

## AUSTRALIA v. WEST INDIES BOXING DAY TEST



DECEMBER 26, 2015  
FACT SHEET - DAY 1

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 57, 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 363 (46.30 per cent), lost 205 (26.14 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, beginning with the First Test on today's sheet, followed by each of the remaining games in sequence on the sheets for subsequent days.

## 1930/31: West Indies' Inaugural Tour of Australia



It should be noted that West Indies, unlike all the other Test-playing nations, has never existed as a sovereign nation. The title applies only to international cricket, its representatives being selected from Barbados, Guyana (previously British Guiana), Jamaica, Trinidad & Tobago, Antigua, Dominica, Grenada, Montserrat, Nevis/Anguilla, St Lucia and St Vincent, most of whom achieved their independence as individual nations in the latter half of last century. Up

until the mid-1950s, however, only players from the first four named territories were considered for international selection.

Prior to embarking on its Australian venture, West Indies had played only seven Tests, all against England (three in 1928 and four in 1929/30), its elevation to Test status having been granted only after the fulfilment of a key requirement, the formation in 1926 of an administrative body with overall responsibility for the game in the Caribbean – the West Indies Cricket Board of Control.

The infant board hit the ground running, as David Frith revealed in *Inside Story: Unlocking Australian Cricket's Archives*, writing to their Australian counterpart in January 1927 with a request for a program of matches for its side 'down-under', in preparation for its 1928 tour of England. At such short notice, the proposal to link the two tours within the time-frame seemed over-ambitious if not impractical, given that the only mode of overseas travel at the time was by ship.

At its September 1928 meeting, the Australian board finally issued an invitation for West Indies to tour during the 1929/30 season, but it was then mutually agreed to delay it for 12 months because of England's intent to visit the Caribbean that summer.

The tourists arrived in Australia on November 18, 1930, and began their opening engagement three days later, against New South Wales at the Sydney Cricket Ground. The touring party comprised: G.C. Grant (captain, Cambridge University), L.S. Birkett (vice-captain), L.N. Constantine, E.A.C. Hunte, C.A. Roach and E.L. St Hill (all from Trinidad), I. Barrow, G.A. Headley, F.R. Martin and O.C. Scott (Jamaica), E.L. Bartlett, G.N. Francis, H.C. Griffith and J.E.D. Sealy (Barbados), F.I. de Caires and O.S. Wight (British Guiana). Five Tests were included in an itinerary of 16 matches, 14 of which were first-class.

### THE CAPTAINS

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.





# Welcome to West Indies

*Adventurous Cricketers Facing Big Task  
Will Test Cricket be Lighter-hearted this Season?*

The electric West Indies team is bringing a new spirit to cricket in Australia. They delight in having a go at the bowling, and attempts at sixes are common. Usually this spirit is not suited to the dourness of Test cricket, played hitherto in a do-or-die attitude. This seriousness has been forced on English and Australian Test players in the past by the keenness of the struggle, for winning has called from each team the maximum of effort. In the West Indies the game is lighter-hearted, and is played by the temperamental West Indians as it might be expected they would play it. Their methods have gained for them satisfactory scores, for on their true wickets, harder than ours, the balls turn less, and forward play and the hard-hitting game are safer. The turn that the Australian bowlers have been able to get on the hard wickets here has surprised the West Indians, and they have not yet become accustomed to slow and medium-paced bowlers, who, almost miraculously to them, turn the ball.

### Headley and Constantine.

Headley, a super-batsman, has shown himself to be very adaptable and a finished batsman—so good, indeed, is he that Australians want to know how he developed his stroking powers without high-class coaching, and without a lot of experience. Evidently he is a natural cricketer, like Bradman and Ponsford, and the subtleties of correct footwork come naturally to him. This is a rare thing in batsmanship, and Headley's career will be well worth following, also his cricket. He is a pleasant-faced lad, with a charming smile, and, like his brother-Islanders, is catlike in his quickness on the field. He is really a greater cricket personality than Constantine, who has, however, the strongest field personality of any cricketer that has ever visited Australia.

Constantine is panther-like in all his actions. He never seems to do anything like anybody else, whether he is bowling, batting or fielding. It is his fielding, however, that will most delight Australian crowds. They love a brilliant fieldsman, for they are so scarce and mediocrity so common. Fielding had begun to look dull until Constantine came along.



G. C. Grant.

### Wonderful Fielding.

He does wonderful things with his feet and hands that no one has ever seen here before, and combines this with unparalleled anticipation, picking up and throwing in with the one action. On one occasion in Melbourne he, seeing that the outfielder's throw-in would not reach the wicket in time to run Ponsford out, ran with the throw, caught the ball as it was passing him, and, in the same movement, threw it right on top of the wicket into the 'keeper's hands. Ponsford just scrambled home in time.

