

= Don Bradman =

Sir Donald George " Don " Bradman , AC (27 August 1908 ? 25 February 2001) , often referred to as " The Don " , was an Australian cricketer , widely acknowledged as the greatest batsman of all time . Bradman 's career Test batting average of 99 @.@ 94 is often cited as the greatest achievement by any sportsman in any major sport .

The story that the young Bradman practised alone with a cricket stump and a golf ball is part of Australian folklore . Bradman 's meteoric rise from bush cricket to the Australian Test team took just over two years . Before his 22nd birthday , he had set many records for top scoring , some of which still stand , and became Australia 's sporting idol at the height of the Great Depression .

During a 20 @-@ year playing career , Bradman consistently scored at a level that made him , in the words of former Australia captain Bill Woodfull , " worth three batsmen to Australia " . A controversial set of tactics , known as Bodyline , was specifically devised by the England team to curb his scoring . As a captain and administrator , Bradman was committed to attacking , entertaining cricket ; he drew spectators in record numbers . He hated the constant adulation , however , and it affected how he dealt with others . The focus of attention on his individual performances strained relationships with some team @-@ mates , administrators and journalists , who thought him aloof and wary . Following an enforced hiatus due to the Second World War , he made a dramatic comeback , captaining an Australian team known as " The Invincibles " on a record @-@ breaking unbeaten tour of England .

A complex , highly driven man , not given to close personal relationships , Bradman retained a pre @-@ eminent position in the game by acting as an administrator , selector and writer for three decades following his retirement . Even after he became reclusive in his declining years his opinion was highly sought , and his status as a national icon was still recognised ? more than 50 years after his retirement as a Test player , in 2001 , Prime Minister John Howard of Australia called him the " greatest living Australian " . Bradman 's image has appeared on postage stamps and coins , and a museum dedicated to his life was opened while he was still living . On the centenary of his birth , 27 August 2008 , the Royal Australian Mint issued a \$ 5 commemorative gold coin with Bradman 's image , and on 19 November 2009 , he was inducted into the ICC Cricket Hall of Fame .

= = Early years = =

Donald George Bradman was the youngest son of George and Emily (née Whatman) Bradman , and was born on 27 August 1908 at Cootamundra , New South Wales (NSW) . He had a brother , Victor , and three sisters ? Islet , Lilian and Elizabeth May . One of his great @-@ grandfathers was one of the first Italians to migrate to Australia in 1826 . Bradman 's parents lived in the hamlet of Yeo Yeo , near Stockinbingal . His mother Emily gave birth to him at the Cootamundra home of Granny Scholz , a midwife . That house is now the Bradman Birthplace Museum . Emily had hailed from Mittagong in the NSW Southern Highlands , and in 1911 , when Don Bradman was about two @-@ and @-@ a @-@ half years old , his parents decided to relocate to Bowral , close to Mittagong , to be closer to Emily 's family and friends , as life at Yeo Yeo was proving difficult .

Bradman practised batting incessantly during his youth . He invented his own solo cricket game , using a cricket stump for a bat , and a golf ball . A water tank , mounted on a curved brick stand , stood on a paved area behind the family home . When hit into the curved brick facing of the stand , the ball rebounded at high speed and varying angles ? and Bradman would attempt to hit it again . This form of practice developed his timing and reactions to a high degree . In more formal cricket , he hit his first century at the age of 12 , with an undefeated 115 playing for Bowral Public School against Mittagong High School .

= = = Bush cricketer = = =

In 1920 ? 21 , Bradman acted as scorer for the local Bowral team , captained by his uncle George Whatman . In October 1920 , he filled in when the team was one man short , scoring 37 not out and

29 not out on debut . During the season , Bradman 's father took him to the Sydney Cricket Ground (SCG) to watch the fifth Ashes Test match . On that day , Bradman formed an ambition . " I shall never be satisfied " , he told his father , " until I play on this ground " . Bradman left school in 1922 and went to work for a local real estate agent who encouraged his sporting pursuits by giving him time off when necessary . He gave up cricket in favour of tennis for two years , but resumed playing cricket in 1925 ? 26 .

Bradman became a regular selection for the Bowral team ; several outstanding performances earned him the attention of the Sydney daily press . Competing on matting @-@ over @-@ concrete pitches , Bowral played other rural towns in the Berrima District competition . Against Wingello , a team that included the future Test bowler Bill O 'Reilly , Bradman made 234 . In the competition final against Moss Vale , which extended over five consecutive Saturdays , Bradman scored 320 not out . During the following Australian winter (1926) , an ageing Australian team lost The Ashes in England , and a number of Test players retired . The New South Wales Cricket Association began a hunt for new talent . Mindful of Bradman 's big scores for Bowral , the association wrote to him , requesting his attendance at a practice session in Sydney . He was subsequently chosen for the " Country Week " tournaments at both cricket and tennis , to be played during separate weeks . His boss presented him with an ultimatum : he could have only one week away from work , and therefore had to choose between the two sports . He chose cricket . Bradman 's performances during Country Week resulted in an invitation to play grade cricket in Sydney for St George in the 1926 ? 27 season . He scored 110 on his debut , making his first century on a turf wicket . On 1 January 1927 , he turned out for the NSW second team . For the remainder of the season , Bradman travelled the 130 kilometres (81 mi) from Bowral to Sydney every Saturday to play for St George .

= = First @-@ class debut = = =

The next season continued the rapid rise of the " Boy from Bowral " . Selected to replace the unfit Archie Jackson in the NSW team , Bradman made his first @-@ class debut at the Adelaide Oval , aged 19 . He secured the achievement of a hundred on debut , with an innings of 118 featuring what soon became his trademarks ? fast footwork , calm confidence and rapid scoring . In the final match of the season , he made his first century at the SCG , against the Sheffield Shield champions Victoria . Despite his potential , Bradman was not chosen for the Australian second team to tour New Zealand .

Bradman decided that his chances for Test selection would be improved by moving to Sydney for the 1928 ? 29 season , when England were to tour in defence of the Ashes . Initially , he continued working in real estate , but later took a promotions job with the sporting goods retailer Mick Simmons Ltd . In the first match of the Sheffield Shield season , he scored a century in each innings against Queensland . He followed this with scores of 87 and 132 not out against the England touring team , and was rewarded with selection for the first Test , to be played at Brisbane .

