

# The Virtual Wisdener

No 22 October 10th 2020.

The Newsletter of the Wisden Collectors' Club

Sometimes I ramble on in these introductions and I forget that new people are being sent the newsletter for the very first time (I am sure there is a song in those last few words)...so a very warm welcome to all, to this the 22nd Virtual Wisdener. Prior to the events of this year a quarterly newsletter (The Wisdener) was sent out to all members of the Wisden Collectors' Club (WCC), but from early April this amazingly technically advanced Virtual Newsletter has been going out. By receiving this you are a member of the WCC. As of yet we do not have a club tie, any designs will be considered. I hope you find something of interest in the pages that follow.

After a short break in Devon with my lovely wife Lorraine (no daughters, both are now at University and to be honest finding it very surreal and a little tough...as are the vast majority of young people), I am back refreshed, invigorated and completely 100% focussed on...what was I saying.

Congratulations to Essex and Nottinghamshire for winning the Bob Willis Trophy and the Vitality Blast competitions. Back in May/June it looked unlikely we would get any cricket but thankfully we did and whilst it was odd at least we had something.

The mere mention of the Vitality Blast leads me onto something which I am not sure is unique to me, in fact it could be something I should not mention, but I know you won't tell anyone and after all, who reads this stuff anyway? But while driving down to Devon I looked at my Sat Nav and as with most Sat Navs it gives me the time of arrival ie 2.28, the minutes to go ie 104 and the miles to go ie 76. Am I the only person in the world who looks at it and sees Other Teams' score, Runs needed and Balls left? Is it me? Is it!!! HELP! I have tried to put a few different things in this newsletter - and I will be honest, the tightening of restrictions and the coming months are going to be very very tough - so I will be sending out the newsletter a little more regularly. I hope no one minds. Also, as I have said from the start of this, I will continue to offer 20% off on Wisdenworld. The sale is not ending.

The people at Wisden Cricket Monthly are keen to work together on an offer for all WCC members and I believe that a small percentage of whatever you pay will be given back to the WCC - this will be donated to our chosen charities. The next newsletter will have more details

I hope you enjoy the attempt at a funnies page at the back, if anyone has something for that page or anything else, please get in touch. The next panel questions are also below.

I am out of breath typing this, now I need a glass of Bread and Butter Pinot Noir and its only 4pm on a Saturday. Other Pinot Noirs are available.

Be safe and thank you to one and all for accepting this newsletter

Bill, Lorraine and the girls Abs and Libs who we are missing quite a lot.

## Why are you receiving this newsletter?

Since the Virtual Wisdener began back in April the number of people receiving it has grown to 'rather a lot' and hopefully it has continued to be what it started out to be - a little bit of something different during a time of ——— (fill in appropriate word or words, because there are so many to describe what we have all been through)

For those of you who are new or who have recently began receiving the newsletter a very very big welcome and I hope you find something in it that you like.

If anyone would like any previous editions of the newsletter please let me know and I will email them to you.

A Little Poser - How could a cricket hat-trick span three overs?

If you send in your answer then one randomly drawn out correct answer can win a copy of the latest edition of The Nightwatchman.

Contact details on page 9.

## Wisden 2021

A massive thank you to everyone who has pre-ordered the 2021 edition.

I know that I announced the offer far earlier than I have ever done, but my feeling is that the 2021 will be a very desirable edition and I believe it will be one of the first to sell out in a long time. If I am wrong I apologise in advance.

The details for the 2021 are on page 9.

## The Next Virtual Wisdener Panel

I would welcome your thoughts on the following questions. Please feel free to answer in as much detail as you wish and I will endeavour to print as many as possible.

1: In your opinion and given the circumstances, was the 2020 English domestic season a success, please give your reasons either way.

2: Is the structure of the Bob Willis trophy something you would like to see continue?

3: What was the last Wisden you purchased and why?

4: What are your thoughts on the following statement - Next season, more than ever, the English game needs The Hundred.

5: What are our overseas readers hoping to see in the way of cricket in your up and coming summer?

Your views are important. Contact details on page 9.

# The Bowlers Holding The Batsmans Willey

## Sex shop sponsorship is storm in a D-cup

**Southport Trinity CC's choice of sponsor for their first season in the ECB Liverpool Competition has caused a number of red faces. The ink had barely dried on their deal with the Nice'n'Naughty adult shop before the league management committee weighed in with the censor's red pencil.**

Trinity, newly promoted from the Merseyside and Southport Alliance, were instructed to withdraw from the agreement immediately and given a dressing down for "setting unacceptable standards, particularly in relation to junior cricket".

The club had already circulated publicity pictures of two Trinity players, together with the Nice'n'Naughty manageress, holding aloft the shirt outside the shop, in the heart of the sedate Lancashire coastal town. But now, should any player have the temerity to wear one of the sponsor's shirts in any game at any level, the club would forfeit points won.

"We're a bit surprised by the reaction, to be honest," says Trinity chairman Colin Maxwell, whose view was echoed in a local newspaper poll showing more than 50% in favour of the club. "The shop may not be to everybody's taste but it is a legitimate high street business. The deal was worth around £600, which may not sound much to some clubs but we're fourth in the pecking order in this town and it's a hell of a lot to us. And, of course, we had to pay for all the shirts we can't now wear."

Predictably, an attempt to persuade the Competition hierarchy to refund Trinity's outlay fell on stony ground and league secretary Chris Weston maintains: "The club accept that this deal is not in the best interests of the league. We are trying to attract young players and strengthen junior cricket and this does not set the right example." Now for the own goal... The 2006 Competition handbook features an advert for the shop, giving its address, phone number, website and opening hours.

*Liverpool Daily Post 2006.*

## Golden Memories

**Getting out first ball sticks long in the memory for anyone, but especially if you are a hat-trick victim to the world's greatest bowler - and it's not your fault.**

Devon Malcolm suffered six golden ducks in his Test career, so is a stalwart of the Primary Club, and none

were more memorable than in Melbourne during the 1994-95 Ashes Test: Shane Warne's third wicket in succession.

