

= Bill Brown with the Australian cricket team in England in 1948 =

Bill Brown was a member of Donald Bradman 's famous Australian cricket team , which toured England in 1948 . Bradman 's men went through their 34 matches without defeat ; this unprecedented feat by a Test side touring England earned them the sobriquet The Invincibles .

An experienced right @-@ handed opening batsman , Brown was on his third visit to England , having first toured in 1934 before World War II . However , Brown 's best years were lost to the war and by 1948 Sid Barnes and Arthur Morris had superseded him in the pecking order to become Australia 's first @-@ choice opening pair . Brown was selected as a reserve opener ; this decision generated controversy among critics who believed he was past his best .

Bradman rotated the three openers in the tour matches , but Morris and Barnes were preferred in the Tests . Bradman accommodated Brown in his first @-@ choice team by playing him out of position in the middle order in the Tests . However , Brown appeared uncomfortable in the unfamiliar role , and was dropped after making 73 runs at a batting average of 24 @.@ 33 in the first two Tests .

Despite his struggles in the Test arena , Brown had success in the tour matches as an opener . He scored 1 @,@ 448 runs at 57 @.@ 92 in all first @-@ class matches , ranking fourth in both the aggregates and averages . He scored eight centuries , second only to Bradman , including 200 against Cambridge University . However , Brown gained criticism for his slow batting . Following his omission from the Test team , Brown batted in a highly circumspect manner to increase the reliability and volume of his scoring . A very occasional off spin bowler , Brown took his career first @-@ class best of 4 / 16 in his only stint with the ball , against the South of England .

= = Background = =

Brown had been a regular member of the Australian Test team since his debut in 1934 , and immediately after World War II , he captained Australia in the inaugural Test against New Zealand . However , he was sidelined by injury in 1946 ? 47 and Sid Barnes and Arthur Morris opened in the Tests , averaging 73 @.@ 83 and 71 @.@ 85 respectively . Brown resumed his Test career in the following season , replacing Barnes , but he was dropped after scoring 29 runs in two Tests . Barnes then came in and made 139 runs in the next two Tests , including a 112 in the Fourth Test . Morris was then rested for the Fifth Test to allow Brown another chance to show his ability and make a case for continued national selection , and he made 99 . In the Tests against India during the season , Barnes , Morris and Brown had shared the opening duties ; their batting averages were 43 @.@ 00 , 52 @.@ 25 and 42 @.@ 66 respectively . In any case , Brown had done enough to tour England with The Invincibles in 1948 , his third trip there , although Barnes and Morris were the first @-@ choice opening combination .

= = Early tour = =

Australia traditionally fielded its first @-@ choice team in the tour opener , which was customarily against Worcestershire . Brown gained selection , although Bradman batted him out of position in the middle order while Barnes and Morris opened . Brown came in 6 / 335 and scored 25 at a typically placid pace , accumulating his runs at a lower strike rate than the other recognised batsmen . He was out with the score at 6 / 402 as Australia went on to declare at 8 / 462 and win by an innings .

In the next match against Leicestershire , Bradman rested Morris , so Brown opened with Barnes . Brown scored 26 in an opening stand of 46 , as Australia amassed 448 and won by an innings .

The Australians proceeded to play Yorkshire at Bradford , on a damp pitch suitable for slower bowling . In the first innings , Brown took three catches from the bowling of Keith Miller ? who had resorted to bowling off spin ? as Yorkshire were bowled out for 71 in difficult batting conditions . Opening with Morris while Barnes was rested , Brown made 13 as the match remained finely balanced after Australia was bowled out for 101 . Brown took another catch from Miller in the second

innings as the hosts were bowled out for 89 . Chasing 60 for victory , Brown fell to Frank Smailes for two as the Australian top order collapsed to 6 / 31 ? effectively seven wickets down with the injured Sam Loxton unable to bat ? before scraping home by four wickets .

Brown was rested for the next match against Surrey , which Australia won by an innings . After the first four matches , five Australians had made centuries , and another had passed fifty . Brown had scored only 66 runs with a highest score of 26 , while Morris and Barnes , the incumbent openers , had scored 223 and 298 runs with a century and fifty apiece .

