

I remember sometime in the early 1970's watching TV on a Saturday tea-time, I think it was the Cliff Richard show and at the start he looked straight into the camera and said 'We are live and to prove it the latest score in the final is 1-1. I have often thought what year it could have been, or what final, but the point of this irrelevance is to mention that as I write this it is 1.21 pm on Friday May 22nd and the headline on the BBC Website Cricket page is - LISTEN: 2019 World Cup Rewind - England v West Indies...so this, the latest VW, is almost live.

I am guessing that around the same time as the Cliff Richard Show, The Two Ronnies or Morecambe and Wise would have been headlining on the BBC and by an odd, strange, uncanny coincidence (*Bill, this is a convoluted way of making a point...*) in a recent and ongoing survey those two comedy duos are in the top three of 'who makes you laugh out loud'. Still time to send your thoughts in, please have a look at the box on the bottom right of this page.

Cricket still seems to be very slowly moving towards a resumption, but quite rightly, nothing is definite and the steps are very cautious ones. A tentative date of July 1st has been proposed. I understand that England bowlers have started taking part in staggered sessions and these are under strict guidelines. Batsmen and wicket-keepers are resuming on June 1st and there is also news that Northamptonshire are looking at allowing up to 1,500 people into matches, again only if the 'science' allows according to County chairman, Gavin Warren. There is a sense of hope, rather than anticipation right now.

This bank holiday weekend three of us Furmedges were due to set off on our annual trip to West Sussex for a music festival...I know you all think that I live, eat and breathe Wisdens and you are right, as some of the classic songs we were due to listen to included: The Shane Warne classic, 'The Twist': Muralitharan's hit - 'Eye of the Tiger': The Graeme Hick Test match sensation 'Another One Bites The Dust': The Mike Brearley 1981 favourite, 'I'm a Believer': That classic from Ed Gittins, 'Sugar, Sugar': The Kevin Pieterse hit 'You're so Vain' and lets not forget the Ian Botham No 1 - 'All Night Long'.

But, alas, our plans like those of the whole country have been scuppered so instead Lorraine has ordered a 'Silent Disco', for those of you who don't know what one of those is, it is just a way to embarrass me in front of our socially-distancing neighbours. In the grass area near our front door we will set up some chairs and a BBQ, as will three or four of our neighbours, we will then (after copious amounts of alcohol) stay 2 metres apart and silently disco....trust me, I never thought in all my wildest nightmares that I would be doing this, but as a famous 70's presenter of The Generation Game often said, 'hey ho'.

As always, take care and be safe

Bill (Dance lessons urgently required), Lorraine (Best dancer ever),

Your Questions answered.

Thank you for your questions. Hopefully in the next Wisdener I will be responding. It has been great fun receiving them. Also in the next Wisdener the results of the latest quiz, IQ2 will be announced along with a selection of your 'Touring Squads.' In case you missed the Touring Squad poser, it is repeated at the foot of the penultimate page.

If anyone would like to send in a question to me, please feel free.

As I wrote in the previous VW, please send me any questions you would like an answer to (Wisdens, prices, what to buy, not to buy, my business, buying, selling, etc etc...I am afraid that Chemistry, Biology, Physics and Dadaism are *still* not my strengths) - your questions can be simple, detailed, nosey, whatever you want.

A little apology if my rantings are too much for you. I promise you that if they are and you wish to unsubscribe, your name will be taken off the list and I will not pester you.

A Very Odd Question.....Pt 2

After setting this poser in the last issue, I had no idea that the response would be so great, so I am extending it for a wee while so I can actually get organised and announce the winner in the next issue, in fact on that note

- Up for grabs in this poser are three copies of a DVD entitled 'Death of a Gentleman - The Biggest Scandal in Sport' (Described as one of the finest documentaries on cricket). And five copies of the latest Wisden Cricket Monthly.

To win one of the eight prizes tell me - **the only thing you have to do is to tell me who is the 'entertainer' (or 'entertainers' if a double-act) that makes you laugh out loud. Past or present who gives you a real old fashioned belly-laugh.**

Eight people who respond will be drawn out of the 'hat' by Abbey and allocated one of the prizes, as Libby's pay demands are still extortionate and now ACAS are involved.

1902

Australia all out for 36 against England at Edgbaston.