Malcolm is philosophical about making unwanted history: "I don't mind being in the hat-trick from one of the best bowlers in the world - the top Test wicket-taker of all time. It was a good ball - if I did what I said I was going to do when I walked out, I probably would have hit him for six. But Stewie (Alec Stewart) convinced me, at the non-striker's end, to play a defensive shot. I told him it didn't matter where it was going to pitch because I was going to swing hard."

But Devon is convinced Stewart has to shoulder some of the responsibility. He explains: "When I was walking out, I said don't worry, anywhere he pitches this it is going in the stand because I am going to swing from the ring. Unfortunately Stewie says: 'It could be the flipper, it could be the zooter.' I say: 'Stewie it doesn't matter to me, I don't care what he bowls, I don't know what he bowls, I play the line and swing.' But he convinced me to play a defensive shot. So Stewie has to take part of the blame. That is not my game - playing defensive shots against Shane Warne on a hat-trick - that is a silly way for a No. 11 to get out. Get out caught on the boundary, fine, or skying one - bloody well caught bat-and-pad, that's unforgivable!"

*The Cricketer 2007.*

**Chris Cowdrey was a victim of the strange year in Test cricket when the selectors decided to give every cricketer in England who had not so far captained England a chance to do so"**

*Miles Kington in The Independent, 1988*

## 1936

**Hot drinks were served** in the morning on the field in many matches during a very chilly May.

**Cricket is a game for eleven-a-side. During the recent tour of the MCC in Australia this short, simple and self-evident fact seems to have been largely forgotten or ignored. The behaviour or misbehaviour of crowds and the Press reactions thereto the world over lead inevitably to the main question:**

Are Test Matches between England and Australia to continue, and, if so, are they really worthwhile?

D.R. Jardine, his opening words in his book, In Quest of The Ashes.

**"I don't really enjoy Test cricket that much"**

Chris Tavare, after making 35 runs in five an a half hours in Madras.

# Your Next England Touring Party for Australia

Two newsletters ago I asked the question that if you had to choose a touring party NOW to take on the next England tour to Australia (scheduled for 2021-22) who would you take. Australian readers could also choose a squad on the same basis for the same series

Let us all look ahead 12 short months and whether you are Australian or English, choose an **18-man** squad to fight for The 2021-22 Ashes. Your squad must contain two wicket-keepers and you must nominate a captain. I know it is a little unfair on Australian readers as you have had no cricket since the start of the year but give it a go please. One other proviso, the squad must contain **two** players that have **never** previously played TEST cricket.

Considering the truncated season I received some interesting choices and a lot of duplications, which was to be expected.

<b>A</b>	Bairstow	Bess	Archer	Foakes.
Root (C)	Stokes	Virdi	Crawley	Stokes
Buttler	Kohler- Cadmore	<b>F</b>	Curran (S)	Woakes.
Foakes	Broad	Root (C)	Burns	Leach
Burns	Archer	Sibley	Leach	Bess.
Sibley	Wood	Burns	Stokes	<b>K</b>
Crawley	Woakes	Crawley	Woakes	Parkinson
Malan	Curran (Sam)	Malan	Bairstowe	Leach
Lawrence	Overton (Craig)	Pope	Anderson	Crawley
Pope	Bess	Stokes	Buttler	Sibley
Stokes	Leach	Buttler	Parkinson	Burns
Curran (S)	<b>D</b>	Northeast	Foakes	Root (C)
Higgins	Root (C)	Livingstone	Gregory	Malan
Bess	Broad	Broad	<b>I</b>	Pope
Virdi	Buttler	Curran	Root (C)	Duckett
Wood	Stokes	Archer	Burns	Woakes
Archer	Wood	Wood	Sibley	Buttler (batsman)
Chappell	Archer	Woakes	Crawley	Foakes
Anderson	Curran (S)	Stone	Malan	Stokes
<b>B</b>	Bess	Bess	Lawrence	Curran (S)
Root (C)	Burns	Foakes	Buttler	Broad
Archer	Sibley	<b>G</b>	Foakes	Mahmood
Bess	Foakes	Crawley	Stokes	Archer
Broad	Leach	Jennings	Abell	Davies
Burns	Crawley	Bairstowe	Wood	<b>L</b>
Buttler	Pope	Buttler	Broad	Bess
Crawley	Robinson	Foakes	Overton (C)	Sibley
Curran	Mahmood	Davies	Curran (S)	Libby
Foakes	Lawrence	Curran	Archer	Northeast
Leach	Jennings	Stokes	Woakes	Malan
Livingstone	<b>E</b>	Wood	Crane	Root
Mahmood	Root (C)	Mahmood	Bess	Crawley
Parkinson	Sibley	Archer	<b>J</b>	Burns
Pope	Burns	Malan	Sibley	Lamb (Lancs)
Sibley	Crawley	Sibley	Crawley	Buttler
Stokes	Pope	Root (C)	Root (C)	Foakes
Woakes	Stokes	Parkinson	Pope	Stokes
Wood	Curran	Bess	Malan	Overton
<b>C</b>	Buttler	Woakes	Hain	Archer
Burns	Foakes	Stone	Salt.	Wood
Sibley	Broad	<b>H</b>	Archer	Woakes
Crawley	Archer	Root (C)	Wood	S Curran
Root (C)	Wood	Broad	Broad	Porter
Pope	Anderson	Sibley	Anderson	
Banton	Robinson	Wood	Sam Curran	
Buttler	Leech	Pope	Buttler	

**Squad A was chosen by nine readers:**

David Bown, Ed Fishlock, Ray Bannon, David Ingle, Steve Abrahams, John Tyler, Ollie Handley, Jeff Wishart and Julie Slater.

*David Bown who chose squad A: - "I've reluctantly stuck with Root as captain though I'm not convinced about his leadership qualities. A spot of crystal ball gazing has resulted in four currently uncapped players. I'm far from convinced about any of the batsmen. Nor the bowlers for that matter. Oh dear!"*

*Julie Slater - "Anderson is in but my heart ruled my head on that one - I should have gone with Woakes."*

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**Squad B was chosen by eight readers:**

Richard Reardon, Liz Davies, Phil McBride, Eric Goodhead, Jan O'Neil, Chris Waterson, Barry Underhill and David Pearce.