Brown was recalled for the match against Cambridge University , opening with Morris while Barnes rested . After putting on 64 for the opening wicket with Morris , Brown added 176 for the second wicket with Ron Hamence . He added a further 140 for the fourth wicket with Lindsay Hassett , who was captaining the team while Bradman rested himself . Brown top @-@ scored with 200 and Hassett declared when his double @-@ centurion was out with the score at 4 / 414 . Australia went on to win by an innings . In the following match against Essex , Brown opened with Barnes while Morris was rested . The pair put on 145 in 97 minutes ? the highest opening stand by the Australians on the tour to that point ? before Barnes was out hit wicket . In the meantime , Brown had reached 50 in 90 minutes . Bradman came in and he and Brown accelerated to put on a second @-@ wicket partnership of 219 in 90 minutes , before the latter was out for 153 from three hours of batting with the score at 2 / 364 . Brown had scored his last 100 runs in less than 90 minutes . Australia went on to score 721 runs on the first day , the highest number of runs amassed in one day of first @-@ class cricket , before completing victory by an innings and 451 runs , their largest winning margin for the tour . Opening with Morris while Barnes was rested , Brown completed his third century in as many innings with 108 against Oxford University , after putting on an opening stand of 139 . This meant that he had scored 461 runs in eight days of cricket , and put him atop the batting aggregates , ahead of Bradman . Australia went on to complete their fourth successive innings victory .

The next match was against the Marylebone Cricket Club ( MCC ) at Lord 's . The MCC fielded seven players who would represent England in the Tests , and were basically a full strength Test team , while Australia fielded their first @-@ choice team . Bradman installed Barnes and Morris as his preferred opening pair , while Brown batted out of position at No. 6 . Barring one change in the bowling department , the same team lined up in the First Test , with the top six batsmen in the same positions . It was a chance for players from both sides to gain a psychological advantage , but Brown failed to capitalise . He came to the crease with the score at 4 / 280 to join Keith Miller and scored 26 in a stand of 63 before being dismissed as Australia amassed 552 and won by an innings . This was followed by Australia 's first non @-@ victory of the tour , against Lancashire , a draw for which Brown was rested .

Brown returned for the following match , which was against Nottinghamshire , and added 122 to register his fourth century in less than three weeks . Australia made 400 but the hosts hung on for a draw in the second innings . In the next match against Hampshire , Brown opened with Barnes and made a duck as Australia were dismissed for 117 on a damp pitch in reply to the home side 's 195 . It was the first time the tourists had conceded a first innings during the summer . Hampshire were subsequently bowled out in their second innings for 103 to leave Australia a target of 182 . This time Barnes fell for a duck , and Brown anchored Australia to an eight @-@ wicket win with an unbeaten 81 after a century second @-@ wicket partnership with Ian Johnson . The final match before the First Test was against Sussex . Opening with Morris , Brown played second fiddle , accumulating 44 as the pair put on an opening stand of 153 . Morris went on to 184 and Australia declared at 5 / 549 before completing another innings victory .

= = First Test = =

Up to this point , Brown ? who was on his third tour of England ? had scored 800 runs on tour at an average of 72 @. 72 , with a double century , three other centuries and 81 not out , In contrast , middle @-@ order batsman Neil Harvey struggled in the initial stages of his first tour of England . Harvey failed to pass 25 in his first six innings , and although he had scored an unbeaten 100

against Sussex , he had totalled only 296 runs at 42 @. @ 29 . As a result , Brown gained selection in the First Test at Trent Bridge , batting out of position in the middle order while Barnes and Morris opened , whereas Harvey was dropped despite making a century in Australia 's most recent Test against India .

England batted first and made 165 , with Brown prominent in the field . Early on the first day of play , Brown caught England opener Cyril Washbrook on the run at the fine leg boundary after the batsman had attempted to hook a Ray Lindwall bouncer , leaving England at 2 / 15 after 41 minutes of play . He later made a series of one @- @ handed stops in the field , helping to keep the pressure on the batsmen . Brown took his second catch of the innings to remove Alec Bedser , who had featured in a rearguard fightback to help take England to 165 after they had fallen to 8 / 74 .

On the second day , Barnes and Bradman took the score to 1 / 121 before Barnes and Miller were dismissed without further addition to the score . All the while , Australia had been scoring slowly , as they would throughout the day . Brown came in at No. 5 to join Bradman , but he had played most of his career as an opening batsman and he looked uncomfortable in the middle order , but Bradman brought him in ahead of Hassett as the new ball was due and Brown was used to starting his innings against pace bowlers and a new ball . English captain Norman Yardley removed Jim Laker from the attack and took the second new ball . Bradman struck his first boundary in over 80 minutes and the run rate picked up somewhat , prompting England to revert to slower bowling . Australia passed England 's total before Yardley brought himself on to bowl and trapped Brown ? who was attempting to push the ball to mid @- @ on ? leg before wicket ( lbw ) with an off cutter in his first over . This ended a 64 @- @ run stand in 58 minutes and left Australia at 4 / 185 . Following the departure of Brown , the scoring slowed as Bradman changed the team strategy to one of attempting to bat only once . Australia eventually reached 509 , and after England compiled 441 in their second innings , Brown was not needed as Australia made the 98 runs required victory for the loss of only two wickets .