= = Test career = =

Playing in only his tenth first @-@ class match , Bradman , nicknamed " Braddles " by his teammates , found his initial Test a harsh learning experience . Caught on a sticky wicket , Australia were all out for 66 in the second innings and lost by 675 runs (still a Test record) . Following scores of 18 and 1 , the selectors dropped Bradman to twelfth man for the Second Test . An injury to Bill Ponsford early in the match required Bradman to field as substitute while England amassed 636 , following their 863 runs in the First Test . RS Whittington wrote , " ... he had scored only nineteen himself and these experiences appear to have provided him with food for thought " . Recalled for the Third Test at the Melbourne Cricket Ground , Bradman scored 79 and 112 to become the youngest player to make a Test century , although the match was still lost . Another loss followed in the Fourth Test . Bradman reached 58 in the second innings and appeared set to guide the team to victory when he was run out . It was to be the only run out of his Test career . The losing margin was just

12 runs .

The improving Australians did manage to win the Fifth and final Test . Bradman top @-@ scored with 123 in the first innings , and was at the wicket in the second innings when his captain Jack Ryder hit the winning runs . Bradman completed the season with 1 @,@ 690 first @-@ class runs , averaging 93 @.@ 88 , and his first multiple century in a Sheffield Shield match , 340 not out against Victoria , set a new ground record for the SCG . Bradman averaged 113 @.@ 28 in 1929 ? 30 . In a trial match to select the team that would tour England , he was last man out in the first innings for 124 . As his team followed on , the skipper Bill Woodfull asked Bradman to keep the pads on and open the second innings . By the end of play , he was 205 not out , on his way to 225 . Against Queensland at the SCG , Bradman set a then world record for first @-@ class cricket by scoring 452 not out ; he made his runs in only 415 minutes . Not long after the feat , he recalled :

On 434 ... I had a curious intuition ... I seemed to sense that the ball would be a short @-@ pitched one on the leg @-@ stump , and I could almost feel myself getting ready to make my shot before the ball was delivered . Sure enough , it pitched exactly where I had anticipated , and , hooking it to the square @-@ leg boundary , I established the only record upon which I had set my heart .

Although he was an obvious selection to tour England , Bradman 's unorthodox style raised doubts that he could succeed on the slower English pitches . Percy Fender wrote :

... he will always be in the category of the brilliant , if unsound , ones . Promise there is in Bradman in plenty , though watching him does not inspire one with any confidence that he desires to take the only course which will lead him to a fulfilment of that promise . He makes a mistake , then makes it again and again ; he does not correct it , or look as if he were trying to do so . He seems to live for the exuberance of the moment .

The encomiums were not confined to his batting gifts ; nor did the criticism extend to his character . " Australia has unearthed a champion , " raved former Australian Test great Clem Hill , " self @-@ taught , with natural ability . But most important of all , with his heart in the right place . " Selector Dick Jones weighed in with the observation that it was " good to watch him talking to an old player , listening attentively to everything that is said and then replying with a modest ' thank you ' . "

= = = 1930 tour of England = = =

England were favourites to win the 1930 Ashes series , and if the Australians were to exceed expectations , their young batsmen , Bradman and Jackson , needed to prosper . With his elegant batting technique , Jackson appeared the brighter prospect of the pair . However , Bradman began the tour with 236 at Worcester and went on to score 1 @,@ 000 first @-@ class runs by the end of May , the fifth player (and first Australian) to achieve this rare feat . In his first Test appearance in England , Bradman hit 131 in the second innings but England won the match . His batting reached a new level in the Second Test at Lord 's where he scored 254 as Australia won and levelled the series . Later in life , Bradman rated this the best innings of his career as , " practically without exception every ball went where it was intended to go " . Wisden noted his fast footwork and how he hit the ball " all round the wicket with power and accuracy " , as well as faultless concentration in keeping the ball on the ground .

In terms of runs scored , this performance was soon surpassed . In the Third Test , at Leeds , Bradman scored a century before lunch on 11 July , the first day of the Test match to equal the performances of Victor Trumper and Charlie Macartney . In the afternoon , Bradman added another century between lunch and tea , before finishing the day on 309 not out . He remains the only Test player to pass 300 in one day 's play . His eventual score of 334 was a world @-@ record , exceeding the previous mark of 325 by Andy Sandham . Bradman dominated the Australian innings ; the second @-@ highest tally was 77 by Alan Kippax . Businessman Arthur Whitelaw later presented Bradman with a cheque for £ 1 @,@ 000 in appreciation of his achievement . The match ended in anti @-@ climax as poor weather prevented a result , as it also did in the Fourth Test .

In the deciding Test at The Oval , England made 405 . During an innings stretching over three days due to intermittent rain , Bradman made yet another multiple century , this time 232 , which helped give Australia a big lead of 290 runs . In a crucial partnership with Archie Jackson , Bradman battled

through a difficult session when England fast bowler Harold Larwood bowled short on a pitch enlivened by the rain . Wisden gave this period of play only a passing mention :

On the Wednesday morning the ball flew about a good deal , both batsmen frequently being hit on the body ... on more than one occasion each player cocked the ball up dangerously but always , as it happened , just wide of the fieldsmen .

A number of English players and commentators noted Bradman 's discomfort in playing the short , rising delivery . The revelation came too late for this particular match , but was to have immense significance in the next Ashes series . Australia won the match by an innings and regained the Ashes . The victory made an impact in Australia . With the economy sliding toward depression and unemployment rapidly rising , the country found solace in sporting triumph . The story of a self @-@ taught 22 @-@ year @-@ old from the bush who set a series of records against the old rival made Bradman a national hero . The statistics Bradman achieved on the tour , and in the Test matches in particular , broke records for the day and some have stood the test of time . In all , Bradman scored 974 runs at an average of 139 @.@ 14 during the Test series , with four centuries , including two double hundreds and a triple . As of 2012 , no @-@ one has matched or exceeded 974 runs or three double centuries in one Test series ; the record of 974 runs exceeds the second @-@ best performance by 69 runs and was achieved in two fewer innings . Bradman 's first @-@ class tally , 2 @,@ 960 runs (at an average of 98 @.@ 66 with 10 centuries) , was another enduring record : the most by any overseas batsman on a tour of England .

