

Crisis over, all is well, everyone calm down, stop panicking - Jonny Bairstowe has reassured us all that 'any side in the world would miss Joe Root' after the person who is Captain of the England team, yes the Captain, was rested after playing a few Tests against India.

Thank you Jonny for an insightful and deeply thought-provoking behind-the-scenes look at things. Such intelligence and analysis means that he has a career on SKY beckoning the day he retires from the international side - the same day he probably stops playing for Yorkshire too.

On the same day the headline cricketing story was Bairstowe's comment we also had Ben Stokes telling Jofra Archer to get his elbow sorted out and, sorry to mention this, but we had this headline on the BBC cricket page

"Jules has Skype calls with Chris Gayle - Married At First Sight's Cam Merchant on his life in cricket" Cam Merchant played 26 first-class matches and he is now on a reality TV show in Australia.

A few things stand out for me about Cam; who is he and why do I need to be told about him on a cricket page and a minor point away from cricket, surely to goodness the sanctity of marriage or even a solid relationship with another human being deserves more respect.

For those of you who don't know (I didn't and I had to find out) Married At First Sight is exactly that. Two people marry moments after meeting each other. Maybe that is a way forward with cricket....

How about a new format where a group of players who barely know each other move in together and then play games of cricket against another group of players who barely know each other...surely that has to be a winner.

Talking of new competitions, a rather depressing fact emerged recently. Each match in The Hundred has been allocated a marketing budget of £100,000 and 18 freelance cricket writers are having to re-apply for six jobs at £80 a day with no expense for food, travel or accommodation. Something is not quite right! Since March 2020 over 150 staff have been made redundant across the ECB and the counties, remind me again, how much of the £300 million government fund did the ECB get?

The new Wisden

My wisden 2021 order is due to arrive very very soon and as you all know I am not allowed to open it until the official publication date. That is something that I

We have 20 copies of the latest edition of Wisden Cricket Monthly to give away - completely free - honest-a-goodness-Guv, no strings attached, all-above-board me luvlies - by answering, correctly, the following question.

Who is the current England Test Team Coach:

1: His Former Royal Highness Prince Harry of Hollywood

2: Julie the delivery driver who got the job because the word 'delivery' was on her CV.

3: Chris Silverwood.

4: Johnny Depp because of his experience in having failed appeals.

Please email your answers - email address on page and once again, Libby will randomly choose 20 winners .

feel is right. Unless the content or mention of the Five Cricketers of The Year are officially released by the publishers then the content remains out of bounds. The 2021 will have 1,248 pages - for obvious reasons it is slightly thinner than usual. The features, reviews and obituaries in Parts One and Two extend over 300 pages, an increase of 66 on the 2020 edition. A permanent bee in my bonnet has been the lack of coverage each year on those who collect Wisdens and relevant input from a 'wide-range' of those who supply Wisdens. As I have not been contacted I am once again disillusioned that any article on cricket memorabilia will not be fair and a truthful comment on Wisdens or the market. If the almanack was called The Cricket Stuff Almanack of The Year then fair dinkum, but it isn't!!

The English Season

Apparently in 2019 an average of 1,955 people attended a county championship match every day. May I ask a question of those who run the game which is not their game, but the game of every single one of those spectators and the many thousands more who can no longer attend, but crave scores, information and news - what have you done for all those people?

You have increased spend on promoting the VitalityBlast, you have started a new game for those who want a quick-fix, you have continuously denied us the right to see Test players perform around the grounds for their 'county' and you have never answered a single one of Bill's emails...so I ask again, what have you done for those loyal supporters who attend county championship matches?

***Whisper this, do not tell a soul, but in three weeks both our girls might, maybe, possibly be back at University and whilst we love them to bits that is 504 hours, 30,240 minutes and a mere 1,814,400 seconds....We of course, love them dearly
Bill***

Bat Widths!

The origin of the Law Regulating the Width of Bats

In 1774, during a match at Hambledon, one Thomas White - better known as 'Shock' or 'Daddy' White - of Reigate, came in to bat with a home-made implement as wide as the wicket! We are told that one of the opposing players promptly produced a knife and - not unreasonably - shaved it down to proper proportions, 'whilst White stood angry by

Consequently, in that same year, a rule was passed (rushed through almost as a panic-measure, no doubt!) which limited the width of all bats to a maximum of four-and-a-half inches, and a metal gauge was made by which all suspect bats might subsequently be checked.

In all fairness to 'Shock' White, one can only assume that his gargantuan bat was in all probability evolved as a leg-pull, or, possibly, as the outcome of a wager that they would never bowl him out! For White was one of the stalwarts of Surrey cricket, and he would certainly have realised that the introduction of bats of such outsize dimensions would quickly have put a quietus to the game. Indeed, his very nickname indicates that he was one from whom the unexpected might be expected— unless it was upon that particular and momentous occasion that he first earned his soubriquet. It seems likely that he was, in fact, renowned as a practical joker, one of the 'characters' so early thrown up by cricket, and who have, down the succeeding centuries, enriched the game.

One therefore cannot help but be sceptical of the statement that he 'stood angry by' as he watched the

willow-shavings from his magnum opus accumulating steadily upon the pitch at Broadhalfpenny Down!

'Shock' White, together with 'Lumpy' Stevens and Yalden, were for many years the outstanding players assisting Surrey, and it is a tragic fact that their greatest feats are lost to us forever, since they were performed before it was considered worthwhile to preserve match scores.

Suffice it to say, however, that, far from being a cricketing clown, White notched 197 at Sevenoaks in June, 1771, playing for Surrey and Kent against Middlesex and Hampshire—and this in an era when centuries were rare!

In the first fully-recorded eleven-a-side Surrey match, against Laleham Burway in 1773, he ran up scores of 44 and 23.

For several seasons he was Surrey's most successful batsman, and, in addition, a good change bowler. It is surprising to note that John Nyren - the Neville Cardus of his day - while acknowledging him as a good hitter (even with a normal bat!) 'never thought very highly of his play.'

Be that as it may, whatever his prowess as a player may have been, 'Shock' White of Reigate, as he whittled away at his 'bat'—doubtless chuckling the while—could hardly have dreamed that he was at the same time carving himself an immortal niche in the history of Cricket!

Royman Browne, Origins, 1962.

It was not my intention to exclude any 'forms' of cricket when I sent out the 2021 (Men's) English Fixtures List recently. I have received emails from readers questioning why I did not include the Women's Fixture List, or the Minor Counties Schedule and I was also asked for a fixtures list for Over 50's and Over 60's cricket.

Well I have to be honest here, it took me days finding all the fixtures in an easy-to-use format for the men's game and I am sorry, but time was and is against me to do the same research for any other forms of the game. If anyone does know of any websites that include easy to follow fixture lists for all forms of the game, could

you kindly let me know and I will gladly pass it on readers.

There have been a number of pre-season friendlies going on over the past week, but unlike football pre-season friendlies or athletics competitions that exist for the sole purpose of giving away prize money, none of these have been featured to any great extent and even when I clicked on the Lancashire website to read about the games against Essex the only thing is a score, no details at all.

If anyone would like a 2021 County Championship preview, county by county, take a look at the Inside Edge website, just click [here](#)

This edition of The Virtual Wisdener
has been sent out to
8,185 people

The current membership of the
Wisdener Collectors' Club is
2,797 people

If you are receiving this newsletter and you would details on
how to become a full member of The Wisdener Collectors'
Club please contact me - details are on page 3.

The Goodwill of County Members

In winter the publication of financial losses sustained by county cricket clubs and in summer disastrous periods of wet weather, start the old hare - "is county cricket doomed?" The financial losses are the inevitable successor to the wet weather. They cast a gloom on the present and a niggle of doubt about the future.

In a game in which reserves of everything but goodwill and optimism are never more than barely adequate the situation is indeed serious, but by no means irretrievably so. It has been many times more serious than it is today in the history of - one could venture to say - every county cricket club.

Figures can be ignored. They can be made to prove or disprove almost anything. What is needed is an understanding of the still very little exploited asset of goodwill, which is the hidden reserve of every county that cherishes the game at all levels within its borders.