1912

In the opening Test of the 1912 Triangular Tournament, playing against South Africa at Old Trafford Jackie Matthews took a hat-trick in each innings. He took the last three wickets in South Africa's first innings, to prevent them avoiding the follow-on later the same day, 28 May 1912, he took a second hat-trick in the second innings

1826

George Parr, English cricketer (legendary Nottinghamshire batsman, 1st England touring captain) was born in Radcliffe on Trent, Nottinghamshire.

1955

G. L. Jessop died on may 11th at the age of 80. Jessop will always be remembered as one of the most remarkable 'hitters' the game has ever produced. In a career lasting from 1894 to 1914 he scored 53 centuries, including five double-centuries, but only once did he bat for over three hours, when he scored 240 in 200 minutes for Gloucestershire v Sussex at Bristol in 1907. His highest score was 286, also against Sussex at Hove in 1903, made in 175 minutes.

1927

Wally Hammond scores his 1,000th cricket run of the season after 22 days

1930

Australian batsman Don Bradman scores 236 for Australia v Worcestershire in his first 1st class innings in England.

1934

On May 9th, Australia scored 481-5 declared against Cambridge University at Fenner's, with Ponsford hitting 229*, Brown 105 and Darling 98. Don Bradman was out for a duck, the first time he had failed to score in England. The bowler was J.G.W. Davies. In the University's first innings, Grimmett took 9-74.

1934

On May 28th, Sir Jack Hobbs scores his 197th & last first class cricket century at 51 years 163 days.

1935

Northamptonshire County Cricket Club gained (over Somerset at Taunton by 48 runs) what proved to be their last victory for 99 matches, a record in the County Championship. Their next Championship win was not until May 29, 1939.

1946

Popper of Australia hit the winning runs off the fourth ball of the last possible over at 7 pm, to win the First Victory Test match against England at Lord's.

1950

In the England v The Rest Test trial, Jim Laker bowling for England had first innings bowling figures of 14-12 2-8.

It Happened in May (Pt 2)

1942

Ama Singh, one of the best fast bowlers ever produced by India died at the age of 29, succumbing

to typhoid at the height of his career. He had toured England in 1932 taking 111 wickets at an average of 20.78. He subsequently became a Lancashire League player and he was released to play some matches for the 1936 touring team.

1963

The First one-day cricket competition begins with Lancashire playing Leicestershire at Old Trafford. Lancashire won by 101 runs.

1966

First day of Sunday play in county cricket in the match between Essex v Somerset.

1978

At Kingston the West Indies needing 111 to win with one wicket and 6.2 overs remaining were saved from possible defeat against Australia by a 'crowd disturbance' according to Wisden, or a 'riot' as described in the Sydney Herald, with the match being abandoned as a draw.

1979

On the 23rd of May the first ever edition of Wisden Cricket Monthly was available to buy.

1991

West Indian batsman Gordon Greenidge played his last Test cricket innings, scoring 43 vs Australia in Antigua. He hit 7,558 Test runs with an average of 44.72.

1910

A change in the law to allow six runs for any stroke that cleared the boundary without touching the ground. Prior to this date only strokes which sent the ball right out of the ground, and not just out of the playing area, counted six. Another significant law change was to the declaration law - a declaration now being allowed at any time on the second day of a first-class match, and not after the start of the lunch interval - as had been the case since 1900.

1865

The season opened at Lord's with a two-day match between M>C>C and the Knickerbockers, the former winning by an innings and 46 runs. In this match a new scoreboard and score box was used for the first time. It was stated that the scorers were now helped in being able to keep the bowling analysis, they having previously been disturbed and hindered on all sides by obstructive spectators.

1915

At the annual meeting of the M.C.C. the President, Lord Hawke, stated that it was very satisfactory to have registered an increase of nearly 70,000 spectators in 1914. Apart from it being what may be called a glorious summer, Lord Hawke hoped that brighter cricket and some extra keenness amongst the players were largely responsible for the increased attendance.

The Bowlers Holding the Batsmans Willey

Lower Standards? They always were...

England v Australia, Trent Bridge, June 4, 5, 6, 8, 9 1964, *Wisden* 1965, p292

On his return to the UK after several years living abroad, journalist E.M.Wellings wrote an article for the 1980 *Wisden* entitled 'Lower Standards', in which he berated the quality of cricket he found in England in 1979 as compared with when he left in 1973. As well as savaging the likes of Brearley and Randall, he was severely critical of the standard of England bowling, and selected a passage of play in the Oval Test against India to illustrate this. England had two overs to bowl at the Indian openers before an interval, but wasted the opportunity. Wellings observed: 'Shades of fiery Fred Trueman, who would have ensured giving those batsmen six balls of hell!'