On the tour , the dynamic nature of Bradman 's batting contrasted sharply with his quiet , solitary off @-@ field demeanour . He was described as aloof from his teammates and he did not offer to buy them a round of drinks , let alone share the money given to him by Whitelaw . Bradman spent a lot of his free time alone , writing , as he had sold the rights to a book . On his return to Australia , Bradman was surprised by the intensity of his reception ; he became a " reluctant hero " . Mick Simmons wanted to cash in on their employee 's newly won fame . They asked Bradman to leave his teammates and attend official receptions they organised in Adelaide , Melbourne , Goulburn , his hometown Bowral and Sydney , where he received a brand new custom @-@ built Chevrolet . At each stop , Bradman received a level of adulation that " embarrassed " him . This focus on individual accomplishment , in a team game , " ... permanently damaged relationships with his contemporaries " . Commenting on Australia 's victory , the team 's vice @-@ captain Vic Richardson said , " ... we could have played any team without Bradman , but we could not have played the blind school without Clarrie Grimmett " . A modest Bradman can be heard in a 1930 recording saying " I have always endeavoured to do my best for the side , and the few centuries that have come my way have been achieved in the hope of winning matches . My one idea when going into bat was to make runs for Australia . "

= = = Reluctant hero = = =

In 1930 ? 31 , against the first West Indian side to visit Australia , Bradman 's scoring was more sedate than in England ? although he did make 223 in 297 minutes in the Third Test at Brisbane and 152 in 154 minutes in the following Test at Melbourne . However , he scored quickly in a very successful sequence of innings against the South Africans in the Australian summer of 1931 ? 32 . For NSW against the tourists , he made 30 , 135 and 219 . In the Test matches , he scored 226 (277 minutes) , 112 (155 minutes) , 2 and 167 (183 minutes) ; his 299 not out in the Fourth Test , at Adelaide , set a new record for the highest score in a Test in Australia . Australia won nine of the ten Tests played over the two series .

At this point , Bradman had played 15 Test matches since the beginning of 1930 , scoring 2 @,@ 227 runs at an average of 131 . He had played 18 innings , scoring 10 centuries , six of which had extended beyond 200 . His overall scoring rate was 42 runs per hour , with 856 (or 38 @.@ 5 % of his tally) scored in boundaries . Significantly , he had not hit a six , which typified Bradman 's attitude : if he hit the ball along the ground , then it could not be caught . During this phase of his career , his youth and natural fitness allowed him to adopt a " machine @-@ like " approach to batting . The South African fast bowler Sandy Bell described bowling to him as , " heart @-@

breaking ... with his sort of cynical grin , which rather reminds one of the Sphinx ... he never seems to perspire " .

Between these two seasons , Bradman seriously contemplated playing professional cricket in England with the Lancashire League club Accrington , a move that , according to the rules of the day , would have ended his Test career . A consortium of three Sydney businesses offered an alternative . They devised a two @-@ year contract whereby Bradman wrote for Associated Newspapers , broadcast on Radio 2UE and promoted the menswear retailing chain FJ Palmer and Son . However , the contract increased Bradman 's dependence on his public profile , making it more difficult to maintain the privacy that he ardently desired .

Bradman 's chaotic wedding to Jessie Menzies in April 1932 epitomised these new and unwelcome intrusions into his private life . The church " was under siege all throughout the day ... uninvited guests stood on chairs and pews to get a better view " ; police erected barriers that were broken down and many of those invited could not get a seat . Just weeks later , Bradman joined a private team organised by Arthur Mailey to tour the United States and Canada . He travelled with his wife , and the couple treated the trip as a honeymoon . Playing 51 games in 75 days , Bradman scored 3 @, @ 779 runs at 102 @.@ 1 , with 18 centuries . Although the standard of play was not high , the effects of the amount of cricket Bradman had played in the three previous years , together with the strains of his celebrity status , began to show on his return home .

= = = Bodyline = = =

Within the Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC) , which administered English cricket at the time , few voices were more influential than " Plum " Warner 's , who , when considering England 's response to Bradman , wrote that it " must evolve a new type of bowler and develop fresh ideas and strange tactics to curb his almost uncanny skill " . To that end , Warner orchestrated the appointment of Douglas Jardine as England captain in 1931 , as a prelude to Jardine leading the 1932 ? 33 tour to Australia , with Warner as team manager . Remembering that Bradman had struggled against bouncers during his 232 at The Oval in 1930 , Jardine decided to combine traditional leg theory with short @-@ pitched bowling to combat Bradman . He settled on the Nottinghamshire fast bowlers Harold Larwood and Bill Voce as the spearheads for his tactics . In support , the England selectors chose another three pacemen for the squad . The unusually high number of fast bowlers caused a lot of comment in both countries and roused Bradman 's own suspicions .

Bradman had other problems to deal with at this time ; among these were bouts of illness from an undiagnosed malaise which had begun during the tour of North America , and that the Australian Board of Control had initially refused permission for him to write a column for the Sydney Sun . Bradman , who had signed a two @-@ year contract with the newspaper , threatened to withdraw from cricket to honour his contract when the board denied him permission to write ; eventually , the paper released Bradman from the contract , in a victory for the board . In three first @-@ class games against England before the Tests , Bradman averaged just 17 @.@ 16 in 6 innings . Jardine decided to give the new tactics a trial in only one game , a fixture against an Australian XI at Melbourne . In this match , Bradman faced the leg theory and later warned local administrators that trouble was brewing if it continued . He withdrew from the First Test at the Sydney Cricket Ground amid rumours that he had suffered a nervous breakdown . Despite his absence , England employed what were already becoming known as the Bodyline tactics against the Australian batsmen and won an ill @-@ tempered match .

The public clamoured for the return of Bradman to defeat Bodyline : " he was the batsman who could conquer this cankerous bowling ... ' Bradmania ' , amounting almost to religious fervour , demanded his return " . Recovered from his indisposition , Bradman returned to the side in Alan Kippax 's position . A world record crowd of 63 @, @ 993 at the MCG saw Bradman come to the crease on the first day of the Second Test with the score at 2 / 67 . A standing ovation ensued that delayed play for several minutes . Bradman anticipated receiving a bouncer as his first ball and , as the bowler delivered , he moved across his stumps to play the hook shot . The ball failed to rise and Bradman dragged it onto his stumps ; the first @-@ ball duck was his first in a Test . The crowd fell

into stunned silence as he walked off . However , Australia took a first innings lead in the match , and another record crowd on 2 January 1933 watched Bradman hit a counter @-@ attacking second innings century . His unbeaten 103 (from 146 balls) in a team total of 191 helped set England a target of 251 to win . Bill O 'Reilly and Bert Ironmonger bowled Australia to a series @-@ levelling victory amid hopes that Bodyline was beaten .

