

Only a matter of a few days before the first Test against the West Indies, shops are now busy, restaurants and pubs are soon to re-open and there seems to be a sense of 'almost, but not quite normality.' But I don't know about you but I am still incredibly cautious about what I do, where I go and whom I meet.

Only last week I went to view some Wisdens, owned by a chap well into his eighties. I wore a mask, gloves and asked to view the collection alone. Via email he said that was fine, but upon arrival he came into the room with me and three times I had to ask him to move away. This may well anger some of you, but I have to be honest, the incident made me think that some people are just not getting how serious the situation is and still will be if we do not act responsibly.

Back to cricket - apparently as I type this, England are playing England at The Rose Bowl and the West Indies are playing the West Indies at Old Trafford. Full matches with squads that have been isolating together. With absolutely no cricket for months, you would think that the BBC website would at least have some information on both games, but no, the headline on the BBC cricket page reads, 'Life Inside England's Sci-fi movie.' I am fast coming to the conclusion that SKY is the best place for cricket.

The announcement that the domestic game will begin on August 1st was not a shock as that was the date that had been suggested some time ago. The format, apparently after discussions with the counties, will soon be released. Why are they only finalising discussions now? They have had months to sit down, or should I say, 'zoom' down, 'Skype' down or whatever other not-actually-meeting communication method they use. They have had months to decide what format the championship would take, what the VitalityBlast will look like...but the 'we are discussing the structure with the counties' surely smacks in the face of a sport run by rather inept people who cannot organise themselves out of a paper bag. Seriously? Still talking about the structure! I can just see the agenda for the online meeting of all concerned:

Item A - Individual apologies from the numerous thousands who could not attend owing to not having a say in what goes on.

Item B - Thanks to all the previous Presidents of The MCC, all the previous secretaries and all the staff at every county and the setting up of a sub-committee to report back to the committee on a draft of a thank you note to one and all, posthumously in many cases.

Item C - The formation of the said sub-committee. The setting up of a sub sub-committee to decide the structure and aims of the sub-committee.

Break for Drinks.

Item D - Ten minute silence to remember every penny that might have to be given back to SKY TV.

Item E - Re-cap on A to D.

Item F - Lunch (a virtual lunch at the expense of the ECB)

....Need I go on. Just when clarity, concise decision-making and the love of the game should have been upmost in the minds of all, we have procrastination and dithering.

About ten years ago the Furmedges discovered a beach, a rather isolated beautiful beach about two hours drive from Furmedge House. Last Thursday we went to the beach. It still remained undiscovered and it was beautiful.

One problem was that Abbey and Lorraine did the 'picnic' shopping. Trust me, any future 'picnic' shopping will involve me. The choice of pork pie was disappointing. There was a lack of adequate sausage roll options and the usual 'when Bill does the picnic shopping'

array of snacks and goodies was missing. All of which will be brought up at each individual appraisal.

Libby managed to fall over twice whilst getting out of her chair and then, obviously because she is 19, did not put any sun-tan cream on but still wore her cap...resulting in a brown face to just level with her eyebrows, how we laughed.

Forgive the rant and the ramblings. Please continue to take care and to be safe.

Bill, Laney, Abs and Libs - two former members of the 'picnic' buying committee

Thank you to all for sending in responses to the VW panel questions.

The deadline for all is next Monday. Here they are again -

1: Which county or state side do you follow and why?

2: Choose three cricketing moments that you would love to see again - great innings, great bowling, an hour, an afternoon, or a day from any match. Three memories!

WIN WIN WIN: -

How many runs will be scored in both first innings of the England v West Indies First Test? Nearest one wins, one name drawn if more than one correct.

One winner receives a £50 Wisdenworld Gift Voucher.

Ten closest will win a copy of the latest Wisden Cricket Monthly

No less influential an institution is Wisden's Five Cricketers of the Year, a stroke of genius that Charles Pardon hit upon in 1889, shortly before his untimely death. It took most of the decade to condense into the coveted award that now marks the start of every English season, and it first saw light in the 1889 edition as an accolade for Six Great Bowlers of the Year, "to signalise the extraordinary success that bowlers achieved in 1888."

The first recipients were legends one and all - Johnny Briggs, JJ Ferris, George Lohmann, Bobby Peel, CTB Turner and Sammy Woods.

Pardon in his preface wrote, "Wisden's Almanack has now reached its twenty-sixth year, and without losing any of the old features, we have been able to make the book even more comprehensive than before..."

County Cricket, by the editor.

"I ought, perhaps, to repeat my conviction that county cricket is the very best sort of cricket, and that competition, whatever can be said against it by well-intentioned theorists, is an altogether admirable thing for the game. Competition means keen feeling on the part of all the players, and hearty interest on the part of the local public. This interest takes the practical shape of subscriptions and gate-money for the county club and as cricket is a public game, with heavy expenses, gate-money is a first necessity of existence."

A Few Jottings, by Robert Thoms.

"The past season has undoubtedly been a bowler's one, for the grounds on many occasions were so treacherous through rain that most of the leading bowlers could do a nice little bit of conjuring with the batsmen. Cricket, like other events of life, alters according to its surroundings, and the goodness of the wickets during the last twenty years has brought forth not only more forcing batting, but also deep out-fielding, with bowlers that partakes most of the art of trying to get the batsman caught than, as of yore, going for the sticks."