Wellings may have had a point: there is nothing more tiresome than opening bowlers firing balls harmlessly past the off stump, especially when accompanied by a chorus of 'well bowled' from behind the wicket. But I think perhaps he was guilty of viewing the past through rose-tinted spectacles. Here is Norman Preston in the 1965 *Wisden*, writing about the First Test against Australia, when England were trying to bowl out Australia on the last afternoon: 'Trueman, who employed five slips, preferred to test O'Neill with a series of short-pitched, harmless bouncers. O'Neill, with unerring accuracy, hooked each of the first four balls of Trueman's second over for 4.' Hell? Perhaps, but if there was wailing and gnashing of teeth on that day, it probably came from the fielding captain, not the batsman.

Arguments are put forward in favour of transforming the great game into a thing of immense rapidity - a sort of Bolshevik cricket devoted to hurricane yorkers and 'swipes'. This, of course, would make quite impossible the science, the law and beauty which are the charm of cricket. *Manchester Guardian* editorial, 1918. *The end of the First World War had brought calls to liven up the game*

Popular opinion would be wrong if it ever thought that the 'M' in MCC could stand for misogyny. Quite the reverse is the case. But it may well be that in this changing world there would be one small part of a small part of London which affords refuge for the hunted male animal. *Former MCC secretary Jack Bailey, arguing against the admission of women into the Lord's pavilion, 1989*

In the first instance much of the credit for England's revival over the eighteen months belonged to Tony Greig, but when as England's reigning captain he did his secret deal with Packer, the authorities at Lord's instructed Alec Bedser and his fellow selectors to choose another, although none of the Packer signatories was precluded as a candidate to play against Australia. The honour of leading the team went to Mike Brearley, the Middlesex captain, who had been the vice-captain on the tour to India, Sri Lanka and Australia. And Brearley followed in the footsteps of Percy Chapman and Sir Leonard Hutton in regaining the Ashes at home. In the process Brearley equalled the feat of Peter May,

whose achievements as captain in 1957 were without parallel. Never before had the same man led England successfully through a Test series (West Indies) and his county (Surrey) to the top of the Championship in the same year as did May.

Now, Brearley led the winning England team and he kept his county, Middlesex, at the top of the Championship. Lord Hawke, captain of Yorkshire, led England on tour but not at home. F. S. Jackson led England but not his county, Yorkshire. A. W. Carr provides the nearest approach to May and Brearley. In 1929 he captained the successful Nottinghamshire side and he also led England against South Africa at Manchester and The Oval, but not through the whole series.

Brearley, a totally different captain from the volatile Greig, led his men with quiet efficiency. He is clearly a master in the art of cricket. He handled his bowlers skilfully and was ahead of Greig in field placing. As a batsman, with his special headgear for protection against the bumper, he averaged only 27, but was nevertheless the obvious man to take England on a winter tour of Pakistan and New Zealand. Unfortunately a broken arm caused him to return home and miss what would have been his first visit to New Zealand. It is a long time since I first saw Brearley in action. Back in 1961 when at the age of nineteen he was a Freshman at Cambridge and playing primarily as a wicket-keeper, he made 73 and 89 against the Australians at Fenner's. He batted number eight in the first innings, but opened the second and hit fifteen 4's, scoring altogether 162 runs in five hours, twenty minutes. This was a superb performance for a young man with only three weeks' experience of the first-class game. At times his academic career kept him in the background as far as cricket was concerned.

Wisden 1978

When the seventeen names were announced for the Australian tour, many of us were of the opinion that M.C.C. had chosen one of the strongest sides ever to be sent overseas. I am afraid that since then those ideas have been completely shattered. To my mind England's troubles began when the M.C.C. Committee found it necessary to withdraw their invitation to Wardle. That was a bold decision and one which M.C.C. took in the best interests of the game; but in the first place they should never have been placed in that embarrassing position. Yorkshire must shoulder the blame, for no sooner had they informed M.C.C. that Wardle would be available to tour Australia than the county decided to dispense with his services.

Wisden 1959

I was batting for Surrey when a bowler called out, "Can I have a snort leg for this guy please." At Sussex I heard cracks like, "Keep a tight line, Ed", and "that's a snorting delivery". But probably the best one was when I was taking a bit of stick in one match and someone called out, "Don't let them get up your nose, Giddo".