The Third Test at the Adelaide Oval proved pivotal . There were angry crowd scenes after the Australian captain Bill Woodfull and wicket @-@ keeper Bert Oldfield were hit by bouncers . An apologetic Plum Warner entered the Australian dressing room and was rebuked by Woodfull . Woodfull 's remarks (that " ... there are two teams out there and only one of them is playing cricket ") were leaked to the press , and Warner and others attributed this to Fingleton , however for many years (even after Fingleton 's death) a bitter war of accusation passed between Fingleton and Bradman as to who was the real source of the leak . In a cable to the MCC , the Australian Board of Control repeated the allegation of poor sportsmanship directed at Warner by Woodfull . With the support of the MCC , England continued with Bodyline despite Australian protests . The tourists won the last three Tests convincingly and regained the Ashes . Bradman caused controversy with his own tactics . Always seeking to score , and with the leg side packed with fielders , he often backed away and hit the ball into the vacant half of the outfield with unorthodox shots reminiscent of tennis or golf . This brought him 396 runs (at 56 @.@ 57) for the series and plaudits for attempting to find a solution to Bodyline , although his series average was just 57 % of his career mean . Jack Fingleton was in no doubt that Bradman 's game altered irrevocably as a consequence of Bodyline , writing :

Bodyline was specially prepared , nurtured for and expended on him and , in consequence , his technique underwent a change quicker than might have been the case with the passage of time . Bodyline plucked something vibrant from his art .

The constant glare of celebrity and the tribulations of the season forced Bradman to reappraise his life outside the game and to seek a career away from his cricketing fame . Harry Hodgetts , a South Australian delegate to the Board of Control , offered Bradman work as a stockbroker if he would relocate to Adelaide and captain South Australia (SA) . Unknown to the public , the SA Cricket Association (SACA) instigated Hodgetts ' approach and subsidised Bradman 's wage . Although his wife was hesitant about moving , Bradman eventually agreed to the deal in February 1934 .

= = = Declining health and a brush with death = = =

In his farewell season for NSW , Bradman averaged 132 @.@ 44 , his best yet . He was appointed vice @-@ captain for the 1934 tour of England . However , " he was unwell for much of the [English] summer , and reports in newspapers hinted that he was suffering from heart trouble " . Although he again started with a double century at Worcester , his famed concentration soon deserted him . Wisden wrote :

... there were many occasions on which he was out to wild strokes . Indeed at one period he created the impression that , to some extent , he had lost control of himself and went in to bat with an almost complete disregard for anything in the shape of a defensive stroke .

At one stage , Bradman went 13 first @-@ class innings without a century , the longest such spell of his career , prompting suggestions that Bodyline had eroded his confidence and altered his technique . After three Tests , the series was one ? one and Bradman had scored 133 runs in five innings . The Australians travelled to Sheffield and played a warm up game before the Fourth Test . Bradman started slowly and then , " ... the old Bradman [was] back with us , in the twinkling of an eye , almost " . He went on to make 140 , with the last 90 runs coming in just 45 minutes . On the opening day of the Fourth Test at Headingley (Leeds) , England were out for 200 , but Australia slumped to 3 / 39 , losing the third wicket from the last ball of the day . Listed to bat at number five , Bradman would start his innings the next day .

That evening , Bradman declined an invitation to dinner from Neville Cardus , telling the journalist that he wanted an early night because the team needed him to make a double century the next day . Cardus pointed out that his previous innings on the ground was 334 , and the law of averages was

against another such score . Bradman told Cardus , " I don 't believe in the law of averages " . In the event , Bradman batted all of the second day and into the third , putting on a then world record partnership of 388 with Bill Ponsford . When he was finally out for 304 (473 balls , 43 fours and 2 sixes) , Australia had a lead of 350 runs , but rain prevented them from forcing a victory . The effort of the lengthy innings stretched Bradman 's reserves of energy , and he did not play again until the Fifth Test at The Oval , the match that would decide the Ashes .

In the first innings at The Oval , Bradman and Ponsford recorded an even more massive partnership , this time 451 runs . It had taken them less than a month to break the record they had set at Headingley ; this new world record was to last 57 years . Bradman 's share of the stand was 244 from 271 balls , and the Australian total of 701 set up victory by 562 runs . For the fourth time in five series , the Ashes changed hands . England would not recover them again until after Bradman 's retirement .

Seemingly restored to full health , Bradman blazed two centuries in the last two games of the tour . However , when he returned to London to prepare for the trip home , he experienced severe abdominal pain . It took a doctor more than 24 hours to diagnose acute appendicitis and a surgeon operated immediately . Bradman lost a lot of blood during the four @-@ hour procedure and peritonitis set in . Penicillin and sulphonamides were still experimental treatments at this time ; peritonitis was usually a fatal condition . On 25 September , the hospital issued a statement that Bradman was struggling for his life and that blood donors were needed urgently .

" The effect of the announcement was little short of spectacular " . The hospital could not deal with the number of donors , and closed its switchboard in the face of the avalanche of telephone calls generated by the news . Journalists were asked by their editors to prepare obituaries . Teammate Bill O 'Reilly took a call from King George V 's secretary asking that the King be kept informed of the situation . Jessie Bradman started the month @-@ long journey to London as soon as she received the news . En route , she heard a rumour that her husband had died . A telephone call clarified the situation and by the time she reached London , Bradman had begun a slow recovery . He followed medical advice to convalesce , taking several months to return to Australia and missing the 1934 ? 35 Australian season .

= = = Internal politics and the Test captaincy = = =

There was off @-@ field intrigue in Australian cricket during the antipodean winter of 1935 . Australia , scheduled to make a tour of South Africa at the end of the year , needed to replace the retired Bill Woodfull as captain . The Board of Control wanted Bradman to lead the team , yet , on 8 August , the board announced Bradman 's withdrawal from the team due to a lack of fitness . Surprisingly , in the light of this announcement , Bradman led the South Australian team in a full programme of matches that season .

The captaincy was given to Vic Richardson , Bradman 's predecessor as South Australian captain . Cricket author Chris Harte 's analysis of the situation is that a prior (unspecified) commercial agreement forced Bradman to remain in Australia . Harte attributed an ulterior motive to his relocation : the off @-@ field behaviour of Richardson and other South Australian players had displeased the South Australia Cricket Association (SACA) , which was looking for new leadership . To help improve discipline , Bradman became a committeeman of the SACA , and a selector of the South Australian and Australian teams . He took his adopted state to its first Sheffield Shield title for 10 years , Bradman weighing in with personal contributions of 233 against Queensland and 357 against Victoria . He finished the season with 369 (in 233 minutes) , a South Australian record , made against Tasmania . The bowler who dismissed him , Reginald Townley , would later become leader of the Tasmanian Liberal Party .