Yorkshire in 1888 (Wisden)

'Bearing especially in mind that the county started the year as badly a sit can be, the executive must be heartily congratulated upon the fact that the same team came out practically only inferior to Surrey among the eight important counties. The position of second place among the crack counties was, it will be remembered, very keenly contested towards the end of the season, and when all the results were made up it was found that Yorkshire and Kent tied for that honour, just ahead of Gloucestershire.

Batting for Surrey against Oxford University, W.W. Read scores 338.

Derbyshire dropped out of the 1888 'championship' leaving eight counties. The eight counties played each other home and away, with the exception of Middlesex

and Sussex who had not met since 1868.

The following are six of the best known sources for determining the 'unofficial champion county' for 1873 to 1889:

The list compiled by Rev. RS Holmes and printed in Wisden until 1962: The list compiled by Rowland Bowen and printed in Wisden from 1963: The list compiled for the 1903 edition of WG Grace's book *Cricket*: The magazine *Cricket*, published at the time: James Lillywhite's *Cricketers' Annual*: The list compiled by Roy Webber in his 1957 book *The County Cricket Championship* and used in the *Playfair Cricket Annual* up to 1976.

All above sources concluded that Surrey was the champion county for 1888.

Glamorgan CCC was formed in 1888.

Wisden Match Report:

Lancashire v Surrey, Manchester, August 2nd.

'A start was punctually made at noon and at half past six the match was all over...just at half-past six Lohmann bowled Pilling, the innings finishing for 63, and the match resulting in favour of Surrey by an innings and 25 runs. This memorable match - the only first-class county engagement, we believe, which was ever played out in a day - attracted nearly ten thousand people. In the second innings Lohmann's five wickets cost 38, but his figures for the entire game - 13-51 - were exceptionally fine.

England v Australia, Kennington Oval, August 13, 14.

'The crowd followed the game with great attention, and applauded heartily the few good things that the Australians did, while they naturally and very properly rewarded with the cheers so dear to public men, the magnificent all-round cricket of the winners. We have praised the colonial team for what they did at Lord's, but the confidence and the abounding energy were this time on the side of England, and it was worth going miles to see how freely and with what skill our representatives acquitted themselves.'

In a summer of consistently low scores and low scorers, WW Read scored 1414 first-class county runs for an average of 36.25: WG Grace hit 1886 runs for an average of 32.51 and Bobby Abel hit 1323 runs for an average of 31.50.

Johnny Briggs of Lancashire topped the bowling averages, his 160 wickets costing on average 10.49, although George Lohmann took 209 first-class championship wickets for an average of 10.90.

Finding a completely original 1889 Paperback Wisden is tricky. Invariably the spine will have cracked, been damaged or simply worn away, so a restored or replacement spine is often the norm. An original paperback with no replacement part or parts should be between £850 and £1000.

The Bowlers Holding the Batsmans Willey

Injuries, and deaths, to be sure, are not funny, but I must relate part of a conversation overheard at Hove last summer when Sussex were playing Surrey.

George Cox (of Sussex), having sat down with the Surrey players, mentioned to Bernard Constable that Sussex Second Eleven were playing Surrey at Mitcham later in the season and asked what sort of ground it was, Constable, quite poker-faced and never taking his eyes off the cricket replied. "Well, its alright, except that you have to cross a main road to get to the wicket'...and he went on..."We have had three batsmen on 99 killed going out after tea crossing the road...the 118 buses seem to get them!"

At that precise moment a wicket fell. Constable was in...he left without a smile, and not having to contend with the Mitcham hazards reached the wicket in one piece in time to take guard. *They don't have the 118 bus in Hove.*

The Cricketer, Notes and Comments, June 1939.

Hampshire's George Brown was extremely upset to be dropped down the batting order - and showed it. Coming in at No. 10, he smashed a ball for six over the wicket-keeper's head. The blow split his bat, so he broke it into two, handed half the blade to the umpire and successfully battled on with the other half. A countryman of immense strength and courage, Brown used to pride himself on batting against fast bowling without gloves.

Cricket Eccentrics

The two rival cricketers were talking. 'The local team wants me to play for them very badly.' 'Well, you're just the man for the job.'

The two clubmen were talking. 'So you had a hard time explaining the cricket game to your wife, eh?' 'I certainly did. She found out I wasn't there.'

There's a man in London who claims to have invented a game that in certain respects is a bit like cricket. What he doesn't know is that the England team has been playing it for years.

'You're looking glum'.

'Yes. My doctor says I can't play cricket.'

'Really? I didn't know he'd ever seen you play!'

George was always thinking of cricket. Eventually, his exasperated wife said, "You think nothing but cricket. I bet you don't even remember the day we were married."

"Of course I do," said George.

"It was the day Sir Colin Cowdrey got 100 not out against Surrey."

A friend asked George, "Tell me, is your daughter's fiancée a good catch?"

"Good catch?" answered George.

"Dammit, he's the best fielder we've got in the side!"