Ed Giddins, after the TCCB upheld their two-year ban for his testing positive for cocaine in 1996.

The Legacy of the "Little Wonder"

Alan Hill pays a centenary tribute to John Wisden.

Article taken from the *Cricketer International* (Spring Annual 1984)

The nightmare wicket resembled the thinning locks of an elderly gentleman's head and its preparation was akin to the urgent brush work with which he tries to conceal his balding crown. The pace where the ball pitched was covered with grotesque tufts of rough grass wetted and rolled down with equally futile results.

The outfield was a wasteland of ridges and furrows. John Lillywhite said that the only comparison between the ground and a billiard table was that both had pockets. This was hallowed Lord's, far from its immaculate self, in the middle of the last century. Upon the swamp-like pastures W. G. Grace, not then 20, demonstrated his genius by scoring 134 out of 201 for the gentleman against the players in 1868.

Eighteen years earlier John Wisden ("the Little Wonder" of Sussex) had proved too "fast and ripping" for the batsmen of the south of Lord's. Playing as the given man from the North, he took all 10 second innings wickets, all clean bowled. It was said that he "kept his break from the off from one to two feet throughout the innings." Wisden is one of the five Sussex players – the others are G. H. Bland, James Lillywhite, George Cox Senior and Ian Thomson – to take 10 wickets in an innings.

Wisden, tiny and frail in physique as a youngster although he stepped up into the welterweight class in later years, seems ill-cast as a cricketing hero. He was only five feet four inches tall and in his heyday he tipped the scales at a little over seven stone. Yet he excited the praise of his fellow professionals, including William Caffyn, one of a contingent of famous 19th century players.

Caffyn, is a great favourite at the Oval where he was known as the "Surrey Pet", said of Wisden: "He was the best fast bowler I ever saw for so small a man. He was a remarkably good-natured little fellow, with a most comical expression of face. He was a grand bowler with, I think, the easiest delivery I ever saw, and a great command of pitch. As a batsman he was first-rate, with a beautifully straight bat."

At Harrow where the school was never beaten by Eton during his four years as a professional bowler and cricket tutor, the Sussex man gained further acclaim. One observer said: "He has a perfect delivery, with a short but rapid run, a graceful and easy sweep of the arm, moderate pace, hardly a loose ball, and always on the spot."

John Wisden (Pictured, opposite) was born at Brighton on September 5th, 1826. His career spanned 18 years until an injury playing racquets coupled with encroaching rheumatism forced him to concentrate his efforts on promoting the game. He first played for Sussex in 1845

and he quickly soared to prominence. Against Kent at Hove in 1848 he took 15 wickets with slow underhand lobbs.

One of his most resolute batting feats in a career which produced over 4,000 runs as well as 2,707 wickets was achieved in the first county match played at Bramall Lane, Sheffield. In August 1855, Sussex beat Yorkshire by an innings and 117 runs. Wisden, opening the innings, scored 148 – his highest score – out of 292 to quell the home attack, which included Isaac Hodgson, the first of Yorkshire's illustrious slow left-arm bowlers.

Centuries were rare on the fiery wickets of Wisden's time, but he also hit a hundred against Kent in 1850. The innings included four sixes and these were scored against Edgar Willsher, a formidable left-arm bowler with a spiteful, lifting delivery.

Wisden, dapper and neat in his straw hat which he adopted in preference to the white topper worn by older players, reached his Zenith as a bowler between 1848 and 1859. In this period he averaged 225 wickets a season. His round

–arm deliveries, with his fast shooter invariably rattling the stumps, wreaked havoc in the summer of 1851. Wisden took an incredible 455 wickets in 43 matches.

In 1859 Wisden was a member of George Parr's

powerful England team which travelled to North America on the first overseas tour.

The English Professionals, after a terrible voyage across the Atlantic, did not lose a game and even local teams of 22 were overwhelmed.

In eight matches Wisden took 64 wickets. The tour ended with an innings victory over the XXII of the United States and Canada in a snowstorm at Rochester. Wisden's match tally was 29 Wickets (16-17 and 13-43) and his figures included a double hat trick – six wickets in six balls.

Before the rise of county cricket William Clarke and John Wisden and another Sussex man, James Dean, quickened the pulse of the game in England with their all-star touring elevens which attracted enormous crowds. Clarke had a reputation as a dictator – "his services to cricket were marred by over-tenacity in asserting his rights, real or otherwise," commented a contemporary writer. The consequence was that Wisden and Dean formed their own United England team as a rival group to Clarke's All-England men. (Cont'd...)