Australia defeated South Africa 4 ? 0 and senior players such as Bill O 'Reilly were pointed in their comments about the enjoyment of playing under Richardson 's captaincy . A group of players who were openly hostile toward Bradman formed during the tour . For some , the prospect of playing under Bradman was daunting , as was the knowledge that he would additionally be sitting in judgement of their abilities in his role as a selector .

To start the new season , the Test side played a " Rest of Australia " team , captained by Bradman , at Sydney in early October 1936 . The Test XI suffered a big defeat , due to Bradman 's 212 and a haul of 12 wickets taken by leg @-@ spinner Frank Ward . Bradman let the members of the Test team know that despite their recent success , the team still required improvement . Shortly afterwards , Bradman 's first child was born on 28 October , but died the next day . He took time out of cricket for two weeks and on his return made 192 in three hours against Victoria in the last match before the beginning of the Ashes series .

The Test selectors made five changes to the team who had played in the previous Test match . Significantly , Australia 's most successful bowler Clarrie Grimmett was replaced by Ward , one of four players making their debut . Bradman 's role in Grimmett 's omission from the team was controversial and it became a theme that dogged Bradman as Grimmett continued to be prolific in domestic cricket while his successors were ineffective ? he was regarded as having finished the veteran bowler 's Test career in a political purge .

Australia fell to successive defeats in the opening two Tests , Bradman making two ducks in his four innings , and it seemed that the captaincy was affecting his form . The selectors made another four changes to the team for the Third Test at Melbourne .

Bradman won the toss on New Year 's Day 1937 , but again failed with the bat , scoring just 13 . The Australians could not take advantage of a pitch that favoured batting , and finished the day at 6 / 181 . On the second day , rain dramatically altered the course of the game . With the sun drying the pitch (in those days , covers could not be used during matches) Bradman declared to get England in to bat while the pitch was " sticky " ; England also declared to get Australia back in , conceding a lead of 124 . Bradman countered by reversing his batting order to protect his run @-@ makers while conditions improved . The ploy worked and Bradman went in at number seven . In an innings spread over three days , he battled influenza while scoring 270 off 375 balls , sharing a record partnership of 346 with Jack Fingleton , and Australia went on to victory . In 2001 , Wisden rated this performance as the best Test match innings of all time .

The next Test , at the Adelaide Oval , was fairly even until Bradman played another patient second innings , making 212 from 395 balls . Australia levelled the series when the erratic left @-@ arm spinner " Chuck " Fleetwood @-@ Smith bowled Australia to victory . In the series @-@ deciding Fifth Test , Bradman returned to a more aggressive style in top @-@ scoring with 169 (off 191 balls) in Australia 's 604 and Australia won by an innings . Australia 's achievement of winning a Test series after outright losses in the first two matches has never been repeated in Test cricket .

= = = End of an era = = =

During the 1938 tour of England , Bradman played the most consistent cricket of his career . He needed to score heavily as England had a strengthened batting line @-@ up , while the Australian bowling was over @-@ reliant on O 'Reilly . Grimmett was overlooked , but Jack Fingleton made the team , so the clique of anti @-@ Bradman players remained . Playing 26 innings on tour , Bradman recorded 13 centuries (a new Australian record) and again made 1 @, @ 000 first @-@ class runs before the end of May , becoming the only player to do so twice . In scoring 2 @, @ 429 runs , Bradman achieved the highest average ever recorded in an English season : 115 @. @ 66 .

In the First Test , England amassed a big first innings score and looked likely to win , but Stan McCabe made 232 for Australia , a performance Bradman rated as the best he had ever seen . With Australia forced to follow @-@ on , Bradman fought hard to ensure McCabe 's effort was not in vain , and he secured the draw with 144 not out . It was the slowest Test hundred of his career and he played a similar innings of 102 not out in the next Test as Australia struggled to another draw . Rain completely washed out the Third Test at Manchester .

Australia 's opportunity came at Headingley , a Test described by Bradman as the best he ever played in . England batted first and made 223 . During the Australian innings , Bradman backed himself by opting to bat on in poor light conditions , reasoning that Australia could score more runs in bad light on a good wicket than on a rain affected wicket in good light , when he had the option to go off . He scored 103 out of a total of 242 and the gamble paid off , as it meant there was sufficient

time to push for victory when an England collapse left them a target of only 107 to win . Australia slumped to 4 / 61 , with Bradman out for 16 . An approaching storm threatened to wash the game out , but the poor weather held off and Australia managed to secure the win , a victory that retained the Ashes . For the only time in his life , the tension of the occasion got to Bradman and he could not watch the closing stages of play , a reflection of the pressure that he felt all tour : he described the captaincy as " exhausting " and said he " found it difficult to keep going " .

The euphoria of securing the Ashes preceded Australia 's heaviest defeat . At The Oval , England amassed a world record of 7 / 903 and their opening batsman Len Hutton scored an individual world record , by making 364 . In an attempt to relieve the burden on his bowlers , Bradman took a rare turn at bowling . During his third over , he fractured his ankle and teammates carried him from the ground . With Bradman injured and Fingleton unable to bat because of a leg muscle strain , Australia were thrashed by an innings and 579 runs , which remains the largest margin in Test cricket history . Unfit to complete the tour , Bradman left the team in the hands of vice @-@ captain Stan McCabe . At this point , Bradman felt that the burden of captaincy would prevent him from touring England again , although he did not make his doubts public .

Despite the pressure of captaincy , Bradman 's batting form remained supreme . An experienced , mature player now commonly called " The Don " had replaced the blitzing style of his early days as the " Boy from Bowral " . In 1938 ? 39 , he led South Australia to the Sheffield Shield and made a century in six consecutive innings to equal CB Fry 's world record . Bradman totalled 21 first @-@ class centuries in 34 innings , from the beginning of the 1938 tour of England (including preliminary games in Australia) until early 1939 .

