



An Unforgettable Summer

**The 1960-61 Australia-West Indies Series
A 40th Anniversary Tribute**

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Ken Williams**

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The centre of attention: Wes Hall walks out for a pre-match practice session.

PRELUDE TO THE 1960 - 61 WEST INDIES TOUR

Fifty years ago, international cricket had a much different formula. Five-day Tests were the only vehicle for competition - one-day play was not yet even a figment of commercial imagination. There was no television in Australia, radio and newspapers providing the only media coverage. Overseas teams toured in every second season, on average, with interest focused on the Sheffield Shield competition in between times. Thus opportunities for seeing leading overseas players in action were limited.

England and Australia ruled unchallenged as the leading Test nations and series between the two, for the right to hold the mythical Ashes, were regarded as the ultimate contest. Fixtures with the other Test-playing nations of the day - South Africa, West Indies, New Zealand, India and Pakistan - were considered of secondary importance and they were granted only occasional tours. Apart from England (three series), only West Indies and South Africa (one series each) played Tests in Australia during the 1950s.

The departure of Sir Donald Bradman from the playing arena after the triumphant 1948 tour of England had not only removed the greatest player of all time from the game but also its biggest drawcard. As a result, the Australian team, although still formidable, lost its previous air of invincibility.

The three Ashes campaigns in Australia during the decade disappointed most spectators. Australia won a low - scoring series in 1950 - 51 by a misleading 4-1 margin. England turned the tables four years later 3-1, while Australia re-established itself with a 4-0 win in 1958 - 59. Progressively slower over rates and negative field placings greatly restricted scoring opportunities and the game suffered as a spectacle. The matches had become a grim war of attrition, with the fear of defeat generally stifling risk - taking. Cricket - lovers yearned for positive and attractive play. Life after Bradman was proving more difficult than expected.

The West Indies had overwhelmed England in 1950 and the Board of Control (as the ACB was then known) hastily arranged a tour for the victors in 1951 - 52. It was hoped that their blend of strokeful batting and quality spin bowling, that had proved so successful in England, would produce an attractive and closely contested series. However, Australia won the series 4-1, with its greater experience and cohesion under pressure keeping the tourists in check. Only occasionally was there a glimpse of what had been anticipated.

It was the unheralded South Africans who made a much bigger impact 12 months later. There had been calls for the tour to be cancelled because of a perception that the side was below standard. Perhaps it was this lack of expectation that added to their acceptance and popularity. A shared two - all margin in a high-scoring series rewarded their capacity for hard work and high level of physical fitness, which lifted fielding standards to a new level.



Aspects of both the West Indies and South African teams had great spectator appeal. The wristiness of the leading West Indian batsmen and their willingness to play strokes was much admired, while the enthusiasm of the South Africans and their obvious enjoyment of the game also made them crowd favourites. As the decade drew to a close, there was a growing realisation that there was potentially more to Test cricket than the fight for the Ashes.

Australians were uncertain what to expect on the eve of the 1960 - 61 West Indies tour. The two previous teams (1930 - 31 and 1951 - 52) were recalled as capable of spasmodic brilliance, but without the consistency of performance or depth of quality players to extend the home team. Customary predictions about brighter cricket were made and, from what was known of the team's personnel, there was potential for brilliance, but was there depth and consistency? Cynics, soured by the experience of the three previous Ashes series, thought not. Optimists clung to the 'hope springs eternal' premise.

Ray Webster

West Indies 1960-61 Summer Tour



Rohan Kanhai walks out without fanfare.



The rise of West Indies cricket and the background to the 1960-61 tour of Australia

By 1960 there had been relatively little contact at Test level between Australia and the West Indies. In the 32 years since the West Indies had first appeared in Test cricket, they had met in only three Test series – two in Australia, in 1930 - 31 and 1951 - 52, and one in the West Indies, in 1955. In the 15 Test matches between them Australia had won 11 times and the West Indies twice, while two Tests, both in 1955, had ended in draws.

Early First class matches

First class cricket in the West Indies began in 1865 with matches between Barbados and Demerara (British Guiana). Trinidad made its first appearance four years later but it was not until 1895 that Jamaica took part in first class matches. A significant improvement in playing standards occurred after the visit by a team of English amateurs in 1894 - 95. This inaugurated a regular series of visits by English teams and next season a representative West Indies eleven was able to defeat another touring side by three wickets.

A further major step forward occurred in 1900 when the West Indies undertook their first tour of England, but its matches were not granted first class status and most players struggled in conditions that were foreign to them. Six years later, a second tour of England was accorded first class status but the team again did poorly, winning only three of its 13 first class matches.

Promotion to Test cricket

However, by the time the West Indies made its third visit to England in 1923, it was clear that their cricket had made considerable progress. Two players to make a big impression were George Challenor, a splendid opening batsman, now regarded as the 'father' of West Indian batting and a promising all-rounder, and Learie Constantine who was also a brilliant fieldsman. As a result, when the West Indies made their fourth visit to England in 1928, three Test matches were included in the itinerary. Unfortunately, their debut in Test cricket was an anti-climax, as England won all three Tests by an innings. Although Challenor, Constantine, Frank Martin and Clifford Roach all exceeded 1000 first class runs on the tour, the batting was brittle, especially in the Test matches. The pace attack of Constantine, Herman Griffith and George Francis was the team's strong point, but they were let down by poor fielding. Constantine, who performed the 'double' of 1000 runs and 100 wickets, performed brilliantly against the counties, but could not reproduce the same form in the Tests.

Despite this undistinguished beginning, the West Indies did not have long to wait for their first Test victory. Early in 1930 they undertook a Test series at home against England, and levelled the four-Test series one-all after winning the Third Test at Georgetown by 289 runs.

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Their stars were the brilliant 20 year-old batsman, George Headley, who made a century in each innings, opener Clifford Roach who made 209, and Constantine, who took five for 87. Headley, playing in his first series, scored 703 runs at 87.87, including four centuries. One of the greatest batsmen in the history of the game, he went on to dominate West Indies' batting throughout the 1930s and did much to establish the reputation of their cricket. Other leading performers were Roach, 467 runs at 58.37, and fast bowlers Constantine and Griffith, who captured 18 and 16 wickets respectively.

The first Australia v West Indies Test series

The 1930 - 31 series marked the beginning of Australia v West Indies Test rivalry with the arrival of the first West Indies touring team in Australia. Apparently the tour took place on the recommendation of the former Australian Test player, Charlie Macartney, who had seen the West Indians in action in England in 1928. The West Indies had used four different captains in their previous series against England and for this tour they appointed yet another captain, 23-year-old G. C. 'Jackie' Grant. Though born in Trinidad, Grant had never played a first class match in the West Indies. His first class cricket had all been played in England where he had gained blues at Cambridge University in 1929 and 1930. He had little experience of captaincy and met some of his team-mates for the first time at Panama when he joined the ship taking the side to Australia. With batsmen of the calibre of Headley and Roach and a pace attack containing Constantine, Griffith and George Francis, some felt that the tourists were capable of providing strong opposition for the Australians, who had recently regained the Ashes on the 1930 tour of England.

Unfortunately this proved not to be the case as Australia gained convincing wins in each of the first four Tests – by 10 wickets at Brisbane, an innings and 172 runs at Sydney, an innings and 217 runs at Brisbane and by an innings and 122 runs at Melbourne. The West Indies batsmen were unable to handle the spin of Clarrie Grimmett and 48-year-old Bert Ironmonger, who captured 55 wickets in the series between them. Even the brilliant Headley, apart from an unbeaten 102 out of 193 in the first innings at Brisbane, was restricted by the Australian bowlers' tactic of concentrating on his leg stump. By contrast, most of the top Australian batsmen scored heavily – Alan Kippax made 146 and Stan McCabe 90 at Adelaide, Bill Ponsford 183 at Sydney and 109 at Brisbane, and Don Bradman 223 at Brisbane and 152 at Melbourne.

However, just prior to the final Test, the West Indies' confidence received a boost when they defeated a strong New South Wales team, which included Bradman, Kippax and McCabe, by 86 runs. On a faster wicket than most encountered on the tour, the home side was dismissed for only 190 with Constantine taking six for 45. Most of the West Indies batsman then got among the runs, with Derek Sealy (who was only 18 years old) making 58 and 92.

The final Test was also played at Sydney where, in a remarkable reversal of form, the West Indies achieved a memorable victory, their first against Australia. In their best batting performance of the series, Headley and Frank Martin both made hundreds before Grant declared at tea



on the second day with the West Indies' score at six for 350. Rain had affected the pitch and his plan was to make Australia bat while it still aided the bowlers. His decision paid off and by the close Australia had lost five for 89. Next day, with the pitch playing truly, West Indies gained a valuable first innings lead of 126, which they extended to 250 by the close of play. Further rain caused the abandonment of the fourth day and, as the pitch was still damp, Grant made his second declaration for the match, first thing on the fifth day. Australia then slumped to six for 76, with Griffith bowling Bradman for his first duck in Test cricket, and the West Indies went on to win by the narrow margin of 30 runs.

Although the West Indies had salvaged some pride by winning the last Test, they still had a fair way to go before they could be reckoned as a force on the international scene. Their biggest asset was their pace attack of Constantine, Griffith and Francis, though unfortunately the wickets in Australia were generally slow and lifeless and rendered them little assistance. George Headley was easily the best batsman, scoring 1066 first class runs, including 336 in the Tests. Apart from Grant, who topped the Test batting averages with 255 runs at 42.50 and the steady Martin, whose unbeaten 123 in the final Test lifted his Test record to 254 runs at 28.22, the batting was weak. A major disappointment was the failure of Constantine in the Tests. In all first class games he had a fine record, scoring 708 runs and taking 47 wickets, but in the five Tests he managed just 72 runs at 7.20 and eight wickets at 50.87. The 37-year-old Griffith was their leading Test bowler with 14 wickets at 28.07.

When they returned home there was a strong wish among West Indian supporters for Australia to pay a return visit to the West Indies in the not-too-distant future, but this did not eventuate. Twenty-one years elapsed before Australia and West Indies again did battle on the Test arena, and 24 years before an Australian team set foot on West Indian territory.

Rise to a world power

In 1934-35 the West Indies won a Test series for the first time when they defeated England two-one in a four-Test series at home. Their success was based on the hostile opening bowling combination of Learie Constantine and Manny Martindale, while George Headley scored 270 not out in the final Test, which the West Indies won by an innings. However, by the outbreak of the Second World War, they were still to record their first Test victory in England - failing to win a Test on either of their 1933 and 1939 tours of England.