The public wants cricket. It wants it as a game to play, as a game to watch and as a game to understand. Cricket matters a great deal to many, many people, and so, too, do cricketers, although too often players tend to forget their public either through modesty or thoughtlessness.

But if all these people to whom the game matters were asked to do so, no doubt they would forego quite a bit to assure the future of this pleasant, interesting, provocative and, at its best, intensely satisfying game of first-class cricket.

Foregoing a bit means in fact paying a bit. It might not be a great exaggeration to say that more money is spent on buying newspapers to read about the game than is spent on paying to watch it, and it is interesting to reflect that however much the Press may forecast the approaching end, no newspaper can afford to ignore cricket without taking some chance with circulation, nor replace a respected cricket writer with whom his reader-ship is en rapport. All serious newspapers choose their cricket writers with care and retain them long.

To know one's bird is one thing - to persuade it to lay the golden egg another. The only way to do so with assurance is to keep in close contact with the public and let both the need for membership of county clubs, and what such membership can offer, be widely known.

Thank you to Clive Evans who sent in this article from *The Cricketer* in March 1966. It is worth reflecting on what has happened over the years to secure county membership, advertise and encourage new members and to involve all members...it does seem that the concerns raised in 1966 are very similar to those that are now used to put forward the argument that the longer form of the game is in permanent, irreversible, decline.

County clubs have turned to many ruses since the war to raise money. Many have prospered through organising the instinct of the English to gamble regularly small sums of money for large prizes, but this, at least through the pools, is a now diminishing asset. Sooner or later something must take its place.

Nothing could be better than the bringing into county clubs of the many people who would gladly join if the need were known, but who either do not know of the need or worse still are put off either by an almost invariably imagined waiting list or the feeling that county clubs are for the elect, and people who are or have been more than ordinarily good players.

In reality the only forbidding things about all too many clubs are out-of-date amenities and to a lesser degree out-of-date ideas. County cricket clubs must concentrate on being clubs, with committee, players and members in close touch to sustain and develop their own interest which is the continuity of the game at the highest level of skill, and in the pleasantest surroundings that their efforts can secure.

Given a numerically adequate membership only two more things are necessary - a willingness to give full support whenever necessary and, of more mundane but no less importance, to pay a fair subscription in line with the current value of money.

This will enable the players and staff to secure a fair return for their services. Both players and staff must, of necessity, be first class or the game will be diminished by the measure of their underpayment; and more players will disappear into business or industry before they should.

The evidence is ample that cricket does attract the loyal member. Let the object be to increase the number and effectiveness of members. The cure will soon be apparent and county cricket clubs will flourish, as so many other clubs do today.

FELIX - The Cricketer, March 1966.

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Underwood Beats The Flood - The Oval Test of 1966

Brooms, brushes and blankets, John Arlott called it, and he might have added buckets and mops, if only for the way it bucketed down and for the mopping up operations that followed, reinforced by an amphibious brigade from the terraces. Was this quite de rigueur? It was the final day of the fifth and final Test at The Oval, 21 years ago on August 27, 1968. England were poised to square the series when the playing area was transformed into a lake by a lunchtime cloud-burst. Thus they looked certain to be denied the victory that had eluded them all summer.

Did we say summer? Jack Fingleton called it abominable, and even abandoned a book he had been commissioned to write on the tour - as so much of the cricket was abandoned that summer - because he was convinced that 'nobody would want to read the dreary story of rain over England's cricket fields'. There was one schoolboy yam, however, that Englishmen longed to read, and that was the story of a fairy-tale victory that would give them a belated but crushing revenge. Now even that story looked stillborn.

Robbed by rain at Lord's, and again Edgbaston, of their chance of squaring the series after losing the First Test at Old Trafford, England could not overcome an Australian side bent on avoiding defeat and thus retaining the Ashes at Headingley. Yet honour could still be salvaged by winning at The Oval and drawing the series.

England were forced beforehand to make changes to their batting through illness and injuries, and of these the most significant was the reintroduction, on the late withdrawal of Roger Prideaux, of Basil D'Oliveira. The dropping of D'Oliveira after he had top-scored with 87 not out in the disastrous First Test caused no more than a ripple compared with the repercussions of his re-entry now, on the eve of the impending South African tour.

Cowdrey won the toss and England batted, and a rare morning of sunshine was dominated by John Edrich in this his best home series against Australia. Contributions from Milburn, Dexter and Cowdrey were modest, and at 113 for three, when Graveney joined Edrich, England looked vulnerable. But whatever sort of summer others were having, Graveney was enjoying an Indian one, and he put on 125 with Edrich before being caught low down at square cover, so low that he waited for the decision. That was 238 for four.

Next, to face an anxious 46 minutes before the close, came the eleventh-hour choice. If there were some who secretly hoped he would fail, thereby removing him as a possible impediment to the forthcoming tour, they were to be vastly disappointed. Far from a

So many times in recent and not-so-recent Test history a team battling to save the game have adopted tactics that can only be compared to a football team taking the ball into the corner to waste valuable time - The Oval Test of 1968 was not one of those. This wonderful article on the match that becomes Underwood's Test was first published in 1989, written by Ralph Barker.

nervous 46 minutes, the South African started hitting the ball over the top first bounce into the pavilion in challenging fashion. Next day Edrich took his score to 164 and D'Oliveira finished close behind with 158. What about that South African tour now?

England's 494 looked good when Australia slumped to 188 for six, but Lawry occupied the crease all day on the Saturday, and three Australian tail-enders, McKenzie, Mallett and Gleeson, contrived to make their highest scores of the series, and in the case of Mallett (43 not out) the highest of his entire Test career. Lawry's dismissal for 135 early on the fourth morning, caught behind off Snow, provided a controversial cameo, the Australian captain pausing on his way to the pavilion to register dissent. But the follow-on was saved, Australia being left with a deficit of 170.

England's one-day-style second innings produced 181, and when Australia began the last innings just before six o'clock on the fourth evening they had 6V2 hours to survive or make the 352 needed for victory. Tiny chance they had of the latter seemed to vanish when they lost two wickets that evening, Lawry caught by Milburn at short leg off Brown and Redpath padding up unwisely to Underwood's arm-ball at 13 for two.

So to the climactic day, and an elongated morning, 11 to 1.30, went very much England's way, at least until just before lunch. After Ian Chappell and Walters had fallen to Underwood and Sheahan to Illingworth, stubborn resistance by Jarman, the Australian wicketkeeper, in partnership with Inverarity, was interrupted at 1.28 by bad light. Then, with Australia 85 for five, came the deluge.

No one could seriously have imagined, viewing the waterlogged Oval, that there could be any more play. Yet the crowd, whether watching with stoical resignation or intent on displaying their aquatic skills, were reluctant to go home. When the sun came out again at 2.15 the wielding of brooms, brushes and blankets began. Playing conditions could hardly have been restored without the crowd's help, certainly not in time to give England a chance of victory. Such audience participation, "so far as we know, is not covered by the laws of the game.



The Australians, convinced, like the Walrus and the Carpenter, that mopping up operations would fail, made no complaint, their tears, if they shed any, being as crocodile as those of that ill-assorted pair. But miraculously, not in half a year but in 2V2 hours, the field was ready for play. What of the footholds? What of the run-ups? What of the worn patches on the square? Quantities of sawdust that might have set ecological tongues wagging in a later era were lavishly distributed, making a patchwork quilt of the square, and at 4.45, with 75 minutes left, the game restarted.

Alas for England's hopes, all life had been drained from the wicket along with the water. Inverarity and Jarman batted with depressing composure to English eyes, and Cowdrey switched his oowlers in vain. Eventually he settled for Underwood from the Vauxhall end and Illingworth from the pavilion, and maiden after maiden lifted the over rate sky-high. Even the Australians, in England's second innings slog, had managed 20 overs an hour, and now they scorned to waste time by gardening. Once Jarman actually ran back to the mound of sawdust at the pavilion end, scooped a supply on to the face of his bat with a gloved hand, and trotted egg-and-spoon race style back to the crease to scatter it under his feet. But with nearly half the time gone Cowdrey was desperate, and he turned at last to a certain inveterate stand-breaker. If these two could be separated, the rest might follow.