The movement showed quick de-

cision on his part—uncanny anticipation, extraordinary judgment in catching, and wonderful accuracy in throwing. He appears to be a law unto himself in the field, and makes batsmen uncomfortable. If the West Indies win a match it looks as if Headley's and Roach's batting and Constantine's bowling and fielding will win it for them.

### Test Match Temperament.

The captain of the team, G. C. Grant, has a charming, though serious, personality, and already has a fine control of his team. He is ably supported by his lieutenant, L. S. Birkett. Both of these men are class cricketers, Birkett being a fine, enterprising batsman, as well as a promising bowler. It is no surprise to see them do well in the Tests, when the pressure is on, for they both have the Test match temperament.

The managership of the team is entrusted to Mr. Mallett, an experienced manager and cricket enthusiast, a member of the Marylebone club, who has managed West Indies teams in England and M.C.C. teams in the West Indies, and was really responsible for the arrangement of the team. His assistant is Mr. J. E. Scheult, of Trinidad, who was with the last West Indies team in England. Under the experienced direction of these men the path of the team, outside Grimmett and Ironmonger, should be smooth and pleasant.

Australian cricket will certainly be the richer for the West Indian visit, and the dash of joyousness they are bringing to the playing fields is doubly welcome during the interval in the strenuous Test seasons.

### West Indies Averages (Test)

BATTING.					
	Inns.	N.O.	H.S.	Total.	Av.
G. C. Grant	2	2	71*	124	124.0
E. L. Bartlett	2	—	84	95	47.5
L. S. Birkett	2	—	64	91	45.5
C. A. Roach	2	—	56	65	32.5
F. R. Martin	2	—	39	42	21.0
I. Barrow	2	—	27	39	19.5
L. N. Constantine	2	—	14	15	7.5
H. C. Griffith	2	—	10	11	5.5
G. Headley	2	—	11	11	5.5
O. C. Scott	2	—	8	11	5.5
G. C. Francis	2	—	5	8	4.0

BOWLING.					
	Overs.	Mdns.	Runs.	Wickets.	Av.
O. C. Scott	33.5	2	138	4	34.5
G. Francis	28	8	75	2	37.5
H. Griffith	38	5	95	2	44.5
L. Constantine	31.3	—	116	1	116.0
L. Birkett	2	—	2	—	—
F. Martin	40	3	138	—	—

Above and next page: Extracts from the special West Indies Tour 1930/31 edition of the *Australian Cricketer*. 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 First Test

*A Keen Struggle*

*Surprising Exhibition by West Indies Eleven*

After their three matches against the southern States, the form of the West Indies team seemed to be recognisable. Allowing for some improvement in the side, and counteracting that by assuming that Australia was stronger than any one State, it seemed as if the West Indies scores would not exceed their scores against the States. On form it did not seem as if the West Indies bowlers would trouble the Australian Eleven batsmen, tried and true in many a test. But there were surprises both ways, and an additional surprise in that, although the stars, Headley and Constantine, failed, the team did better in both batting and bowling than it has been in the habit of doing when they were playing on form.

There was rather a surprise when it was seen that the West Indies were going to score 300 runs in their first innings. There was greater surprise, though, when the Australian Eleven batsmen were seen to be going down before the Islanders. Only Kippax and McCabe got scores, and they were lucky.

#### Above Form.

The general opinion was that the West Indies team was playing above its form. Be that as it may, there were the unalterable figures on the Adelaide scoreboard on the Monday for all to see.

The possibility that the Australian Eleven might have been below their usual test form was hardly considered, though it was obvious in the batting. It was less obvious in the bowling, because both Grimmett and Hurwood bowled as well as expected. The others, though, were not so good. Hurwood's success was in the nature of a personal triumph for him, for he



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

had not been played in any of the tests in England.

#### Their Changed Attitude.

Considering the match carefully, it seems that the West Indies' success was due to their departure from their usual and natural light-hearted game, and their adoption of the Australian-English game, grim, dour, and purposeful. The students of form had not expected this reversal of attitudes, and so they were all wrong. So much wrong that the first three days of the match showed the usual grim fight

for runs, with apparently little between the teams.

Only when the West Indians began to lose their grip in their second innings did the position begin to look safer for Australia. And Grant, the West Indies captain, again stood in the way of a quick ending to the innings. Indeed, Grant was the outstanding figure of the match. It seems that England has lost a test batsman and captain, and that the West Indies has gained one, for the last has certainly not been heard of Grant. To go in early in the innings in each case, as he did, and to carry his bat unconquered right through the match is an unparalleled feat. It was his first test match, and he was facing Grimmett, the best bowler in the world, with honours still thick upon him.