First class cricket in the West Indies was comparatively unaffected by the war and the early 1940s saw the emergence of a group of highly talented players. Test cricket resumed in the West Indies with a visit by England early in 1948, and the West Indies underlined their improvement by winning the series two-nil. The tourists failed to win a single first class match on the tour. The West Indies' strength lay in batting and the series marked the first appearances in Test cricket by a remarkable group of talented stroke-makers. The best were three batsmen from Barbados who all had surnames beginning with the letter 'W' – the three "Ws": Worrell, Weekes and Walcott. Each batted in a different style – Frank Worrell, a graceful and elegant stroke-maker, was

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renowned for his superb timing, especially when driving and late-cutting. Everton Weekes, shortish, thickset and remarkably quick on his feet, was a punishing stroke-player with an insatiable appetite for runs, a fierce cutter and hooker and a powerful driver off either foot. Clyde Walcott, who also kept wickets, was tall and massively built and was renowned for the awesome power of his driving, especially off the back foot, and his hooking. Worrell topped the batting averages with 294 runs at 147.00, his best innings of 131 not out at Georgetown setting up the West Indies' first win of the series, while Weekes made 293 runs at 48.83, which included 141 in the final Test at Kingston. Others to do well were Jeff Stollmeyer and Gerry Gomez, who had both made their Test debuts as teenagers in 1939 and Bob Christiani, who was dismissed for 99 on his Test debut. Andy Ganteaume had the unusual distinction of making 112 on his Test debut and never playing in another Test.

History was made in the opening Test when George Headley became the first coloured man to captain the West Indies. Unfortunately he was injured during the match and took no further part in the series. Otherwise he would also have led the West Indies in the final Test. John Goddard, a white Barbadian, captained the West Indies in the two Tests that were won. The West Indies were not to be led by another coloured cricketer until Frank Worrell was appointed to take the side to Australia in 1960-61.

In 1948-49 the West Indies undertook their first tour of India, winning the five-Test series one-nil. The highlight of the tour was the batting of Everton Weekes. Having scored a century in his final innings of the 1947-48 series against England, he proceeded to score 128 in the First Test at Delhi, 194 in the Second at Bombay and 162 and 101 in the Third at Calcutta. In the next Test he was run out for 90, thereby just missing out on six successive Test hundreds. Walcott, Stollmeyer, Gomez, Christiani and newcomer Allan Rae, who formed a successful opening partnership with Stollmeyer, all hit their maiden Test hundreds. The West Indies' most successful bowlers were their pace men, Prior Jones and John Trim, while medium-pacer Gerry Gomez had developed into a capable all-rounder.

It was generally felt that the West Indies team to tour England in 1950 would be their strongest yet. With Worrell again available, the batting, headed by the three "Ws" as well as Stollmeyer, Rae, and Christiani, followed by the all-rounders Gomez and the captain, Goddard, was enormously strong. However there were concerns about the strength of the attack. Although the pace bowling appeared adequate, spin was a problem. Leg-spinner Wilf Ferguson had been the West Indies' leading wicket-taker against England in 1947-48, with 23 wickets, but had been ineffective in India. As a result, the selectors, apparently at the instigation of Goddard, left him out and gambled on two virtually unknown and inexperienced slow bowlers, Sonny Ramadhin and Alf Valentine. Ramadhin, a diminutive leg-spinner who could spin the ball both ways without a noticeable change in his action, was the first player of Indian descent to be chosen for the West Indies. At the time of his selection he had played in just two first class matches, both on matting pitches and had never travelled outside his native Trinidad.



Valentine, bespectacled and gangling, was a left-arm spinner with excellent control who could spin the ball sharply. Like Ramadhin, he had played in only two first class matches in which he had taken just two wickets.

After losing the First Test at Manchester by 202 runs, the West Indies gained their first-ever Test win in England by winning the Second Test at Lord's by 326 runs. This was followed by huge wins in the remaining Tests, by 10 wickets at Nottingham and by an innings and 56 runs at The Oval. The West Indies' resounding three-one series triumph caused a sensation and generated enormous excitement among their followers. All their leading batsmen were in wonderful form, the highlight being the partnership of 283 in three and a half hours by Worrell (261) and Weekes (129) at Nottingham. The biggest stars, however, were the two "unknown" spinners – Ramadhin and Valentine, "those two little pals of mine", who completely mesmerised the leading English batsmen, Valentine capturing 33 wickets at 20.42 and Ramadhin 26 at 23.23.

The second Australia v West Indies series

Having trounced England in two successive series, the stage was now set for the West Indies to try its hand against Australia and soon after the completion of the 1950 tour the West Indies board accepted an invitation to visit Australia in 1951-52. All the leading players from the 1950 side were available and the series was built up as the unofficial "cricket championship of the world". Unfortunately an unusual itinerary meant that the tourists played only one first class match before the First Test which gave them little opportunity to acclimatise.

The opening Test at Brisbane was a tight contest in which the highest innings total was 245. Australia, aided by a series of dropped catches (at one point five chances were missed off Valentine inside half an hour), gained a narrow first innings lead. Set 236 to win, the home side prevailed by three wickets in a tense finish. The West Indies skipper, Goddard, relied on Ramadhin and Valentine to such an extent that each bowled 40 overs, and when the second new ball was taken he rubbed it in the dirt to enable them to keep going. Both were terribly overbowled, and Goddard was widely criticised for not giving them a break.

Australia moved to a two-nil lead in the series with a convincing win by seven wickets in the Second Test at Sydney. Although the West Indies scored a creditable 362 in their first innings, Lindsay Hassett (132) and Keith Miller (129) pounded the bowlers during a partnership of 235 for the fourth wicket, and the lower order batsmen took advantage of a tiring attack to take the total to 517, a lead of 155. Once again missed chances cost the West Indies dearly and significantly, Ramadhin, one of their trump cards, was mastered, taking just one wicket in the match.

To their credit, the West Indies fought back to win the Third Test at Adelaide by six wickets. Australia went into the match with an unbalanced team following the late withdrawal through injury of their captain, Hassett. Electing to bat first on a rain-affected pitch, Australia were dismissed for only 82, Worrell taking six for 38 with his left-arm medium-pacers. In reply

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West Indies managed to lead by just 23 runs and by the close of a remarkable first day Australia had lost two wickets in its second innings. Fine bowling by Valentine (six for 102) restricted Australia to 255 next day and an unbroken fifth wicket stand of 92 by Gomez and Christiani saw the West Indies home.

The Fourth Test in Melbourne will always be remembered for the remarkable last wicket stand by Doug Ring and Bill Johnston which took Australia to an improbable one-wicket win. West Indies held sway for most of the game. Worrell's 108, the first century by a West Indian batsman in the series, enabled the West Indies to reach 272, despite hostile bowling from Miller. In reply, Australia managed a disappointing 216, losing its last five wickets for just eight runs, with pace man John Trim, in his only Test of the summer, taking five for 34. West Indies disappointed in its second innings, making just 203, thus setting Australia 260 to win, a challenging target on a wicket that was taking spin. As at Brisbane, Goddard pinned his faith in Ramadhin and Valentine. Despite a gallant century from Hassett, Australia faced certain defeat when its ninth wicket fell at 222, 38 runs short of victory. Remarkably, the last pair, Ring and Johnston, got the runs, Ring leading the way with a series of lofted drives which may have resulted in catches had the field been set deep enough. With the prospect of a certain victory slipping out of their grasp, the West Indians appeared to panic and Goddard's captaincy came in for further criticism.

With Australia holding an unbeatable three-one lead in the series the Fifth Test attracted little interest. Goddard, suffering from "nervous exhaustion", withdrew and Stollmeyer led the side. On a remarkable first day on a good pitch, Australia was bowled out for 116 with Gomez taking seven for 55. In reply West Indies did even worse, being dismissed for just 78, with Miller taking five for 26. In Australia's second innings, half-centuries from Colin McDonald (on debut), Hassett, Miller and Graeme Hole ensured a healthy total of 377 and despite a fighting century from Stollmeyer, who withstood some fierce bowling by Lindwall, Australia won by 202 runs.

On the surface the series had been one-sided, with Australia winning four Tests to the West Indies' one, yet the result could easily have been reversed had the West Indies accepted key chances at Brisbane and broken the last wicket stand at Melbourne. Overall, however, many of their players had failed to play up to their potential and the only players to fully live up to their reputations were Gerry Gomez and Alf Valentine. Gomez headed both the Test batting and bowling averages with 324 runs at 36.00 and 18 wickets at 14.22 and Valentine was the leading wicket-taker with 24 at 28.79. Of the three "Ws", only Worrell, 337 runs at 33.70 and 17 wickets at 19.35 had a successful series, although apart from his century at Melbourne, he never looked comfortable against the pace of Lindwall and Miller. The only other batsman to average over 30 was Stollmeyer, with 328 runs at 32.80. Weekes and Walcott, both troubled by injury, had poor series. Weekes, who never fully recovered from torn hamstring muscles in both legs, averaged a modest 24.50, and Walcott, who suffered a broken nose early on and later missed two Tests with back trouble, averaged only 14.50. Ramadhin, after bowling well in the



opening Test, took just 14 wickets at 49.64. Australia's best players were their pace bowlers, Miller, Lindwall and Johnston who each captured at least 20 wickets. By contrast their batting was surprisingly brittle, the leading run-scorer being Hassett who, despite missing one Test, was the highest scoring batsman in the series with 402 runs at 57.42.

The third Australia v West Indies series

In the two seasons before Australia undertook its first tour of the West Indies, from March to June 1955, the West Indies contested two home series – against India in 1952-53 and England in 1953-54. The batsmen dominated the series with India, the West Indies winning the only Test to be played to a finish. The three "Ws" were in top form, especially Weekes who scored three centuries and made 716 runs at 102.28 and Walcott, with two hundreds and 457 runs at 76.16. Worrell's 237 at Kingston was the highest score of the series. Valentine (28 wickets at 29.57) bowled splendidly but Ramadhin (13 wickets at 36.15) disappointed

After England had defeated Australia to regain the Ashes in 1953, some felt that the 1953-54 West Indies v. England series would be another unofficial world championship. For the first time England sent a full-strength side to the West Indies, but the tour was marred by much rancour between the teams, intimidation of umpires and crowd disturbances, which included a bottle-throwing riot in the Third Test. West Indies easily won the first two Tests, before England fought back to level the series by winning the Third and Fifth Tests. Walcott was the home side's outstanding batsman, scoring three hundreds and making 698 runs at 87.25, and Weekes made 487 runs at 69.57. Ramadhin, disappointing in the previous two series, was easily their leading bowler with 23 wickets at 24.30. No one else took more than eight wickets.

In 1954-55, immediately prior to touring the West Indies, Australia had been heavily defeated by England whose pace attack, headed by Tyson and Statham, had demolished Australia's batting. As the West Indies had shared the series with England a year earlier, many felt they had a good chance of beating the Australians, especially as they had never lost a Test series on home soil. In the event, their bowlers posed few problems for the Australian batsmen and in an orgy of run-scoring, Harvey and Miller each made three Test hundreds, McDonald two, and Morris, Archer, Benaud and Lindwall one each.

