

AUSTRALIA V. WEST INDIES BOXING DAY TEST



DECEMBER 29, 2015
FACT SHEET - DAY 4

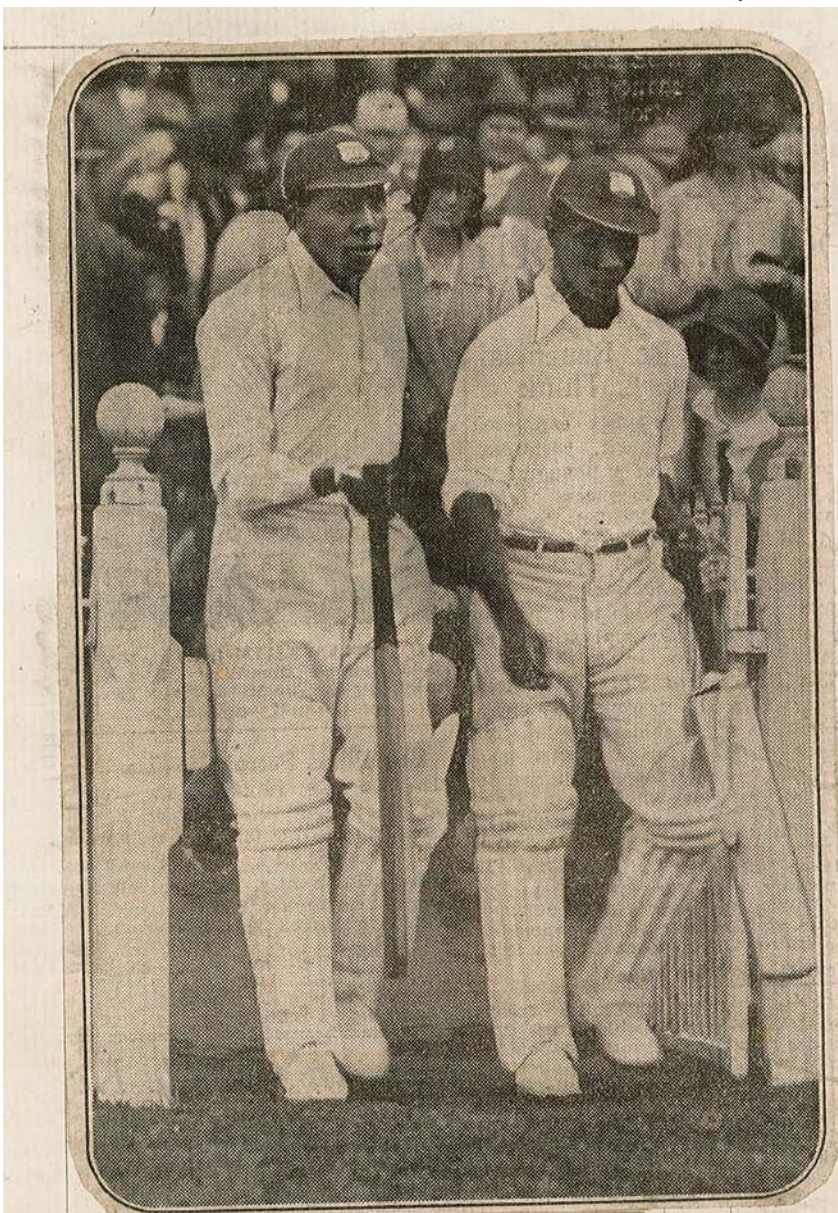
Beginning with the inaugural Test match in March 1877, 107 Tests have been staged at the MCG. One Test, in 1970/71, was abandoned without a ball bowled and is not counted in the records. Fourteen of the matches have involved West Indies, Australia winning 10 of those contests, West Indies three, with the other drawn. The other sides to play Tests at the MCG are England (55), India (12), South Africa (12), Pakistan (9), New Zealand (3) and Sri Lanka (2).