*Chris Waterson - "Livingstone is an exceptional talent but I have a feeling he may be one of the games great under-achievers, it is a risk choosing him."*

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**Squad C was chosen by six readers:**

Andy Hall, Mark Hilton, Keith Russell, Ben Roberts, Ian Casey and Jane Thompson

*Keith Russell - "The areas I paused on were Anderson, but decided time to say goodbye, certainly in Australia: Ollie Robinson, but others ahead of him and taking only two spinners, but can't think of a third, and we do have a good crop of quickies."*

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**Squad D was chosen by five readers:**

Alan Newman, Jenny Booth, Kevin Lentos, Brian Wilsted and Nick Adamson

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**Squad E was chosen by five readers:**

Bob Summer, Paul Craven, Giles Falconer, Karen Derbyshire and Chris Price.

*Giles Falconer - "There are obviously a fair number of imponderables here – will Root still be Captain? Will Buttler have made enough runs to keep his place despite his weaknesses as a red ball keeper? Will Anderson still be firing on all cylinders? Will Mark Wood be fit? Plus the way Ed Smith and co have pulled players with average records from county cricket into the Test squad (step up Zak Crawley – and he did!) may mean there will be surprises with players not even talked about at the moment being brought into the team between now and the Ashes tour.*

*Anyway, taking the stipulations on board, I have largely gone with a conservative selection – most of the players chosen are in/around the current squad. Gone are Moeen (sorry Mo), Woakes (less effective overseas) and Joe Denly (a good player selected a few years too late in his career, in my opinion). My 'uncapped' players selected may well be Test players by next year, though the temptation to choose two Ollie Robinsons had to be resisted fiercely. Ollie the keeper from Kent is a fine young player whose day may come, but for the moment I'd rather see Foakes in the team (though I suspect he'll be the reserve).*

*The balance of the team may raise some questions – only 5 specialist batsmen, but I regard both Stokes and Buttler as batsmen who offer something else as well as runs, so in effect we have 7. I am also aware of the age and fitness record of our bowlers, and would expect to rotate their workload – at least that's the idea!*

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**Squad F was chosen by four readers:**

Mark Taylor, Stefan Williams, Charlie Weller and Lee Stephenson.

*Mark Taylor - "I have included Dawid Malan because he did well on the last Ashes tour and is currently in good form and Olly Stone because of his reputed pace as a fast bowler. Liam Livingstone can bat and is also a useful leg break bowler Sam Northeast deserves a chance. Sorry but no room for the evergreen Jimmy A or for Moeen Ali."*

*Charlie Weller - "Foakes should be the England wicket-keeper and Buttler if in form should play as a batsman."*

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**Squad G was chosen by three readers:**

Jack O'Neil, Kim Bowman and Chris Davenport.

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**Squad H was chosen by three readers:**

Trevor Bedells, Frank Birch and Sandra Bowden.

*Trevor Bedells - "Having isolated myself in a darkened room, and fortified by copious amounts of falling down water, this selector has picked the following squad to win back the Ashes in 21/22. Fairly tried and tested, but one or two unknown quantities. Is Sir Alistair available?*

*First reserve - Furmedge W. also, I believe, as yet, uncapped. Loaded with bowlers I know, but bowlers win matches, batsmen save them*

*Time to head back to the darkened room, now where's my gin?"*

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**Squad I was chosen by three readers;**

Christopher Rowsell, Mark Carpenter and Craig Dyson.

*Craig Dyson - "I think the bowling, if used in rotation and sensibly can hold its own...the batting is weak."*

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**Squad J was chosen by two readers:**

Nick Gilligrass and Lauren Blake.

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**Squad K was chosen by two readers:**

Oscar Trowman and Bill Andrews.

*Bill Andrews - "I like the look of the Lancashire keeper Davies and I feel that Buttler can hold his own as a batsman, so Foakes should play. Overall my squad seems for want of a better word, naive, but we need to take a chance of some players."*

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**Squad L was chosen by one reader:**

*Tim Fennell - "Lamb of Lancs looks to be a cracking prospect, but I see no room for Broad and Anderson who have consistently under-performed in Australia."*

Thank you to everyone who contributed.

### Keith Miller - the captain who never did the obvious

**Captaincy is 90 per cent luck and 10 per cent skill ... but for heaven's sake, don't try it without that little 10 per cent.**

**There will be many who consider that heresy. To them the captains tagged with the word 'great' are a class above the normal mortals who gambol and gamble around the cricket field, sometimes playing outstanding cricket but often, as players, not quite reaching the greater heights. As far as I know, there has never been a captain labelled as great who has not been lucky.**

It is the 10 per cent skill which is brought in at that point. The captain who sees an opening and goes straight for the jugular is the one who is drinking the champagne at the end of the day. The one who muses about it for an over or two before belatedly making the nerve-tingling decision, or taking the incredible gamble, is the one who reads about the next Test series from the comfort of his living-room, sipping from a cold can or an iced glass, according to his habit, and making slightly sarcastic comments on the quality of leadership being displayed by his successor. He has trouble deciding whether to have scrambled or fried eggs with his bacon and is never completely certain in which lane he should be on the motorway. Or he makes it to the commentary box where, I can assure you, it is all much more simple.

The very best captain I ever played under was Keith Miller (Pictured, top, Right). When I came into the New South Wales team in 1948-49 Arthur Morris was captain and he would, in my opinion, have gone on to captain Australia instead of Ian Johnson had the New South Wales selectors not decided to make Miller captain of the state. As Australia's administrators regarded Miller as a rebel and not quite the right style of chap to make the speeches on tour, he was never allowed to play his rightful part in Australian cricket. But he was a magnificent cricketer and a great captain. No one under whom I played sized up a situation more quickly and no one was better at summing up a batsman's weaknesses. He had to do this for himself when he was bowling and it was second nature for him to do so as a captain.

Miller became captain of the New South Wales team on returning from England in 1953 and under his leadership the state side began what was to be a run of nine successive Sheffield Shield championships. He retired in 1956 and then Ian Craig and I followed on.