The club's best batsman was on the phone to his captain, trying to explain why he couldn't play the next day. "No, I can't let you off the game," the captain was heard to say. "If I did, then I would have to do the same for any other player whose wife dies.

In a club match a fast bowler was terrorising a visiting side. As the new batsman slowly reached the middle, he was asked by the umpire if he wanted the sight screen moved. He thought and said he would.

"To the left or right?" asked the umpire.

"Neither," the frightened batsman replied. "Couldn't I have between him and me?"

The radio station TalkSport has been censured by the Advertising Standards Authority after running an advertising campaign for its coverage of England's Caribbean tour that linked cricket with drugs. The headline used in the ad that appeared in the Daily Telegraph read "Splat, splat, spliff." It attracted one complaint from the public.

The Wisden Cricketer, June 2005

"I know why he has bought a house by the sea...so he'll be able to go for a walk on the water..."

Fred Trueman after hearing that Geoff Boycott had moved to Poole Harbour.

"A memory that sticks in my mind was of a debut player for England driving into Edgbaston in a sports car, wearing sunglasses and with a mobile phone to his ear. Was he doing a bat deal? Renegotiating his county contract? Talking to his agent? Or could it be he was here to play for England?"

Aussie coach John Buchanan after winning the Ashes in 2001. Only England debutant in the Test at Edgbaston, Nottinghamshire's Usman Afzaal.

W. G. Grace may have driven a coach and horses through the cricket record books in his time, but 80-year-old Grace Cummins took it all too literally in a village match at Curdridge in Hampshire. When she started the car, her foot became jammed between the throttle and brake pedals.

She broke through a fence and careered around the field, crashing into three other cars and leaving a player's wife with cuts and bruises as she watched from her own car.

Mrs Cummins husband said, 'At first I thought it was some hit-and-run maniac'.

Hampshire Chronicle September, 1987.

Back in 1999 a contestant on the ITV gameshow, Who Wants To Be A Millionaire missed out on the chance of becoming the show's first millionaire when he could not answer the following question:

"Which county side is based at Chester-Le-Street?" The contestant, Peter Lee (not the former Lancashire player) had to settle for £500,000.

There are two ways of passing judgment upon the tour of the sixth Australian team in

The 1889 *Wisden* contained a full and comprehensive analysis of the Australian tour in 1888 and I hope readers enjoy the first part of that two-part review taken from the 1889 *Wisden*

private and financial relations that existed among the members of the eleven. It was at first

England. The first is to compare the individual and collective records of the tour with the performances of preceding elevens, and the second is to discuss the team of 1888 upon their own merits, thinking and saying as little as possible about what has gone before, and summing up the doings of McDonnell's eleven with the object and end of comparing them, not with previous visitors from the Colonies, but with the contemporary Englishmen with whom they battled, by whom they were beaten, and over whom, thanks to their magnificent bowling, they gained many a notable triumph.

The first method has the sanction of precedent, and the advantage of convenience. From the tour of 1880, through the great periods of 1882 and 1884, and in dealing with the less remarkable trip of two years ago, the method of comparison was largely adopted. The method is easy, inasmuch as several of the men were as familiar to English players and the English public as are our own prominent amateurs and professionals. For the satisfaction of those who like to compare the past closely with the present a table is published among the other statistical matter at the end of this record of the Australian tour, and there will be seen what the batsmen and bowlers who had been here before did in England last summer. Beyond that we shall scarcely go.

One reason for this is that the readers of *Wisden's Cricketers' Almanack* are very largely students of cricket history themselves, and have in their libraries the old records from which we should have to quote. Another reason, and a strong one, is that, we there were five previous tours with which and all of which some comparison would be inevitable if the task were entered upon at all, we should be committing ourselves to the construction of a sort of cricket House that Jack built--wearying rather than entertaining those who naturally look in the book devoted to 1888 for the cricket of that year. But the third and most powerful reason is, that the success achieved by our late visitors was due to new men, and the failure was that of new men also. The old hands did pretty much as they might have been expected to do, and, while they rarely brought about victory, they still more rarely caused defeat. Accordingly the second plan will be followed as closely as possible.

Mr. Beal

The team was organised by Mr. Charles W. Beal, on the old basis of private and personal adventure: the men were, we believe, banded together in a commonwealth, though we do not profess to know, nor should we put on record if we did know, the

hoped that Moses, the well-known left-handed batsman, would be a member of the team; while down to the last moment before sailing the companionship of George Giffen was confidently expected.

Disappointment followed in each case, and also in the cases of some other men who were asked to make the trip; and there can be no doubt that the team that sailed from Adelaide last March, while they did not deserve a quarter of the bitter and contemptuous things said about them by newspapers of their own Colonies, were yet far from representing Combined Australia.

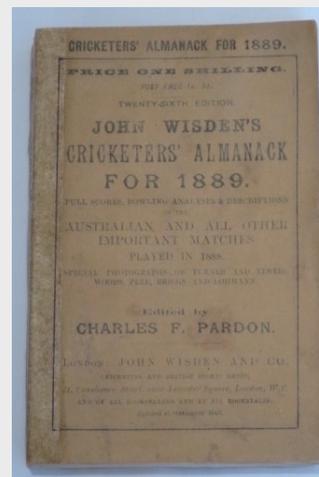
The secretary of the Surrey Club at the meeting in December, 1887, made most of the Australian matches, and the vacant dates were all filled up by the manager of the team as soon as practicable; so that, with the exception of Thursday, May 10, and the Derby Day, May 30, every week day for twenty consecutive weeks was allotted to play. Some few of these fixtures were not made immediately, and in one case there was a change from Edinburgh to Stoke in consequence of the Scotch team being engaged with Yorkshire on the only days the Australians had open.

