

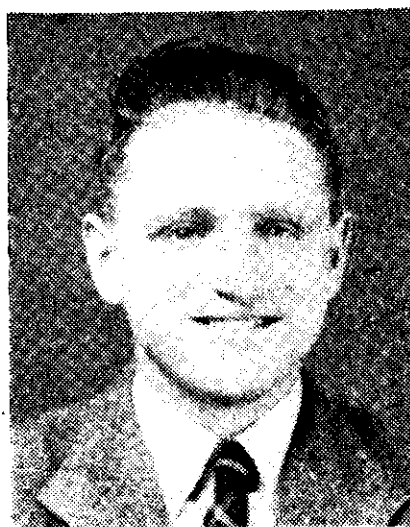
Well Done, Dennis Done

DURING the next week, New Zealand's touring cricket team will be playing its fourth and fifth Tests against South Africa. As before, listeners will hear ball-by-ball commentaries supplied in cable form by Dennis Ivor Done, Sports Editor of the South African Broadcasting Corporation. A recent *Listener* article explained how the commentaries are done. This note will attempt to answer the question: Who is Done?

At the outset, it should be explained that Dennis Ivor pronounces his name to rhyme with "bone," not with "pun." Aged 25, he was born at Durban and educated at Marist Brothers College in Johannesburg. For 10 years from 1942 he worked as a clerk, but his main interest was in sport and sports journalism. His first entry into the latter came in 1948 when he phoned the sports editor of the *Germiston Advocate* and complained about a football report. The sports editor told him if he could do better to go ahead. He did, and his report was published. From then on he reported for the paper on soccer, cricket, hockey, baseball and wrestling. He even undertook a boxing report, but his effort

was so little appreciated by the promoters that he withdrew from that field. Later he was soccer correspondent for two Afrikaans newspapers—his reports being translated by the respective sports editors—and later still became soccer correspondent for the SABC. In 1952, after a year in this capacity, he was appointed to the corporation's news staff, and later to the position of Sports Editor. His assignments since have included broadcast reviews and summaries of the Springbok cricket team's matches in Australia and New Zealand last season, and daily news bulletins on the Wallaby Rugby tour, the Dundee Soccer tour of the Union, the Australian cricket tour of Great Britain, and, as he puts it, "all other sports in general, from the Davis Cup to the latest postponement of a Vic Towel fight."

The speed with which Dennis Done's cables have come to hand during the Tests will appear less surprising when it is known that each Saturday he compiles a programme giving all sports results for the province of Transvaal, with reports coming in to the studio sometimes no more than a minute before the broadcast. Quick thinking and a sure knowledge of many sports are necessary.



DENNIS DONE
Skipper of the SABC XI

This ability to think and act quickly has proved valuable to cricket listeners here. Done accepted the job of reporting for the NZBS when a last-minute change of commentators became necessary. He received detailed instructions from New Zealand on the evening before the first Test started. His first cable—written concisely in the pre-

arranged code—arrived at Wellington 15 minutes after the match began.

According to a biography supplied by one of Dennis Done's colleagues in the SABC the young sports editor is himself no mean performer with bat and ball. He also knows the tricks of the wicket-keeper's trade, his usual position in the field. The note continues: "As you will see from the attached photograph, Dennis is not dissimilar in appearance to the Egyptian Premier, General Naguib—in his prime, of course. Like the ruler of Egypt's destiny Done is a strong man. He has to be, to captain the cricket team of the South African Broadcasting Corporation, which has among its members silver-voiced commentators who have seen and remarked upon the finest batting and bowling exhibitions seen in this country since the first Springbok took to cricket." The biography concludes on a more respectful note: "Done lives and talks sport. He welcomed the opportunity of bringing to the New Zealand listener a factual report of the first cricket Test between our two countries, which have so much in common. But, like the kiwi, Dennis Done will not himself venture to the microphone—he is a silent bird." Listeners who have heard the strident cry of a kiwi in the night may wonder at such a microphone manner, but all who have heard the Tests will agree that Dennis has done us proud.



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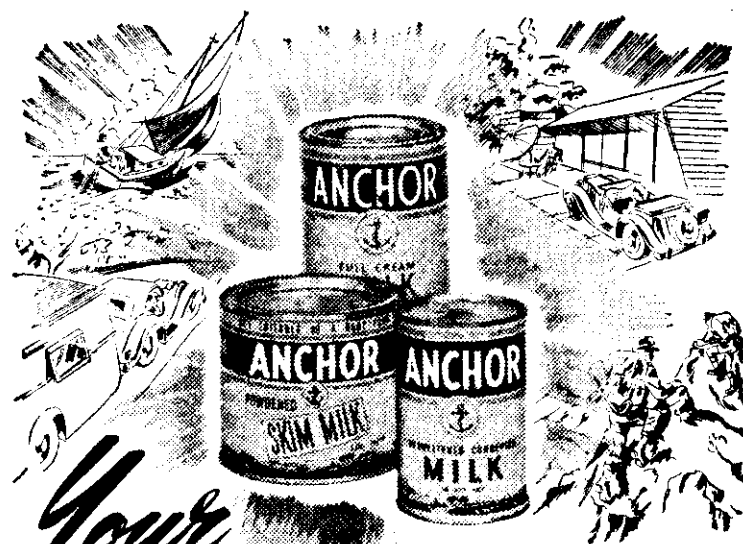
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