declared a profit. It may be argued that some would have had a greater loss if they had not received a slice of the cake from the hastily arranged 'Test matches'.

Attendances for the matches were low, as advanced bookings could not be made for the Rest of the World tour as it was not in place until the end of May 1970 and the uncertainty over the South African tour meant that spectators were reluctant to buy tickets in advance.

According to editor Norman Preston in the 1971 Wisden, England was in the "midst of a General Election and in addition sporting attention and Press and television publicity were switched to the World Cup (soccer) tournament in Mexico, then came the Commonwealth games in Edinburgh..." With no South African touring team and such a poorly attended substitute series, why then did the following years' 1971 Wisden sell out fairly quickly?

The County Championship was a close-run thing and both the John Player League and the Gillette Cup saw attendances rise, but were these reasons enough to make the 1971 edition so popular? Throughout the 1960s it would be fair to say that cricket and especially cricket in England was in decline. The excitement of one-day cricket and the launch of the John

Player League in 1969 gave the counties a much-needed financial boost, but the longer game lacked imagination and flair. Test cricket was not much better.

Sales of Wisden suffered accordingly and print runs for the decade reflected the decline, from a high of 33,000 copies printed in 1963 to a low of 27,000 in 1969. In some years during the 1964-69 period it is thought that as little as 70% of the print run was sold. Therefore, as world cricket and politics combined to dismiss South Africa to the extremities of the game, and the domestic game still failing to ignite interest, there seemed little point in investing in a larger print run for the 1971 edition. In a moment of what could sensibly be viewed in hindsight as sensible the decision was made to actually increase the 1971 run by 2,000, a thousand more each of both the hardback (16,000 in total) and soft back (15,000) editions.

A slight tangent at this point: apparently when Wisden sent out the annual offer to MCC members to purchase the 1971, the take-up was far greater than at any time since the 1963 edition, so it was decided to increase the print run - But, unfortunately, it was too late to order the extra paper required: the average order to delivery time was nine months, and to put this in context, nowadays this process can be done in 36 hours. So they stuck with the original numbers.

The edition, whether as a result of the growing realisation that the 1970 season was actually a very good one indeed, or as a result of the growing economic prosperity enjoyed in the country, quickly sold out. The County Championship was exciting in its closeness, the Rest of the World series had retrospectively gained credibility, and in addition the Australia tour to South Africa in the early part of 1970 was reviewed in full.

The 1971 edition has therefore become a much desired edition. If Wisden had managed to print more copies, would it still be an expensive year to buy? Maybe the answer partly lies in the fact that the print run of the 1972 edition was increased to 31,000 and did not sell out. As more and more genuine collectors enter the market, the 1971 is a much requested edition, plainly and simply because it was the first edition published to contain a Test series between one country and a Rest of the World side, and possibly more importantly, it was the last edition to cover a Test series involving South Africa for many years.

A 1971 Hardback with a stunning condition dust jacket can be as high as £100 - £115.