Only Lord's Cricket Ground (130) has hosted more Test matches than the MCG. As Lord's currently has two Test matches per summer (it hosted three in 2010), it will extend its lead as the MCG has not hosted two Test matches in the same season since 1981/82. Of the 114 Tests between Australia and West Indies to date, Australia has won 56, West Indies 32, one has been tied and the remaining 24 drawn.

The current Test is Australia's 785th and West Indies' 512th. Of its 784 Tests to date, Australia has won 362 (46.95 per cent), lost 205 (26.59 per cent) and tied two. The remaining 202 have been drawn.

The fact sheets for today's game will review the inaugural five-Test series between the two countries, the first match beginning at Adelaide Oval on 18 December 1930, 85 years ago, almost to the day. A summary of each match will appear during the course of this game. Today's sheet features the Fourth Test, played at the MCG.

1930/31: West Indies' Inaugural Tour of Australia FOURTH TEST at the MCG, February 13 & 14, 1931



Constantine and Headley

With an unbeatable three-nil lead in the series, the Australian selectors saw no reason to change their side, naming Victorian batsman Keith Rigg as drinks waiter for a fourth successive Test. The West Indies welcomed back their First Test top-scorer Lawson Bartlett, his broken finger from the Second Test now mended, and relegated Derek Sealy to 12th man.

Jackie Grant won the toss for the West Indies and had no hesitation in deciding to bat on a perfect pitch and with an already high temperature expected to soar during the afternoon. Clifford Roach and Freddie Martin opened soundly against the new ball, but the introduction of left-armer Bert Ironmonger and wrist-spinner Clarrie Grimmett once again exposed the tourists' weakness against quality slow bowling. After the openers were separated, the innings fell away to such an extent that the last seven wickets added only 18 runs.

Only a confident George Headley (54 minutes, four fours) was able to demonstrate that positive footwork was essential for success against such an attack. Ironmonger's unrelenting accuracy and probing orthodox spin yielded his Test-best figures of 7/23, from 20 overs, for once overshadowing the wily Grimmett (2/46).

Australia began its reply in mid-afternoon, captain Bill Woodfull renewing his opening association with Bill Ponsford and relegating Archie Jackson to No.4. The pair added 50 in 47 minutes before Ponsford was adjudged to have been stumped, when the ball rebounded from the pads of keeper Ivan Barrow, who was standing up to the stumps to take Learie Constantine's fast-medium bowling. It was a decision that did not please everybody in the crowd. Don Bradman joined his skipper and, after a brief period of consolidation, the pair scored so freely that 100 runs were added in an hour and by stumps they had raised the total to 197, with Bradman on 92 and Woodfull 75.

Persistent overnight rain softened the pitch, making batting more difficult on the second day, particularly at one end. Bradman was uncertain at first

(manager), C. J.



Francis (West Indies) bowling

4TH TEST

and was dropped by Headley at silly point off Martin before adding to his overnight score. A few runs later, he failed to respond to his partner's call and Woodfull (147 minutes, seven fours) was run out, ending a second-wicket partnership which had added 156 in 92 minutes.

Jackson held on for three-quarters of an hour while 59 runs were added, before top-edging Constantine to Lionel Birkett, who ran back several metres from slip to take the catch.

A few runs later, Bradman (145) was involved in a second running mix-up in which he and Stan McCabe arrived at the same end. Although Bradman was initially given out, he was reprieved after a discussion between the umpires decided that it was McCabe who had to go.

Perhaps unsettled, Bradman (154 minutes, two fives, 13 fours) was caught soon after by Roach at long-off from Martin's bowling, following another masterly display.

The two Alans, Fairfax and Kippax, added a few quick runs, after which Woodfull declared with a lead of 229. Martin (3/91) took the bowling honours for West Indies with his orthodox left-arm spinners, bowling 21.2 steady overs unchanged from the start of play.

AUSTRALIA v. WEST INDIES (1930/31)

Fourth Test Match

Played at Melbourne Cricket Ground on February 13 & 14, 1931.