The next season , Bradman made an abortive bid to join the Victoria state side . The Melbourne Cricket Club advertised the position of club secretary and he was led to believe that if he applied , he would get the job . The position , which had been held by Hugh Trumble until his death in August 1938 , was one of the most prestigious jobs in Australian cricket . The annual salary of £ 1 @, @ 000 would make Bradman financially secure while allowing him to retain a connection with the game . On 18 January 1939 , the club 's committee , on the casting vote of the chairman , chose former Test batsman Vernon Ransford over Bradman .

The 1939 ? 40 season was Bradman 's most productive ever for SA : 1 @, @ 448 runs at an average of 144 @. @ 8 . He made three double centuries , including 251 not out against NSW , the innings that he rated the best he ever played in the Sheffield Shield , as he tamed Bill O 'Reilly at the height of his form . However , it was the end of an era . The outbreak of World War Two led to the indefinite postponement of all cricket tours , and the suspension of the Sheffield Shield competition .

= = = Troubled war years = = =

Bradman joined the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) on 28 June 1940 and was passed fit for air crew duty . The RAAF had more recruits than it could equip and train and Bradman spent four months in Adelaide before the Governor @-@ General of Australia , Lord Gowrie , persuaded Bradman to transfer to the army , a move that was criticised as a safer option for him . Given the rank of Lieutenant , he was posted to the Army School of Physical Training at Frankston , Victoria , to act as a divisional supervisor of physical training . The exertion of the job aggravated his chronic muscular problems , diagnosed as fibrositis . Surprisingly , in light of his batting prowess , a routine army test revealed that Bradman had poor eyesight .

Invalided out of service in June 1941 , Bradman spent months recuperating , unable even to shave himself or comb his hair due to the extent of the muscular pain he suffered . He resumed stockbroking during 1942 . In his biography of Bradman , Charles Williams expounded the theory that the physical problems were psychosomatic , induced by stress and possibly depression ; Bradman read the book 's manuscript and did not disagree . Had any cricket been played at this time , he would not have been available . Although he found some relief in 1945 when referred to the Melbourne masseur Ern Saunders , Bradman permanently lost the feeling in the thumb and index finger of his (dominant) right hand .

In June 1945 , Bradman faced a financial crisis when the firm of Harry Hodgetts collapsed due to fraud and embezzlement . Bradman moved quickly to set up his own business , utilising Hodgetts ' client list and his old office in Grenfell Street , Adelaide . The fallout led to a prison term for Hodgetts , and left a stigma attached to Bradman 's name in the city 's business community for many years .

However , the SA Cricket Association had no hesitation in appointing Bradman as their delegate to the Board of Control in place of Hodgetts . Now working alongside some of the men he had battled in the 1930s , Bradman quickly became a leading light in the administration of the game . With the resumption of international cricket , he was once more appointed a Test selector , and played a major role in planning for post @-@ war cricket .

= = = " The ghost of a once great cricketer " = = =

In 1945 ? 46 , Bradman suffered regular bouts of fibrositis while coming to terms with increased administrative duties and the establishment of his business . He played for South Australia in two matches to help with the re @-@ establishment of first @-@ class cricket and later described his batting as " painstaking " . Batting against the Australian Services cricket team , Bradman scored 112 in less than two hours , yet Dick Whittington (playing for the Services) wrote , " I have seen today the ghost of a once great cricketer " . Bradman declined a tour of New Zealand and spent the winter of 1946 wondering whether he had played his last match . " With the English team due to arrive for the 1946 ? 47 Ashes series , the media and the public were anxious to know if Bradman would lead Australia . " His doctor recommended against a return to the game . Encouraged by his wife , Bradman agreed to play in lead @-@ up fixtures to the Test series . After hitting two centuries , Bradman made himself available for the First Test at The Gabba .

Controversy emerged on the first day of the First Test at Brisbane . After compiling an uneasy 28 runs , Bradman hit a ball to the gully fieldsman , Jack Ikin . " An appeal for a catch was denied in the umpire 's contentious ruling that it was a bump ball " . At the end of the over , England captain Wally Hammond spoke with Bradman and criticised him for not " walking " ; " from then on the series was a cricketing war just when most people desired peace " , Whittington wrote . Bradman regained his finest pre @-@ war form in making 187 , followed by 234 during the Second Test at Sydney (Sid Barnes also scored 234 during the innings , many in a still standing 405 run 5th Wicket partnership with Bradman . Barnes later recalled that he purposely got out on 234 because " it wouldn 't be right for someone to make more runs than Bradman ") . Australia won both matches by an innings . Jack Fingleton speculated that had the decision at Brisbane gone against him , Bradman would have retired , such were his fitness problems . In the remainder of the series , Bradman made three half @-@ centuries in six innings , but was unable to make another century ; nevertheless , his team won handsomely , 3 ? 0 . He was the leading batsman on either side , with an average of 97 @.@ 14 . Nearly 850 @,@ 000 spectators watched the Tests , which helped lift public spirits after the war .

= = = Century of centuries and " The Invincibles " = = =

India made its first tour of Australia in the 1947 ? 48 season . On 15 November , Bradman made 172 against them for an Australian XI at Sydney , his 100th first @-@ class century . The first non @-@ Englishman to achieve the milestone , Bradman remains the only Australian to have done so . In five Tests , he scored 715 runs (at 178 @.@ 75 average) . His last double century (201) came at Adelaide , and he scored a century in each innings of the Melbourne Test . On the eve of the Fifth Test , he announced that the match would be his last in Australia , although he would tour England as a farewell .

Australia had assembled one of the great teams of cricket history . Bradman made it known that he wanted to go through the tour unbeaten , a feat never before accomplished . English spectators were drawn to the matches knowing that it would be their last opportunity to see Bradman in action . RC Robertson @-@ Glasgow observed of Bradman that :

Next to Mr. Winston Churchill , he was the most celebrated man in England during the summer of

1948 . His appearances throughout the country were like one continuous farewell matinée . At last his batting showed human fallibility . Often , especially at the start of the innings , he played where the ball wasn 't , and spectators rubbed their eyes .

Despite his waning powers , Bradman compiled 11 centuries on the tour , amassing 2 @, @ 428 runs (average 89 @.@ 92) . His highest score of the tour (187) came against Essex , when Australia compiled a world record of 721 runs in a day . In the Tests , he scored a century at Nottingham , but the performance most like his pre @-@ war exploits came in the Fourth Test at Leeds . England declared on the last morning of the game , setting Australia a world record 404 runs to win in only 345 minutes on a heavily worn wicket . In partnership with Arthur Morris (182) , Bradman reeled off 173 not out and the match was won with 15 minutes to spare . The journalist Ray Robinson called the victory " the ' finest ever ' in its conquest of seemingly insuperable odds " .