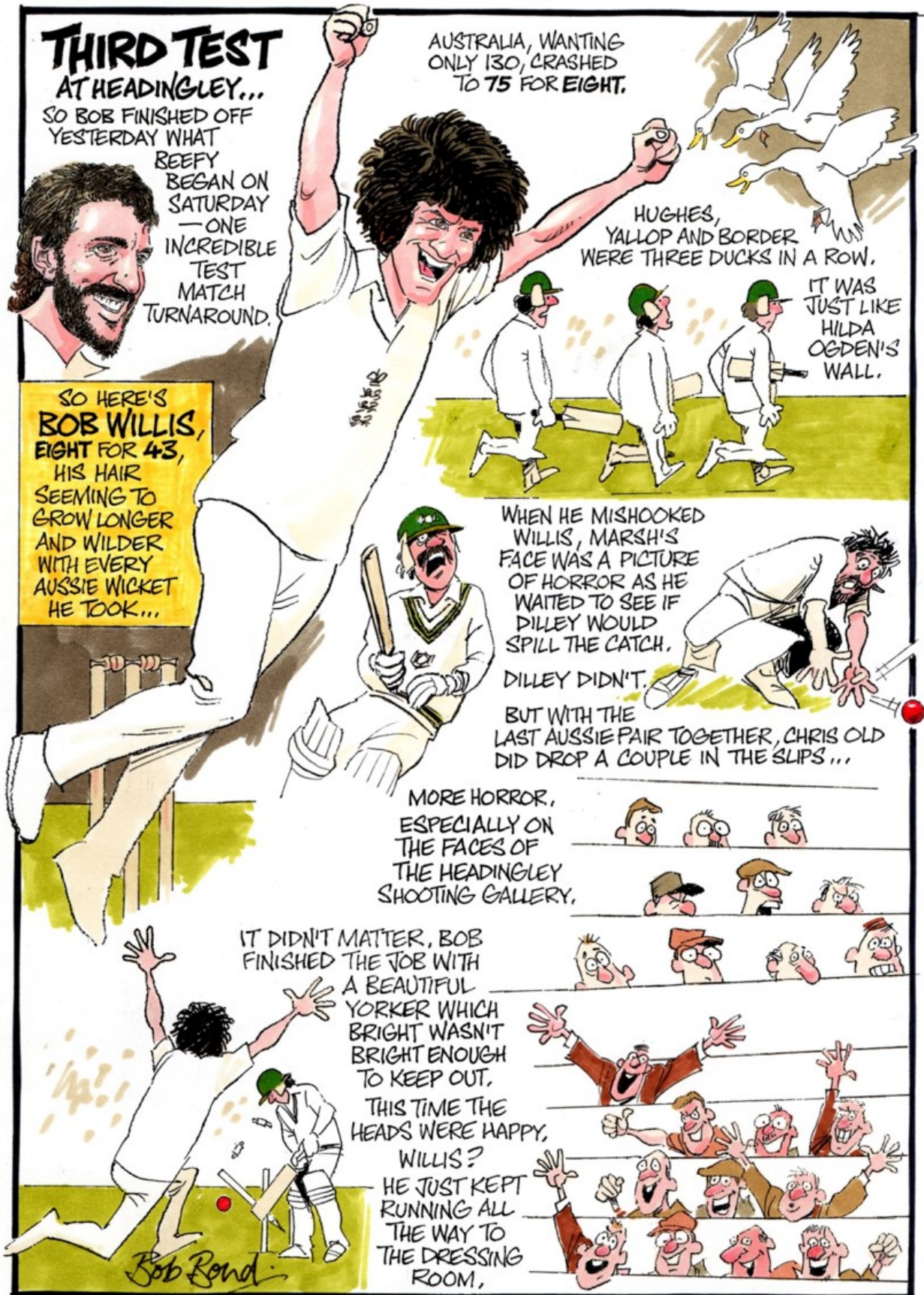
A Soft back edition, again 'stunning' as high as £48.

In the next issue of The VW:

The Isolation Quiz 2 results and questions will be published; The content will also include 'A Must-Have Wisden;' The best of 'Your Touring Squads' and more.

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THIRD TEST AT HEADINGLEY...

SO BOB FINISHED OFF YESTERDAY WHAT REEFY BEGAN ON SATURDAY — ONE INCREDIBLE TEST MATCH TURNAROUND.

AUSTRALIA, WANTING ONLY 130, CRASHED TO 75 FOR EIGHT.

HUGHES, YALLOP AND BORDER WERE THREE DUCKS IN A ROW.

IT WAS JUST LIKE HILDA OGDEN'S WALL.

SO HERE'S BOB WILLIS, EIGHT FOR 43, HIS HAIR SEEMING TO GROW LONGER AND WILDER WITH EVERY AUSSIE WICKET HE TOOK...

WHEN HE MISHOOKED WILLIS, MARSH'S FACE WAS A PICTURE OF HORROR AS HE WAITED TO SEE IF DILLEY WOULD SPILL THE CATCH.

DILLEY DIDN'T. BUT WITH THE LAST AUSSIE PAIR TOGETHER, CHRIS OLD DID DROP A COUPLE IN THE SLIPS...

MORE HORROR, ESPECIALLY ON THE FACES OF THE HEADINGLEY SHOOTING GALLERY.

IT DIDN'T MATTER, BOB FINISHED THE JOB WITH A BEAUTIFUL YORKER WHICH BRIGHT WASN'T BRIGHT ENOUGH TO KEEP OUT.

THIS TIME THE HEADS WERE HAPPY, WILLIS? HE JUST KEPT RUNNING ALL THE WAY TO THE DRESSING ROOM.

Bob Bond

Thank you to Bob Bond for allowing us to use the above. We will be using more in future issues of The VW.

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