Wet Summer

Without for the moment discussing the question of how the wet summer affected the play of the team, it may be at once admitted that by bringing about many short games it greatly increased the period of rest, and enabled the men to go through their programme with few, if any, of those tedious night journey's which have tried the endurance of many cricketers, English and Colonial.

Followers of sport are proverbially superstitious, and on the same principle that many a batsman, to change his luck, has gone in wearing an old cap or carrying an old bat that he used when he made some former big score, so Beal took his men to the hotel from which the great team of 1882 set out and adopted the colours worn by that famous eleven, and, also we believe for the same reason, the early practice was taken on Mitcham Green.

Here naturally enough the chief interest of spectators centred in Turner and Ferris. It was no secret that this trip was an experiment, a new departure in Colonial cricket.



Spofforth

The mighty Spofforth, the greatest bowler we had ever seen, was with the team no more; there was neither Giffen nor Palmer. The Australians of 1888 were for all practical purposes a new eleven trusting to two young bowlers. The choice of a captain had fallen upon Percy McDonnell, and it is difficult to see who else could have been selected. Not improbably when the next team comes Turner himself will be chosen, but it would have been rash in the extreme to have given the anxiety and trouble of leadership to him upon whose bowling those who knew the most about the team knew that the most depended. It was at once seen that Turner and Ferris were bowlers of high capacity and considerable resource, that their action was free from tricks of any kind, and that they both were, like all Australians we have ever seen, scrupulously and irreproachably fair. Bonnor, who had been here since 1886, joined the team on its arrival, and the simple facts were soon learned that Jarvis was brought over to relieve Blackham in wicket-keeping, that a lot was expected of Jones, and very little of Boyle. There was a great deal of cordial good feeling expressed towards the new comers, who commenced their long series of matches at Norbury Park, the private ground of Mr. J. W. Hobbs, on the first Monday in May.

Momentum Builds

The forty matches resulted as follows:--Nineteen victories, fourteen defeats, and seven games unfinished. Turner and Ferris won the first match for their side, Ferris, the left-hander, having in each innings rather the better analysis, and taking eleven wickets to his comrade's nine. There was little in this that was unexpected, for the Englishmen had had even less practice than their rivals.

The complete overthrow of Warwickshire followed, and then again people said this was only what might have been anticipated. Again Ferris did better than Turner, and then the team came up to the Oval to play Surrey. This match, as it turned out, was one of the most completely successful of the whole tour. The batting was good pretty well all through, and Turner surprised even his friends by the brilliant score he made.

Surrey collapsed before the already famous pair, and were beaten more decisively than Warwickshire had been. The fame of the Colonial eleven was established at once. Rushing from one extreme to the other the people who had thought and spoken lightly of the visitors because critics on their own side had set them the example, and because so many famous names were absent from the Australian list, were now enthusiastic or apprehensive according to their temperament, and were full of not only the prowess of the strange bowlers, but had plenty to talk about in what they had seen of the batting of Trott, Turner, and

the men they knew.

Oxford University were unable to stem the tide; there was another 100 scored, another single-innings victory gained, and people pointed out that, as in the second innings of Surrey, Jones's fast bowling had been extraordinarily destructive. He had not bowled twenty overs in the two innings, but he had taken seven wickets for 23 runs.

Something like a scare was certainly beginning, and when Yorkshire, like their predecessors, were beaten in a single innings at Bramall Lane, with Bonnor showing his old hitting, and Turner and Ferris as steady and as deadly as before, the most extravagant opinions were uttered by men of usually calm judgment, and those comparisons which we set out by deprecating were made with irrational and ludicrous freedom.

Now set in one of those periods of disaster which were fated to follow the Australians' triumphs through the season, and so render very difficult the attempt to estimate fairly and accurately the true form of the Colonial eleven.

Briggs, helped by A. G. Steel, J. Eccles, and J. R. Napier, enabled Lancashire to beat them after a big fight at Old Trafford; and, although the next match was a draw and Bonnor made 100, the Gentlemen at Lord's batted so finely against Turner and Ferris that the tone of public opinion changed again. W. G. Grace played a magnificent innings of 165; and the two great Surrey amateurs, Shuter and Read, gave further proof that on a good wicket our best batsmen could play the new bowlers as they had played all other bowlers before them. In that same week a very strong eleven of Players beat the Australians handsomely at all points. This was followed by a crushing defeat at the hands of Nottinghamshire, for whom Attewell and Barnes bowled superbly, and J. A. Dixon played one of the best innings of his career.



Critical Period

This was probably the most critical period of the tour. Jones, the best batsman on the side, who had played finely against Lancashire, and still more finely against the Gentlemen, was evidently ill and sickening during the Players' match, and was obliged to give up his place almost as soon as the contest with Nottinghamshire commenced.