In the final Test at The Oval , Bradman walked out to bat in Australia 's first innings . He received a standing ovation from the crowd and three cheers from the opposition . His Test batting average stood at 101 @.@ 39 . Facing the wrist @-@ spin of Eric Hollies , Bradman pushed forward to the second ball that he faced , was deceived by a googly , and bowled between bat and pad for a duck . An England batting collapse resulted in an innings defeat , denying Bradman the opportunity to bat again and so his career average finished at 99 @.@ 94 ; if he had scored just four runs in his last innings , it would have been 100 . A story developed over the years that claimed Bradman missed the ball because of tears in his eyes , a claim Bradman denied for the rest of his life .

The Australian team won the Ashes 4 ? 0 , completed the tour unbeaten , and entered history as " The Invincibles " . Just as Bradman 's legend grew , rather than diminished , over the years , so too has the reputation of the 1948 team . For Bradman , it was the most personally fulfilling period of his playing days , as the divisiveness of the 1930s had passed . He wrote :

Knowing the personnel , I was confident that here at last was the great opportunity which I had longed for . A team of cricketers whose respect and loyalty were unquestioned , who would regard me in a fatherly sense and listen to my advice , follow my guidance and not question my handling of affairs ... there are no longer any fears that they will query the wisdom of what you do . The result is a sense of freedom to give full reign to your own creative ability and personal judgment .

With Bradman now retired from professional cricket , RC Robertson @-@ Glasgow wrote of the English reaction " ... a miracle has been removed from among us . So must ancient Italy have felt when she heard of the death of Hannibal " .

= = After cricket = =

After his return to Australia , Bradman played in his own Testimonial match at Melbourne , scoring his 117th and last century , and receiving £ 9 @, @ 342 in proceeds . In the 1949 New Year Honours , he was appointed Knight Bachelor for his services to the game , becoming the only Australian cricketer ever to be knighted . He commented that he " would have preferred to remain just Mister " . The following year he published a memoir , Farewell to Cricket . Bradman accepted offers from the Daily Mail to travel with , and write about , the 1953 and 1956 Australian teams in England . The Art of Cricket , his final book published in 1958 , is an instructional manual .

Bradman retired from his stockbroking business in June 1954 , depending on the " comfortable " income earned as a board member of 16 publicly listed companies . His highest profile affiliation was with Argo Investments Limited , where he was chairman for a number of years . Charles Williams commented that , " [b] usiness was excluded on medical grounds , [so] the only sensible alternative was a career in the administration of the game which he loved and to which he had given most of his active life " .

Bradman was honoured at a number of cricket grounds , notably when his portrait was hung in the Long Room at Lord 's ; until Shane Warne 's portrait was added in 2005 , Bradman was one of just three Australians to be honoured in this way . Bradman inaugurated a " Bradman Stand " at the Sydney Cricket Ground in January 1974 ; the Adelaide Oval also opened a Bradman Stand in 1990 , which housed new and much needed media facilities , as well as bar facilities and the South Australian Cricket Museum (the Adelaide Oval 's Bradman Stand was demolished in early 2013 as

the oval undergoes extensive re @-@ development) . Later in 1974 , he attended a Lord 's Taverners function in London where he experienced heart problems , which forced him to limit his public appearances to select occasions only . With his wife , Bradman returned to Bowral in 1976 , where the new cricket ground was named in his honour . He gave the keynote speech at the historic Centenary Test at Melbourne in 1977 .

On 16 June 1979 , the Australian government awarded Bradman the nation 's second @-@ highest civilian honour at that time , Companion of the Order of Australia (AC) , " in recognition of service to the sport of cricket and cricket administration " . In 1980 , he resigned from the ACB , to lead a more secluded life .

= = = Administrative career = = =

In addition to acting as one of South Australia 's delegates to the Board of Control from 1945 to 1980 , Bradman was a committee member of the SACA between 1935 and 1986 . It is estimated that he attended 1 @, @ 713 SACA meetings during this half century of service . Aside from two years in the early 1950s , he filled a selector 's berth for the Test team between 1936 and 1971 .

Cricket saw an increase in defensive play during the 1950s . As a selector , Bradman favoured attacking , positive cricketers who entertained the paying public . He formed an alliance with Australian captain Richie Benaud , seeking more attractive play , with some success . He served two high @-@ profile periods as chairman of the board of Control , in 1960 ? 63 and 1969 ? 72 . During the first , he dealt with the growing prevalence of illegal bowling actions in the game , a problem that he adjudged " the most complex I have known in cricket , because it is not a matter of fact but of opinion " . The major controversy of his second stint was a proposed tour of Australia by South Africa in 1971 ? 72 . On Bradman 's recommendation , the series was cancelled . Cricket journalist Michael Coward said of Bradman as an administrator :

Bradman was more than a cricket player nonpareil . He was ... an astute and progressive administrator ; an expansive thinker , philosopher and writer on the game . Indeed , in some respects , he was as powerful , persuasive and influential a figure off the ground as he was on it .

In the late 1970s , Bradman played an important role during the World Series Cricket schism as a member of a special Australian Cricket Board committee formed to handle the crisis . He was criticised for not airing an opinion , but he dealt with World Series Cricket far more pragmatically than other administrators . Richie Benaud described Bradman as " a brilliant administrator and businessman " , warning that he was not to be underestimated . As Australian captain , Ian Chappell fought with Bradman over the issue of player remuneration in the early 1970s and has suggested that Bradman was parsimonious :

I ... thought to myself , ' Ian , did you just ask Bradman to fill your wallet with money ? ' Bradman 's harangue confirmed my suspicions that the players were going to have a hard time extracting more money from the ACB .

= = = Later years and death = = =

After his wife 's death in 1997 , Bradman suffered " a discernible and not unexpected wilting of spirit " . The next year , on his 90th birthday , he hosted a meeting with his two favourite modern players , Shane Warne and Sachin Tendulkar , but he was not seen in his familiar place at the Adelaide Oval again . Hospitalised with pneumonia in December 2000 , he returned home in the New Year and died there on 25 February 2001 , aged 92 .