D'Oliveira had bowled only seven overs in the match so far, four in the first innings and three in this. Now he came on at the pavilion end for Illingworth and bowled an up-and-down maiden to Jarman. Cowdrey switched Illingworth to the Vauxhall end, keeping Underwood up his sleeve. When D'Oliveira began his second over there were 38 minutes left and five wickets still to fall. 37 minutes had somehow been frittered away. Jarman had now batted for 79 minutes in all, and Inverarity was rock-like. But did Jarman's excursion for more sawdust mean that the wicket was drying?

Four more straight balls from D'Oliveira suggested otherwise. But the fifth, aimed at the off stump, lifted abruptly. Jarman, raising his bat, sensibly left it alone, but it hit high up on his pads and dropped on the wicket. Jarman was out and the breakthrough was made. Next man in, Mallett, promoted above McKenzie after his skilful defence for more than three hours on Saturday and Monday, infuriated the crowd by seeming to loiter on his way to the wicket. He was

perfectly justified in taking his time. He blocked D'Oliveira's last ball, but Inverarity was unable to conjure a single off Illingworth, and now Cowdrey reinstated Underwood, this time at the pavilion end. Mallett gave a catch to Brown at short square leg first ball, and Brown took it. 110 for six had become 110 for seven.

McKenzie blocked his first four balls, one of them so firmly that it struck Brown on the ankle, a blow which might have caused a stoppage if the umpires could have added injury time. But with no such dispensation, and no 20 overs in the last hour, Brown hobbled back into line. And as with many a fouled footballer, he immediately sprang back into galvanised life, taking a great one-handed catch near the ground off the last ball of the over to dismiss McKenzie. 110 for eight, 26 minutes to go. Now the pressure was on Australia.

Again Inverarity couldn't steal the coveted single off Illingworth, but Gleeson gave a belligerent answer, taking five runs off Underwood's first two balls. Then Inverarity got the single that took him back to face Illingworth. Inverarity hit Illingworth for four but would have preferred an odd number, and Gleeson, pinned down for four balls by Underwood, was clean bowled by the fifth. 120 for nine, ten minutes to go. Connolly blocked the last ball.

Illingworth, in his next over, couldn't suppress the single, and Inverarity, who had come in with Lawry just before six o'clock the previous evening and made no discernible mistake, now faced what would probably be Underwood's last over. To survive it, and get down the other end for the last over from Illingworth, would bring everlasting glory. In four hours of unerring concentration Inverarity's temperament had been proved. But the tension now was palpable. Padding up to Underwood's third ball, he did not see that it was

the one that went with the arm. Up went Charlie Elliott's finger, and England had won with six minutes to spare.

In almost any other Test of the period, those minutes would have been 'professionally' whittled away. Full marks for

sportsmanship were awarded to Lawry. Another cloud burst on international cricket when Cartwright withdrew from the South African tour and D'Oliveira was chosen in his place, leading to a severance that has now lasted 21 years.



The Birth of the Three Ws

The past, they say, is a foreign country. Exactly 50 years ago, MCC set off to the Caribbean in circumstances wildly different, in point of cricket and world affairs, from today. For one, England had just gloriously won a home series, during which the sun shone non-stop. West Indies had played no Test cricket in over eight years. On the wider front, much of the world was still agonising from the War. India had recently become independent. In Britain, slivers of food and bargain Utility clothes were redeemed by the ration-book. Much of the country was being nationalised. The Marshall Plan ushered in a long era of subsidies and creeping 'Americanisation' of western Europe. Princess Elizabeth married the new Duke of Edinburgh.

The tour itself was the product of a gentle deceit by the home Board of Control. Karl Nunes, its president, had asked Pelham Warner to use his influence to have an England side sent as soon as feasible after the War; adding, for good measure, that the home team 'won't be very good'. Nunes' words chimed with the popular consensus at Lord's. With 18 months' solid cricket behind them and the prospect of Bradman's Australians ahead, England's top players were thought to need a rest. The result was a touring party from which Hutton, Compton, Edrich, Bedser and Wright were all omitted. Only three names survived from the side of 12 months earlier. Incredible, too, as it seems today, the captaincy was deemed strictly an amateur's preserve. Hence the appointment of 45-year-old Gubby Allen. In the event, Warner and the rest would come to rue their selection policy. Midway through the tour an SOS was sent for Hutton, who appeared in Guyana to give much-needed class to the batting.

The party - only 15 strong to start with - duly set sail on December 23, 1947 on the SS Tettela, a banana boat that pitched and rolled its way across the Atlantic. Christmas dinner was notable only for the large number of vacant chairs around the table. The ship was three days late in berthing at Barbados, and never can cricketers have been so glad to see that idyllic island. More than one felt moved to kiss the ground.

The central theme of the tour was established from then on. It would be no picnic. The England party suffered every sort of injury and illness, and at one stage even put journalists on standby to play. E.W. Swanton and the News Chronicle's 'Chalky' White both appeared in a one-day match against South Trinidad. When MCC flew to Guyana, the Daily Telegraph's headline above a Reuter report was 'Allen has 7 Fit Men. Reporters may be in MCC XI.' Nor were the visitors' infirmities offset by any local weakness. By the end of the series, the 'three Ws', Frank Worrell, Clyde Walcott and Evertori Weekes, had firmly established themselves as the stars of West Indian cricket. They

Over the past few issues the Test matches between England and the West Indies for The Wisden Trophy in 1963 have been featured - the report of the final Test begins on Page 9 - and I am glad that so many of you have enjoyed our little look back, indeed thank you to Jason Baron for recommending this article, by Christopher Sandford from 1998, in which he recalled the 50th anniversary of the post-war tour.

Sandford - 'In 1948 the MCC left for a tour of the West Indies with a party of 15 shorn of its best players. The folly of the selectors, who had underestimated the opposition, and an embarrassment of injuries, were to prove crucial as the home side won the series 2-0.'

bestrode the Caribbean for the next six years, until the debut of a 17-year-old, also from Barbados, named Sobers.

The tour was never one of those routs that befell English visits to the islands in the 1980s. No politicians made speeches. Not a bottle was thrown. But it was a sobering experience. Match by match, ball by ball, confidence grew, not least in the hearts of veteran West Indians like Headley and Goddard. By the Second Test there was flickering hope. As hope gleamed, Walcott, in particular, came to the fore, an unrelenting foe, 'tough' in the sense that certain Australians merited the word. He played hard but not meanly. He was all for the rigour of the game. Walcott 'murdered' all sorts of bowling, not only loose or mediocre stuff but the best. Laker would remember the Barbadian hitting him for three successive fours: 'They were three of the best balls I ever bowled in my life.'

Every Englishman did his best to halt Walcott's rapid ascent to the top. The 21-year-old was simply too good for them. It would take men of the calibre of Trueman, Loader and Bailey to stop him.

West Indies had comfortably the best of the First, drawn Test at Bridgetown. England were balked by the absence of Allen and Harold Butler, both with pulled muscles; the attack was opened by Cranston and Tremlett, neither of whom could be classified as electric. Later in the match Dennis Brookes broke a finger and was unable to play again on the tour. For England, Hardstaff batted heroically for 98, bettered only by Christiani, who made 99 on his debut for West Indies.

Godfrey Evans, on only the second tour of his long career, remembers a 'merry off-the-field atmosphere, with none of the hassle or politics of later (Caribbean) trips... Unfortunately, we were fielding virtually a 'B' team to start with, and there were never fewer than four or five on the sick-list. We got away with it at Barbados. But it was all downhill from there.'

In the Second Test the folly of England's selection and the ruinous injuries were fully exposed. Hardstaff,

Place and Brookes were all unavailable. The upshot was that Billy Griffith, the reserve 'keeper, was called on to open the innings. He responded with 140, his maiden first-class century. Laker, in his second Test, scored 55, and the England total of 362 was, thought Evans, 'relatively respectable'. Relatively, for West Indies' George Carew scored 107; the first wicket went down at 173; and Worrell (Pictured, Below), on his Test debut, proceeded to 97 before Cranston found the edge and Evans pounced the catch.