Australia took command of the series from the outset, convincingly winning the First Test at Kingston by nine wickets after Harvey (133) and Miller (147) had put on 224 for the third wicket. A bright spot for the West Indies was a century on debut by 21-year-old Collie Smith, who looked an exciting prospect. The Second Test at Port of Spain was a high-scoring draw with six centuries being scored. A highlight was Walcott's feat of scoring a century in each innings – in the first, he and Weekes (139) put on 242 for the third wicket. In reply the first three Australian batsmen (McDonald, Morris and Harvey) all made hundreds. By contrast, the Third Test at Georgetown was relatively low scoring. After leading by 75, the Australian captain, Ian

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Johnson, captured seven for 44 in West Indies second innings and Australia lost only two wickets in making the 133 needed to win.

The Fourth Test at Bridgetown was drawn after one of the most extraordinary rearguard actions in Test history. Batting first, Australia amassed the huge score of 668, with centuries from Miller and Lindwall and 98 from Archer. In reply West Indies had collapsed to six for 146 late on the third day, when wicketkeeper Clairemonte Depeiza, who had never made a first class century, joined Denis Atkinson whose appointment as captain to replace the injured Stollmeyer had drawn criticism. By the close of the day's play they had taken the score to 187, and they then proceeded to bat right through the fourth day and into the fifth, their partnership finally totalling 347 runs. Their magnificent stand is still the seventh wicket record for all Tests and stood as a record in all first class cricket for 40 years. Atkinson's 219 remained his only Test century, and Depeiza's 122 his one and only first class hundred. As a result, Australia's lead was restricted to 158 and the West Indies comfortably saved the game.

The Fifth Test at Kingston resulted in a win to Australia by an innings and 82 runs. The match is memorable for two reasons. First, Australia made its highest-ever Test score of eight for 758 declared, with no fewer than five players (McDonald, Harvey, Miller, Archer and Benaud) scoring hundreds, Benaud's taking just 78 minutes. And second, Walcott, for the second time in the series, made a century in each innings, a feat that has not been repeated. His five centuries in the series also remains a record.

Australia's three-nil series victory did much to restore their flagging morale, and in contrast to the discord which had marred the English visit twelve months earlier, the Australians were immensely popular, due in no small part to the public relation skills of skipper Ian Johnson. Twenty-two centuries were scored in the series, still a record. Walcott was the highest run-scorer on either side with 827 runs at 82.70, followed by Neil Harvey for Australia with 650 runs at 108.33. Weekes was the West Indies' next best batsman with 469 runs at 58.62. Atkinson (13 wickets at 35.30) was the only West Indian to take more than 10 wickets, while Ramadhin and Valentine each took only five expensive wickets. By contrast, five Australians captured over 10 wickets, with Miller and Lindwall heading the list with 20 each. The keeping of Gil Langley for Australia drew high praise. Though well beaten, West Indies could take some comfort from the batting of Collie Smith and the all-round skills of 18-year-old Garfield Sobers.

Background to the 1960-61 tour

Australia's improved showing in the West Indies in 1955 did not lead to an immediate improvement in its Test fortunes as England comfortably retained the Ashes in 1956, when Australia's supposedly strong batting collapsed against the spin of Jim Laker, who captured a remarkable 46 wickets. However the 1957-58 tour of South Africa saw the beginning of a remarkable resurgence as Australia, entering the series as underdogs, easily defeated their hosts.



Richie Benaud and Alan Davidson headed a well-balanced attack, while the batting, beginning with openers Colin McDonald and Jim Burke, was very strong, especially the lower middle-order where Ken Mackay averaged 125 and Richie Benaud scored two centuries. Next season, under the inspiring leadership of Benaud, and strengthened by the aggressive batting of newcomer Norman O'Neill, Australia decisively regained the Ashes. During 1959-60 Australia undertook an arduous tour of the sub-continent where, despite several players falling ill, they decisively won Test series against Pakistan and India.

The West Indies' record in Test matches during this period was uneven. In 1955-56 they sent a somewhat inexperienced team to New Zealand which won the first three Tests but lost the last after being dismissed for 77, its lowest score in Test cricket to that time, to give New Zealand its first-ever Test win. They toured England in 1957, but far from repeating the triumphs of 1950 were heavily defeated, losing the Test series three-nil. The only bright spots were the form of Collie Smith, who scored two Test hundreds, Garry Sobers and newcomer Rohan Kanhai. Captaincy remained a problem as John Goddard, recalled to the leadership at the age of 38, did not have a successful tour.

In 1957-58, the West Indies proved too strong for Pakistan in a home series. Garry Sobers emerged as one of the world's top batsman - he scored 824 runs at 137.33 and in the Third Test at Kingston beat Len Hutton's world-record Test score of 364. His 365 not out occupied just over ten hours and included 38 fours. Opening batsman Conrad Hunte made his Test debut and scored 622 runs at 77.75 including 260 at Kingston, where he and Sobers added 446 for the second wicket, at the time only five runs short of the Test record for any wicket, set by Bradman and Ponsford in 1934. Another newcomer, off-spinner Lance Gibbs, headed the bowling averages with 17 wickets at 23.05. It was hoped that Frank Worrell would captain the side, but because of law studies in England he was unavailable, and wicket-keeper Gerry Alexander, who had made his Test debut on the 1957 tour, took over as captain. Weekes and Walcott, who both scored centuries, announced their retirement at the end of the series.

In 1958-59 the West Indies toured the sub-continent where they easily accounted for India but lost the series against Pakistan. The big discovery was fast bowler Wes Hall, who captured 46 wickets in the eight Tests. His fearsome new-ball partnership with Roy Gilchrist brought back memories of Martindale and Constantine in the 1930s. However Gilchrist, who captured 26 wickets at 16.11 against India, was involved in several incidents both on and off the field and was sent home before the Pakistan leg of the tour, and never played for the West Indies again. Sobers made three centuries in successive Tests and a significant advance was made by Kanhai who scored two double centuries. Two new batsmen, Basil Butcher and Joe Solomon, also made their mark. Tragically, the tour marked the end of Collie Smith's highly promising Test career, as he was killed in a car accident in England later in the year.

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The West Indies suffered another reverse in 1959-60 when they unexpectedly lost the Test series against England. Four of the Tests ended in high-scoring draws but they lost the Second Test in Georgetown after a first innings batting collapse. Sobers was in outstanding form, scoring 702 runs at 101.28, including three centuries, but though Worrell and Kanhai each made one century and Hunte was consistent, their batting was disappointing. Hall was the leading wicket taker and with Gilchrist not being considered, Chester Watson, a fast bowler whose action some thought suspect, gave useful support. Ramadhin headed the bowling averages with 17 wickets at 28.88. Gerry Alexander, still captain, kept wickets capably and equalled the Test record of 23 dismissals in a series.

The team for Australia

The West Indies selection committee, comprising Gerry Gomez (chairman), Berkeley Gaskin, John Goddard, Frank Worrell and Gerry Alexander, named the side for Australia on 31 March 1960. The most significant move was that Alexander asked not to be considered for the captaincy, and history was made when Worrell became the first black man to be appointed captain of a West Indies touring side. Initially 15 players were named: Frank Worrell (captain), Alexander (vice-captain), Lance Gibbs, Wes Hall, Jackie Hendriks, Conrad Hunte, Rohan Kanhai, Peter Lashley, Seymour Nurse, Sonny Ramadhin, Cammie Smith, Garry Sobers, Joe Solomon, Alf Valentine and Chester Watson. Worrell had hoped to include Roy Gilchrist, but the Board would not approve his selection and Eric Atkinson (brother of Denis) was chosen to complete the team. Atkinson then pulled out for work reasons and the final place went to Tom Dewdney, a pace bowler who had played against Australia in 1955. Gomez was appointed manager, with Max Marshall as his assistant. The team contained three players without Test experience: Smith, an aggressive and unorthodox opening batsman, Lashley, a left-handed middle-order batsman, and Hendriks, the reserve wicket-keeper. Nurse, a powerful and stylish batsman, had played only one Test, against England in 1959-60. By contrast, Ramadhin had appeared in 41 Tests, Worrell 36, Sobers 32 and Valentine 29. Valentine was an unexpected inclusion, as he had played little first class cricket since failing to take a Test wicket on the 1957 tour of England. Basil Butcher was a surprise omission, the selectors preferring the less-experienced Nurse and Lashley as middle order batsmen.

Overall, the West Indies' selectors had chosen a strong combination, with considerable depth in batting and a well-balanced attack. Yet, despite possessing a wealth of talented players, the West Indies' Test record over recent years had been inconsistent and generally disappointing, with many feeling that the positive and aggressive approach which had defined the character of West Indies cricket had been lost and replaced by a safety-first outlook. It was hoped that the appointment of Frank Worrell as captain would inspire and unify the team and bring about a return to the brilliance that had characterised the best West Indies teams of the past. In order to achieve this, however, the skill and temperament of Worrell and his team would be severely tested by the tough opposition they would encounter "down under".

Ken Williams



The Australian team for the Third Test. (Standing L-R): Wally Grout, Bob Simpson, Frank Misson (12th man), Ian Meckiff, Les Favell, John Martin; (Seated L-R): Alan Davidson, Norman O'Neill, Richie Benaud (Captain), Colin McDonald, Ken Mackay. Inset: Neil Harvey (Vice-captain).



The West Indies touring team. Back row: Peter Lashley, Chester Watson, Cammie Smith, Tom Dewdney, Wes Hall, Jackie Hendriks, Lance Gibbs, Mannie Alves (Masseur). Middle row: Gerry Gomez (Manager), Sonny Ramadhin, Gerry Alexander (Vice-Captain), Frank Worrell (Captain), Garfield Sobers, Alf Valentine, Max Marshall (Assistant Manager). Front row: Conrad Hunte, Rohan Kanhai, Joe Solomon, Seymour Nurse.

The Summer of 1960-61

On November 8, 1960, John Fitzgerald Kennedy was elected President of the United States. To some, he appeared an uncertain prospect, promising perhaps, but with little, as yet, to suggest that he was anything out of the ordinary. Ten days later, similar observations were being made about Frank Worrell's West Indians when they appeared at the Melbourne Cricket Ground for the first time.

Most local cricket-lovers were aware that the team contained players of exciting potential, but three matches in Perth and Adelaide had not brought the tourists a win. At the WACA, Worrell and Alexander had "turned on aggressive and skilful batting of the type Australian crowds had been pining for since Don Bradman's days", [1] and MCC batsman Colin McDonald's first encounter there with Wes Hall indicated that the West Indies had unearthed a truly quick bowler. [2] However, unimpressive totals of 97 and 143 against state teams only reinforced fears that this West Indies side might be brittle like its predecessor of nine years earlier. Bill O'Reilly was far from impressed with them, claiming that their fielding "presented such an air of immaturity that one can foresee difficulties" and that, in Adelaide, their batting "was on a par with their fielding". [3]

It was at Melbourne that the West Indians enjoyed their first triumph of the tour. Sonny Ramadhin was in deadly form, with five wickets in each innings, and on the Friday morning, Alf Valentine spun a web that eventually had the bewildered McDonald stumped for 16. The Vics were bundled out for 118. At stumps, the West Indies held a four-run lead - with nine wickets in hand. The following morning, Rohan Kanhai gave the most ominous warning yet that this tour might in fact be that elusive something "out of the ordinary." His face hidden under a big maroon cap with a flat, slightly upturned peak, the little right-hander from British Guiana added a blazing 84 to his overnight score of 38. Then he clouted another 84 in the afternoon session. *The Herald* said "His timing was wonderful and his power superb as he thrashed the Victorian attack to every part of the field". [4] Indeed, Kanhai's innings of 252 was all of that - but it was cold, ruthless murder as well. No tourist had treated any Australian attack quite as viciously since before World War II. At the other end, Frank Worrell hit an elegant 82. With sweetly timed drives through the covers and the occasional back cut to the fence, the 36-year-old skipper left no doubt that he was still a very classy batsman. By the end of the afternoon, three of the Victorian bowlers - Meckiff, Gaunt and Quick - had centuries beside their names and Kline had 4/94. So desperate did the Vics become for a breakthrough at one stage that even W. M. Lawry sent down two overs, conceding only six runs.