In 1855 Wisden began his prosperous reign as a London Businessman and sporting promoter. He was first associated with Fred Lillywhite as the proprietor of a cricket outfitters and cigar depot in New Coventry Street, off Leicester Square.

One of his sporting products was the celebrated "Catapulta", a curious device "borrowed from the Romans", who used it as a siege engine. It was designed to bowl at any length a batsman selected. The device was used in practice at Harrow School and models were sold at Lord's for eleven guineas each.

Wisden later moved to nearby Cranbourne square where he published his famous almanack for the first time in 1864. It coincided with the first appearance of W. G. Grace in major cricket. The annual was initially a primitive affair, consisting of only 112 pages (compared with around 1,300 pages today) and including mainly

scores.

In its first 20 years there were two other substantial cricket annuals and Wisden was slow to build up its popularity. The rarity of the first issue would seem to indicate low sales.

In 1870 the almanack underwent its first major overhaul and, in 1887, with the introduction of the Pardon family to the editorship, it established a format which was to last for 50 years. The enthusiasm and devotion of succeeding editors, notably the late Norman Preston, have ensured its place among sporting best-sellers.

John Wisden, the "thoroughly upright man, fast friend and generous employer" died of cancer at the age of 57 on 5th April 1884. The worthy almanack is his most enduring legacy to cricket. As a collector's piece, browser's pleasure and work of reference, it is in itself a

A Meeting With Harold Larwood - Richard Seekts

Dear old Harold Larwood was a true champion.

I was in Australia for the Melbourne and Sydney Tests in 1990-91 in hope of seeing a Gower century. I saw two! Staying with my sister in Sydney, I asked one of her cricketing friends if and how it would be possible to contact Larwood with a view to, perhaps, visiting him. "Look in the phone book", came the reply. I did.

I rang the number that Sunday evening, one of Harold's daughters answered and after a brief chat to reassure her I was a 25-year-old private individual there to watch the Test (this was the tour before the birth of the Barmy Army) and not a news hound, she checked with her parents and invited me to the house for 10am next morning. I hardly slept that night!

Arriving at Harold's house, I was greeted warmly by his wife, Lois, who offered me a beer (declined so soon after breakfast) and informed me quite firmly that Harold wouldn't be keen to talk about cricket and particularly the Bodyline series. My heart sank a little, what else was I going to talk about with an octogenarian former miner and shop keeper with failing eyes? The three of us sat together making small talk for a while - I think she was vetting me on Harold's behalf - and after a while she was satisfied the English visitor came only out of respect and admiration, and no harm would come of the occasion. Lois made her excuses and left the room. Moments later, Harold leaned towards me and announced quietly, "She don't like cricket," and suddenly the barriers were down.

He talked all about his days at Trent Bridge, Notts captain Arthur Carr - still "Mr Carr" to Harold - his first tour of Australia in 1928-29 and all manner of things. He was a big admirer of Archie Jackson, who scored 164 on debut at Adelaide in a match England won by 12 runs on the seventh day. I'm sure you know the sad story of Jackson who died four years later aged 23. My only regret is that at age 25 and without any time to do some homework before meeting the great man, I knew so little that I could ask him about without straying onto Bodyline, the elephant in the room. Lois was right, he was indeed reluctant to discuss that series in any detail but we did touch on it a few times and he positively enthused about other parts of his cricket career, always expressing gratitude to those who had helped him. He was still clearly upset by the way MCC treated him as a scapegoat after Bodyline but didn't, as I recall, blame anyone in particular.

Harold showed me much of the memorabilia in his cosy front room, mostly photographs which, despite being almost blind, he could describe in great detail while sharing anecdotes about the players in question. Without doubt the absolute high point of my visit was when he handed me the silver ashtray from his mantelpiece, a gift from Douglas Jardine when they got home from the 1932-33 tour engraved "To Harold for the Ashes, from a grateful skipper." My heart skipped a beat, I worried about dropping it but held on long enough to feel incredibly privileged before carefully handing it back.

Eager not to outstay my welcome, we brought our chat to an end. Harold signed a couple of things for me, we had photos outside his front door and I was away on a cloud of happiness, with a story that I've told many times in the last 29 years but have never written until now. What a day was 14 January 1991.



'That Underarm delivery'

Would you stick your hand in the fire if your brother told you to?

