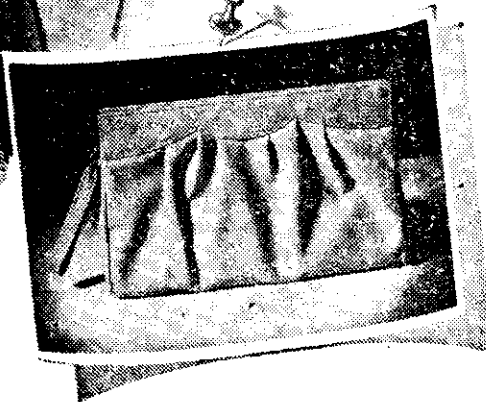




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PEACE — it's Wonderful!

But Wait Till the Tests Begin

CRICKET clubs in New Zealand are coming out of winter hibernation with promise of the most active season since 1938. Yet the greatest cricket interest will be in Australia where the first series of England-Australia matches since before the war has started. With several city and country matches between Tests, the first Test will be played from November 29 to December 5 at Brisbane. Between this and the second Test at Sydney there will be one match against a Queensland country team and the visitors will then travel to Newcastle, Canberra, and Bendigo. The third Test will be at Melbourne and before the fourth there will be matches at Hobart, Launceston, and Adelaide. Adelaide will also be the scene of the fourth Test, with matches at Ballarat, Melbourne and Sydney before the fifth and last Test at Sydney. The NZBS has arranged for New Zealand to receive news of all games—brief descriptions have already been broadcast—with special coverage of the Tests.

Cricket news and views, and particularly statistics, are as fascinating to the follower of the game as the figures in a profitable personal balance-sheet to an accountant. During an interview with Winston McCarthy, NZBS sports commentator, *The Listener* fielded some facts of interest to player, old player and grandstand habitué. England has a strong batting team — Hammond, Hutton, Compton, Hardstaff and Edrich, but the bowling of the English team is at the moment an unknown quality, taking Australian wickets into consideration.

Much will depend on the 6ft. Surrey colt, Alec Bedser, who might be to England what Maurice Tate was in the past. In any event the M.C.C. is not strong in bowling; neither, for that matter, is Australia. It is expected that there will be some prolific scoring on both sides, and it seems that batting and fielding will decide the issue in this, the first Test series since the outbreak of war.

Games of the Past

Up to now 143 matches have been played between England and Australia, the first in Australia during the 1876-77 season. Australia has won 57, England 55 and 31 have been drawn. Out of 77 games played in Australia, England has won 34 and Australia 41, with only two drawn, while of the 66 played in England the home team won 21, Australia 16 and 29 were drawn. After the 1914-18 war the Australians had a great run. An A.I.F. team had been playing in England in 1919 and from its members the nucleus of post-war Test teams was formed.

In the first series of Tests after World War I, Australia defeated England heavily in each of the five matches. Australia had Armstrong, Collins, Macartney, Pel-lew, Oldfield, Gregory, Macdonald, and Bardsley; England had Hobbs, Fender, Rhodes, Douglas, J. W. Hearne, Woolley



and Patsy Hendren. Experience of big cricket favoured the Australian team, whereas it had been denied to the majority of the Englishmen during the war. And Australia had a shrewd captain in Armstrong. In 1921 the Australians went to England with practically the same players, winning the first three Tests easily; the second and third were drawn.

England went to Australia for the 1924-25 season and lost the first three Tests. But then came a great day for English cricket when, at Melbourne in the fourth Test, thanks to a century by Sutcliffe, England beat Australia by an innings and 29 runs. Of the 13 Tests played between 1920 and that Test in 1924-25, England had not had a win.

The 1926 series in England was generally regarded as most unsatisfactory. The first Test, played at Notts, was abandoned after 50 minutes because of rain. The next three were drawn. On the final Test at the Oval depended the fate of "the ashes" which Australia had held since 1920-21. Into the English team was brought Wilfred Rhodes, the great left-hand bowler, at the age of 49. To his bowling, particularly in the second innings, when he took the wickets of Bardsley, Ponsford, Collins, and A. J. Richardson for 44 runs, England owed her win. In England's second innings the great firm of Hobbs and Sutcliffe put on 172 runs for the first wicket. Hobbs got 100 and Sutcliffe 161.

Two Famous Batsmen

The next series, in 1928-29, were in Australia. This was perhaps the most important of all because for the first time two of the most prolific batsmen, Hammond of England, and Bradman of Australia, were in the matches. Hammond had a most successful season, scoring 905 runs in the series, including two double centuries. Bradman, after scoring 18 and one in the first Test, was dropped from the team for the second. But as England also won this match it was decided to put Bradman in again for the next. It was just as well, for he scored 79 and 112 runs. But even Bradman could not prevent England from winning the first four Tests and, with them, retaining the Ashes. The final Test at Melbourne was won by Australia with Bradman again scoring more than a century—123.

The 1930 series in England was won by Australia, by two Tests to England's one, the matches at Leeds and Manchester being drawn. Now it was Bradman's turn to be a record-breaker, for