In his first match as captain we played Queensland in Brisbane in November 1953, on a splendid batting pitch with a temperature in the 90s, and had the misfortune to lose the toss. Ray Lindwall bowled the opening two overs from the Pavilion or Members end and Jack Clark bowled two from the Stanley Street end. After Lindwall had bowled his third, Miller waved me across to bowl the sixth over of the game.

'Nugget,' I said, 'the ball's still new.' 'Don't worry about that,' he replied, 'it'll soon be old. Just think about the field you want. Now we'll have a slip and a gully and a silly-point ...' At

that stage he must have caught sight of my face and he said, 'It's all right, it'll spin like a top for an hour.

We've got a great chance to bowl them out.' I took five for 17 before lunch and we could have had the whole side out if a catch at the wicket and a stumping had not gone to ground. The batsman was Ken Archer, a fine player for

Queensland, who made a century and, with Peter Burge, saw the side through to 354. When I went in to bat on the second day we were a disastrous 85 for four and 'Nugget' said as I walked past him, 'You'd better get stuck into it out there, give 'em a bit of stick.' Arthur Morris and I put on 264 in 180 minutes and it was the start of my captaincy apprenticeship.

With Morris, Miller and Lindsay Hassett, my apprenticeship was always likely to be interesting. One of the dicta drilled into me over the years has been that you should always obey your captain or vice-captain. Sometimes though you are not quite sure which one should take precedence. I was twelfth man in the First Test match against South Africa in December 1952 in Brisbane and the game provided me with a marvellous example of that.

It was one of those matches where you don't really want to be twelfth man. It coincided with the worst heatwave experienced in Brisbane for 10 years and towards the end of proceedings Keith Miller went down with a throat infection and was unable to take any further part in the game. It meant I was on the field all the way through South Africa's final chase for victory. Before that, however, we had the rest day of the Test and, therefore, the rest night on the Saturday evening — no Test cricket on Sunday in those days.

As the youngest player in the side, I had been given the privilege of rooming with vice-captain Arthur Morris, a man of vast experience and one who had a sound knowledge of what went on on cricket tours and on the evenings prior to rest days. We had a couple of drinks and a quiet dinner with some of the team but when we were on our way upstairs we had to go past skipper Lindsay Hassett's room. A party was in full swing. We looked in for a few moments, said hello, and then reached our own room without too much trouble, whereupon Morris proceeded to give me a very, very stern lecture on what was to happen if anyone came knocking on our door during the evening. 'Just remember this,' he said. 'Under no circumstances are you to open that door to anyone during the night, particularly if it's the captain who comes along.' 'Why is that?' I asked innocently. 'Well,' he said, 'the captain is a great chap, but at times he has an impish sense of humour and if he decides he'd like to wake up someone in the middle of the evening before the rest day it's not a good thing to be part of that. I'm telling you again, under no circumstances open the door to anyone.'

At 2 a.m. there was a knock on the door, a knock repeated quite loudly a dozen times. But after I had half woken up I



suddenly thought, ah, remember what Arthur said: '... under no circumstances open the door to anyone.' I dozed off, full of self-congratulation that I had remembered the instructions. Then the telephone rang and instinctively I reached out and picked it up, whilst at the same moment someone began hammering on the door.

I said 'Hello' into the mouthpiece and a voice in my ear stated, 'Someone is knocking on your door.' 'Gosh, thanks very much,' I said. I got out of bed, opened the door and Hassett pushed past me and walked towards Morris's bed — Arthur was now well awake and glaring past Hassett at me. 'I thought I bloody well told you not to open the door,' he remonstrated. Hassett sat on the edge of the bed, held out his hand and said to Arthur, 'Do you have a match? 'I'd like to talk to you about my golf swing!' After our skipper had left, an hour later, Morris was kind enough only to say, 'Mark it down in your book of experience, son, and never ever open the door to Hassett at 2 a.m.'

I was very lucky I played with New South Wales when the state was so strong. Morris, Lindwall and Miller were marvellous players from whom to glean experience and the chance to learn captaincy from them was one of the best things which ever happened to me. They knew all there was to be known about the playing side of the game, and the intricacies of blasting or winking out the batsmen, keeping up team spirit and, above all, winning. Losing captains litter the footpaths of cricketing cities all over the world and I was taught by them very early on that there is no percentage in losing but a big one in being the victor.

The hallmark of Miller's captaincy was that he never did anything ordinary, or rather he never allowed anyone to believe it was ordinary. He had already impressed me with his unorthodox methods that day in Brisbane and, from that time on, I tried to adapt them to my own personality and technique on the field. Sometimes he would try something very unorthodox and he was always prepared to buy wickets. The only thing he demanded was that his bowlers did exactly as he asked and not make him look foolish. Quite right too. When the captain says jump, no matter how it might be phrased . . . then everyone should jump.

One of the most extraordinary things I ever saw Miller do as captain was bowl out a Sheffield Shield team for 27 on a good pitch. We had started the 1955-56 season with a first-innings win over Queensland after Ray Lindwall, who was by then their captain, had put us in to bat. Three weeks later, in November, we met South Australia at the Sydney Cricket Ground and got off to a good start when Warren Saunders and I scored half-centuries. Then came a sensational collapse and, when we had slumped to 215 for 8 with 40 minutes to go, Miller made one of his surprise declarations. Out behind the Members Stand, however, the storm clouds were massing and not a ball could be bowled that evening. Miller had steam coming out of his ears and stalked off the field muttering something along the lines of, 'Just wait until I get these jokers tomorrow.'

It rained most of the night and, despite the pitch being fully covered, there was a 15-minute delay before we could get on

to the field. Miller then took seven for 12 from 7.3 overs and, with Pat Crawford taking three for 14 at the other end, South Australia were in again before lunch. They made 252 in their second innings and Miller bowled just six overs of medium pace and took 0 for 19. He had made his point and it was one that the South Australians never forgot. When they batted a second time Les Favell and David Harris opened the innings and were still together shortly before lunch when two South Australian supporters from Adelaide arrived at the Members entrance to pick up their tickets. 'What's the score?' they asked the gatekeeper, but he didn't answer. When they walked inside and saw the scoreboard on the Hill showing 12 for 0, Favell five and Harris seven, there was a long silence and then one turned to the other and said, 'Well, I suppose it's pretty slow . . . but the first-innings points are what matter. They'll push it along a bit more after lunch!'