At stumps, the Victorian position looked hopeless - 373 runs behind, and two days to play - but a washed-out Monday offered hopes of a draw. On the final day, stout resistance from



McDonald, John Shaw and Ian Huntington took the score to 3/157, but the subtly varied flight and spin of Ramadhin and Valentine finally settled the issue. In 48 minutes, the last seven wickets fell for 47, to give the West Indies victory by an innings and 171 runs.

In Sydney a week later, though, the tourists never recovered from the opening spell of Alan Davidson and Gordon Rorke. After five overs, they were 5/16. Then Harvey and O'Neill made centuries, and Richie Benaud completed the disaster with 5/31 off 19 overs. When he bowled Sobers first ball on the third morning, one enthusiastic reporter speculated that the Australian captain had Sobers' "measure".

A draw against Queensland did little to improve expectations for the tour. Though Valentine and Sobers both bagged five wickets in an innings, and some of the batsmen got starts, the fact remained that the West Indies had failed by 74 runs to pass the state side's first innings score of 431. Moreover, the dour Ken Mackay, in an unusually fluent display, made 173, the highest score yet against the tourists.

Thus, on the eve of the First Test in Brisbane, the West Indies had not dispelled their reputation for being somewhat unpredictable and even disappointing. One of the few who still sensed that the series could be exciting was Sir Donald Bradman, chairman of the Board of Control for barely two months. Seeking "a wonderful year for cricket", he encouraged the Australians to take the initiative and produce "one of the most attractive cricket series seen in the country for a long time". The Don also tried to encourage the opposition, assuring the out of form Garfield Sobers that runs would come, "at the right time" [5].

That moment came early on the first day. When Sobers stepped on to the Gabba, the scoreboard showed 2/42. The course of the match - perhaps the series, even - hinged on the next few minutes. With another quick wicket (and, after all, Benaud did have Sobers' "measure", we were told) the Australians could have the West Indies on the verge of another disaster. Davidson was the first to find that, today, Sobers was not going to be a pushover. An early delivery from the left-arm fast bowler was belted "like a rocket past square leg". Then, according to Benaud, Sobers really cut loose:

... he began to tear the Australian attack into little pieces ... this was champagne batting. I bowled for a long time to him that day - some twenty-odd overs - and although I knew exactly where I was going to pitch each ball, I had no idea where he was going to hit it.

Lesser deliveries were despatched for four; at times, the better balls got even less respect as they careered to the fence as well. For almost three hours, the whirlwind continued. Once, Benaud thought he had him, as the left-hander shaped to send a topspinner through mid-wicket. Sensing danger as the ball headed for his off stump, the maestro changed his mind, and smashed the ball back between the bowler and mid-off "like a bullet". [6] Finally, at 132, Sobers fell to a less

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than worthy delivery from Meckiff, a full toss that flew off the back of the bat to Kline at mid-on. Scribes and spectators alike rated the innings as one of the greatest ever played.

Sobers had not only set the West Indies on the way to a score of 453. In the words of *The Daily Telegraph's* Phil Tressider, he had put the Australians "on the run". No matter what happened later, the Brisbane Test was already one that would be long remembered.

The Australians replied with 505. Norman O'Neill made a steady 181 in just under seven hours - it would remain the sole Australian century of the series. O'Neill was not "greatly pleased" with his performance:

I had my share of luck but even so I was more disappointed with the struggle I had to find a gap in which to hit the ball.

A maiden Test hundred continued to elude Bob Simpson, who was bowled by Ramadhin for 92. There is a grain of truth in Neil Harvey's remark that, for much of the time, the match was destined to go "down in the books as just another game" [7] but as the Australians chased 233 on the last day, the direction of the contest changed several times. From 2/7, Australia lurched to 5/57, then 6/92. Partnered by Davidson, Benaud was still chasing a win. Picking up quick singles and the odd boundary, the pair pressured the West Indians, hoping that they'd crack. With seven minutes left, the score reached 6/226, and an Australian win seemed likely.

But Frank Worrell had been in John Goddard's team at Melbourne in 1952 when the West Indies had lost a Test match through wilting under pressure from Bill Johnston and Doug Ring. Now, *he* was the captain, and had no intention of letting his volatile players fail. Benaud tells how Worrell "ruled with an iron hand", keeping his men alert and relaxed. It was the Australian skipper who made the fatal error. Alan Davidson thought that "perhaps for the one and only time in his career ... Richie became flustered in a crisis". Benaud himself has said that he made "a bad call ... a dangerous call" to Davidson who had no chance when Joe Solomon threw down the stumps from side-on. [8]

Wally Grout scored a single off Sobers and, at 5.56, Wes Hall took the ball for the last over. Eight deliveries, six runs to win - or three wickets to fall.

Grout added another single, then Benaud gloved a bumper to Alexander and was caught. Ian Meckiff failed to score from the first two deliveries he faced, but on the second Grout called him through for a stolen single. Four to win now, off four deliveries. Grout's swipe at the fifth ball flew towards the waiting Kanhai. He would be out for sure - but with the batsman mouthing "a few unprintable words", the eager Hall tore in and made a lunge. [9] The ball fell to the ground, and Grout grabbed another priceless single. To the next delivery, Meckiff played "a five-iron shot" - then ran for all he was worth. Uncut clover slowed the ball down. Conrad Hunte swooped on it. By then, the batsmen had taken two. Surely they could get one for the throw - but Hunte's 80-yard throw went straight into the gloves of Gerry Alexander - and Grout was run out.



Forty years on, Lindsay Kline (left) and Ian Meckiff walk up the stairs in the Melbourne Cricket Club Pavilion, past the famous photograph depicting the final moment of the tied Test at Brisbane.

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It was well after six o'clock now, but no one thought of the time. Glued to radios at home and in cars, the nation was counting down the balls and runs. Two to come, one run for victory. Lindsay Kline recalls his walk to the middle:

... I passed Frank Worrell and he said: "You look a little pale, Lindsay". I replied: "I feel a little pale, Frank". [10]

The crowd was also a little pale, watching in near-silence as Hall moved in for the seventh delivery. The tension broke when Kline played the ball out to square leg and set off for the winning run. But square leg was where Joe Solomon lurked. Minutes earlier, Solomon's reliability had revived his team's chances. Now, as Ian Meckiff was hurling himself towards the safety of the crease, little Joe was the last person the Australians needed to see with the ball. He was also the last hope of the West Indies - there was no keeper at the stumps! His throw, again from side-on, crashed into the wicket, with Meckiff short of his ground. Everywhere - the scoreboard, on the field, in the ABC broadcasting box - there was pandemonium. Through it all came the sage old commentator Johnnie Moyes, with words no one had ever said of a Test match before: "It's a tie!" [11]

The West Indians had only one first class match to prepare for the Melbourne Test. Over the Christmas weekend, they had little to celebrate on the field as New South Wales thrashed them by an innings and 97 runs. O'Neill belted his third century off their bowlers, while Booth, Craig, Harvey and Davidson also scored solidly. Only a chanceless 105 from Conrad Hunte lightened the gloom.

By the time the tourists arrived in Melbourne for the Second Test, Alan McGilvray sensed that they had "run off the rails a little":

As often happens when gifted players of real flair suddenly scent a chance against a team considered better than they are, they changed their approach entirely ...

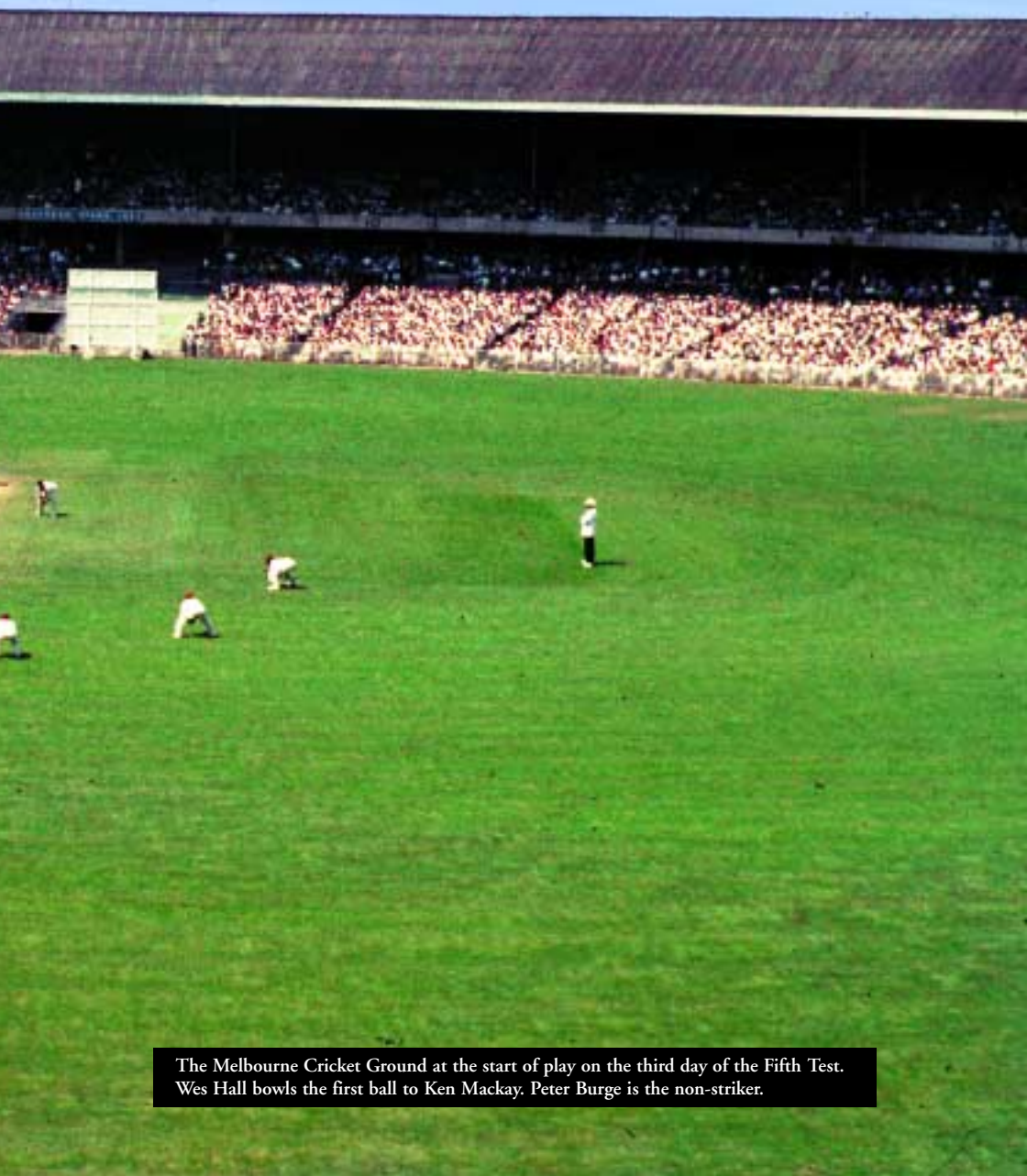
He felt that their efforts in Brisbane had turned the West Indians into

a bunch of tentative fumblers, hell bent on tight defence, whose conservative appraisal of every ball rendered them dull and ineffectual. [12]