Between Tests , Brown was rested for the match against Northamptonshire , which Australia won by an innings . He returned for the second fixture against Yorkshire . Opening with Barnes , Brown made 19 as Australia took a 43 @- @ run first innings lead . In the second innings , Brown top @- @ scored with 113 . He combined with Bradman to add 154 runs for the second wicket as the match petered into a draw . In a patient and restrained display , Brown took four hours to make his century . Following his controversial selection for the tour , Brown was attempting to justify his position in the team by accumulating a large amount of runs , but earned criticism for being too dour . However , the century was enough to see him retain his middle @- @ order position for the Second Test at Lord 's , where Australia fielded an unchanged team . Former Test leg spinner and teammate Bill O 'Reilly ? who was in England as a journalist ? criticised the selection of Brown , who had appeared to be noticeably uncomfortable in the unfamiliar role . He said that despite Brown 's unbeaten double century in his previous Test at Lord 's in 1938 , Sam Loxton and Neil Harvey had better claims to selection .

= = Second Test = =

Australia won the toss and batted first at the home of cricket . Centurion Morris fell at 3 / 166 and new batsman Miller was trapped lbw for four shortly after . Brown came in at 4 / 173 and helped Lindsay Hassett rebuild the innings after the two quick wickets . Both men scored slowly , averaging more than three and half minutes for each run . After putting on a partnership of 43 , Hassett was bowled by Yardley , who then trapped Brown for 24 to leave Australia stumbling at 6 / 225 . Brown had hit two consecutive half @- @ volleys off his pads through the leg side for four , and attempted a third boundary in a row to a similar delivery . However , this third delivery came off the pitch more quickly and beat Brown for pace . Australia managed to avoid further collapse a counterattack from the tail saw them to 350 before they bowled England out for 215 . The tourists batted much more productively in the second innings in ideal weather on the third day . Brown joined Miller after Bradman fell at 4 / 329 ; Australia had lost 3 / 33 but steadied to reach stumps at 343 without further loss , with Brown on seven . After the rest day , Australia resumed with a lead of 478 runs and six

wickets in hand . The morning was punctuated by three rain stoppages . Just ten minutes after the start , heavy rain intervened . The weather cleared and Miller and Brown moved to lunch on 63 and 32 respectively , with Australia at 4 / 409 . In 88 minutes of play , Australia had added 117 runs . Brown was caught behind from Alec Coxon after lunch without adding to his score for 32 , after an 87 @-@ run partnership with Miller , with the score at 5 / 416 . Bradman eventually declared at 7 / 460 , 595 runs ahead . It would take a world record chase from England to win the match . The home team lost wickets regularly and fell for 186 to lose by 409 runs . Although part of a successful team , Brown was unable to replicate the centuries he made in each of his two previous Tests at Lord ' s on the preceding tours , and it was to be the last Test of his career .

The next match was against Surrey and started the day after the Test . Brown injured a finger while fielding in the first innings , so he was unable to bat in Australia ' s first innings . In the second innings , Australia ' s makeshift openers Harvey and Sam Loxton chased down the 122 runs for victory to complete a 10 @-@ wicket win in less than an hour .

= = Dropped = =

Brown was rested for the following match against Gloucestershire before the Third Test . Loxton scored 159 not out , featuring in two century partnerships and propelling Australia to 7 / 774 declared , which was its highest score of the tour and laid the foundation for an innings victory . Loxton ' s effort was enough to oust Brown from his middle @-@ order position for the Third Test at Old Trafford . According to O ' Reilly , Brown had appeared out of place in the middle @-@ order because he was used to the opener ' s classical role of defending against and wearing down the opening bowlers , rather than attacking . During the Test , which was drawn , Barnes was injured and off spinner Ian Johnson was used as a makeshift opener as Morris was the only specialist left after Brown ' s omission . Afterwards , Brown managed only eight as Australia defeated Middlesex by ten wickets in their only county match between Tests .

Barnes was still unavailable for the Fourth Test , but Brown was not recalled to open with Morris ; instead , Hassett was promoted to open with Morris , while the teenaged Harvey came into the middle @-@ order . Although Hassett failed with only 13 and 17 in his two innings , Harvey struck 112 in the first innings , before Australia chased down 404 on the final day to set a world record for the highest successful run @-@ chase in Test cricket and won by seven wickets .

Brown partnered the recovered Barnes and patiently scored 140 , before being the fifth man out with the score at 344 , as Australia amassed 456 and defeated Derbyshire by an innings immediately after the Fourth Test . Looking to regain his Test position by sheer weight of runs , Brown started slowly ; Barnes made 24 of the first 29 runs . He took 185 minutes to reach 50 , much to the displeasure of the restless spectators , before accelerating and scoring his next 50 runs in 37 minutes .