In that period when Miller was being looked at as the possible Australian leader, one of the things which stood between him and higher captaincy honours was the fact he was an outstanding bowler. I first saw him when the Services team returned to Australia in 1945 and he bowled against Sid Barnes at the Sydney Cricket Ground. Barnes made 154, having been dropped by Hassett in the gully off Miller before he had scored. From that season, Miller was always bracketed with Lindwall as Australia's fast bowling pair and they were the equal of any fast bowling combination the game has seen.

As a captain Miller was no great theorist. Some of the captains I have seen over the years have had more theories than an Australian bullock driver had vocabulary, but Miller believed the game was played best by those players who were natural cricketers rather than forced cricketers. There was no better example of this than Miller himself, nor was there ever a better example of a cricketer who could have played in any era and been an eye-catching favourite with everyone who followed the game. He taught me many things either by word or by example. Two things stood out though in all the time I was serving a self-styled apprenticeship. The first was never allow the game to fall into a routine — as soon as it looks like doing that, pull something out of the hat which will surprise the opposition, even if it surprises your own players as well. The second was ... win.

Miller was one of the greatest competitors ever to step on to a cricket field and he never allowed the opposition to forget it, whether he was batting, bowling or captaining the side. He saw plenty of losers in his time, even backed a few of them among the winners he had on the racecourse, but he was always desperately keen to avoid looking at the dressing-room wall and thinking of what might have been. He was, for all his flamboyance, fairly shy when it came to things like making speeches or what one might loosely term good deeds. In fact, he would be horrified if anyone thought that under the brash man's exterior there lurked a generous heart. But the idea of having him stand up at Fishmongers Hall in London to make the speech, as captain of Australia, in reply to Lord Justice Birkett was too much for our administrators. What a waste!

## George Orwell on Cricket

**George Orwell's attitude towards cricket has all the endearing perverseness and contradictions so characteristic of the man and the writer. His self-confessed 'hopeless love affair with cricket' up to the age of about 18 (of course, like so many cricketers, he says he was 'no good at it'!) coincides with his time at the hated 'St Cyprian's' preparatory school and later at Eton.**

As an Etonian who wanted to belong to the working classes, Orwell's manifest affection for cricket is sometimes mixed with a certain defensiveness. Recent research has shown that his so often trumpeted masochistic loathing of his schooldays was something of a sham. His schoolmate Cyril Connolly suggests this, and even in that great hymn of execration of St Cyprian's, 'Such, Such were the Joys', Orwell admits that he had 'good memories' as well as a horde of bad ones.

Orwell loved to emphasise how spotty, gangling and unloved he was as an adolescent, a failure with girls and regarded as a 'swot'. (He won a scholarship to Eton, a bad sign). Cricket may have been an escape for him. He loved this 'leisurely game' because it was so unhurried and English, and he smiled at the 'ill-defined' rules and endless post-mortems in village pubs. He associates it with village life, but already in his review of Blunden's *Cricket Country* (1944) is forced to ask: 'Will cricket survive?'

Even then Orwell saw the game threatened by increasing urbanisation, the pace of modern life and the erosion of the principle of 'fair play'. (Those who doubt Orwell's powers as a prophet, would do well to reflect!). He laments the fact that it is being played less by children than it was, and is being supplanted by what are, in his view, infinitely inferior games like golf and tennis.

In the Blunden review, Orwell argues that cricket has a 'socially binding quality' and is not, contrary to what its detractors (like 'Beachcomber' and 'Timothy Shy') say, a 'snobbish' game, unlike golf. And yet, in his marvellous essay on Raffles and Miss Blandish (1944), Orwell contradicts himself by declaring that cricket is 'predominantly an upper-class game', expensive to play and exclusive. It is significant that he refers wistfully on several occasions to the Eton and Harrow match (which he attended in 1921) as a sort of mystical apotheosis of the game.

He chides Kipling (whom, characteristically, he both disliked and admired as what he called a 'good bad poet') for allegedly deriding the Eton and Harrow match. It seems that Orwell regarded the match as symbolically 'English', like red buses and pillar boxes

This is a lovely piece sent to us by Derek Kenyon, one of our Australian readers. It was written by David Heald and it is from 1988. It is believed it first appeared in *The Cricketer*.



and bowler hats. Even if it is forgotten, he writes in *The Lion and the Unicorn* (1941), England will still be England.

Orwell's piece on E.W.Hornung's *Raffles* is revealing. Here he avers that cricket is 'not in reality a very popular game in England' and yet it is quintessential<sup>^</sup> English in being bound up with concepts like 'fair play' and 'playing the game' (Orwell

defends Sir Henry Newbolt (Pictured, below), against left-wing critics). *Raffles* is a cad and a snob (for Orwell, 'Paradise to Raffles means Piccadilly and the MCC!'), but he is an English cad and snob, so far preferable to the sadistic thugs of American pulp fiction represented by cricket' is still an ethos respected by Raffles. He is still, after all, an 'amateur cracksman', and not a professional.

Orwell clearly regarded what he called the 'anti-cricket school' as unpatriotic, and rumbustiously attacked the 'endless jibing at every English institution — tea (Orwell wrote a delightful piece on the merits of putting tea, rather than milk in the cup first), cricket, Wordsworth, Charlie Chaplin, kindness to animals, Nelson, Cromwell and what-not'.

In his essay on 'Boys' Weeklies' of 1939, the main thrust of Orwell's argument is that the Frank Richards-style stories in *Magnet* and *Gem* paint a snobbish and class-ridden picture of school life. These weeklies, Orwell argues, so riddled with dated expressions like 'yaroo!' and 'frabjous', so redolent of cricket, fagging, can-ings, ragging and crumpets in front of the boarding house fire represent an escapist indoctrination of the young of all classes. And yet, unmistakably, beneath the apparent censoriousness, one senses a deep affection for a vanished world. Frank Richards's spirited and hilarious defence of his stories was appreciated by Orwell and included in his collected essays.