A period of anxiety for the manager ensued, the grief and burden of which had to be borne by him alone, while even the knowledge that cause for such anxiety existed was wisely restricted to a very few. No risk was run, no danger was incurred, no steps were taken to which the strictest purist in morals could have objected; but, acting under full medical authority and sanction, the secret of the highly contagious nature of Jones's illness was strictly and faithfully kept, and only

one or two members of the team itself and some three or four persons outside the team knew until months afterwards, when all danger was past and the unlucky young fellow was about again, what a narrow escape the ship had had from foundering before the voyage was a quarter over.

The public knew well enough in these early June days that a crisis had come, and it is very much to the credit of the Australians that they surmounted their difficulties and played themselves into form again. Beal and Turner, and we fancy M'Donnell also, never lost heart, but faced fortune like men, and, the first great disaster overcome, were able to take the ups and downs that distinguished the remainder of the tour quite philosophically, coming out at the end, as everyone knows, after two tremendous thrashings at Leeds and Manchester, with big victories at Hastings and the Oval.

They could naturally never replace Jones. Batsmen of his class are not made in a day; and, notwithstanding Trott's consistent excellence, M'Donnell's brilliant though rash hitting, Bonnor's occasionally magnificent play, the tireless patience of Bannerman and Edwards, and the late success of Lyons. the batting all through the remainder of the tour was unsatisfactory, untrustworthy and unequal to that shown by most of their adversaries. Time after time the fortunes of the tour ebbed and flowed, until people used to joke about having Beal up before the Jockey Club to explain the in-and-out running of the team.

Batting Disappointments

The most surprising thing of all was that the batting showed little or no improvement when with August the English summer started. There had of course been some fine weather in May, but June was detestable, and July indescribable. It was in the first days of August that Turner accomplished at Hastings his greatest achievement of the year so far as figures were concerned. He had already at Stoke taken thirteen wickets in a match for 48 runs, but at Hastings, just after the team had been washed out of the Oval, he actually took seventeen wickets for 50 runs.

Then came the August Bank Holiday, and with it the sunshine. But with the consequent good wickets there did not come any material improvement in the Australian batting.

It has always been an axiom with cricketers that, given good batsmen, the better the wicket the better the scores. Tried by this standard the Colonial batting cannot escape condemnation. It is true that the team beat Kent, but on the grand Canterbury ground they only scored 116 and 152, Gloucestershire at Clifton put them out for 143 and 126, and at Cheltenham again defeated them, dismissing them for 118 and 151.

At the Oval, on a wicket good enough for anything, they went down before the England bowlers for 80 and 100; at Nottingham, Attewell, Barnes and Dixon put

them out for 95 and 147. They did better at Portsmouth, but there there was literally no bowling against them; while at the Crystal Palace they had all the worst of a bad wicket.

They were helpless against England at Manchester, and, although they beat the mixed team at Harrogate, the victory was achieved as much by the bowlers as by the batsmen. Many cricketers will readily remember how Briggs and Peel dismissed them at Scarborough for 96 and 57, and, although they batted fairly well on the strangely treacherous turf at Holbeck, they were beaten there by Shrewsbury's team and again at Manchester, when Briggs and Lohmann (Pictured, below, left) actually put them out for 35, and this when the wicket offered no adequate excuse. It was after this miserable exhibition, when the bitter days of Nottingham seemed to have come back again, and the



tour looked like finishing up in failure and gloom, that a splendid victory was gained over the representative eleven of the South at Hastings, and that Surrey were beaten, after a gallant and plucky fight, by splendid all-round cricket.

Great Victories

We have purposely not mentioned in their places the two great victories achieved over England at Lord's and the North at Manchester. The Lord's game was played on a bowlers' wicket throughout, and the Manchester victory was due to one of the most remarkable batting feats that has ever been witnessed, McDonnell scoring 82 out of 86 runs by hitting unique in our experience for its rapidity, power, and daring.

At Lord's the Australians started with a score of 116, and this, with the ground in the condition it was, proved enough to win with. Our side were put out for 53, narrowly saving the follow on. The wicket was worse afterwards, and the Australians made 60. Turner and Ferris, with all the conditions in their favour, then accomplished their great historical feat of getting England out for 62 after W. G. Grace had begun the innings by scoring 24. This game, as well as all the other games, is described in the record of the tour which comes after this. If against the Lord's match we had only to set the match at Manchester, where England won the toss and the game, there would have been little to say one way or the other. Certainly we won the Manchester match more easily than they did the game at Lord's, but in each case the ground was not in a condition to play a Test match upon, and, while the Australians were admittedly not representative of the full strength of Australia, England had emphatically the best available side in the field. But there is the Oval match to be considered, and there, as we have said, the Colonial batting broke down utterly before our best bowlers, and, although

the challengers had first innings and nothing against them except the ever-to-be-lamented absence of Jones, they were never formidable from start to finish, and were badly beaten at all points of the game. We do not wish to make much capital out of this victory of the old country in the strictly international contests.