The result was that the home side were left needing 140 to win at two runs a minute. They were getting them when Butler - a heavy, broad-shouldered bowler in the best Nottinghamshire tradition - took the ball.

There were no close fielders. Weekes got an edge and the ball jagged off between the non-existent second and third slips. Evans caught it. That is, he took off, extended a hand and, as he crashed to the turf the ball was resting squarely in his glove. The crowd, uniquely, fell quiet. Weekes himself seemed to take some time to comprehend what had happened. It was, by any yardstick, an epic feat of agility and anticipation. West Indies duly settled for a draw.

At this stage, in mid-tour, Brookes flew home. Allen, still on the sharp side of medium pace, broke down with a strain. Cranston, Butler and Howorth were all spending more time under the physio's lamp than in the field. Evans had come down with prickly heat. The result was a mercy-dash, made via Lisbon, Dakar and Brazil, by Hutton. He arrived in Guyana and promptly — played an innings of 138 in the Colony match. It was an extraordinary feat in unique conditions. At the ground, nine feet below sea level, steam could be seen rising from the pitch. Laker remembered it as like 'being locked, fully clothed, for six solid hours in a sauna'. Few of the party were distraught when rain ended the final fixture before the Third Test.

In that match Hutton again distinguished himself in response to West Indies' 297, of which Worrell made 131. After a promising start, England collapsed and followed on. At this point, on a worn pitch, a rearguard action involving Evans and the bowlers meant that West Indies would at least bat again; and against Laker, to boot. At one stage, chasing 78, they were 26-3, and the looks from the home dressing-room were anything but sanguine. Had Gomez not been dropped five times, England might even have forced an improbable win. But dropped he was. The batsmen had but one shot between them - the jab - and the whole innings seemed to go on forever, like a bad dream. In the end the home side prevailed by seven wickets.

In some disarray, the dozen or so semi-fit tourists made their way to Jamaica. Here, the home Board were ready to drop Weekes, and would have done so but for Headley's withdrawal. Instead, the third 'W' scored the first of what were to be five consecutive

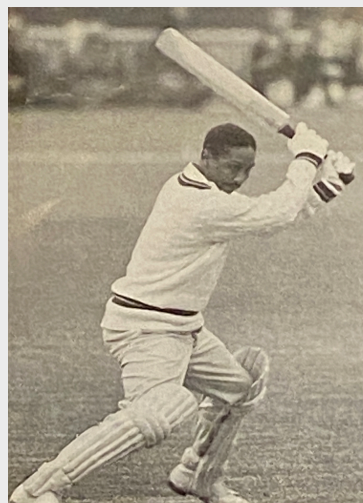
Test centuries. He never looked back. Hutton, who had played on the island a dozen years earlier, helped put on 129 for the first England wicket; the remaining nine made 98. Johnson took 10-96 in the match. Mutterings about a visible 'ridge' just short of a length only half-excused what became a rout. West Indies won by 10 wickets. The home side took the series two-nil and, more importantly, were taken seriously on the world stage from then on. There would be no more talk of sending 'B' teams to the Caribbean.

With the serious cricket finished, MCC received and complied with a request to play an unofficial two-day match along the coast at Montego Bay. They duly recorded their sole win of the tour. It seemed an ominous portent for the Australians' arrival a few weeks later. Even so, there were plusses to the visit: when fit, Allen and Butler were a perfectly competent attack, if, in terms of ability, on the way down rather than the way up. Evans seized his chances. Robertson, Griffith and Laker all had their days.

Hutton was, quite simply, in a class of one: batting as he spoke, quietly, calmly, with dry conviction and a superb awareness of context. He could flash or prod forward woodenly all day. A master technician.

England would rely on him for much of the next

decade.



The other bonus of the tour was the islands themselves. Evans remembers Barbados, for one, as a riot of sights and sounds - particularly the latter, which he compares to 'playing cricket inside a beehive'. As vivid as the January sun overlying the ground, the incessant blare of drums and hooters punctuated a Test in which as much

happened off the pitch as on it. The crowd, dressed in tones of fiery red, Evans recalls, 'darted and flapped like carnivorous fish'. Bets were wagered on every day, every session, every ball; even on the speed of the two drink-boys to and from the wicket.

The sheer dazzle of the West Indies contrasted starkly with austere, post-war Britain. For this reason, the spirit within the party and the periodic glints of skill, the tour was a success. England would never again leave their shores with their best players (unless legally barred) languishing at home. West Indies would never again be the poor relations of world cricket. The three Ws had arrived. Two spin bowlers, Ramadhin and Valentine, were coming up behind, fast. There was talk of a schoolboy called Sobers.



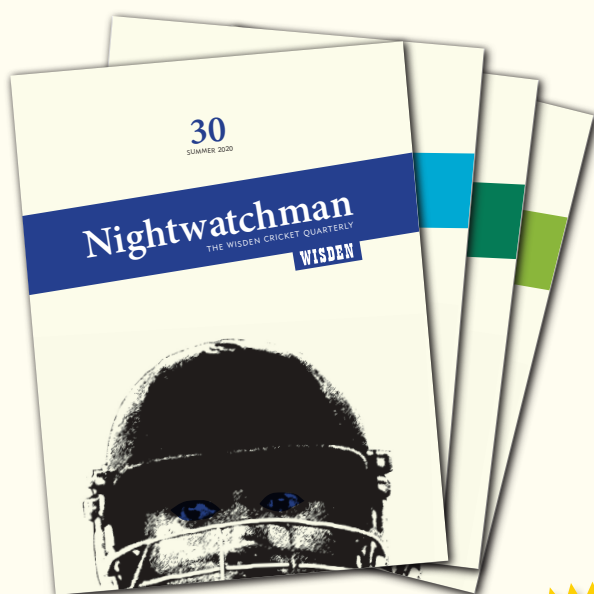
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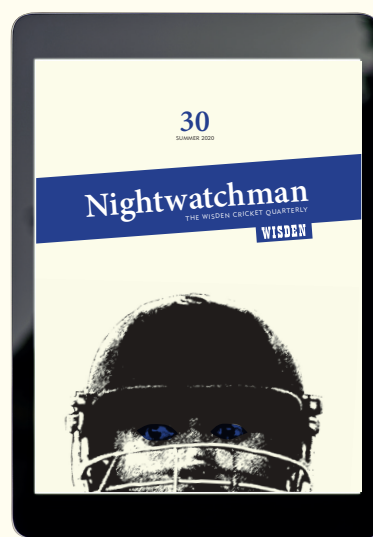
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Unforgettable Scenes as the West Indies Triumph

Never in the long history of this famous Test match ground has there been scenes to rival those provided by jubilant West Indians when the West Indies won the last Test at the Oval by the overwhelming margin of eight wickets, to clinch the series by three matches to one with one drawn, and that amid pulsating excitement at Lord's.

The series, quite apart from the vintage cricket it has produced in large measure, is remarkable in that in five Test matches no England batsmen scored a century—the first time this has happened since 1888. Dexter, both immediately after play ended, and on television forty-eight hours after the smoke of battle had died down, put forward the explanation that we had selected bowlers to perform in conditions which usually prevail in this country, but in fact, virtually all the wickets throughout the series had given the bowlers little movement and have favoured the batsmen. If this is so, then what a sorry display our batsmen put up. I think if the bowlers were questioned on their views they would point out that never once have they enjoyed the luxury of having a really good score behind them.