Australia won by an innings & 122 runs. Toss: West Indies.

West Indies

C. A. Roach c Kippax b Grimmett	20	- lbw b Fairfax.	7
F. R. Martin lbw b Ironmonger.	17	- (6) c Oldfield b Fairfax.. . . .	10
G. A. Headley c Jackson b Ironmonger .. .	33	- c Fairfax b Ironmonger.. . . .	11
L. S. Birkett c McCabe b Ironmonger.. . . .	0	- c Jackson b Ironmonger	13
E. L. Bartlett st Oldfield b Ironmonger .. .	9	- (7) b Fairfax.	6
* G. C. Grant c Oldfield b Ironmonger	0	- (5) c McCabe b Ironmonger	3
L. N. Constantine c Jackson b Grimmett .. .	7	- (2) c Kippax b Fairfax	10
† I. Barrow c Fairfax b Ironmonger	0	- c Oxenham b Ironmonger	13
O. C. Scott run out	11	- not out	20
G. N. Francis not out	0	- (11) c Jackson b Grimmett	0
H. C. Griffith c Fairfax b Ironmonger.. . . .	0	- (10) b Grimmett.	4
Nb 2	2	B 3, lb 6, nb 1	10
1/32 2/51 3/53 4/81 5/81 6/88	99	1/8 2/32 3/36 4/49 5/60	107
7/88 8/88 9/99 10/99		6/60 7/67 8/92 9/97 10/107	

Bowling: *First Innings* — Fairfax 5-0-14-0; Oxenham 6-1-14-0; Ironmonger 20-7-23-7; Grimmett 19-7-46-2. *Second Innings* — Fairfax 14-2-31-4; Ironmonger 17-4-56-4; Grimmett 4-4-10-2.

Australia

* W. M. Woodfull run out	83	R. K. Oxenham c Constantine b Griffith	0
W. H. Ponsford st Barrow b Constantine..	24	† W. A. S. Oldfield not out.	1
D. G. Bradman c Roach b Martin.	152	B 7, lb 3, nb 1	11
A. A. Jackson c Birkett b Constantine. . .	15		
S. J. McCabe run out	2	1/50 2/206 3/265 (8 wkts, dec.)	328
A. G. Fairfax c Birkett b Martin.	16	4/275 5/286 6/325 7/326 8/328	
A. F. Kippax b Martin	24		

C. V. Grimmett and H. Ironmonger did not bat.

Bowling: Francis 13-0-51-0; Griffith 8-1-33-1; Scott 11-0-47-0; Constantine 25-4-83-4; Martin 30.2-3-91-3; Birkett 2-0-12-0.

Close of play score: Aust 1/197 (Woodfull 75, Bradman 92).

Umpires: A. N. Barlow & J. Richards.

Roach and Constantine began the visitors' second innings, the latter sent in presumably to attack the bowlers straight away and not allow them to settle.

The tactic failed, with medium-pacer Fairfax removing both openers, the hard-hitting Constantine having made only 10 of the 32 added while he was at the crease.

Headley again began confidently, only to be dismissed by a freakish one-handed catch by Fairfax at slip.

The remaining batsmen offered little resistance, apart from a few lusty blows towards the end by Tommy Scott, one of which cleared the fence for the only six of the match. Fairfax (4/31) produced Test career-best figures, while Ironmonger finished with a match return of 11/79.

Grimmett came on just in time to take the last two wickets. The home side completed the match with an hour to spare on the second day, recording its third successive victory by an innings and plenty.

For more on the 1930/31 West Indies Test tour, see the MCC Library's journal, *The Yorker*, available from the library reference desk.