Unequal Australians

The Australians themselves would freely admit that the team of 1888 were not equal, or anything like equal, to the best contemporary eleven of England. It would have been a disgrace to have been beaten, and we are only speaking the simple truth when we say that England maintained her superiority. Of course the beating we had at Lord's in July is a recorded fact and will be remembered against us, but it was in no sense a defeat upon our merits, and not one Englishman in a thousand will feel it as belonging to the same category as our overthrow at the Oval in 1882.

The team who have left us have a good deal to be proud of besides the fluky defeat of England on a mud-heap. There are the splendid series of victories with which they opened, the excellent drawn game with Cambridge after the University had scored a first innings of 332, the triumph over the Past and Present

of Oxford after being 72 runs behind on the first innings, the complete beating administered to Middlesex, the keen and victorious engagement with the M.C.C., the startling successes over the North and the South, and the double defeat of Surrey. These are achievements which are more than enough to stay the hand of anyone disposed to write down the tour as a failure, while the vigour and thoroughness of the Colonial cricket on these and other occasions compel the impartial critic to declare that Australian cricket stands far higher to-day than it did two years ago. And yet no sooner has this judgment - which we believe to be a true and candid one - been pronounced than there come before our eyes the shadows of the matches at Brighton and Leicester to bewilder us, and the indelible figures which chronicle the triumphs of Humphreys and Arthur Hide in the one game and of Pougher and Arnall-Thompson in the other to protest against too favourable a conclusion, and to show us, however we may decide upon this motley and self-contradictory collection of facts, that no judgment will be regarded as final or universally accepted as satisfactory.

(Part 2 will be in the next VW)

The tenth West Indies side to visit England after gaining Test status fifty years ago covered themselves in glory under the astute direction of their captain, Clive Lloyd and the manager Clyde Walcott, of the Three W's fame.

Blessed by ideal conditions such as they enjoy in their own islands, for it was the hottest summer within living memory, they kept the Wisden Trophy, outclassing England in the last three Tests after drawing the first two.

Only a few months earlier the West Indies men had undergone a disastrous tour in Australia and then met India in four Tests on their own soil where they won two and were beaten once.

Before they arrived in England in May it was questioned whether they would be stale from so much continuous cricket. Many of their batting performances in Australia had been reckless, but apart from a repetition of this malady in the first innings of the Lord's Test they generally knuckled down to the business on hand and showed themselves to be a splendid set of players who enjoyed their cricket as well as providing first-class entertainment.

Only four of the seventeen players were strangers to first-class cricket in England, Michael Holding, Raphick Jumadeen, Collis King and Albert Padmore, but King had played for Nelson in 1974 and 1975. The majority had extensive experience in county cricket and, indeed, several were indebted to their individual counties for their development into top-class Test performers.

By the time they had completed the tour Lloyd and his team claimed easily the best first-class record of any West Indies combination in England for their results were even better than the glamorous 1950 side when those two spinners, Ramadhin and Valentine, mystified the cream of England's batsmen. The following details speak for themselves:

Year	Captain	Pd	Won	Lost	Dwn
1928	RK Nunes	30	5	12	13
1933	GC Grant	30	5	9	16
1939	RS Grant	25	8	6	11
1950	JDC Goddard	31	17	3	11
1957	JDC Goddard	31	14	3	13
1963	FM Worrell	30	15	2	13
1966	GS Sobers	27	8	4	15
1969	GS Sobers	19	2	3	14
1973	RB Kanhia	18	7	1	10
1976	CH Lloyd	26	18	2	6

With a little welcome to the 2020 West Indies, a look at the record and the Editors' introductory notes on the 1976 West Indies tour. (*Wisden, 1977*)

Barry Richards, perhaps the greatest batsman of the early seventies, has virtually turned his back on cricket writes Alan Lee. He works for a freight company in Australia, driving vans in a public relations capacity, and he insists that he has not missed the game. His revelations on the way his life has changed are remarkably frank, perhaps because, as he says, "I have never seen the sense in being anything but blunt. That is probably why so many people don't like me."



Africa to play in the projected series against a World team.

"That is entirely up to the South African selectors," he says. "If they pick me, I will play. But the reaction to me at home is not good. The public seem to think I have let them down by playing somewhere else for the past few years. My answer is that there were 10 years, at my

Richards is 34 and the most poignant victim of the political policies which have prevented South Africa from playing the strongest side they have ever possessed in Test cricket. He might have become the finest batsman the world has seen, but he has never had the chance to prove it.

"Throughout my cricket life," he recalls, "I have been labelled a mercenary. I didn't see it that way. I believed I was fighting for a better deal for cricketers, and I can see the benefits of that campaign in the sort of living that David Gower, for instance, is able to enjoy."

Richards played for Hampshire for 11 seasons, with growing disenchantment, until he quit midway through the 1978 season. About that, he harbours no regrets.

"I have had no contact with cricket for several months," he told me on his alarmingly brief visit to England for the International Batsman of the Year competition. "I have not kept in touch. I haven't even looked at the scores. The reason I have not missed county cricket is that it was so predictable. This past summer, you could have told me the time on any one day, and I would have told you what the Hampshire players were doing. The routine was stifling. It might have been different if there had been an escape, in the form of a tour or some Test matches. Gordon Greenidge, my opening partner for so long at Hampshire, had that release and enjoyed it. There was nothing else for me."