**Australia v New Zealand, Melbourne, February 1st 1981.
Third of Five Matches in the One-Day Final Series.**

The notorious underarm delivery that created one of the most controversial moments in world cricket history is still regarded as possibly the single most example of unsporting behaviour on a cricket field. The controversial bowl triggered a cold war between the two nations after the infamous day on February 1 when New Zealand needed six runs with one ball remaining to draw the match. But Aussie skipper Greg Chappell instructed the bowler, who was his younger brother Trevor, to deliver the ball underarm in a bid to prevent batsman Brian McKechnie any chance of hitting a six.

After the Test series, which Australia won comfortably, the countries met in the one-day finals (these were decided on a best-of-five basis), India having been eliminated at the preliminary stage.

New Zealand won the first of these games, in Sydney, quite comfortably. Two days later, in Melbourne, they lost the second when their batting let them down. The third, also in Melbourne, produced two lamentable incidents, for which this particular Australian season will be long remembered.

The first of them came when Greg Chappell, without doubt, the outstanding player on either side and Australia's regular match-winner in this competition, was given not out to an appeal for a low, diving catch at mid-wicket by Snedden off Cairns.

Australia, batting first, had reached 131 for one at the time with Chappell in his 50s. With the umpires, somewhat surprisingly, both claiming that they were looking for short runs rather than watching the ball, and therefore unable to give Chappell out, it was left to Chappell to accept Snedden's claim, strongly supported by Howarth, that he had made a clean catch. This he declined to do, though TV pictures showed that there was no question of the ball having been grounded. Chappell went on to make 90 and New Zealand had to make 236 to win.

The second, more far-reaching incident came when, with New Zealand needing 6 to tie off the last ball of the match, Greg Chappell instructed his brother, Trevor (Pictured, opposite), to bowl an underarm sneak to McKechnie, the New Zealand number ten, as an insurance against their getting them.

As the ball gently rolled down the pitch, McKechnie

blocked the ball before he tossed his bat to the ground out of anger and disgust.

Australia won the match but the hell that followed left the Chappell brothers struggling to cope under the pressure from the backlash.

Despite that underarm bowling was not ruled as illegal at the time, it was deemed 'an act of cowardice' and against the true spirit of cricket that cost New Zealand the tournament.

Not surprisingly this prompted widespread charges of poor sportsmanship.

The Australian Cricket Board, meeting by telephone hook-up, at once agreed that the playing conditions should be changed to prohibit the use of underarm bowling in the remaining matches of the competition. They also decided that, as no existing rule had been infringed, the Melbourne result, however regrettably achieved, must stand.

Mr. P. L. Ridings, chairman of the Australian board, said his board "deplored Greg Chappell's action" and had "advised him of their strong feelings on the matter and of his responsibility as Australia's captain to uphold the spirit of the game at all times". Chappell said himself it was something he would not do again.

Even the Prime Ministers of the two countries had things to say, Australia's Mr. Malcolm Fraser claiming that Chappell had "made a serious mistake, contrary to the spirit of the game". New Zealand's Mr. Robert Muldoon was more outspoken, describing the underarm delivery as "an act of cowardice". It was appropriate, he said, that the Australian team should have been dressed in yellow, a reference to the coloured strip favoured by Australia in these one-day matches.

Mr. Bob Vance, chairman of the New Zealand Cricket Council, described it as the worst sporting action he had ever seen. Victory at this cost, he said, was at the sacrifice of Australia's tremendously proud cricket heritage. Sir Donald Bradman totally disapproved of what had happened. Richie Benaud referred to the actions as being 'disgraceful' and "One of the worst things I have seen on a cricket field."



Harold Larwood aged 77 and living in retirement in Sydney, said it was "a bloody stupid thing to do", adding, "No-one in my time would have done anything like that."

A Sydney radio station said that several callers had urged that Australia's ambassador to New Zealand be recalled as an expression of national shame. There were charges, too, that the substantial prize-money was changing players' attitudes

Two days later, in Sydney, Australia won the fourth of the finals, a victory that gave them the series by three matches to one. Having had a mixed reception when he went in to bat, Greg Chappell, after playing another brilliant innings, was loudly cheered when he was out. He was made the Man of the Series, though there were those who believed that the underarm controversy played a part in his decision not to undertake the forthcoming tour of England.

