

# AUSTRALIA V. WEST INDIES BOXING DAY TEST



## DECEMBER 27, 2015 FACT SHEET - DAY 2

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. Today's sheet features the Second Test, played at the Sydney Cricket Ground.

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

#### SECOND TEST at the Sydney Cricket Ground, January 1, 2, 3 & 5, 1931

Australia made one change to its side from the First Test, omitting fast bowler Tim Wall in favour of left-arm spinner Bert Ironmonger, who had match figures of 13/118 for Victoria against the tourists a month earlier. The West Indies fielded the same 11.

Having won the toss, Australian captain Bill Woodfull had no hesitation in electing to bat in ideal conditions. Opening batsmen Bill Ponsford and Archie Jackson, however, were at once put under pressure by the visitors' pace trio of George Francis, Learie Constantine and Herman Griffith. Jackson was cleverly caught one-handed by Francis at first slip off Griffith in the eighth over, while just before lunch, Don Bradman, who had begun confidently, was adjudged to have been caught behind the wicket off the lively Francis.



Soon after the adjournment, an uppish Alan Kippax drive from Griffith was gathered in low down at mid-on by Lawson Bartlett, who immediately left the field. An x-ray revealed a broken finger on his right hand and he took no further part in the match. Stan McCabe and Ponsford added 71 in an hour before McCabe was trapped lbw by leg-spinner Tommy Scott, reducing Australia to 4/140. Ponsford, who had remained steadfast throughout, was joined by long-time opening partner Woodfull and the pair added 183 for the fifth wicket to reach 4/323 at stumps, Ponsford on 174 and Woodfull 58. (cont.back page)

#### 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.

WEST INDIES  
CRICKET TEAM  
AUSTRALIAN TOUR  
1930 ————— 31

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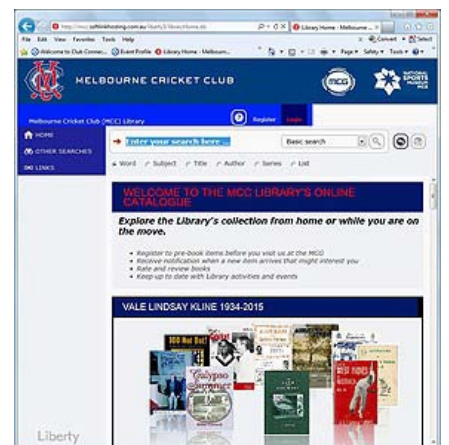
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**Facts sheet research by MCC Library Volunteers  
Ross Perry and Ray Webster.  
Edited by David Studham and Trevor Ruddell.**



## THE WEST INDIES TEAM

❖			
G. C. GRANT ( <i>Captain</i> )	...	...	Trinidad
L. S. BIRKETT ( <i>Vice-Captain</i> )	...	...	Trinidad
I. BARROW	...	...	Jamaica
E. L. BARTLETT	...	...	Barbados
L. N. CONSTANTINE	...	...	Trinidad
F. I. DECAIRES	...	...	British Guiana
G. FRANCIS	...	...	Barbados
H. C. GRIFFITH	...	...	Barbados
G. HEADLEY	...	...	Jamaica
E. ST. HILL	...	...	Trinidad
E. R. HUNTE	...	...	Trinidad
F. R. MARTIN	...	...	Jamaica
C. A. ROACH	...	...	Trinidad
O. C. SCOTT	...	...	Jamaica
J. E. D. SEALEY	...	...	Barbados
O. S. WIGHT	...	...	British Guiana

R. H. MALLETT (*Manager*)

J. E. SCHEULT (*Assistant Manager and Treasurer*)

## ITINERARY OUTWARD JOURNEY

		<i>Mileage</i>
Fri. 10th Oct.	Depart Southampton, Messrs. Shaw Savill & Albion Co.'s S.S. "Tamaroa."	
Thurs. 23rd Oct.	Arrive Colon	4,597
Tues. 11th Nov.	Arrive Wellington, New Zealand	6,595
Fri. 14th Nov.	Depart Wellington, Messrs. Huddart Parker & Co.'s S.S. "Ulimaroa."	
Tues. 18th Nov.	Arrive Sydney	1,239