The something else, for Richards, finally came along in the shape of World Series Cricket, the ultimate challenge to his status in the world's batting order. Perhaps even that came a little late.

"I wish it had been five years earlier," he agrees. "There is no use pretending I was at a cricket peak, technically or mentally, during the two years of WSC. But I did play some good innings. I was proud of my century in the Super Test Final against the Australians in the second season - but, even for that, I took flak for being too slow. I have just come to realise that, no matter what you do in this game, you will not satisfy everyone."

Richards is to spend this winter in Perth, still driving freight vans and playing again for the Midland-Guildford grade club he first graced in the 1976-77 season. In March, he may return to his native South

best, when I could have deserted them by qualifying for any other Test country. I refused to do that because, despite all else, I will always be a South African. The country has made great strides in recent times, not just in the cricket field which interests me so much, but in general life. Barriers have been destroyed and there has been a visible breakdown in apartheid policies. It is up to the rest of the sporting world to give us a chance."

Although Richards claims that cricket has no further attractions for him, he retains a loyal interest in the game's future. He believes that the coming few months are critical. "There are plenty of scars left over from the Packer affair, believe me. This winter will sort out a lot and, if we can get over that and make the Australian series a success, we have a chance of lasting peace."

On a more personal line, the man who has charmed the most cynical cricket watcher with strokes of which so few are capable may take his immense talents to Holland.

"I would like a cricket job there," he says, "because I have been to England 14 times and yet never seen the continent. Every time, I have flown in and flown out again, and the very structure of the county game means that the summer is written off. But if you asked me what I would be doing in five years' time, I just would not have a clue. I have no ties and I mean to enjoy myself, without being beholden to anyone. I used to plan long-term, to try and map out my future. But I realised that you so rarely reach any goals anyhow. Now I am living for the present, and I refuse to look beyond the current year."

Batting	M	I	NO	Runs	HS	Avg	100s	50s
Test	4	7	-	508	140	72.60	2	2
First-Class	339	576	58	28336	356	54.70	80	151
List A	233	229	17	8506	155*	40.10	16	50

Bowling	O	M	Runs	W	BB	Avg
Test	72	3	26	1	1-12	26.00
First-Class	6126	274	2886	77	7-63	37.50
List A	270	5	185	7	2-8	26.40

This article by Alan Lee appeared in the Sydney Herald, November 1979.

“Naughty Wickets In The Nineties”

EIGHT times during the 1890s a first-class fixture ended in a day. Inevitably the indifferent pitches of the time by exposure to rain and sun were the cause. In part three of this series featured in VW 12 the story of Somerset’s four one-day defeats in the space of seven years was told. Part 4 tells the story of the other four one-day finishes in the nineties are dealt with. The first two took place at Lord’s involving M.C.C. matches, the remaining two were championship fixtures at Leicester and Southampton.

June 1st, 1891: M.C.C. v. Nottinghamshire

It was anything but the glorious first of June for the Midland County. The last fortnight of May had been notable for even more appalling weather than usual and a bigish crowd watching the soft ground steaming under the first sunshine of the year anticipated there would be plenty of fun ahead.

So did W. G. Grace leading the M.C.C. for on winning the toss he put Notts in, a Notts team weakened by the absence of two of its principal stars - Arthur Shrewsbury and J. A. Dixon. They were put out for 21 in 25 overs, ‘Mr Extras’ was top scorer with six and seven batsmen were dismissed without scoring. The analyses of the M.C.C. bowlers were:

Ferris 13-7: 7-6,
Rawling 12-8: 8-4.

Grace made one or two tart remarks for the benefit of his wicket-keeper in being so slack as to allow four byes. Grace and Ferris then went out and passed the Notts total without being parted. Whereas M.C.C. had need to use only two bowlers, Notts felt obliged to try seven although the pitch was still proving difficult. No one could expect to stay very long at the crease but five M.C.C. batsmen made useful contributions in the total of 127 which left Notts obliged to score 106 to avoid an innings defeat.

They never got near doing it for although their opening bat C. W. Wright going in with William Attewell promoted from No. 7 put on 37 for the first wicket and knocked Rawling out of the firing line, Ferris now found a new partner in devastation called Phillips, a fellow Australian. Between them they shared the Notts second innings wickets:

Phillips taking 5-30 and Ferris 5-25 to finish with 11-32.

Notts were all out again for 69 leaving M.C.C. winners by an innings with 37 runs and time to spare. Altogether the M.C.C. had four Australians in their side and as Pope made 31 the club’s top score and W. L. Murdoch one-time captain of Australia did well, this match must go down to history as the one in which Marylebone’s match winners all came from ‘Down Under’.

There is no record of what the ‘Old Man’ had to say about that!

May 2nd, 1894: M.C.C. v. Sussex

No season in the long history of Lord’s has ever begun so sensationally as did 1894. In order to secure a good attendance at the annual dinner of the M.C.C. that night it was decided to follow the precedent of 1893 and begin the opening game on a Wednesday.