Cricket for Orwell is England. In his *Homage to Catalonia*, he describes in moving prose a journey in a boat-train, returning to London from his participation... (Cont'd...)

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as a combatant in the Spanish Civil War. He lovingly views the slumbering wilderness of outer London, with its red buses, blue policemen and the posters telling of royal weddings and, of course, cricket matches. Even the Spanish Civil War itself is somehow associated with cricket as when Orwell notes that the Spanish royalist colours could easily be mistaken for those of MCC! He castigates deluded left-wing intellectuals who 'think war is a cricket match', and finds it logical that the Nazis should proscribe such a gentle and resolutely un-modern game as cricket. Sniggering at the old-fashioned ethos of 'it's not cricket' is, for Orwell, precisely what is wrong with the 20th century.

Not surprisingly, Orwell remembers an incident from the early 1920s with vivid clarity twenty years on. At a village cricket match, he witnessed a display of petulant bad sportsmanship by the local squire questioning and finally overturning the umpire's decision: 'I was only a boy at the time, and this incident seemed to me about the most shocking thing I had ever seen.' Now in 1944, Orwell continues, so much do we coarsen with the passage of time, he would merely enquire whether the umpire was the squire's tenant as well!

Affectionately as he views cricket, Orwell was well aware of the growing 'competitiveness' of the professional game. In his Raffles essay, he instinctively feels that body-line bowling is 'not cricket', and in *The Sporting Spirit* of 1945 condemns the 'rough tactics' of the 1921

Australians under their captain W.W. Armstrong. For Orwell, the genuine unadulterated game was village cricket.

Though as far as we know he never played cricket seriously ('I never had a cricket bat of my own', he twice laments in 'Such, such were the joys'), George Orwell retained a life-long feeling for the game. His sister Avril recalls, not without chagrin, 'interminable games of French cricket when he (Eric) always seemed to be in and we were always vainly trying to get him out'. Her recollections, published in the recent volume *Orwell Remembered*, firmly give the lie to Orwell's own allegations that he had an unhappy childhood.

Denys King-Farlow, a contemporary of Orwell's at Eton, and co-editor with him of *College Days*, for which Orwell wrote a cricket piece for the 1920 Eton-Harrow match at Lord's, remembers non-serious games of cricket in which 'Blair (pseudo wet-bob) sometimes batted and fielded with unsuspected expertise'. Clearly if he had owned his own cricket bat, he would have become even more proficient. Incidentally, is it only a coincidence that the central character in Orwell's novel *Coming up for air* is called George Bowling?

George Orwell cared about cricket, and cared about the direction it was taking. One suspects that even before the war, he felt it was taking the wrong direction. Were he alive now, he would find his worst fears realised. And yet one senses that even if the bombs came raining down (as he predicted they would), Orwell felt -and hoped - that England, and cricket, would go on forever.

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## One Run is Enough

**When Merv Hughes was lbw to Curtly Ambrose (Pictured, below, centre) - the tall Antiguan's 10th wicket of the match - soon after lunch on the fourth day at Adelaide, Australia were reeling at 74 for 7, their chase for 186 to win the match and the series seemingly forlorn. But determined batting from the tail-enders saw Australia - already one-up in the five-match rubber - inch closer to their goal. Tim May, already a hero after taking 5 for 9 on his home ground in his first Test for four years, revealed unsuspected batting talents as he shepherded his side towards a famous victory.**

When debutant left-hander Justin Langer was caught behind for 54, made in 253 minutes from 146 balls, the score was 144 for 9 — still 42 needed — but May and last man McDermott stuck at it, taking their side to within one run of Test cricket's third tie. With five wanted, Richardson dived at mid-off and almost caught McDermott, but nonetheless saved precious runs. With two needed, McDermott toe-ended a pull at Walsh and Haynes stopped the ball at short leg. Then, after 88 minutes of mounting tension, McDermott, who had, by and large, abandoned his policy of stepping away to leg to the quicker bowlers, tried to swivel out of the way of the last ball of Walsh's 19th over. A bouncer, predictably enough, the ball went from glove to helmet-peak and thence through to a jubilant wicketkeeper Murray. West Indies had won by one run, the narrowest margin of victory in Test history.

It had been an engrossing match from the beginning. West Indies made a bright start after winning the toss, raising 100 in 31 overs before lunch for the loss of Simmons and Richardson. Three quick wickets went down after the interval, two of them to off-spinner May, but another impressive innings from Lara and a jaunty knock from Murray took the visitors to 252, Hughes taking 5 for 64.

In indifferent light Australia lost Taylor third ball, and then the debutant Langer, a left-hander who scored over 4000 runs (22 centuries) in club cricket for Dover in 1992, had his helmet split by a Bishop bouncer. After attention he continued, but little more play was possible in a day shortened by 56 minutes by the weather. Australia were 2 for 1 (Boon 1, Langer 0) by the close. Langer was playing only because of a freak injury to his WA team-mate Damien Martyn, who had been poked in the eye during fielding practice by Australian coach Bob Simpson.

The 4th Test match of the West Indies tour to Australia in 1992-93 resulted in one of the closest contests of all-time. We hope you enjoy this article taken from Wisden Cricket Monthly and suggested to us by Danny Graham.



Boon took a nasty blow on the left forearm from Ambrose on the second morning, and had to retire hurt for the first time in his 69-Test career. Mark

Waugh replaced him, and escaped a confident leg-before appeal first ball only to give a catch to third slip off the next. After a rain interruption Langer (20 in 98 minutes) was caught off the glove while hooking. More rain and bad light forced an early close on a day which saw only 140 minutes' play: Steve Waugh, dropped by a diving Murray off Ambrose when 27, had made 35 of Australia's 100 for 3, while Border, needing 70 to supplant Sunil Gavaskar as Test cricket's leading run scorer, had 18 to his credit.