It could be said that, apart from Sharpe Phil Sharpe, (Pictured batting, Below, Left) and the ever-willing Trueman, not one player in the England side particularly enhanced his reputation. In the West Indies ranks there were a number who did so. Sobers, whom Dexter regarded as one of the key figures in the series; fast bowler Griffith, who took double the number of wickets of Hall; Gibbs, who spun England to defeat at Manchester; Hunte and Kanhai - both with averages above 50, Hunte starting and finishing the series with a century (182 at Manchester and 108 not out at the Oval); Murray, whose 24 victims in the series constituted a new record, and, of course, the superb leadership of Worrell, whose personal contributions in terms of runs and wickets do not in any way mirror the true worth of this cultured cricketing ambassador, who, as well as giving millions of cricket followers the rapturous joy of watching his batting in his hey-day, has rendered an immense service to the West Indian



people, whom he has served with such distinction. Frank Worrell has earned, and has indeed been accorded, the highest possible respect and admiration by cricket enthusiasts all over the world. It was fitting that his last Test series should provide him with such a

England v West Indies, 1963 - The Battle for the Wisden Trophy - The Fifth Test

Thank you for your feedback on my decision to print the contemporary match reports of the England v West Indies 1963 Test series. I am delighted to reproduce the contemporary full reports of each of the five Tests and this continues with the Fifth Test played at The Oval on August 22, 23, 24, and 26. Written by Ron Roberts and this first appeared in The Cricketer in August 1963.

crowning finale for his endeavours.

FIRST DAY

The news, before play began, that Titmus was to be omitted from the twelve England players was common proof that the wicket was a very different cup of tea from the one prepared for West Indies here in 1957. Light in texture, it looked as if it might have been parched by the sun, a suggestion verging on the ridiculous in this squalid English summer of 1963. One thing, at any rate, was that the atmosphere was apparently ideal for seam bowling and was likely to precipitate a good deal of movement through the air. Thus, when England won the toss and batted, one wondered what damage would be done to our batting in the crucial first hour by the pace of Hall and Griffith. We watched the first few overs not a little apprehensively, but the tension gradually eased as the wicket proved to be a good one for batting. In fact, assessing it by the present standards, an opening partnership of 59 was untold riches, and should have laid a foundation for a score of sizeable dimensions.

England's batting these days, however, does not flower as it used to. It was not long before Griffith was no-balled; nor indeed much longer before a fizzing short-pitched ball aimed in a known area of weakness at Edrich struck him painfully on the arm as he essayed to push it away to leg. Edrich, by family tradition, will stand his ground unflinchingly against anything, but he needed time before he could take guard again. Every West Indian player, save Griffith himself, crowded round Edrich to survey the damage. Griffith seemed to think that it was no concern of his and merely awaited the signal to continue hostilities.

At twelve o'clock, the boys were in-invited to sit on the grass and we felt that a Test match of great moment was really on the move. Edrich hit Hall for 3 past mid-off to give him confidence whilst Bolus enjoyed mixed fortune against Hall; he hit him for 4 - a sort of square drive—survived an appeal for lbw, played the next ball into his pad, and then satisfactorily ducked under a soaring bumper. At a quarter past twelve with 29 scored, Sobers was set in motion instead of Hall. The first hour had produced 37 runs and two runs later England's fortunes hung momentarily on a thread when Edrich pushed one round the corner and Bolus

set off for a run. Edrich stopped him in his tracks with a firm 'No', and Bolus might easily have been stranded but for some indifferent fielding and throwing.

Hall, taking a turn at the pavilion end instead of Griffith, began with a no-ball which Bolus suitably hit straight for 4. Hall promptly let go a couple of bouncers, one which needed all the agility of the acrobatic Murray to prevent going for byes. Buller, the umpire, was seen to have a word or two with Worrell at this point; Worrell subsequently passed on the gist of the message to Hall. Edrich put the 50 up with a 4 off Sobers —53 runs in 78 minutes, only the second opening partnership for England in the series in excess of 50. The figures are 34, 93, 2,15,2, 30,13 and 0. The good work was to continue for only a little longer. Bolus, who occasionally adopts a rather curious position as if he is about to cut and then declines to do so, did make contact when the score was 59, and Murray took the chance with the nigh infallibility which he has shown throughout the series. Dexter began with a 3 off his toes against Hall, but then Edrich played a ball which he might well have left alone, straight into the hands of Murray; two wickets for Sobers, and two down for 64.

Shortly after one o'clock Gibbs took a turn and from the purchase he managed to get on the ball one had second thoughts as to the advisability of leaving out Titmus. Dexter and Barrington survived until lunch with the England score 83 - 2, and just after half-past two Dexter hoisted the hundred with a scorching cover drive off Griffith. All was well, or so we thought, when Sobers, that magnificent all-round cricketer (he had already taken two wickets) brought off a splendid diving catch at leg-slip to get rid of Barrington.

Dexter twice tried to drive Griffith off his toes; once he drove him on to them, a fairly painful operation one would imagine, and then, suddenly, Dexter was gone. He hit Griffith straight back for a caught and bowled - scarcely a shot out of the top drawer - and England were 115 - 4, with batsmen numbers one to four out.

This brought in Sharpe to join Close. Sharpe's selection had puzzled many, and annoyed a few. His current form alone was little to write home about, but he had done a good job for England before, and here was a golden opportunity in time of need to do it again. This philosophy, of course, applied to Close, and the two Yorkshiremen, with the bit between their teeth, did England proud. Sharpe looked in good form from the word 'Go', and played the sweetest of late-cuts off Gibbs, stroking the ball as if with warming affection as it passed him. At 151 England enjoyed a slice of luck, which, as events turned out, was quite a big piece of cake. Gibbs dropped Sharpe off Sobers in the slips when he had made 16. It was a low one straight at him, and as Gibbs fell backwards into a sitting position the ball jolted out of his hands.

By tea, when the score was 188 - 4, Sharpe and Close had pulled England round to a position of advantage. Worrell had tried various bowling permutations ; we had seen Hall, Sobers, Gibbs - bowling round the wicket - and Worrell himself, and it was off Worrell, just after tea, that Sharpe struck a glorious boundary to reach his 50. He had scored 51 out of 82 which he and Close had added in a shade over an hour and a half. Close ultimately put up the 200 with a swing into open country in the shadow of the gasometers at ten minutes to five. Sharpe was the dominating figure, and it was he, after a couple of boundaries off Worrell, who put up the hundred partnership at virtually a run a minute.

Whilst confidence was growing, so indeed was the threat of an all-out assault by West Indies since the new ball was due any second. In fact. Hall came on to bowl the 85th over. The new ball was taken at five minutes past five with the score 216 - 4, Sharpe was 62 and Close 46. Close fell straightaway; he was bowled by Griffith when hitting across the line after a priceless partnership which had added 101 runs.

A minute or two afterwards Sharpe had gone as well for an invaluable 63. At 224 - 6, West Indies had brought themselves very much back into the game, and it was a spin of the coin what England's long tail could produce.

Trueman was a cosmopolitan mixture of light and shade, with good fortune and skill playing their parts; he managed to stay until 250 was reached before he was bowled by Griffith at 252.

Six runs later Lock was given out in somewhat unusual circumstances. He seemed surprised that Griffith should regard him as an accredited batsman, and thus in the bracket of fair game to receive bumpers. Griffith despatched him a rather vicious short-pitched ball which Lock, in trying to spar off, fended away with his wrist; this obviously hurt him, and instinctively caused Lock to drop his bat, which fell on to the wicket.

As leg slip had caught the ball, the question at issue was whether or not it was considered that Lock had broken his wicket in the execution of the stroke and was out hit-wicket, or whether the umpire ruled that the stroke had been completed, and he was out, caught. Lock remained intact, awaiting his fate, leaving little doubt in our minds as to his general thoughts on the situation. He was, in fact, given out, hit-wicket. The last two wickets, those of Parks and Statham, were swiftly captured and England were all out for 275 on the stroke of time.

The day had belonged to Sharpe and Close of England and to Griffith, who had bowled with commendable speed and direction and finished the day with 6 - 71. Hall, who also had 71 scored off him, was without a

victim until he bowled Statham at the end of the day. It had been a fascinating day's cricket in which, once again, England had failed to reach 300 in an innings. Their score, however, was not particularly one thing or the other. The wicket seemed likely to continue to play well, and there was no reason why West Indies should not do equally well or probably even better.

SECOND DAY

The day began with Close keeping wicket, and in character with the complete absence of even the most elementary form of public relations throughout the whole of first-class cricket in this country, no announcement was made explaining that Parks had gone for an X-ray to his foot, damaged the previous day. One day, perhaps, the game might consider the need for an overhaul of its relationship with its paying customers since they are of considerable importance to a professional sport.