The weather was typical of the early Mays of our own time - cold and cheerless but not withstanding there was a big crowd. It was the usual story of the ball beating the bat throughout the match which started at five past twelve and was all over by twenty past five. M.C.C. fielded eight amateurs but it was their three professionals who took the honours of the day. In the first innings in which Sussex survived only 75 minutes and were out for 42:

F. Martin took 7-12
J. T. Hearne took 3-27.

When M.C.C. replied Sussex savoured a rare and satisfying sight, W. G. Grace clean bowled for a duck. Parris who did the mighty deed went on to return 6-44 and Fred Tate supported him with 4-48 and the club just managed to top three figures thanks to 44 by A. E. Stoddart.

Then it was the turn of Martin again and W. Mead the other professional in the M.C.C. ranks. Martin added 4-17 thus coming out of the match with 11-29 and Mead took 6-39. Sussex could muster only 59 which left M.C.C. the winners by an innings and two runs with ample time for several noggins before the all-important dinner.

June 10th. 1897: Leicestershire v Surrey

This was the shortest first-class match ever played in the hunting county. It took place on the Aylestone Ground just down the road from the present Leicestershire headquarters at Grace Road, being completed in four and three-quarter hours including intervals and breaks between innings.

Surrey made no more than 164 but it was enough to give them victory by an innings and 94 runs, Leicestershire being dismissed for 35 both times. Richardson and Hayward bowled unchanged in both innings and needed only 48 overs and 4 balls to dismiss the home team twice. Richardson’s match figures were 12-20, Hayward’s 7-43. No-one made double figures in the Leicestershire second innings (cont’d...)

It was the familiar story of a pitch treacherous after rain but it supplied a lesson for all teams in such conditions, one I am afraid which has not been absorbed. I will content myself with quoting the final sentence of Wisden's account of the match without comment: 'It should be stated that the Surrey men, having seen their opponents fail while adopting cautious methods, went in for hitting, and the policy met with admirable results.'

May 27th, 1898: Hampshire v Yorkshire

To contribute to your own financial downfall and be perfectly aware you are doing so is a fate happily spared most men but it happened to the Hampshire bowler, Harry Baldwin.

His benefit year was 1898 and what better match could he have than Yorkshire at Southampton. The first day of the match was washed out. Destiny had moved the first pawn against the unfortunate Baldwin.

In those times Hampshire relied a great deal on service officers to strengthen the side, particularly the batting, but all these had been called away for military manoeuvres - the second move on the chessboard of one man's fate had been made. The third was the treacherous state of the pitch and the bowling of

Schofield Haigh to exploit it. He hit the stumps ten times and had a match analysis of 14-43.

The game began at noon and ended at five past six. Hampshire going in first were put out for 42. Haigh varying his pace with consummate skill and breaking the ball viciously had the following figures: 15-4-10: 21—8.

Finally and ironically Baldwin checkmated himself. He hit back by clean bowling both Yorkshire openers, that formidable pair, J. T. Brown and John Tunnicliffe, and having Denton and Haigh caught. This gave him the best Hampshire bowling figures of 4-37 but Yorkshire's comparatively swift dismissal for 157 left Haigh all the time he needed to run through the home batting for the second time in the day.

Only one man, D. A. Steele, made ten in the two Hampshire innings and he was missed before he got to double figures!

Basil Easterbrook wrote a series of articles for Playfair Cricket Monthly in 1968 and 1969 on matches that were completed in a day, and I hope readers find them enjoyable.

The VW would like to thank David Hutchinson for setting the quiz in the last VW. There were 142 entries and 118 were all-correct. This put my abysmal score of three correct into stark perspective. The £50 Wisdenworld Gift Voucher went to Mike Ball (Mike can thank Abbey who drew his name out). Please see below the Questions and the Answers - all of which are in this years *Wisden*.

- 1: Who is the only England batsman to be out first ball of the innings in a World Cup match and who was the bowler that dismissed him? *Graham Gooch and Eddie Brandes (page 228)*
- 2: Who holds the record of scoring the most runs in an Australian Test summer? *Rickie Ponting (page 897)*
- 3: Who was the last man to score a Test double century in what turned out to be his last Test match innings? (Not current players) *Jason Gillespie (page 215)*
- 4: Who was the last West Indies spinner to take 10 wickets in a Test match against England? *Lance Gibbs (page 871)*
- 5: Who is the only England bowler to take a wicket with the first ball of a Test match twice? *Geoff Arnold (Page 448)*
- 6: Who is the only England bowler to take a wicket with the first ball of the innings in a World Cup match and who was the batsman he dismissed? *James Anderson and Will Porterfield (page 288)*
- 7: Who with 9 has scored the most successive half centuries in one day international cricket? *Javed Miandad (page 974)*
- 8: Who was the last Wisden schools cricketer of the year to go on to play Test cricket for England? *Joss Butler (page 820)*
- 9: Who is the oldest man to score a Test match 50 while batting at number 11? *Pat Symcox (page 866)*
- 10: David Warner made a pair at Old Trafford in 2019 but who was the last Australian opening batsman prior to Warner to record a pair in a Test match in England? *Ross Edwards (page 410)*

Thank you again to David Hutchinson - and congratulations to Mike Ball.



Thank you to Bob Bond for allowing us to use the above. We will be using more in future issues of The VW.
The 'Desert Island' drawings that have been featured recently were first used in the WCC publication
'Desert Island Wisden.

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