Grant may not have the grace of Trumper, the artistry of Kippax, or the sureness of Bradman, but he surely has the test match temperament, and he also must include some "Woodfullness," and the same qualities that have carried Woodfull, his rival captain, so far, must surely carry Grant a little further. With Grant as an inspiration, the West Indies team is not to be taken too lightly, for by temperament they are susceptible to inspiring and successful leadership.

The West Indies team may not win a match. English teams have left Australia, and not without honour, without winning a match. But the British West Indians have proved themselves worthy opponents, and the result will be greater public interest in the games, particularly if there are one or two alterations in the Australian team for each match. (Test scores on opposite page.)

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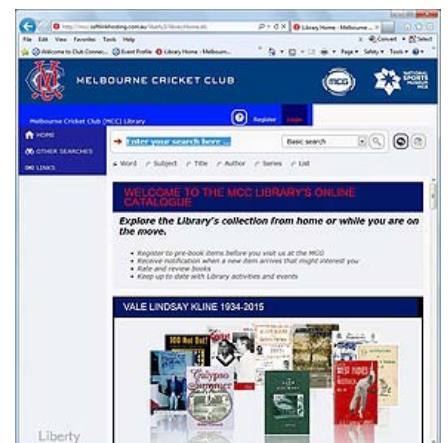
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# FIRST TEST at Adelaide Oval, December 12, 13, 15 & 16, 1930



Adelaide spectators saw Don Bradman in a new role yesterday when he was put on to bowl during the Bartlett-Grant partnership in the test match against West Indies. **ADELAIDE** 1st Test 1930

Australia was at full strength for its inaugural Test against the West Indies, fielding 10 of the Ashes-winning 11 which had defeated England at The Oval four months earlier. The only change was the inclusion of off-spinner Alec Hurwood in place of fellow Queenslander, Percy Hornibrook, whose left-arm spin had captured 7/92 in England's second innings at The Oval. Hornibrook had previously announced that he could no longer give cricket priority over the needs of his dental practice. The only visitors new to Test cricket, were their captain and vice-captain, Jackie Grant and Lionel Birkett.

The match began 46 years to the day after the very first Test had been staged at Adelaide Oval. Grant made a positive start by winning the toss and giving his side first use of a good batting strip. Birkett and Clifford Roach (132 minutes, one six, two fours) led off with a half-century partnership before leg-spinner Clarrie Grimmett rocked the visitors by removing Birkett and star batsman George Headley in the same over. Roach and Freddie Martin held on until lunch at 2/96, but soon after the wickets of both, together with that of Learie Constantine, fell within the space of 13 runs to Grimmett and off-spinner Hurwood. Lawson Bartlett (119 minutes, seven fours) joined his captain and the pair added 114 for the sixth wicket before Grimmett trapped Bartlett lbw and had wicketkeeper Ivan Barrow caught. By stumps, however, the visitors could feel satisfied with their total of 7/286.

Grant (188 minutes, four fours) was left stranded next day, when Grimmett and Hurwood grabbed the last three wickets at a cost of only 10 runs. Bill Ponsford and Archie Jackson began the Australian reply confidently, but their dismissals soon after the luncheon adjournment, together with the early departure of Don Bradman, reduced the home side to 3/64. Stan McCabe (132 minutes, nine fours) joined Alan Kippax and the pair, after a few anxious moments early against the pace of George Francis and Herman Griffith, added 182 runs for the fourth wicket in their contrasting styles, the former with power and panache while the latter was all elegance and sweet timing. Their association was spectacularly ended by Constantine when he caught and bowled McCabe more than half-way down the pitch in his follow-through. A little later, a running mix-up saw skipper Bill Woodfull sacrifice his wicket to save that of Kippax, who was on 99 at the time. Kippax obtained his century, his second in Tests, immediately after and in partnership with Alan Fairfax

carried the score to 5/297 by stumps, a lead of one run.

The pair extended their partnership to 72 next day before Kippax (229 minutes, 18 fours) fell to Griffith. His elegant 146 was one of his finest displays and remained his highest Test score. Apart from a little resistance from Bert Oldfield, the innings ended abruptly, when leg-spinner 'Tommy' Scott grabbed the last four wickets in the space of nine balls, as Fairfax (108 minutes, one six, three fours) watched from the other end. The West Indies began their second innings 80 runs in arrears and were soon in trouble, Woodfull further exposing their weakness against spin with the early introduction of Hurwood and Grimmett into the attack. Four wickets were lost before the arrears were cleared, followed by a further three before stumps at 7/203. Only Birkett (104 minutes, five fours) and Grant, who was unconquered on 50, his second half-century of the match, offered any serious resistance.