Border added only one more on the third morning before falling to Ambrose, one of three wickets in nine balls for the angular Antiguan. Healy soon followed, for the first half of an eventual 'pair': it was a mixed match for the dapper Queenslander, who during the game passed Bertie Oldfield's tally of 130 dismissals, to lie third on Australia's wicketkeeping lists with 137, behind Rod Marsh (355) and Wally Grout (187). Australia were rescued from 112 for 6 by a gutsy stand of 69 between the restored Boon (who ended the innings with 39 not out) and Hughes, whose innings top-score of 43 included a hooked six off Bishop. Hughes and Warne (second ball) fell in the same Hooper over. May looked unlucky to be given out after the ball appeared to hit him on the arm, and Ambrose wrapped up the innings at 213, finishing with 6 for 74.

West Indies, leading by 29, made an indifferent start. McDermott, sharper than in the first innings but guilty of several no-balls, removed both openers, and then inflicted a 'pair' on Arthurton. Only Richardson lasted for long, rushing to 50 from 56 balls, whereupon he pulled and swept sixes off Warne. Border bravely persevered with the leg-spinner, and was rewarded when Richardson charged down the pitch, edged, and was both caught and stumped by Healy for 72. When he had made 46 Richardson, who was playing in his 67th match, became the seventh West Indian to score 5000 runs in Tests (after Richards, Sobers, Greenidge, Lloyd, Haynes and Kanhai).

From 137 for 5, West Indies declined to 146 all out — their lowest against Australia since 1975-76 (128 at Sydney) — in the face of a remarkable spell from May (Pictured, below, left). Spinning the ball significantly,



the local man flighted the ball well and extracted some bounce from the pitch as he took 5 for 5 in 32 balls. It was the first five-wicket haul of May's Test career, and came only a year after he had been dropped by South Australia after struggling to regain full fitness after the 12th operation on his injured knee.

Seventeen wickets fell on the third day, but the pitch was not to blame for the batsmen's struggles.

And so the fourth day — Australia Day — dawned. The home side needed 186 to win the new Frank Worrell Trophy, a replica of the lost original having just been completed by Melbourne silversmith John Atherton. Victory would have given Allan Border, captaining Australia for the 74th time to equal Clive Lloyd's overall Test record, a series win over West Indies for the first time in seven attempts (four as captain). As the tension mounted the crowd grew to 14,113, giving a match total of 57,573 after daily attendances of 17,485, 16,020 and 9955.

Australia suffered an early blow when the solid Boon went for a duck, lbw to one from the inevitable Ambrose which kept rather low. Taylor's disappointing series continued when he fell for 7: his double failure cost him his place for the final Test at Perth.

Newcomer Langer and Mark Waugh took the score to 54, but then all seemed lost as five wickets went down for 20. Soon after completing 1000 runs in his 18th Test, Mark Waugh was caught at second slip, then, first ball after lunch, his twin departed when Arthurton juggled but held onto a catch at cover. Border, protecting his face, gloved a wicked bouncer to Haynes, then Healy played on (Walsh's 1000th first-class wicket). And when Hughes was lbw Australia stood at 74 for 7, their victory target seemingly impossibly distant.

Langer (Pictured, top, right), May (on his 31st birthday) and McDermott then defied the pacemen, who became increasingly frustrated: Ambrose was warned for intimidation by umpire Hair, whose colleague King later dished out a similar warning to Bishop. The crowd cheered every run and applauded defensive shots: the strains of Waltzing Matilda could be heard at times. In

the end it all boiled down to just one run. One edge through the slips, one no-ball, one lucky nudge off the hip . . . but one run was enough for West Indies.



David Frith:

MUCH more of this kind of Test cricket, with its four days of continuous and excruciating tension, and the one-day game could be threatened! The nation almost came to a standstill as Australia pulled themselves out of the wreckage of 74 for 7 on the fourth afternoon and regrouped for a most gallant rearguard. Little Langer, who so resembles Graeme Fowler, had recently spent five days in bed with concussion after a blow on the helmet while fielding in a Shield match. Now, in his first Test innings, he took another stunning blow on the head, and in the second innings he shamed his elders with a gutsy 4'fi-hour resistance which would have done John Edrich proud. He should be back in England this summer, not making further thousands of runs around Dover way but with the Australian Test team. To be unsentimental about it, top-order batsmen are supposed to battle it out. But here at Adelaide it was Australia's last three, bowlers all, who attracted the arc-lights of legend. The West Indian quicks, as is their custom, employed merciless brute force. Warne (72 mins). May (135 mins) and McDermott (88 mins) copped it sweet, as they say around these parts. At times, May looked more like Peter than Tim as he presented a brave straight bat. He needed no great sixth sense to predict where the ball would be. The swinging yorker, the off-cutter and the slow ball have minor places in the West Indian heavy artillery, which zeroes in almost exclusively on the ribcage.

*And yet if there was anything more worthy than May's effort it was McDermott's, for he had been branded — not entirely without justification — as a coward by the West Indians. His lower-order batsmanship, once so useful for its midwicket hits, had disintegrated after Walsh had inflicted an horrific gash above the right eye in Jamaica two years ago. But 'Billy', with the eyes of the nation upon him, now forced himself to get into line: well, most of the time. Those 40 tenth-wicket runs by him and May were among the most remarkable in Test history, for in spite of Spofforth and Trumble and Willis and Botham, never in Test cricket's dozen or so hair's-breadth finishes can such lethal denial have been directed from both bowling ends.*

*Curtly Ambrose further underlined the shortage of options open to any batsman in the world when facing him. Rod Marsh says he has Holding's rhythm, Garner's height and Roberts's temperament. It is no exaggeration, and it gives even the cockiest of batsmen no foundation for confidence at the prospect of opposing the Antiguan giant.*

*The interminable short stuff from Ambrose, Bishop, Walsh and Benjamin could almost have been construed as a fitting memorial to that distasteful Bodyline Test at Adelaide Oval 60 years ago. In 1933 it was felt that a riot was imminent as two Australians were severely injured at the crease. Had one spectator leapt the fence .... Here, in 1993, one young man did run on to address his personal feelings to one of the West Indian bouncer merchants. Neither he nor the ICC legislation on intimidation has had any effect on the pattern of the attack. Fast bowlers grizzle at the restriction on shoulder-high deliveries, but they merrily continue dropping short and aiming for desperate surrender by the airborne batsman as he jabs helplessly. Not a pretty sight.*