After Brisbane, the Melbourne Test was always going to be something of an anti-climax. It is given scant attention in the books, but it was a vital piece in shaping the mystique of the summer of 1960-61. Benaud won the toss and decided to bat. Today, without the injured Meckiff in his team, he couldn't risk putting the opposition in, as he had done to Peter May at the MCG in 1959. Besides, it was over 100 degrees, so it was far better to let the West Indies swelter in the field. By stumps, the Australians were all out for 348. It could have been a lot less, as most of the batsmen failed to build on promising starts. Les Favell looked set for a score, but at 51 he sent a Sobers long hop to Seymour Nurse behind square leg:

I could have hit that ball anywhere, and I could have kicked myself anywhere when I hit the catch to Nurse. [13]





The Melbourne Cricket Ground at the start of play on the third day of the Fifth Test. Wes Hall bowls the first ball to Ken Mackay. Peter Burge is the non-striker.



Only a ninth-wicket stand of 97 between newcomer Johnny Martin and Ken Mackay justified Benaud's decision to bat. "Slasher" top-scored with 74, while Martin, in his Test debut, hit 55 in 82 minutes.

In the last moments of the day, Davidson got rid of Solomon for a duck, and the West Indies were 1/1. Next morning, Frank Misson came on to bowl his first over in Test cricket. With his second delivery, he had Conrad Hunte caught by Bobby Simpson, and the West Indies were 2/1. The day was disrupted by rain, with the players on the field for only 145 minutes. Nurse and Kanhai began rebuilding the innings with a stand of 123. The New Year's Day holiday, on the Monday, held the promise of a big West Indies total. It was not to be. Kanhai's dismissal for 84 triggered a collapse, the last seven wickets falling for 57, as Davidson finished with 6/53. Nurse had made 70 - the next best effort was 9 from Sobers.

Things were little better when the West Indies followed on. Hunte almost failed again, when Favell, at third slip, leapt high but could not bring down a snick from Davidson's first ball. [14] It was an expensive miss - Hunte went on to make a polished 110 in 4½ hours, but his team mates collapsed once more. Joe Solomon's exit caused a sensation. His deeds in the final moments in Brisbane had earned him respect and popularity in the eyes of the crowd. As the little opener from British Guiana played back to a ball from Richie Benaud, he jerked his head back. His cap fell on to the stumps, and dislodged a bail. Wally Grout appealed, and Solomon was, quite rightly, given out. The crowd, especially those on the southern side of the Ground, blamed Benaud. As Les Favell put it,

they told him his family history in no uncertain terms, but it was not Benaud's fault. He bowled the ball but to this day I don't know if Benaud himself appealed ... [15]

The fact that the Australian captain was from New South Wales did nothing to soothe the crowd's feelings, and for the rest of his career, Benaud could always count on a warm reminder of the Solomon incident from the Melbourne outer.

It seemed that Rohan Kanhai might stop the collapse, but a four-ball burst in successive overs from Johnny Martin ended that notion. Kanhai was caught for 25. Then, off the left-arm spinner's next delivery, Simpson grabbed a snick from Sobers. Worrell, facing a pair, came in - and hit the second ball he faced from Martin into the waiting hands of Simpson. One spectator, believing that this would be Worrell's farewell tour, had flown from England to watch his idol bat for one last time - and didn't even see him score a solitary run! Equally disappointed were those who had come hoping for a show of brilliance from Sobers. His failure started the belief that Melbourne was something of a hoodoo ground for him. (Only in 1972, when he was leading the Rest of the World, did Melbourne see Sobers in full cry with a dazzling 254.)

As the West Indies' second innings unravelled, stubborn resistance came from Gerry Alexander, with 72 in a little over three hours. The wicketkeeper had made 60 in Brisbane, and

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this effort in Melbourne left no doubt that he posed real nuisance value to the Australians. Still, he did have some luck - when he had made 25, Benaud got one through him, only to see the ball hit the off stump without removing the bail.

The West Indies struggled to a 66-run lead. Les Favell, listed to come in at number five, optimistically felt that he would not be required in Australia's second innings, so he "settled down in the dressing room quite content to be a spectator for the rest of the match ..." [16] Wes Hall and Chester Watson had other ideas. They were going to make the Australians fight for every run, and unleashed a ferocious barrage. One rocket from Hall flicked the edge of Colin McDonald's cap and turned it sideways. ABC broadcaster Michael Charlton claimed that, through the glasses, he "could see the blood drain out quite palpably" from the batsman's face. Johnnie Moyes, who had been around since before World War I, said "I think that is the fastest ball I have ever seen bowled." Charlton retorted "If it isn't, I wouldn't like to see one faster." [17] A collapse was not long in coming. Hall removed McDonald for 13, then had Neil Harvey caught by Alexander for a duck. As O'Neill went out to bat, Les Favell started putting on his pads, but "before I had the last buckle done up, there was a tremendous roar from the crowd ..." Watson had trapped O'Neill leg before for 0. In 13 deliveries, Australia had gone from 0/27 to 3/30.

Les Favell has left a graphic account of what followed:

... those 67 runs for victory were beginning to look quite a task. The Melbourne wicket was not playing all that well - there were a few cracks in it, and some balls were whizzing past batsmen's noses while others skidded through at ankle height ... On this day in Melbourne, when Hall was determined to bowl Australia out ... he bowled like lightning. He pounded up the track, leaped high in the air and thumped the ball down on the pitch. This great leap just before delivery, coupled with Hall's six feet three height and long arms, meant the ball was delivered from a great height and lifted sharply off the pitch.

Big Wes welcomed the newcomer with a bouncer. Being Favell, he had to hook it. The ball sailed into Sobers' hands at deep fine leg. Fortunately, it was a no-ball. According to Favell, Hall bowled another 50 deliveries before the winning run was hit, but Bobby Simpson faced only four of them - he was quite happy to remain at the other end, since "it was a lot safer up there". [18]

Though the Australians won by seven wickets, these latter stages of the Melbourne Test showed signs of change in the West Indians. When he arrived in Australia in October, Frank Worrell had told Benaud that

I think we might have a good series out here. We've got some good players ... the difficulty is going to be to get them to play as a team. [19]

By mid-January, when the West Indians arrived in Sydney for the Third Test, his efforts with his men were at last bearing fruit. Alan McGilvray felt that

Worrell had quietly worked himself into a position of supreme command. For the first time in their history, the West Indies had become a coherent, workmanlike



band of international cricketers. Their play was co-ordinated, their competitiveness thoroughly established ... The conservative nonsense in which they had indulged in Melbourne was gone. [20]

Worrell's efforts held no room for sentiment. Chester Watson, good trier that he was, was dropped. Even more painful was the decision to exclude the great Ramadhin in favour of 26-year-old Lance Gibbs.

Winning the toss, Worrell decided to bat. At 2/68, Sobers came in to give what *The Sydney Morning Herald* termed "one of the greatest exhibitions of controlled hitting seen on the SCG". The standard of the bowling was good - Davidson finished with 5/80 and Benaud got 4/86 - but Sobers was simply superb. Once, with the new ball, Meckiff pitched one short, around off stump, forcing him on to his back foot. For a split second, the batsman was in trouble, but Alan McGilvray would never forget

the vision of Sobers, on his toes and reaching for his full height, whipping the bat through to hit on the up. He connected with such awesome power that the ball flew high, slightly to the on-side of a straight hit, and careered into the Sheridan Stand ... If ever there was a shot to break a bowler's heart, it was that one.

Afterwards, Sobers told Meckiff: "It was you or me, and I let go with everything to make sure it wasn't me!" [21]

Though Sobers contributed 168, the Australians were far from out of the game when the West Indies were all out for 339. However, apart from a 71 from O'Neill, they had trouble breaking the shackles of Valentine and Gibbs. Any lingering hope of a first innings lead evaporated when, in four balls, Gibbs took the wickets of Mackay, Martin and Grout. Leading by 137, the West Indies then took full toll of the Australian attack, which was weakened by injuries to Davidson and Meckiff. Cammie Smith hit a dashing 55, and Worrell chimed in with 82, but once again severe damage came from Alexander. Batting at number 8, he hit 108 in 212 minutes before Mackay trapped him lbw. Indeed, it was only tight bowling (in 76 eight-ball overs) from Mackay and Benaud that prevented an even bigger target being set.

To win, the Australians needed 464, "a formidable task", Les Favell observed, "but one which did not over-awe the players". Starting at 2/182 on the final morning, with Harvey and O'Neill at the crease, the Australians must have given themselves a chance. However, disaster came in the first over when Harvey suffered a leg injury. Soon, he and O'Neill were caught by Sobers off Gibbs. Mackay went for a duck, and Favell had a real rush of blood:

I made only two before trying to hit Gibbs into Moore Park - if the ball had not hit the wicket I would have been stumped by 17 yards, more or less - and the innings folded up at 241. [22]

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After thrashing the Australians by 222, Worrell's new-look team headed for Adelaide with the series one-all. Now, Alan McGilvray felt they were playing "with a precision that brought the first signs of the machine-like cricket that became their hallmark in Clive Lloyd's day". [23] On the other hand, the Australians were in disarray: Harvey, Davidson and Meckiff were all injured, Martin had not been impressive in Sydney, and Favell was told he would have to open the innings with McDonald. Into the team came Misson, Kline, Peter Burge and Des Hoare.