## HOMeward JOURNEY

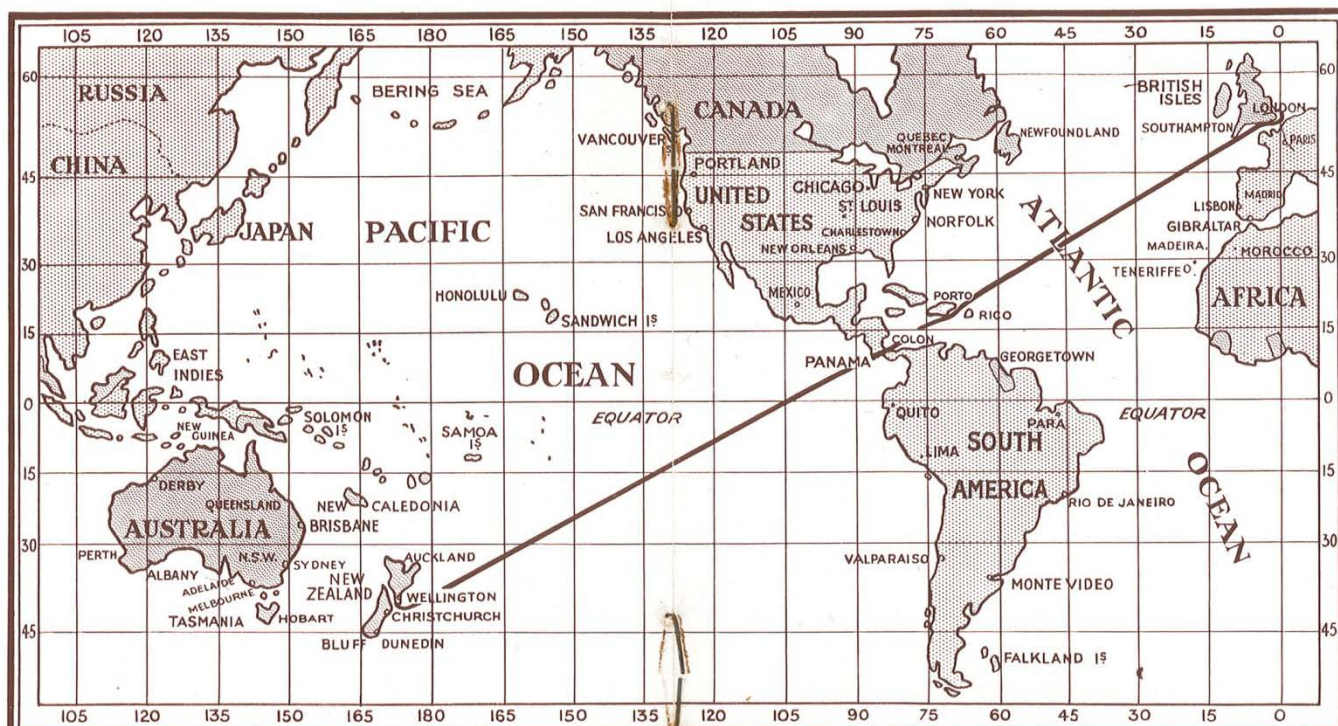
Fri. 6th March.	Depart Sydney, Union S.S. Co. of New Zealand, "Maunganui."	
Tues. 10th March.	Arrive Wellington, New Zealand	1,239
Wed. 11th March.	Depart Wellington, Messrs. Shaw Savill & Albion Co.'s S.S. "Mataroa."	
Mon. 30th March.	Arrive Colon	6,595
Mon. 13th April.	Arrive Southampton	4,597

It is hoped that not more than one trunk, a travelling case and cricket bag will comprise the luggage of each player.

All luggage to be marked with the West Indies Colours, as per this cover.

Passports are required.

This page and opposite: *West Indies Cricket team Australian tour 1930-31*. Shaw, Savill & Albion Coy. Ltd. (1930). Shipping line's itinerary and tour fixture. For more on the 1930/31 West Indies Test tour, see the MCC Library's journal, *The Yorker*, available from the library reference desk.



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