THE CAPTAINS – Bill Woodfull and Jackie Grant



W. M. Woodfull, Captain of the Australian XI.

Although this series was only his second at the helm, **Bill Woodfull** had led Australia to a 2-1 series victory in England a few months earlier to regain the Ashes. He was already regarded as one of Australia's greatest opening batsmen, his seemingly impenetrable defensive technique leading critics to label him as "The Unbowable". He entered the 1930/31 series with an impressive record of 1142 runs at an average of 54.38, with six centuries, from 15 Tests. His overall first-class record was even more imposing – 9263 runs at 70.17, with 37 hundreds, in 112 first-class appearances. Renowned for impeccable sportsmanship, Woodfull had immediately earned the admiration and respect of his players for his leadership.

Even after 85 years, the appointment of the 23-year-old **George Copeland ('Jackie') Grant** as captain still seems bizarre. A right-hand middle order batsman, he had never played first-class cricket in the Caribbean, although born in Trinidad, his only

experience at that level being 26 fairly successful appearances for Cambridge University while completing his studies there. He had also had no leadership experience and only met the members of his side when joining their ship as it passed through the Panama Canal en route to Australia. It proved, however, to be an inspired choice, for Grant went on to head the Test batting averages, as well as earn widespread praise for his astute leadership and tactical expertise. He remains the youngest player to have captained West Indies in Tests.



G. C. Grant.

Alan George Fairfax (1906-1955)

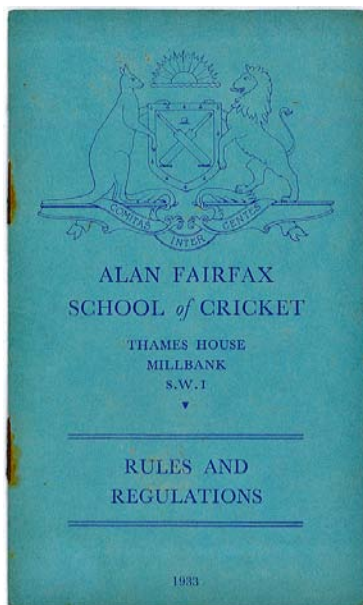


Having made both his first-class and Test debuts in the 1928/29 season, New South Wales all-rounder Alan Fairfax showed enough potential to suggest that Australia may have found a replacement for the dynamic Jack Gregory, who had retired in the same season. Tall and well built, Fairfax was a sound batsman, who used his height and reach to advantage in driving, an accurate medium-fast swing bowler who varied his pace well, and a fine slip fieldsman. Australia's domination of the West



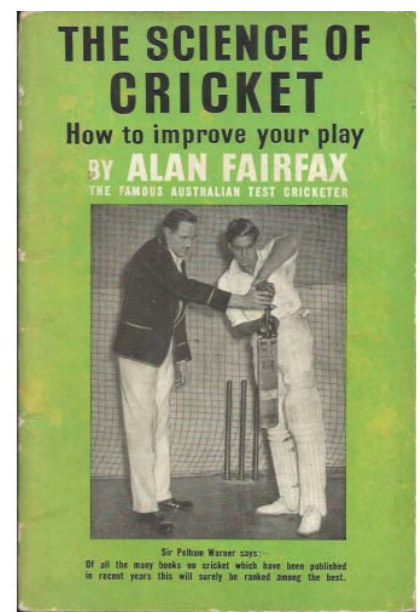
Indies reduced his opportunities in the 1930/31 series, although he contributed useful runs and wickets in support of the side's major players, none more so than in the Fifth Test at Sydney when he made 114 runs without being dismissed, in what proved to be his last Test.

He quit Australia abruptly late in 1931 to play league cricket in England and subsequently opened



a cricket centre in London. His 10-Test career, which included the 1930 England tour, produced 410 runs at 51.25 and 21 wickets at 30.71, while in all first-class cricket he made 1910 runs at 28.93 and captured 134 wickets at 27.87.

The Library contains two works by Alan Fairfax. His book *The Science of Cricket* published in 1952 and a pamphlet titled *Alan Fairfax School of Cricket Rules and Regulations 1933*. Fairfax sold his interest in the school in 1937 when he was appointed cricket coach at Eton College.



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