In his second over in Tests, Hoare dismissed Hunte for 6, but the Australians were soon wishing that they hadn't brought Kanhai to the crease so early. He went after the bowling with a vengeance, belting a chanceless 117 in only 149 minutes. When Benaud came on to bowl, *Kanhai greeted him by sending the first ball into the wild blue yonder, to fall with a resounding clang on the roof over the turnstiles at the entrance to the outer ground on the eastern side of the oval.* [24]

Worrell and Nurse picked up runs, but Alexander remained a nuisance at number 8, scoring a valuable 63 to take his team to 393. One of the great things about the series was that solid scores were met by solid replies. The Australians seemed on track to pass the West Indies total until a hat-trick from Gibbs removed Mackay, Grout and Misson. (It was the first Test hat-trick in Australia since Hugh Trumble snared Bosanquet, Warner and Lilley at the MCG in 1904.) In a last-ditch fight, Benaud and Hoare managed to get the Australians to 366.

The game was still in the balance. The West Indies were out to crush their opposition, though, and Smith opened briskly in partnership with Hunte. At 1/66, Kanhai appeared at the crease, not quite as vicious as he was in the first innings, but still lethal, hitting 115 in under four hours. Alexander's 87 hammered home the West Indies' advantage, enabling Worrell to declare at 6/432, with a lead of 459. Australia was soon in trouble, slipping to 3/31 at stumps on the fourth day. Next day, O'Neill fought doggedly for his 65 but, apart from Burge's 49, he received little support.

With 110 minutes remaining, the Australians were only a touch from defeat when Kline went out to join Mackay at 9/207. The MCC player had spent fifteen minutes or so practising behind the Giffen Stand, but was clearly not in top form, for O'Neill and Martin got him out with monotonous regularity. A woman remarked, "Well, it's a waste of time sending you in". Many spectators shared her pessimism, gathering up their things for a quick departure. Some didn't even bother to stay. [25]

They missed one of the most stubborn fights ever seen in Test cricket. Kline, the hapless bunny of O'Neill and Martin, now held out the might of the West Indies. He even played a couple of classic cover drives. Kline found that he could handle Hall:

... he wasn't moving the ball much, so I just kept getting behind the ball and played the ones on the wicket and left anything wide alone ... One thing I was terribly



pleased about was that he didn't bowl me a bouncer, and I give all credit to Wes and Frank Worrell ... I was lucky to have such sporting opponents. [26]

At the other end, the 35-year-old Mackay kept rolling along, as only he could. It was as if his whole career of stubborn batting for Queensland had been a preparation for this moment. Gradually, the two left-handers began to frustrate their opponents, who sensed that their win was starting to lose its inevitability. The West Indians' frustration was heightened when they thought Sobers had caught Mackay off Worrell, only to have umpire Egar rule that the ball had bounced first. Later, Mackay confided to Wes Hall: "If I thought it was out I would have walked. I was sure it hit the ground so I stayed and let the umpire give his decision."

By then, the nation was almost at a standstill, listening wherever there was a radio. Those that couldn't stop asked others "Are they still there?" Norman O'Neill claimed that *Hotel bars were packed and by a great number of people who did not drink. It must have been the first and only time that Australian bars were crowded by people not interested in beer.*

At 5.58 Hall took the ball for the last over to Mackay, who had no interest in scoring, only in surviving. It was not easy to concentrate. A small boy wandered on to the ground, the West Indians played mind games. Then, in his eighth delivery, the desperate Hall bowled a no-ball. Thinking the game was over, the crowd rushed on to the ground. It was nearly 6.10 when Mackay ensured a draw by playing Hall's last thunderbolt with his ribs. [27]

So the Fifth Test at Melbourne would decide the series. The Board of Control announced before the match that the winning team would receive the Frank Worrell Trophy, a silver ornament crafted by former Test bowler Ernie McCormick. The piece, which would become a perpetual trophy for competition between Australia and the West Indies, was decorated with a kangaroo and palm tree, with one of the balls from the Tied Test on top.

MCC Secretary Ian Johnson felt that interest in the Test was higher than for a football Grand Final. In those games, the result is everything, but the interest here was due to more than just the outcome of the series being at stake. The season had already acquired an aura possessed by no other. The incident with Solomon's cap had shown that the Australian crowds were less partisan than usual. Admiration for the West Indians led many spectators to place the game of cricket and the spirit in which it was played ahead of eagerness for a home-team result. After the draw in Adelaide, a local paper wrote of the tourists that

By play and conduct ... they have already endeared themselves to the Adelaide crowds as no other team has done ... On this tour their infectious good spirits and high chivalry have had a warm response from our men. [28]

While the rapport between the teams added to the interest, it was hard to recall two such powerful teams being so closely matched - perhaps Australia and England in 1936-37, but only those past 30 could remember that. The summer of 1960-61 had produced several moments that



Frank Worrell leads out Gerry Alexander, Peter Lashley, Chester Watson (substitute) and Lance Gibbs at the start of the third day of the Fifth Test. With Australia 3/236 overnight, he has high hopes of an early breakthrough.



A pensive Richie Benaud leads Ken Mackay and Alan Davidson on to the field at the start of the fourth day.



bordered on the incredible, from players who literally had become legends well before their playing days had ended. Much of this stemmed from the positive outlooks fostered by both captains. Deservedly, Worrell has been praised for his efforts in this regard, but Les Favell felt Benaud merited even more credit:

Never once in the series did Richie go on the defensive. There were many occasions when Frank Worrell put five men on the leg side and swung the ball on to the batsman's legs, which is not the way to foster brighter cricket. [29]

Benaud was certainly at his attacking best on the first morning. With his trusty lieutenants, Harvey and Davidson, back in the team, Richie won the toss and put the West Indies in, believing that "the wicket had enough moisture and grass on it to not only help the Australian fast bowlers but also Wes Hall". He also suspected that the moist outfield "would cost the batting side perhaps fifty runs". [30] Even though it was a Friday in February, 46225 showed up, but an element of disappointment was never far away. The West Indies' stars were all rather subdued, Sobers taking 177 minutes to score a 62 that showed few glimpses of his genius. By stumps, the West Indies were 8/252.

With the prospect of Australia batting on the Saturday, interest in the series peaked, luring a world-record 90800 to the Melbourne Cricket Ground. Hall and Gibbs pushed the score to 292, with Alf Valentine contributing his almost perpetual 0 not out. The West Indians did not appear to have done enough, and the game began slipping away from them when Simpson and McDonald put on 146 in 166 minutes - it was the best opening stand of the season. Sobers finally had McDonald lbw for 91 and Simpson went for 75. For much of the afternoon, the West Indies were fighting to contain the Australians, who finished with 3/236. Sobers bowled 22 overs unchanged from the Pavilion end, and on the Monday he carried on with another 19 straight, his 5/120 restricting the Australian lead to 64. Indeed, without a solid 68 from Peter Burge, the situation would have been much tighter.

The West Indian second innings began aggressively, as Smith hit a six and five boundaries in his 37. Though Hunte got 52 and Alexander made a fine 73, the West Indies biggest names did not do enough. Benaud got Kanhai for 31 with a flipper, and, to the disappointment of many, Sobers made only 21, edging a ball from Simpson into Grout's gloves.

The Australians were set 258 to win. The Board of Control had scheduled six days for the match, so there were more than two days to make the runs, but Bob Simpson seemed bent on getting them all before stumps on the fourth day. Hall's opening delivery went to the fence. By the end of the over, Simpson had hit three more fours and a two. Once, when a dot ball was recorded, a voice urged Simpson to "Have a go!" It was all unbelievable - 18 off the first over - and from Wes Hall, too! The bowler felt "as though I had just tangled with a 10-ton truck". Simpson was the rock on which the innings was built, reaching 92 for the second time in the series, only to be bowled by Gibbs. Things looked safe as O'Neill and Burge pressed on with the runs - but in this series, safety was rarely far from crisis. Valentine removed Burge for 53, and Worrell got rid of O'Neill. For good measure, the captain picked up Harvey and Davidson cheaply as well.

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At least "Slasher" was still there, supported by Grout. As Valentine began his 22nd over, the Australians needed only four to win. Grout back cut the first ball:

Gerry Alexander was across outside the off stump and I watched that ball skid from my bat clear of the wicket and shoot through Gerry's legs.

But, as the batsmen ran two, Alexander stood pointing at the stumps - and at a bail on the ground in front of the off stump. The umpires had no idea what had happened - nor did anyone else - so Grout had to be given the benefit of the doubt, much to the disappointment of the West Indians. Worrell, with no time for any loss of discipline, got his men back on the job. Wes Hall felt that the incident left Grout "visibly upset and shaken" and led to him being caught by Smith off the next delivery.

Memories of Brisbane came flooding back. Could it, would it, happen *again*? Dear old Alf Valentine now seemed full of menace. When Johnny Martin snatched a single, the crowd ran on to the ground - but another run was needed. When order was restored, Valentine's spin beat Mackay. Wes Hall recalled that, for a split second, 'Slasher' "watched in a frenzy as the ball shaved the stumps and trickled away for one very important bye" that gave Australia the series.

Now the MCG belonged to the crowd, who swarmed everywhere, finally gathering in their thousands in front of the Grey Smith Stand. In vain, they called for Worrell to appear, but he was in the shower. Eventually, the two teams stepped on to the balcony above the dressing room, where a dais, draped in the MCC's red, white and blue, had been prepared. Alongside it, ABC television had cameras to record the final rites of the summer. The moment when Sir Donald Bradman held the Frank Worrell Trophy aloft for the crowd to see for the first time was truly a piece of cricket history. But it was history in the making, for the brand-new trophy lacked the tradition or charisma that it has since acquired. It was handed to Benaud, who spoke of his sadness that the series was over, but it was Frank Worrell who made the ceremony unforgettable, with a presentation of his own. Handing his maroon cap, tie and blazer to Benaud, he explained somewhat hoarsely that they represented his head, neck and body. He could give no more, he said, as his legs weren't worth having.

The crowd's affection for the West Indian skipper - and his team - was evident in a sea of smiles. Many who were there had also been at the Closing Ceremony of the Melbourne Olympics. Then, they had wondered whether they would ever see the Games again. The sadness of that day returned now, as the Southern Command Band played the tune which had brought tears four years before, *Will Ye No Come Back Again?*

Melbourne had one last tribute for the West Indians. Two days after the match, both teams were to attend a civic reception at the Town Hall. John Priestley of *The Herald* asked Frank Worrell "whether we would mind being driven around a few blocks of the main shopping centre". These days, almost every sporting triumph earns a parade; in 1961, it was almost



unheard of. Amazingly, this one was for the losing team, not the victorious Australians, who were nowhere to be seen. Worrell could not believe what he saw:

Much to our pleasure and dismay the following morning the traffic was literally stopped while ... people were to be seen lining the streets, leaning out of windows three or four storeys up ...

People were everywhere. So many were crammed into the intersection of Bourke and Elizabeth Streets that it was difficult to see the players sitting high in their open cars. By then, it was hard to recognise some of them, for they were wearing dark glasses. Frank Worrell explained why:

As we travelled through the milling crowd at snails' pace, we heard tremendously gratifying statements ... but the statement which was quite frequently made and which brought a lump to my throat and tears to my eyes was: "Come back soon." ... I can't tell you how overwhelmed the boys and I were. I can tell you tears came easily to me in that extraordinary procession - and I couldn't be bothered wiping them away - and I wasn't the only one. It was incredible. [31]

Yes, it was incredible. A summer in which events and individuals blended in a way that has not happened since, a summer that still remains fresh and vivid in the memories of those of us who were there. Forty years ago. But it still seems only yesterday.