In the next match against Glamorgan , Brown scored 16 in a rain @-@ affected draw that did not reach the second innings . He scored 33 and seven in the following match , falling both times to the leg spin of Eric Hollies as Australia defeated Warwickshire by nine wickets . Brown was then rested as Australia faced and drew with Lancashire for the second time on the tour . He returned for the non @-@ first @-@ class match against Durham , scoring 49 out of Australia ' s 282 in a weather @-@ affected draw that failed to reach the second innings . Brown was overlooked for selection in the Fifth Test at The Oval . Barnes returned to the team and Australia crushed England by an innings and 149 runs to take the series 4 ? 0 after cutting them down for only 52 in the first innings .

= = Later tour matches = =

Seven matches remained on Bradman ' s quest to go through a tour of England without defeat . Australia batted first against Kent and Brown top @-@ scored with 106 . After putting on 64 with Morris for the first wicket , he put on 104 each for the next two partnerships with Bradman and Harvey respectively , before falling at 3 / 272 . Brown again batted slowly ; he took 255 minutes to reach triple figures and was greeted by ironic clapping as he slowly accumulated runs while his

partners attacked . Brown 's dismissal triggered a collapse ; Australia lost their last seven wickets for 89 to end at 361 . Despite this , they completed another innings victory . In the next match against the Gentlemen of England , which was held at Lord 's , Brown scored 120 , featuring in a 180 @-@ run second wicket partnership with Bradman , as Australia amassed 5 / 610 and won by an innings . Former Australian Test opener and batting partner Jack Fingleton said " Brown has always looked the class batsman that he is when playing at Lord 's , and this superb century , so different in conception and execution to the one at Canterbury [ against Kent ] , made one reflect what a grand opening batsman this series of Tests had done without " . Fingleton made a duck in the next match but Australia nevertheless defeated Somerset by an innings and 374 runs . He then made 13 against the South of England in his last first @-@ class match of the season . The match was washed out , but not before Brown took 4 / 16 from 4 @.@ 1 overs in his only first @-@ class bowling effort of the tour , cleaning up the tail .

Australia 's biggest challenge in the post @-@ Test tour matches was against the Leveson @-@ Gower 's XI . During the last Australian tour in 1938 , the team was effectively a full @-@ strength England outfit , but this time Bradman insisted only six England players from the season 's Tests be allowed to compete . After his opponents had finalised their team , Bradman fielded a full @-@ strength team , and Brown missed out . The match ended in a draw after multiple rain delays .

The tour ended with two non @-@ first @-@ class matches against Scotland . In the first match , Brown was rested as the Australians claimed an innings victory . In the second match , Brown scored 24 not out batting at No. 8 and took a wicket in the second innings as Australia ended the tour with another innings victory .

= = Role = =

An experienced right @-@ handed opening batsman , Brown was on his third campaign in England , having first toured in 1934 before the World War II . However , Brown 's best years were lost to the war and by 1948 , Barnes and Morris had risen above him in the pecking order and become Australia 's first @-@ choice opening pair . Brown was selected as the reserve opener , a decision that generated controversy among pundits who believed he was past his best .

During the tour matches , which were usually played consecutively with only one or no days between fixtures , Bradman rotated the trio of openers , so one would generally be rested while the other two opened , N- but in the Tests , Morris and Barnes were preferred . Bradman accommodated Brown in his first @-@ choice team by playing him out of position in the middle order in the first two Tests and against Worcestershire and the MCC , when he fielded the strongest XI . However , Brown appeared uncomfortable in the unfamiliar role , and after making 73 runs at 24 @.@ 33 in the first two Tests , he was dropped .

Nevertheless , Brown was successful in the tour matches when he played as an opener . He ended the tour with eight centuries and a total of 1 @,@ 448 first @-@ class runs at an average of 57 @.@ 92 , behind only Bradman , Hassett and Morris in the runs and averages , with a highest score of 200 against Cambridge University . Brown 's tally of eight centuries was second only to Bradman , and took his tally on English soil to 18 first @-@ class tons . Excluding the matches against Worcestershire , the MCC and the first two Tests , in which Brown had scored 25 , 26 , 17 , 24 and 32 batting in the middle order while Barnes and Morris opened , Brown scored 1 @,@ 324 runs at 66 @.@ 20 while opening in the other matches , which would have put him in a clear fourth place on the batting averages . Following his omission from the Test team midway through the tour , Brown batted in a slow and conservative manner in order to score more runs and regain his position , much to the chagrin of the crowds .

A very occasional off spinner , Brown took 4 / 16 against the South of England in his only first @-@ class bowling assignment of the tour . It was his best career bowling figures ? he accumulated only six wickets in his first @-@ class career . He also took 18 catches in the first @-@ class fixtures .

= = = Statistical note = = =

== General notes ==