From England's point of view, the start was most encouraging. Rodriguez, opening with Hunte, flicked Statham round to leg-slip where Lock picked the catch out of thin air and tossed the ball towards heaven in triumph and jubilation. At this point, only 10 runs had been scored and Kanhai arrived to join Hunte; slowly they proceeded to repair the damage. Trueman threw in a bouncer or two before Shackleton relieved him at the Vauxhall end with the score 29 - 1; Hunte took a couple of fours off Statham in three balls and the first hour produced 48 runs.

At ten minutes to one Lock was given a turn. Kanhai lofted him dangerously over Shackleton at mid-off and collected two runs. Kanhai, it appeared, enjoyed living dangerously and aimed a similar blow at Lock's next ball but failed to connect and was comprehensively bowled. Hunte, mean time, was going well and with Butcher saw out the remaining half an hour before lunch. Parks, by this time, was fit and ready to take his place behind the stumps; he watched Hunte and Butcher (Pictured, Centre, Right) gradually take a firm hold and by twenty minutes to three they had added 50. At 122 Butcher skied Lock square, Trueman moving round from close third-man was never in with a chance of catching the ball which described an arc as a result of the spin.

The salient fact was that Close was fielding on the boundary on the extension of a line between the striker and where the ball fell. Surely, in May's time of captaincy, Close would not have been on the boundary in the prevailing circumstances. Lock, after all, is an attacking bowler. When he had made 70, Hunte played and missed at Lock, the ball almost shaving the stumps. Even Dexter jumped with both feet off the ground at cover as Lock performed his

usual contortions when the heavens have been unduly kind to a batsman.

Butcher, dour, unshakeable, was beaten no less than three times by Lock in one over before Dexter had a bowl himself to give Lock a rest—a well-deserved rest after a sustained piece of accurate bowling showing a fine deviation of flight and excellent control.

Hunte and Butcher were doing a grand job for West Indies. They applied themselves with restraint when, indeed, serious application was necessary, until Hunte made his first mistake at halfpast three, and it cost him his wicket. Shackleton discovered that Hunte's bat did have an edge as well as a solid middle, and he found it, Parks taking the catch without any trouble. Eighty runs had been added in an hour and three-quarters. The score-board now read 152 - 3.

Could England achieve any sort of break-through? If not then the series would ebb slowly but surely away from them. Lock was brought back after one over by Dexter, presumably to have a go at Sobers, the new batsman; also Butcher had never looked entirely happy against him.

Sobers did have some anxious moments against Lock, once or twice the ball running up his body with the spin. Butcher reached his 50 at four o'clock after two hours and twenty minutes at the wicket. Just before tea, with West Indies score 179 - 3, the batsmen appealed against the light and the appeal was upheld. This happened when Trueman was called upon to bowl; instead he had a rest in the pavilion for nearly half an hour.

This was a turning point in the match, as with two dramatic pieces of good fortune for England the West Indies innings capsized. Who could have dreamt that West Indies, at one time 150 - 2, would end the day 231 - 8? Butcher's dismissal will long be remembered. Sobers hit Lock with amazing force straight back at him. Lock, who would put his hand to a tank if necessary, made a courageous effort to stop the ball from thudding against the pavilion rails, and did

succeed in diverting it into the stumps at the precise moment that Butcher was backing up and out of his ground. Butcher was out, 185 - 4.

Sobers performed a delicate late cut for 4 to make up for his unsuspecting part in bringing about his colleague's downfall. Sobers then played the best shot

of the day. A bullet past Lock as if challenging him to divert that one.

A single in the same over brought Solomon into the firing line. Solomon cut Lock for what seemed a reasonable enough single but Close, with only one



stump visible to him, threw the wicket down before Sobers was home - 198 - 5; what a swing of the pendulum. These two run-outs within the space of a quarter of an hour might have saved the series for England.

The departure of Sobers brought one of cricket's nostalgic moments - the arrival of Frank Worrell. He was given a moving ovation by the crowd. One remembered a similar occasion when Bradman walked to the wicket in his last Test at the Oval; dramatically the Don was bowled by Hollies for a duck.

The Oval to a man were hoping for Worrell to get off the mark; this he did and put up the 200. At 202 - 5, Statham was back at the pavilion end to use the new ball which he took for his third delivery at Worrell. Trueman, at the Vauxhall end, amused the crowd when a newspaper blew across his path as he was about to bowl. Trueman picked it up and began to read, giving the crowd a thumbs up when he had finished. At 212—5 bad light held up play for eight minutes.

When play was resumed Barrington got a hand to a full-blooded slash by Worrell and fell full stretch trying to hold the ball at the second attempt, but failed. Worrell took a run, as did Solomon from the next ball, and then Worrell, trying to cut Statham, was bowled. Lock picked up Murray off Trueman at leg-slip - 221 - 7; and then the cat and mouse performance with the light intervened again. This time the players were off for only five minutes; what a long-suffering body of men and women the cricket watchers are.

There was enough time when the last session of play commenced for Trueman not only to bowl Hall middle stump, but to break the stump in the bargain. So ended the day's proceedings. West Indies, at one time 150 - 2, were now 231 - 8.

THIRD DAY

Rain, which had threatened to cut deep inroads into the day's entertainment, produced merely a partial interference and play began only a quarter of an hour late. England brushed aside the West Indies two remaining wickets and they were all out at ten minutes past twelve for 246.

Trueman (Pictured, Right), when he bowled Hall, had taken 34 wickets in the series, one more than the previous highest in an England v. West Indies series (Valentine took 33 in 1950). England, with a lead of 29, West Indies having to bat last, and the weather uncertain to say the least of it, were nicely placed. They were expected to spend the rest of the day consolidating a position from which they could strike for victory. Edrich and Bolus, who had given England a start of 59 in the first innings, weathered the initial onslaught by Hall and Griffith, Edrich looking reasonably composed against Griffith, who was clearly not bowling with as much fire and direction as he had

done with the new ball in the first innings. Worrell was quick to spot this, and with only 18 runs scored Griffith was taken off from the pavilion end and Sobers came on. At this point a green balloon floated across the ground riding on the breeze; Worrell took a kick at it as a sober reminder that in a matter of hours the English football season would be getting under way; Kanhai made as if to save, but without success, and it drifted away to seek refuge with the Caribbean contingent on the gasometer side of the ground. It was not long before Sobers showed us just how dangerous he can be with the new ball. Bolus, trying to drive, made contact with the edge of his bat and Gibbs took the catch in the slips, 29 - 1. Two runs later Edrich appeared to be in two minds when sparring at Griffith outside the off-stump and steered the ball into Murray's gloves. Here ended the dismal story of England's openers in the 1963 Test series - this gaping hole in our cricket armoury is still as exposed as ever. It remains with another body of selectors for 1964. Now, of course, England were in trouble, but not so deeply that Dexter and Barrington could not put matters right.

When they came out together after lunch with the England score 37 - 2 the fate of the whole series virtually rested upon their success or failure. Barrington had apparently decided to take the bull by the horns and scored 28 in under half an hour, taking 15 off one over from Griffith; admittedly, he lived dangerously, but this seemed a deliberate attempt to throw West Indies out of their stride and for a time it paid dividends. Griffith, however, whose yorker has steadily grown in effectiveness as the tour has progressed, produced a snorter for Barrington who lost his off-stump. Close, having helped himself to a four off Griffith, was immediately lbw to



Sobers. England were 69 - 4, 98 runs on, and all eyes turned

towards Dexter who, for all his brilliance, had not scored a hundred in the series. Here was as good a time as any! Sharpe, so palpably out of form in County cricket, could barely be expected to come off yet again for England. Sobers and Dexter had a most interesting duel, Dexter never really touching his known form.

Murray might conceivably have caught him very early on, and Sobers was within an inch of a caught and bowled; it was no real surprise that Sobers won in the end when Dexter tried to cut him and got an edge. 121 - 5, Dexter gone, Sharpe . . . Parks, and then the beginning of the tail. West Indies had swung themselves back into the game with a vengeance.