Alf Batchelder

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The Frank Worrell Trophy presentation at the conclusion of the Fifth Test. Sir Donald Bradman, Chairman of the Australian Board of Control, addresses the crowd. In the foreground are Garfield Sobers, Norman O'Neill, Wally Grout and Ken Mackay.



Sir Donald Bradman displays the Frank Worrell Trophy for the first time.



Richie Benaud brings a smile to Worrell's face.



Frank Worrell about to present his cap, tie and blazer to Richie Benaud.

**AUSTRALIA v. WEST INDIES 1960-61:
TEST AVERAGES**

AUSTRALIA

Batting & Fielding

	<i>M</i>	<i>I</i>	<i>NO</i>	<i>R</i>	<i>HS</i>	<i>Avg</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>50</i>	<i>Ct/St</i>
P. J. P. Burge	2	4	0	215	68	53.75	—	2	2
N. C. O'Neill	5	10	0	522	181	52.20	1	3	4
R. B. Simpson	5	10	1	445	92	49.44	—	4	13
K. D. Mackay	5	9	2	289	74	41.28	—	2	2
C. C. McDonald	5	10	0	337	91	33.70	—	3	2
A. K. Davidson	4	7	0	212	80	30.28	—	1	3
R. Benaud	5	9	0	194	77	21.55	—	2	3
L. E. Favell	4	8	1	150	51	21.42	—	1	1
J. W. Martin	3	5	1	76	55	19.00	—	1	1
R. N. Harvey	4	8	0	143	85	17.87	—	1	6
A. W. T. Grout	5	9	0	72	42	8.00	—	—	20/3
F. M. Misson	3	4	2	13	12*	6.50	—	—	5
I. Meckiff	2	4	2	12	6*	6.00	—	—	0
L. F. Kline	2	4	4	18	15*	—	—	—	1

Played in one Test: D. E. Hoare 35, 0 (ct 2).

Bowling

	<i>O</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>R</i>	<i>W</i>	<i>Avg</i>	<i>Best</i>	<i>5wI</i>	<i>10wM</i>
A. K. Davidson	173.7	25	612	33	18.54	6/53	5	1
R. Benaud	268.1	55	779	23	33.86	5/96	1	—
R. B. Simpson	71	10	217	6	36.16	2/18	—	—
F. M. Misson	92.5	12	373	9	41.44	4/58	—	—
K. D. Mackay	94.4	15	287	6	47.83	3/75	—	—
J. W. Martin	64	6	255	5	51.00	3/56	—	—
L. F. Kline	54.6	11	223	3	74.33	3/52	—	—
I. Meckiff	40	4	234	2	117.00	1/74	—	—

Also bowled: D. E. Hoare 29–0–156–2; N. C. O'Neill 6–1–12–1.

WEST INDIES

Batting & Fielding

	<i>M</i>	<i>I</i>	<i>NO</i>	<i>R</i>	<i>HS</i>	<i>Avg</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>50</i>	<i>Ct/St</i>
F. C. M. Alexander	5	10	2	484	108	60.50	1	5	16/0
R. B. Kanhai	5	10	0	503	117	50.30	2	2	2
G. S. Sobers	5	10	0	430	168	43.00	2	1	12
C. C. Hunte	5	10	0	377	110	37.70	1	2	4
F. M. M. Worrell	5	10	0	375	82	37.50	—	5	2
S. M. Nurse	3	6	0	181	70	30.16	—	1	2
J. S. Solomon	5	10	1	250	65	27.77	—	1	5
C. W. Smith	4	8	0	206	55	25.75	—	1	3
A. L. Valentine	5	9	8	21	10*	21.00	—	—	3
P. D. Lashley	2	4	0	78	41	19.50	—	—	0
W. W. Hall	5	9	0	158	50	17.55	—	1	0
L. R. Gibbs	3	5	0	55	18	11.00	—	—	1
S. Ramadhin	2	4	0	21	12	5.25	—	—	0

Played in one Test: C. D. Watson 4, 5 (ct 1).

Bowling

	<i>O</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>R</i>	<i>W</i>	<i>Avg</i>	<i>Best</i>	<i>5wI</i>	<i>10wM</i>
L. R. Gibbs	192.2	65	395	19	20.78	5/66	2	—
W. W. Hall	144.6	14	616	21	29.33	5/63	1	—
F. M. M. Worrell	134	34	357	10	35.70	3/27	—	—
A. L. Valentine	170.4	42	533	14	38.07	4/67	—	—
G. S. Sobers	191	27	588	15	39.20	5/120	1	—
S. Ramadhin	37	4	138	3	46.00	1/21	—	—

Also bowled: J. S. Solomon 3–2–1–0; C. D. Watson 21–2–105–2.

AUSTRALIA v. WEST INDIES 1960-61.

FIRST TEST: at Brisbane, December 9-14. **Match tied.** WEST INDIES 453 (G. S. Sobers 132, J. S. Solomon 65, F. M. M. Worrell 65, F. C. M. Alexander 60, W. W. Hall 50; A. K. Davidson 5/135) and 284 (F. M. M. Worrell 65, R. B. Kanhai 54; A. K. Davidson 6/87); AUSTRALIA 505 (N. C. O'Neill 181, R. B. Simpson 92, C. C. McDonald 57; W. W. Hall 4/140) and 232 (A. K. Davidson 80, R. Benaud 52; W. W. Hall 5/63).

SECOND TEST: at Melbourne, December 30-January 3. **Australia won by 7 wickets.** AUSTRALIA 348 (K. D. Mackay 74, J. W. Martin 55, L. E. Favell 51; W. W. Hall 4/51) and 3/70; WEST INDIES 181 (R. B. Kanhai 84, S. M. Nurse 70; A. K. Davidson 6/53) and 233 (C. C. Hunte 110, F. C. M. Alexander 72).

THIRD TEST: at Sydney, January 13-18. **West Indies won by 222 runs.** WEST INDIES 339 (G. S. Sobers 168; A. K. Davidson 5/80, R. Benaud 4/86) and 326 (F. C. M. Alexander 108, F. M. M. Worrell 82, C. W. Smith 55; R. Benaud 4/113); AUSTRALIA 202 (N. C. O'Neill 71; A. L. Valentine 4/67) and 241 (R. N. Harvey 85, N. C. O'Neill 70; L. R. Gibbs 5/66, A. L. Valentine 4/86).

FOURTH TEST: at Adelaide, January 27-February 1. **Drawn.** WEST INDIES 393 (R. B. Kanhai 117, F. M. M. Worrell 71, F. C. M. Alexander 63*; R. Benaud 5/96) and 6/432 dec. (R. B. Kanhai 115, F. C. M. Alexander 87*, C. C. Hunte 79, F. M. M. Worrell 53); AUSTRALIA 366 (R. B. Simpson 85, R. Benaud 77, C. C. McDonald 71; L. R. Gibbs 5/97) and 9/273 (N. C. O'Neill 65, K. D. Mackay 62*).

FIFTH TEST: at Melbourne, February 10-15. **Australia won by 2 wickets.** WEST INDIES 292 (G. S. Sobers 64; F. M. Misson 4/58) and 321 (F. C. M. Alexander 73, C. C. Hunte 52; A. K. Davidson 5/84); AUSTRALIA 356 (C. C. McDonald 91, R. B. Simpson 75, P. J. P. Burge 68; G. S. Sobers 5/120, L. R. Gibbs 4/74) and 8/258 (R. B. Simpson 92, P. J. P. Burge 53).



Michael Charlton interviews the captains on ABC television.



Pianist Winifred Atwell chats with Frank Worrell and Alf Valentine.

WEST INDIES IN AUSTRALIA 1960-61: FIRST CLASS TOUR AVERAGES

Batting & Fielding

	<i>M</i>	<i>I</i>	<i>NO</i>	<i>R</i>	<i>HS</i>	<i>Avg</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>50</i>	<i>Ct/St</i>
R. B. Kanhai	11	18	1	1093	252	64.29	4	4	4
F. C. M. Alexander	10	19	5	734	108	52.42	1	6	31/1
F. M. M. Worrell	12	22	3	818	82	43.05	–	10	4
C. C. Hunte	11	20	0	731	110	36.55	2	3	17
G. S. Sobers	12	22	0	804	168	36.54	3	3	23
J. L. Hendriks	4	7	1	191	82	31.83	–	3	5/6
S. M. Nurse	10	18	0	498	97	27.66	–	3	7
C. W. Smith	11	21	0	560	59	26.66	–	2	4/3
J. S. Solomon	11	21	3	476	65	26.44	–	2	7
P. D. Lashley	9	15	0	291	69	19.40	–	1	6
W. W. Hall	12	18	0	218	50	12.11	–	1	1
L. R. Gibbs	9	14	1	156	43	12.00	–	–	6
C. D. Watson	7	9	4	57	16*	11.40	–	–	5
D. T. Dewdney	6	9	3	61	37*	10.16	–	–	0
S. Ramadhin	7	12	1	93	16*	8.45	–	–	0
A. L. Valentine	11	16	9	27	10*	3.85	–	–	6

Played in one match: W. M. M. Marshall 1.*

Bowling

	<i>O</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>R</i>	<i>W</i>	<i>Avg</i>	<i>Best</i>	<i>5wI</i>	<i>10wM</i>
S. Ramadhin	170.3	17	631	24	26.29	5/37	3	1
L. R. Gibbs	373.2	65	922	34	27.11	5/66	2	–
W. W. Hall	260.4	14	1109	40	27.72	5/63	1	–
A. L. Valentine	376.7	42	1126	39	28.87	5/33	2	–
F. M. M. Worrell	242.3	34	748	22	34.00	5/53	1	–
G. S. Sobers	356	45	1209	34	35.55	5/63	2	–
C. D. Watson	126	11	469	13	36.07	4/30	–	–
D. T. Dewdney	71	9	296	5	59.20	2/28	–	–

Also bowled: C. C. Hunte 4–0–16–1; J. S. Solomon 15–3–67–1.