Greg Chappell (Pictured, left) said he was not aware of quite how badly his decision would go down until he was



walking off. "One little girl ran beside me and tugged on my sleeve and said, 'You cheated'," he recalled. "That was [when] I knew it would be bigger than I expected."

What was not widely known at the time was that Chappell was deeply unhappy about the demands being put on Australia's players by a relentless

schedule of cricket. "The underarm had very little to do with winning that game of cricket, because, in fact, we'd won the game," he said. "They weren't going to get six off the last ball of the game. It was my statement. My cry for help was: 'You're not listening. This might help you sit up and take notice'."

McKechnie confirmed Chappell's state of mind. "He was under pressure," he said. "He wanted to leave the field during the game. He stood at long-off, which is near the boundary. That's unusual for a captain."

The reaction in the media verged on splenetic,

New Zealand, meanwhile, were "pissed off" according to McKechnie but no more than that. "An hour or two after the game, when we'd all had a shower and were back at the hotel, we were joking about it, trying to work out how you could hit a six off an underarm," he later told the *Melbourne Age*.

McKechnie - "We tried a few years later to flick it up and hit it. You can flick it up if the ball is at the right pace, but the coordination of it is damn difficult. And then you'd have to hit it about 90 metres for it to be six at the MCG. I would defy anyone to do that. When we tried, it took about 30 or 40 goes to get to the level where you could actually hit the ball. But we could only hit it 40 metres."

But was Greg Chappell's act as heinous as it is often made out? One-day cricket was still a relatively new beast - the

first World Cup had been played less than six years earlier - and players were challenging regulations still geared to the first-class game all the time.

In the first international one-day series in Australia the previous season, Mike Brearley, the England captain, had put all his fielders, including the wicketkeeper, on the boundary with West Indies needing four to win off the final delivery. It was an action almost as unsporting as the underarm incident, but was barely commented upon.

Almost three decades later Tony Greig, who at the time had just moved into the commentary box after retiring as a player, had nothing but scorn for McKechnie rather than either Chappell. "He didn't even try to hit the thing for six," he explained. "We practised for years in England because we knew at some stage someone would bowl an underarm. For him to not run down and let it hit his toe and pop up and try and smash it for six was a gross miscalculation. Bloody atrocious."

McKechnie had regrets of his own. "I wish it all went away the day after it happened, to be honest. I wish it never happened. It still gets raised in other contexts, inside and outside of sport. When someone thinks Australia have done something to NZ they shouldn't have, the underarm comes up again.

Trevor Chappell admitted he got fed up with hearing about *that* delivery. "But some years ago I came to the conclusion that I'm better off just to go along with it rather than get upset by it. So I might as well jump on the bandwagon and have a bit of a laugh about it."

Greg Chappell said he always got more abuse in Australia than New Zealand, but he added his brother should have got more credit for the delivery. "Richard Hadlee twice tried to bowl underarm balls to me in charity matches but both were wides," he said. "I might have thought it might have been forgotten. I have got over it. It took me a while."

The ICC amended the Laws of Cricket so underarm deliveries were illegal in one-day matches, stating they were "not within the spirit of the game".

Wisden, 1982. Page 995.

Australia - 235-4

GM Wood 72, GS Chappell 90, MF Kent 33.

Snedden 10-0 2-52

Hadlee 10-0 1-41

New Zealand - 229-8

JG Wright 42, BA Edgar 102*, JM Parker 24.

Lillee 10-1 1-34

TM Chappell 10-0 2-57

GS Chappell 10-0 3-43

GR Beard 10-0 2-52

Australia won by 6 runs

Intriguing nuggets lie scattered through every Wisden. Take page 1360 of the most recent edition. Listed among the best bowling analyses in Women's Test Cricket are the two most economical seven-fors recorded in that branch of the game, achieved in a Test between Australia and England at Melbourne in 1957-58. Now, look at the opposite page, where you will see that both sides recorded the lowest innings totals in Women's Tests. What, in the name of WG, was going on?

Wisden for 1959 fills in some of the gaps, but leaves a lot untold. The match itself receives a four-line summary scorecard. Fortunately, the illustrious Netta Rheinberg – who later became one of the first ten women to be made honorary members of MCC – added an account of the tour.

The team, who paid their own outward and homeward fares, left England in September 1957 and returned the following April. They spent nine weeks in New Zealand, where they drew two Tests, and eleven weeks in Australia. One of the biggest problems was the rain, which affected 13 of the 27 matches. A very high wind at one of the New Zealand Tests meant bails were dispensed with on the afternoon of the second day. Another mishap was when all clothing and cricket equipment failed to arrive in time for the first day of a match against Victoria.