*The subtlety of spin, scoffed at by Richie Richardson, was well worth watching, but it was the overall contest, on a pitch offering a little something for everybody and with only three half-centuries being notched, which left players, umpires and onlookers exhausted. Out of hopelessness came the chance for Australia to regain that long-lost Worrell Trophy. In fact it suddenly seemed a thrilling certainty. Then the reformed coward, just when he should have been distancing himself from the rearing ball, got his glove in the way. All kinds of tears fell as Test cricket's narrowest victory / defeat was completed.*

#### QUOTES

*What can you say — one run? It's very disappointing. It was a couple of brilliant spells by Ambrose which made the difference.*

*Allan Border*

*I've never seen a bowler like him (Ambrose) for prolonged accuracy. I have no doubt he is the best in the world.*

*Richie Richardson*

*May batted for his country in a way which would have confused any British officer looking for an Australian to blame for their past failures in battle.*

*Malcolm Conn in The Australian*

*I was interested to hear Michael Holding say that Curtly is still learning. I hope he doesn't leant too much more.*

*Allan Border*

*Our game (the 1960-61 Brisbane tie) was the first of a series and, when it came to the last ball, it might still have been a draw. At Adelaide, everything depended on it and the excitement was far greater.*

*Sir Garfield Sobers*

*What Walsh rescued, with the wicket that gained his side the narrowest winning margin in Test history, was a sporting dynasty. West Indies have not lost a series for 13 years. This result keeps the sequence alive at least another week.*

*Alan Lee in The Times*

**QUIZ...With prizes. I know, a quiz with prizes, yes, a quiz with actual prizes...I know you can't believe it but its true.**

**Because both our daughters area way at Uni everyone who answers the following questions correctly will be put into a very very big hat - you could say it is actually a Sombrero - and Lorraine, my beautiful assistant will draw out 15 winners. The first five will each receive a copy of the latest edition of The Nightwatchman and the next ten will receive a copy of the October issue of Wisden Cricket Monthly. All correct answers please either by email or normal mail - details on Page 9.**

**Here you go:**

- 1: Which four counties were the beaten Quarter-Finalists in this years Vitality Blast?**
- 2: Name three West Indies cricketers who have received a Knighthood?**
- 3: What was played for the first time on January 5th 1971?**
- 4: In what year was the first edition of The Cricketer published?**
- 5: Victoria scored 1107 in an innings, against whom?**
- 6: How many overs a side was the Gillette Cup Competition in 1963?**

**See how many you can get without picking up a Wisden or five!**

## As I Get Older I realise:

- \*I Talk to Myself because sometimes I need the best advice
  - \*Sometimes I roll my eyes out loud
  - \*I don't need anger management, I just need people to stop annoying me.
  - \*The biggest lie I tell myself is "I don't need to write that down, I'll remember it."
  - \*As a child I thought a nap was a punishment, now I try to squeeze one in.
  - \*The day runs out of red wine is just too awful to think about.
  - \*'Getting lucky' means walking into a room and remembering why I am there.
- 



"What did you and Megan put on Trump's Get Well Card?"  
"Stay Positive."

---

## Women's 'Arse Size'

A new study reveals interesting findings. The new study is about how women and how they feel about their arse's and the results are fairly interesting.

- 30% of women think their arse is too fat.
- 10% of women think their arse is too skinny.

The remaining 60% say they don't care, they love him, he's a good man and they wouldn't trade him for the world.

---

## 'Hello Mead, I saw your father play in 1911.'

The words shouted at Philip Mead during the England tour of 1928. The spectator was somewhat confused as it was Mead himself who had toured in 1911.

## 'I was fascinated by an adorable girl.'

Ted Dexter, explaining his delayed arrival for his first season at Sussex following Cambridge University's tour of Copenhagen, 1957.

## 'The slow motion replay doesn't show how fast that delivery was'.

*Richie Benaud*

'Ray Illingworth has just relieved himself at the pavilion end.' *Brian Johnston, BBC Radio*

**It was a county match in England between Somerset and Glamorgan. An unknown batsman with unknown talent, named Vivian Richards was at the crease. Greg Thomas, the Glamorgan fast bowler thundered in and beat the great man's bat. 'It's red and it's round. Can't you see it?', the bowler taunted Richards. The next ball was an action replay. The ball pitched three quarters of length on middle and off, seamed away, and once again Richards was all at sea and comprehensively beaten. 'It's red and it's round and it weighs four-and-a-half ounces. Can't you see it?', Greg Thomas quipped. Richards took a stroll, summoned his powers of concentration, swung his arms around, took a fresh guard and got ready for the next ball. Greg Thomas came running in. The delivery was right in the slot, and Viv launched into one of his trademark shots and smashed the ball out of the ground and straight into the river that flowed around it. The maestro told the hapless bowler who almost died watching the ball go, 'You know what it looks like... now go and get it!'**

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## Cricket explained to an American

You have two sides, one out in the field and one in. Each man that's in the side that's in goes out, and when he's out he comes in and the next man goes in until he's out. When they are all out, the side that's out comes in and the side that's been in goes out and tries to get those coming in, out. Sometimes you get men still in and not out. When a man goes out to go in, the men who are out try to get him out, and when he is out he goes in and the next man in goes out and goes in. There are two men called umpires who stay all out all the time and they decide when the men who are in are out. When both sides have been in and all the men have been out, and both sides have been out twice after all the men have been in, including those who are not out, that is the end of the game.

---

**That tough cricketer Brian Close was fielding close to the wicket at short leg when the batsman produced a full blooded pull shot and the ball hit the fielder hard on the side of his face. Amazingly it flew straight up in the air and the batsman was caught at slip. 'My God,' said a worried fielder going up to check on Close. 'What would have happened if he'd hit you right between the eyes?' 'In that case,' growled Close, 'the bloke would have been caught at cover.'**

---

**Daryll Cullinan was on his way to the wicket, Shane Warne remarked that he had been waiting 2 years for another chance to humiliate him. 'Looks like you spent it eating,' Cullinan retorted.**

**Yorkshire 232 all out, Hutton ill - I'm sorry, Hutton 111. John Snagge, BBC News.**