Their supporters staged a minor volcanic eruption when Dexter was out and were never quiet again, but Sharpe and Parks began a valuable association which did England's chances a power of good. West Indies let Sharpe off the hook when he had scored 16 - a dropped catch off Sobers - but he played some superb strokes, especially off Gibbs; and even when Parks fell to Griffith after a stand of 52, Sharpe continued with some glorious strokes, particularly one off Hall, who was brought back to demolish the tail.

This he did with a ruthless piece of bowling. First, Sobers picked up Trueman in the slips, like a vulture swooping on its prey; next ball Hall bowled Lock and the noise was like a beer-garden as Statham came out to ward off a hat-trick and promptly hit a four to show he had no time for half-measures. Sharpe was trying to manipulate the striking, but when Statham was left to his own devices he hit Sobers for a couple of fours, and Hall for two over mid-off, as proof that he was in no need of protection, but Hall shattered his stumps in the end. Sharpe's score, mean time, was mounting, but when he was trying to get a single at the end of an over, Hall let fly a bouncer; normally Sharpe would have watched it go by, but he took a swing and the ball brushed the face of the bat and ran through to Murray. The little wicket-keeper held the catch—his twenty-fourth of the series, and a record. This record was not allowed to go unnoticed in the West Indian quarters to the leeward of the gasometer side score-board, and a horde rushed on the field to add their personal congratulations.

Sharpe had made 83, Shackleton, for the second time in the match, a distinguished not out 0! West Indies needed 253 to win; they scored 5 of them without loss and we all had the weekend to think about it. Whatever we thought, Sharpe had been a hero.

FOURTH DAY

Great expectations filled the hearts of a seething multitude streaming into the Oval for the last and decisive phase of a great battle; each camp had good enough reasons for believing that victory was within its grasp. As far as England was concerned, grave doubts centred upon the fitness of Trueman, who had turned a foot over in a blockhole on Saturday and severely damaged his heel. Happily, Trueman took his place in the field when Dexter led the England side out, and he opened the bowling. Grievously for England, one over was too much for him, and he limped off never to be seen again. This left Statham, with Shackleton (Derek, Pictured, Top, Right), Dexter and Lock, to hold the fort. Never, for a single moment, did this attack look the slightest bit like

bowling West Indies out; sad to say, it looked very thin indeed.

Statham had bowled the first over from the pavilion end and the wicket was as good as gold, and when Trueman departed, and Shackleton replaced



him, never was it more apparent how different can be the approach of opening batsmen when they are facing Hall and Griffith to when they are opposed by Shackleton, who, admittedly, may well get them out, but there is never the psychological element involved as to when the next bouncer is coming. Shackleton, splendidly as he may well have performed within the limits of his particular type of bowling, is a poor substitute for a really quick bowler on good wickets, and on this last day he rarely ever looked like getting anyone out. Statham, too, not the great Statham that we have known and admired enormously over such a long period, was finding it hard going without his old accomplice at the other end.

Hunte very soon took a straight four off Shackleton and then cut him square for another four. Murray kindly brought out a message to Dexter since England's twelfth man was on the field; the contents were obviously of a private nature and could have ranged somewhere between advice on how to get West Indies out, or something fancied a good deal in the second race at Folkestone!

At 40—0 Lock took a turn at the pavilion end, and started with a maiden. Parks, incidentally, when Shackleton was bowling, was standing up to Hunte and back to Rodriguez (Pictured, Below, Centre). Not a run was scored off Lock until his fourth over.

The scoring was slow, but there was no need to hurry. West Indies had two days in which to get the runs, and if play was rained off they had won the series anyway. It was a happy position to be in, especially when the 50 went up just before one o'clock. Rodriguez was given a life when Lock failed to hold a fast high one at leg-slip and at lunch West Indies were 71 without loss.

Frankly, barring a miracle, they were home and dried then. At 78, Lock made amends and caught Rodriguez this time, and this brought in Kanhai to provide us with a cricketing gem. He swept Lock for 4; raised the 100 when he had scored 19; Hunte reached his own 50 out of 108, Kanhai was then 23.



It was hereabouts that Kanhai ran amok. Hunte did precious little else but stand and watch and not too distant Kanhai passed Hunte's score. Kanhai took a couple of fours off Shackleton, clouted Dexter, so that Close, bowling spinners, was risked in the firing line; 'risk', indeed, was the operative word, as Kanhai carted him for three fours in one over, the West Indians clustered in massive groups on the gasometer side signalling their approval with voice and contortions!

Lock threw up a chinaman to see what Kanhai could do with that one. He attacked the ball with such venom that he took both feet off the ground and finished up flat on his back; it might be mentioned, just as an afterthought, that the ball went for 6! Now, everyone had forgotten the remote possibility of England winning, and were ready to settle for Kanhai just as long as he cared to stay. It was thus a great disappointment when Kanhai tried a repeat performance off the next ball and was caught out by Bolus, 191 - 2.

This brought in Butcher and he stayed with Hunte until victory and the subsequent scenes of enthusiasm quite unparalleled in the long history of cricket. Kanhai, it might be mentioned, had batted an hour and a half for his 77. Hunte soldiered on unmoved and

majestic, that is until Butcher hit the final run and Hunte, scampering off like a frightened rabbit, lost his bat in the melee and was then hoisted up on willing shoulders as the nation's hero, 108 not out.

The Oval turf was enveloped by a swarm of people; scenes followed which will become as historic as the 'white horse' cup final at Wembley. What is wrong with cricket as a public spectacle?

Here, indeed, was the complete answer.

England v West Indies.

Fifth Test: The Oval - August 22,23,24 & 26 1963.

Toss: England

Debuts - None.

England 275 (PJ Sharpe, 63. DB Close,46. CC Griffiths, 6-71) and 223 (PJ Sharpe, 83. WW Hall, 4-59).

West Indies 246 (CC Hunte, 80. BF Butcher, 53. FS Trueman, 3-65. JB Statham, 3-68) and 255 - 2 (CC Hunte, 108*. RB Kanhai, 77).

West Indies won by 8 wickets and took the series by three victories to one.

Choose Your Team to play England in our unofficial Trial Match

I am far too young (looks up and whistles sheepishly) to remember Trials Matches, but I thought it might be a good idea with a busy English domestic season of international cricket coming up and Australia on the horizon for us all to have a think about choosing an England XI comprising of players who have never played Test cricket to play a match against the current England Test side.

It needs to be a team of XI! And must include a wicket-keeper.

The game will take place at Old Trafford and the wicket will be the best prepared ever for a proper five-day Test...it wont rain and no play will be lost at all. The game will be live on normal free television with no adverts and **YOU** also have to name the two current commentators (from Radio, TV) that you want to hear commentating on the match.

You can have as many players as you want from one county, but please remember that the best team (in my opinion the one that I think has the best chance of defeating the current England team) that I receive will win the recipient a copy of **GOLDEN SUMMERS** by Stephen Chalke - and that doesn't mean that a

Lancashire fan can get around me by choosing a Lancs XI.

This question has been prompted by a comment I read which said that those in positions of authority in English cricket should realise that we have no depth, no talent pool to call on.

Please send in your teams to
furmedgefamilly@btinternet.com



THE BIG SPRING QUIZ

Thank you to all of you who have responded to The Big Spring Quiz.

Owing to the gap between the last two editions of The Wisdener I sent out Rounds 5 and 6 to all participants separately, but I have reprinted then questions below and if you did not receive them and would like to send in your answers, please do so along with your answers to the final two rounds, seven and eight by Saturday April 3rd.

An apology to 11 people for missing their names off the last leaderboard...the updated table is on the next page.

Round Five:

- 1: Who is the oldest man to play in a One Day International for Australia?
- 2: Name the last man to score a 1000 runs and take 50 wickets in a County Championship season?
- 3: Name the last wicket keeper to take 11 catches in a Sheffield Shield match?
- 4: Name the man who once scored 96 in a One Day International without hitting a single boundary?
- 5: Who is the bowler to have taken the most wickets after his 30th birthday in Test cricket?
- 6: Which batsman scored most runs in Test Cricket during the decade of the 1980's?
- 7: Which man has the best match bowling figures while also being Captain of his team in Test Match cricket?
- 8: Who was the first man to be out for 199 in a Test Match?
- 9: In which year were floodlights first used in a 1st class match in England?
- 10: Who were the 2 England opening batsmen both dismissed for ducks. The last time this happened in an Ashes Test match?