AUSTRALIA v. WEST INDIES: RESULTS OF TEST SERIES

	<i>Tests</i>	<i>Aust won</i>	<i>WI won</i>	<i>Tied</i>	<i>Drawn</i>	<i>Holder of Frank Worrell trophy</i>
1930-31 (Aust)	5	4	1	–	–	–
1951-52 (Aust)	5	4	1	–	–	–
1954-55 (WI)	5	3	–	–	2	–
1960-61 (Aust)	5	2	1	1	1	Aust
1964-65 (WI)	5	1	2	–	2	WI
1968-69 (Aust)	5	3	1	–	1	Aust
1972-73 (WI)	5	2	–	–	3	Aust
1975-76 (Aust)	6	5	1	–	–	Aust
1977-78 (WI)	5	1	3	–	1	WI
1979-80 (Aust)	3	–	2	–	1	WI
1981-82 (Aust)	3	1	1	–	1	WI
1983-84 (WI)	5	–	3	–	2	WI
1984-85 (Aust)	5	1	3	–	1	WI
1988-89 (Aust)	5	1	3	–	1	WI
1990-91 (WI)	5	1	2	–	2	WI
1992-93 (Aust)	5	1	2	–	2	WI
1994-95 (WI)	4	2	1	–	1	Aust
1996-97 (Aust)	5	3	2	–	–	Aust
1998-99 (WI)	4	2	2	–	–	Aust
Total	90	37	31	1	21	



Postscript

Following the widespread sadness at the departure of the West Indies team, there were two hopes expressed by Australian cricket followers. First, that the example set by both teams during the 1960-61 series would herald a new era of "brighter" cricket and, second, that a way could be found for the West Indies to return in the near future, perhaps in four years, the normal interval between visits by England teams.

One immediate result was that Wes Hall, Rohan Kanhai and Garry Sobers returned in 1961-62 to play Shield cricket. Of the three, Sobers, whose three seasons with South Australia yielded 2707 runs and 137 wickets, made the biggest contribution. In both 1962-63 and 1963-64 (when South Australia won the Shield for the first time in 11 seasons), he scored over 1000 runs and took over 50 wickets - no other player has managed to achieve this remarkable double in Australian first-class cricket. Hall spent two seasons with Queensland, setting a state record of 43 wickets in his first season, while Kanhai scored two centuries for Western Australia in 1961-62, but did not return. After the departure of Sobers, it was not until 1969-70, when Lance Gibbs spent a season with South Australia, that another West Indian came out to play Shield cricket. Although a few West Indies players also came in the 1970s and 1980s, none had anything like the same impact as Sobers.

Unfortunately the hopes for "brighter" cricket were not realised. Far from heralding the dawn of a new era, the next five years witnessed a plethora of drawn Test matches – of the 16 Tests played in Australia during this period, no fewer than 10 failed to achieve a result. The Ashes series in 1962-63 proved especially disappointing. Before it started, both captains, Benaud and England's Ted Dexter, vowed to play attractive and positive cricket and when the series stood at one-all after the Third Test, it appeared set for an exciting climax. However, neither side made a positive attempt to win the Fourth Test, preferring, it seemed, to wait for the final Test to settle the series. Although it needed to win this Test to regain the Ashes, England made little effort to seize the initiative and the match degenerated into another dull draw, a remarkable contrast to the thrilling finale of the West Indies series two years earlier. This pattern of drawn matches was repeated against South Africa in 1963-64 and against England in 1965-66, when both series were shared one-all with three draws. The one-off Test against Pakistan in 1964-65 was also drawn.

The West Indies' strong showing against Australia proved to be the start of an era which saw them become the most powerful team in the world. However, as with the hope for "brighter" cricket, the hope that the West Indies would be able to return to Australia within a few years did not eventuate. It was eight years before they made their next visit to Australia, by which time their side was in decline.

West Indies 1960-61 Summer Tour

In the seasons immediately following the 1960-61 series, the West Indies enjoyed a period of almost unbroken success. In 1961-62 they defeated India five-nil at home. Worrell topped the batting averages with 332 runs at 88.00, while Kanhai, Sobers and Easton McMorris, an opening batsman who narrowly missed selection for the tour of Australia, all exceeded 400 runs. Hall captured 27 wickets at only 15.74, while Sobers and Gibbs both took over 20 wickets. The series was overshadowed by a serious injury to India's captain, Nari Contractor, who suffered a fractured skull when struck above the ear by a lifting delivery from Charlie Griffith in the tour match against Barbados. Contractor underwent emergency surgery which saved his life, but though he made a full recovery, he never played Test cricket again. On their tour of England in 1963, the West Indies emulated the deeds of the 1950 side by winning the series three-one. Hunte, Kanhai, Butcher and Sobers were the leading batsmen, but their outstanding player was fast bowler Charlie Griffith. Prior to the tour Griffith had played in only one Test, but in this series he captured 32 wickets at 16.21, and with Hall formed one of the most fearsome fast bowling combinations ever seen. Griffith's greatest assets were his exceptional command of the yorker and a vicious bouncer, delivered with what some felt to be a suspect action. Gibbs and Sobers gave fine support, each taking over 20 wickets. Frank Worrell, playing in his last Test series, earned the highest praise for his leadership and he received a knighthood in the New Year Honours of 1964.

The West Indies' success in England meant that their next series, at home against Australia in 1965, was regarded as an unofficial world championship. Sobers had replaced Worrell as West Indies captain, but otherwise the 1960-61 side was virtually intact. By contrast, the Australian side, now led by Bob Simpson, had undergone many changes following the retirements of Benaud, Davidson, Harvey, McDonald and Mackay. The West Indies took a two-nil lead in the series after convincing wins in the First Test at Kingston—Hall captured nine wickets—and the Third Test at Georgetown. Although Australia fought back courageously in the remaining Tests—drawing the Fourth Test at Bridgetown after Bill Lawry and Simpson put on 382 for the first wicket, a new Australian record, and easily winning the Fifth Test at Port of Spain—the West Indies won the series two-one and were now acknowledged as the best team in the world. Unfortunately the goodwill that had existed between the teams during the previous two series was noticeably absent, with much ill feeling being generated over criticism of the bowling action of Charlie Griffith. For the West Indies, Hunte, Kanhai and Butcher all scored heavily and Gibbs was the leading wicket-taker. Australia's highest run-scorer was a relative newcomer, Bob Cowper, while Neil Hawke, with 24 wickets, was easily the leading wicket-taker on either side.

Originally it was intended that the West Indies would not make another tour of England until 1971, but following the success of the 1963 visit, the English authorities were able to reschedule their program to fit another West Indies tour in 1966. As in 1963, the West Indies easily won the series by three Tests to one, though it was felt that their side was perhaps not quite as powerful as Worrell's team of three years earlier. Nevertheless, they outplayed England for most of the series, thanks in no small part to Sobers, who scored 722 runs at 103.14 and captured 20 wickets.



In 1966-67 the West Indies undertook a short tour of India where they won the three-Test series two-nil. Sobers was again the outstanding player and Gibbs the leading wicket-taker but the most significant feature was the promising batting on debut by Clive Lloyd, who would become one of the West Indies' greatest Test captains. The illness and death of Sir Frank Worrell, however, overshadowed the tour. He had gone out to India to be with the team when he suddenly fell ill and was flown home. It was found he was suffering from an acute form of leukaemia, and he died soon after, on 13 March 1967, aged only 42. His early death was a tragic loss to West Indian cricket, for he had become a national symbol and would certainly have played an important leadership role for many years to come.

Worrell's death heralded a decline in West Indies cricket, for in 1967-68 they lost their home series against England one-nil. Admittedly, England's only win in the series came after a risky declaration by Sobers which set England 215 to make in 165 minutes, which they achieved with three minutes to spare. However there were signs that the West Indies were on the wane, for although Sobers, Kanhai and Nurse all batted well, and Lloyd confirmed his promise, the attack relied heavily on Gibbs and Sobers, with Hall and Griffith well below their best.

Eventually, in 1968-69, the West Indies made their long-awaited return visit to Australia. However, although the team included six of the 1960-61 tourists – Sobers, Kanhai, Hall, Gibbs, Nurse and Hendriks, the series failed to recapture the magic of eight years earlier. The West Indies began well by winning the First Test in Brisbane by 125 runs – Gibbs took eight wickets and Lloyd, in his first Test against Australia, scored 129 – but thereafter they rapidly fell apart. Australia squared the series with an innings victory in the Second Test at Melbourne, and went two-one up with a comfortable ten wickets win in the next Test at Sydney. Although the Fourth Test at Adelaide ended in a thrilling draw, with Australia, who at one stage appeared to be heading to an easy victory, managing to hold on with their last batsmen at the crease, the final Test at Sydney saw Australia win by the overwhelming margin of 382 runs. The match was noteworthy for the fact that Australia's captain, Bill Lawry, declined to enforce the follow-on, despite a first innings lead of 340, and eventually set the West Indies 735 to win. Australia's three-one series win was highlighted by the prolific run-scoring of Doug Walters, Lawry and Ian Chappell, while Graham McKenzie captured 30 wickets. Although the West Indies batsmen generally did well, with Sobers, Joey Carew, a left-handed opening batsman who was a surprise selection, and Butcher all exceeding 400 runs, their attack, not helped by poor catching, relied almost exclusively on Gibbs and Sobers, whose wickets came at a relatively high cost. Hall and Griffith were never fully fit and each took only eight expensive wickets - both retired from Test cricket at the end of the series. As the tour proceeded the side appeared demoralised and Sobers, despite his fine contributions on the field, was unable to provide the leadership needed to rally his team when things were going against it. The great side that Worrell had built up in the early 1960s was breaking up, and although Sobers, Kanhai and Gibbs kept on playing for many years, West Indies cricket was entering a lean period.

West Indies 1960-61 Summer Tour

Subsequently, Australia went on to comfortably win their next two Test series against the West Indies two-nil in the Caribbean in 1973 and five-one in Australia in 1975-76. However, although well beaten in the latter series, there were signs by the mid-1970s that the West Indies were once again becoming a force in world cricket. Under Clive Lloyd, a strong leader who expected high standards from his players, they won the inaugural World Cup in England in 1975 after defeating Australia in a memorable final at Lord's and great promise was shown by several newcomers, including Andy Roberts and Viv Richards. In 1976 they overwhelmed England three-nil and in 1977-78 they regained the Frank Worrell Trophy from Australia. It would take 17 years before Australia could win another series against the West Indies and regain the trophy. During this long period it appeared that the West Indian dominance of world cricket would never end. The West Indies possessed arguably the most powerful combination in the history of the game. With strong leaders in Clive Lloyd, and later Viv Richards, they possessed a powerful batting side headed by Desmond Haynes and Gordon Greenidge, backed up by Lloyd and Richards, as well as Alvin Kallicharran, Larry Gomes and Richie Richardson. There was an exceptional line-up of talented fast bowlers, Andy Roberts and Michael Holding, Joel Garner and Colin Croft, Malcolm Marshall, and later, Courtney Walsh and Curtly Ambrose. They were backed up by an outstanding wicket-keeper/batsman in Jeffrey Dujon.

Since 1995 the West Indies have struggled for consistency at Test level, despite the batting talent of Brian Lara and the excellent bowling of Walsh and Ambrose. Australia retained the Frank Worrell trophy in 1996-97 and 1998-99 and the West Indies' decline was emphasised recently in England when the home side won a Test series against them for the first time since 1969.

Ken Williams

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The Street parade in Melbourne prior to the West Indies departure; Gerry Gomez and Frank Worrell shelter behind sunglasses as the parade enters Elizabeth Street.



Joe Solomon and Alf Valentine are driven past Hosie's Hotel in Elizabeth Street.



Melbourne Cricket Club