Rain meant the first Australian Test in Sydney was abandoned without a ball being bowled. The first day of the following Test at Melbourne's St. Kilda ground in the last week of February was also lost, reducing the match to two days.

England's captain Mary Duggan (Pictured, top right) won the toss and chose to field. Australia's first three wickets were lost for 11 runs and eight were down for 28. After fewer than 44 overs, the home side was out for 38. Bowling left-handed, Duggan claimed seven victims for six runs. The only player to reach double figures was Betty Wilson (Pictured, right centre), with 12.

With her right-arm off-breaks, Wilson tore into the England batting. She took seven for 7 as



Wilson.

the visitors were dismissed for 35. Her feat included the first hat-trick in Women's Tests. With wonderful symmetry, the highest scorer was Duggan, also with 12 runs. The two first-innings totals remain the two lowest in this category. With a possible dose of understatement, Rheinberg describes the wicket was 'tricky.'

As the Ellyse Perry of her day, Wilson now proved she was a formidable all-rounder. When Australia batted again, Duggan took two more wickets, but Wilson stayed for 166 minutes, before being bowled for exactly 100. Australia eventually declared on 202 for nine.

Left 206 to win, England were soon in trouble. They reached 76 for eight by close of play to draw the match. Wilson took four wickets for only nine runs and became the first player, either male or female, to score a century and take 10 or more wickets in the same Test. Her match figures of 11 for 16 are just awe-inspiring. Click on Google and you will find a tantalising 43 seconds of her historic achievement.

The following Test at the Adelaide Oval was a draw, although Wilson scored 127. Because of the lost Sydney match, a fourth Test was organised in Perth. That too was a draw. It was also the end of Betty Wilson's international career.

Mary Duggan signed off from Test cricket in style when she made 101* and took seven wickets against Australia at The Oval in July 1963. On her death ten years later, she left £500 to the Women's Cricket Association for the coaching of young cricketers. As for the 1957-58 tour, Netta Rheinberg summed it up with the words 'the fact that England returned unbeaten speaks for itself.' Now turn back to page 1360 of the current Wisden and look at the list of the top wicket takers in women's Tests. There they are, still at the top: Mary Duggan and Betty



Your Challenge. In the last issue I asked a question set by Richard Reardon to pick an all time *touring* party to visit (to visit any one country, so no players allowed from that country) . You are allowed to pick 17 players with the following restrictions: All players chosen must have played at least one Test. You must include two regular wicket keepers and nominate a captain. Your team can be from any Test Playing country and all players can span any year, any decade, any era. You can email or even telephone me with your 'touring party'. Contact details are as follows:

furmedgefamly@btinternet.com or furmedgefamly1864@gmail.com
Tel: 07966 513171 or 01480 819272

SECOND TEST

THE WATCHING POPULACE AT LORD'S YESTERDAY RESEMBLED A FOOTBALL CROWD. ONE ALMOST EXPECTED TOILET ROLLS TO BE THROWN, AND RIBALD COMMENTS...



THERE WAS CAREFUL EXPECTANCY WHILE ATHERTON AND VAUGHAN PROSPERED...



DISMAY AS ENGLAND FALTERED...



THEN ABSOLUTE EUPHORIA WHEN CORK STRUCK THE WINNING RUNS.



PERFECT STRANGERS HUGGED EACH OTHER...



STEWARDS LEFT THEIR DUTIES TO RUN ON TO THE FIELD...



SCORECARD SELLERS TOSSED ASIDE THEIR WARES...



TV PUNDITS RACED ACROSS THE SACRED GRASS TO INTERVIEW THE HEROES... AND THE LOSERS.



WITH SIX WICKETS, COURTNEY WALSH DIDN'T DESERVE TO FINISH ON THE LOSING SIDE. HIS GLARE ALONE WOULD HAVE WITHERED LESSER OPPOSITION.

BUT NEITHER COURTNEY NOR CURTLY COULD FAZE DARREN GOUGH. UNLIKE RAMPRAKASH WHOSE QUICKSTEP LET HIM DOWN AT THE VITAL MOMENT, GOUGH DANCED FAULTLESSLY.

ARE YOU WATCHING, RAMPS?



DOMINIC CORK, STRICTLY THE REAL HERO OF THE HOUR.

Bob Bond.

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

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