Round Six:

Who is the oldest man to play for Australia in the World Cup? Brad Haddin

- 1: Name the last man while batting at number 11 to score a century in a County Championship match?
- 2: Name the first man to score a century on his 1st class debut and on his Test Match debut?
- 3: Who is the batsman that has scored the most runs in a single Sheffield Shield season?
- 4: Name the 2 w-keepers who both scored centuries in the same Test on the first occasion that this happened?
- 5: Who took 12 wickets on his Test Match debut for Australia but only played in one more Test?
- 6: Name the first West Indian to take 5 catches in an innings in a Test Match (none wk)?
- 7: Who is the last man to score a century on his 1st class debut in a County Championship match?
- 8: Who is the last opening batsman to be out to the first ball he faced on his Test Match debut for England?
- 10: Name the cricketer who was born in one country, played Test cricket for a different country and banned from another country for playing cricket in another country?

Round Seven:

- 1: Name the oldest man to score a double century for West Indies in a Test Match?
- 2: Who holds the record for most runs scored in a calendar year in Test Matches for England?
- 3: Who was the last man to take 9 wickets in an innings in a Sheffield Shield match?
- 4: Which bowler took most wickets in Test cricket during the decade of the 1980's?
- 5: Name the last Australian batsman to be out for 99 in an Ashes Test Match?
- 6: Who is the last man to be run out by the bowler while backing up (mankaded) in a County Championship match and who was the bowler involved in this incident?
- 7: Who is the only wicket keeper to take 5 stumpings in a Test Match innings?
- 8: Name the last man to make his debut after his 30th birthday, then to go on to take 100 wickets in Test cricket?
- 9: Who, when scoring a double century in 2016, made his family the first to have 3 generations of 1st class double centuries?
- 10: Name the only bowler to take his team's first wicket in a Test after starting the match as wicket keeper? Tatenda Taibu

Round Eight - FINAL ROUND

- 1 Who is the oldest man to be on a winning team in a World Cup final (not 20/20)?
- 2 Name the youngest man to score a Test Match double century for India?
- 3 Who is the last bowler to take a hat-trick on his 1st class debut in Australia?
- 4 Name the first batsman to score a century in his 100th One Day International?
- 5 Which man scored 4 centuries in Test matches but none in any of his other 112 1st class matches?
- 6 Name the man that has been dismissed most times in the nervous 90's in Test match cricket?
- 7 Who is the last man to score 11 centuries in a County Championship season?
- 8 Who played in 7 Tests for England up to 2005, he then missed the next 142 Test matches that England played before he was recalled to play?
- 9 Which man with 623 has made the most runs when batting in the number 11 position in Test cricket history?
- 10 Name the last England batsman to be run out by the bowler while backing up (mankaded) in a Test match and who was the bowler?

Answers please by email to either furmedgefamilly1864@gmail.com or furmedgefamilly@btinternet.com

THE BIG SPRING QUIZ - Answers so far and Leaderboard

Here are the answers to the first four rounds of questions and the leaderboard after four rounds.

Round One:

- 1: Who was the first bowler to be hit for 200 sixes in Test cricket? **Nathan Lyon**
- 2: Who was the last man to umpire in a Test Match under the age of 30? **Simon Taufel**
- 3: Who was the last Australian batsman to be out for 99 in a Test Match? **Shaun Marsh**
- 4: Who was the man who scored 1 run and 5 ducks in his first 6 innings in Test cricket but later went on to score 6 double centuries? **Marvin Atapattu**
- 5: Which bowler took the most wickets in Test cricket during the decade of the 1970's? **Derek Underwood**
- 6: Who was the first man to captain 3 state teams in the Sheffield Shield? **Dirk Wellham**
- 7: Who was the first man, born in South Africa, to score a century against South Africa in a Test Match? **Andy Flower**
- 8: Who is the youngest man to captain England in a Test Match since World War II? **Ian Botham**
- 9: West Indies fast bowlers dominated Test cricket during the 1980's, but which 2 men scored double centuries against them in this decade? **Sunil Gavaskar and Dean Jones**
- 10: Who was the last batsman to be given out 'handled the ball' in the County Championship? **Sean Dickson**

Round Two

- 1: Which bowler inflicted a record 104 ducks on batsmen in Test cricket? **Glen McGrath**
- 2: Who was the last man to score a century before lunch on the 1st day of a Test Match? **Shikhar Dharwan**
- 3: Who was the first Sri Lankan batsman to be out for 99 in a Test Match? **Russel Arnold**
- 4: Who is the only man to take 5 wickets in an innings against all 18 1st class counties in the CC? **Phillip DeFreitas**
- 5: Who was the last Australian opening batsman to be out for a duck on his Test debut? **Phillip Hughes**
- 6: Who was the last man to score a century and take 10 wickets in a Sheffield Shield match? **Joe Scuderi**
- 7: Who was the last man to be stranded on 99 not out in a County Championship match? **Gareth Berg**
- 8: Who is the only English batsman to score 3 ducks in 3 consecutive innings and then 3 centuries in his next 3 innings in Test cricket? **Ravi Bopara**
- 9: Name the bowler who has taken the most 5 wicket hauls in the 4th innings of the match in Test cricket? **Rangana Herath**
- 10: Who was the last man to make his Test Match debut for Australia over the age of 35? **Adam Voges**

Round Three

- 1: Name the last batsman to make centuries in 5 successive Test Matches? **Gautam Gambir**
- 2: Who, with figures of 14-87, has the best match bowling figures in a Sheffield Shield game since WW2? **Terry Alderman**
- 3: Which Test Match ground is closest to the Equator? **Galle**
- 4: Name the last man to score a century and take 10 wickets in a County Championship match? **Jack Shantry**
- 5: Who was the last man to be stranded on 99 not out in a Test Match? **Misbah-ul-Haq**
- 6: Which batsman scored the most runs in Test cricket during the decade of the 1990's? **Alec Stewart**
- 7: Name the bowler who once dismissed his cousin in a Test Match? **Bruce Reid**
- 8: Name the 2 England opening batsmen who both scored centuries in the same innings on the last occasion this happened in a Test Match? **Alistair Cook and Nick Compton**
- 9: Who is the only wicket keeper to score a double century on his Test Match debut? **Brendon Kuruppu**
- 10: Who made 230 consecutive appearances in the County Championship from 2001 to 2015? **Mark Wallace**

Round Four:

- 1: Name the batsman that scored the one millionth run in Test Match cricket? **Allan Border**
- 2: Who is the youngest man to score a double century in the County Championship? **Dominic Sibley**
- 3: Name the 2 opening batsmen who were out for 97 and 93, it was the first instance of openers both being out in the 90's in the same innings in Test Cricket? **Sunil Gavaskar and Chetan Chauhan**
- 4: Name the bowler to take the most wickets in a single Sheffield Shield season? **Colin Miller**
- 5: Who is the only New Zealander to take 5 catches in an innings in a Test Match (none wk)? **Stephen Fleming**
- 6: Name the first Test cricketer to die on his birthday? **Keith Boyce**
- 7: Who hit the winning run in a World Cup final and took a catch that ended the next final? **Darren Lehmann**
- 8: Who played only 3 Test matches for England and was man of the match in 2 of them? **Richard Johnson**
- 9: There have been 3 New Zealand born bowlers who have taken over 1000 first class wickets, Richard Hadlee and Clarrie Grimmet are two of them - name the third? **Andy Caddick**
- 10: Who has batted the most innings in Test Match cricket without being run-out? **Kapil Dev**

Thank you to the 216 people who have powered through the first four rounds - I am astonished by the number of all correct entries and I think it is easier if I list the top 11 as they all have a 100% correct-answer rate.

Allan Fowler, Neil Marsh, Stephen Richmond, Simon Alexander, Clive Morrison, Jim Whitley, Andy Duckworth, Elaine Turner, Chris O'Brien, Sam Leatherdale and Tony Stuart.....you have all scored 40 out of 40.