The Australian spinners carried their dominance into the fourth day, bowling the visitors out for the addition of another 45 runs. Grimmett began a hold over the West Indian batsmen he was to maintain for the rest of the series, taking 11/183 for the match. He was well supported by debutant Hurwood, who claimed match figures of 7/141. Both benefitted from a flawless exhibition of wicketkeeping by Oldfield, who executed four stumpings. West Indies skipper Grant (160 minutes, six fours) completed a fine double, compiling 124 runs in the match without being dismissed. Needing 170 to win, Australia began its pursuit shortly before lunch. Untroubled by the West Indies bowlers, Ponsford and Jackson (148

minutes, three fours) then proceeded to hit off the required runs at better than a run a minute.

## Edward Lawson Bartlett (1906-1976)

Lawson Bartlett's 84 in this match was the highlight of a five-Test career, which amounted to just 131 runs at an average of 18.71. Always immaculate in his attire both on and off the field, Bartlett was an attacking right-hand batsman with quick footwork and a fondness for leg-side strokes. The fleetness of foot that stamped him as a fine outfielder also served him well as a soccer player in his native Barbados. The tour to Australia was his second with the West Indies, having been a member of the 1928 party to England, where he had made his Test debut in the last of the three-match series, at The Oval. Despite a limited international career, he was a regular in Barbados teams from 1923/24 until 1938/39, compiling 1581 runs at 23.25 overall in first-class cricket, his only century being 109 for West Indies against Nottinghamshire in 1928. When *Wisden* reported his death in its 1934 edition, Bartlett had great delight in informing the illustrious publication that he was very much alive and well. He lived on for a further 42 years.



### AUSTRALIA v. WEST INDIES (1930/31)

#### First Test Match

Played at Adelaide Oval on December 12, 13, 15 & 16, 1930.

Australia won by 10 wickets. Toss: West Indies.

#### West Indies

C. A. Roach st Oldfield b Hurwood	56	- b Hurwood	9
L. S. Birkett c & b Grimmett	27	- st Oldfield b Grimmett	64
G. A. Headley c Wall b Grimmett	0	- st Oldfield b Grimmett	11
F. R. Martin b Grimmett	39	- run out	3
L. N. Constantine c Wall b Grimmett	1	- b Grimmett	14
* G. C. Grant not out	53	- not out	71
E. L. Bartlett lbw b Grimmett	84	- c Grimmett b Hurwood	11
† I. Barrow c Bradman b Grimmett	12	- lbw b Bradman	27
G. N. Francis lbw b Hurwood	5	- b Hurwood	3
O. C. Scott c Fairfax b Grimmett	3	- c Kippax b Hurwood	8
H. C. Griffith b Hurwood	1	- st Oldfield b Grimmett	10
B 6, lb 8, nb 1	15	B 16, lb 2	18
1/58 2/58 3/118 4/123 5/131 6/245	296	1/15 2/47 3/52 4/74 5/115	249
7/269 8/290 9/295 10/296		6/138 7/203 8/208 9/220 10/249	

Bowling: *First Innings* — Wall 16-0-64-0; Fairfax 11-1-36-0; Grimmett 48-19-87-7; Hurwood 36.1-14-55-3; McCabe 12-3-32-0; Bradman 4-0-7-0. *Second Innings* — Wall 10-1-20-0; Hurwood 34-11-86-4; Grimmett 38-7-96-4; McCabe 8-2-15-0; Bradman 5-1-8-1; Fairfax 3-2-6-0.

#### Australia

W. H. Ponsford c Birkett b Francis	24	- not out	92
A. A. Jackson c Barrow b Francis	31	- not out	70
D. G. Bradman c Grant b Griffith	4		
A. F. Kippax c Barrow b Griffith	146		
S. J. McCabe c & b Constantine	90		
* W. M. Woodfull run out	6		
A. G. Fairfax not out	41		
† W. A. S. Oldfield c Francis b Scott	15		
C. V. Grimmett c Barrow b Scott	0		
A. Hurwood c Martin b Scott	0		
T. W. Wall lbw b Scott	0		
B 2, lb 10, nb 7	19	B 8, w 1, nb 1	10
1/56 2/59 3/64 4/246 5/269 6/341	376		(0 wkt) 172
7/374 8/374 9/374 10/376			

Bowling: *First Innings* — Francis 18-7-43-2; Constantine 22-0-89-1; Griffith 28-4-69-2; Martin 29-3-73-0; Scott 20.5-2-83-4. *Second Innings* — Francis 10-1-30-0; Griffith 10-1-20-0; Martin 11-0-28-0; Constantine 9.3-3-27-0; Scott 13-0-55-0; Birkett 2-0-2-0.

Close of play scores: *1st day* — WI (1) 7/286 (Grant 49, Francis 3; *2nd day* — Aust (1) 5/297 (Kippax 118, Fairfax 7); *3rd day* — WI (2) 7/203 (Grant 50).

Umpires: G. A. Hele & A. G. Jenkins.