A memorial service to mark Bradman 's life was held on 25 March 2001 at St Peter 's Anglican Cathedral , Adelaide . The service was attended by a host of former and current Test cricketers , as well as Australia 's then prime minister , John Howard , leader of the opposition Kim Beazley and former prime minister Bob Hawke . Eulogies were given by Richie Benaud and Governor @-@ General Sir William Deane . The service was broadcast live on ABC Television to a viewing audience of 1 @. @ 45 million . A private service for family and friends was earlier held at the Centennial Park Cemetery in the suburb of Pasadena , with many people lining both Greenhill and

Goodwood Roads to pay their respects as his funeral motorcade passed by .

= = = Legacy = = =

Cricket writer David Frith summed up the paradox of the continuing fascination with Bradman :

As the years passed , with no lessening of his reclusiveness , so his public stature continued to grow , until the sense of reverence and unquestioning worship left many of his contemporaries scratching their heads in wondering admiration .

As early as 1939 , Bradman had a Royal Navy ship named after him . Built as a fishing trawler in 1936 , the HMS Bradman was taken over by the Admiralty in 1939 , but was sunk by German aircraft the following year .

In the 1963 edition of Wisden Cricketers ' Almanack , Bradman was selected by Neville Cardus as one the Six Giants of the Wisden Century . This was a special commemorative selection requested by Wisden for its 100th edition . The other five players chosen were : Sydney Barnes , W. G. Grace , Jack Hobbs , Tom Richardson and Victor Trumper .

On 10 December 1985 , Bradman was the first of 120 inaugural inductees into the Sport Australia Hall of Fame . He spoke of his philosophy for considering the stature of athletes :

When considering the stature of an athlete or for that matter any person , I set great store in certain qualities which I believe to be essential in addition to skill . They are that the person conducts his or her life with dignity , with integrity , courage , and perhaps most of all , with modesty . These virtues are totally compatible with pride , ambition , and competitiveness .

Although modest about his own abilities and generous in his praise of other cricketers , Bradman was fully aware of the talents he possessed as a player ; there is some evidence that he sought to influence his legacy . During the 1980s and 1990s , Bradman carefully selected the people to whom he gave interviews , assisting Michael Page , Roland Perry and Charles Williams , who all produced biographical works about him . Bradman also agreed to an extensive interview for ABC radio , broadcast as Bradman : The Don Declares in eight 55 @-@ minute episodes during 1988 .

The most significant of these legacy projects was the Bradman Museum , opened in 1989 at the Bradman Oval in Bowral . This organisation was reformed in 1993 as a non @-@ profit charitable Trust , called the Bradman Foundation . In 2010 , it was expanded and rebranded as the International Cricket Hall of Fame .

When the Australian Cricket Hall of Fame was created in Melbourne in 1996 , Bradman was made one of its 10 inaugural members . In 2000 , Bradman was selected by cricket experts as one of five Wisden Cricketers of the Century . Each of the 100 members of the panel were able to select five cricketers : all 100 voted for Bradman .

Bradman 's life and achievements were recognised in Australia with two notable issues . Three years before he died , he became the first living Australian to be featured on an Australian postage stamp . After his death , the Australian Government produced a 20 @-@ cent coin to commemorate his life .

= = = Family life = = =

Bradman first met Jessie Martha Menzies in 1920 when she boarded with the Bradman family , to be closer to school in Bowral . The couple married at St Paul 's Anglican Church at Burwood , Sydney on 30 April 1932 . During their 65 @-@ year marriage , Jessie was " shrewd , reliable , selfless , and above all , uncomplicated ... she was the perfect foil to his concentrated , and occasionally mercurial character " . Bradman paid tribute to his wife numerous times , once saying succinctly , " I would never have achieved what I achieved without Jessie " .

The Bradmans lived in the same modest , suburban house in Holden Street , Kensington Park in Adelaide for all but the first three years of their married life . They experienced personal tragedy in raising their children : their first @-@ born son died as an infant in 1936 , their second son , John (born in 1939) contracted polio , and their daughter , Shirley , born in 1941 , had cerebral palsy from birth . His family name proved a burden for John Bradman ; he legally changed his last name to

Bradman in 1972 . Although claims were made that he became estranged from his father , it was more a matter of " the pair inhabit [ing] different worlds " . After the cricketer 's death , a collection of personal letters written by Bradman to his close friend Rohan Rivett between 1953 and 1977 was released and gave researchers new insights into Bradman 's family life , including the strain between father and son .

Bradman 's reclusiveness in later life is partly attributable to the ongoing health problems of his wife , particularly following the open @-@ heart surgery Jessie underwent in her 60s . Lady Bradman died in 1997 , aged 88 , from cancer . This had a dispiriting effect on Bradman , but the relationship with his son improved , to the extent that John resolved to change his name back to Bradman . Since his father 's death , John Bradman has become the spokesperson for the family and has been involved in defending the Bradman legacy in a number of disputes . The relationship between Bradman and his wider family is less clear , although nine months after Bradman 's death , his nephew Paul Bradman criticised him as a " snob " and a " loner " who forgot his connections in Bowral and who failed to attend the funerals of Paul 's mother and father .

= = Style = =

Bradman 's early development was shaped by the high bounce of the ball on matting @-@ over @-@ concrete pitches . He favoured " horizontal @-@ bat " shots (such as the hook , pull and cut) to deal with the bounce and devised a unique grip on the bat handle that would accommodate these strokes without compromising his ability to defend . Employing a side @-@ on stance at the wicket , Bradman kept perfectly still as the bowler ran in . His backswing had a " crooked " look that troubled his early critics , but he resisted entreaties to change . His backswing kept his hands in close to the body , leaving him perfectly balanced and able to change his stroke mid @-@ swing , if need be . Another telling factor was the decisiveness of Bradman 's footwork . He " used the crease " by either coming metres down the wicket to drive , or playing so far back that his feet ended up level with the stumps when playing the cut , hook or pull .

Bradman 's game evolved with experience . He temporarily adapted his technique during the Bodyline series , deliberately moving around the crease in an attempt to score from the short @-@ pitched deliveries . At his peak , in the mid @-@ 1930s , he had the ability to switch between a defensive and attacking approach as the occasion demanded . After the Second World War , he adjusted to bat within the limitations set by his age , becoming a steady " accumulator " of runs . However , Bradman never truly mastered batting on sticky wickets . Wisden commented , " [i] f there really is a blemish on his amazing record it is ... the absence of a significant innings on one of those ' sticky dogs ' of old " .

= = In popular culture = =

Bradman 's name has become an archetypal name for outstanding excellence , both within cricket and in the wider world . The term Bradmanesque has been coined and is used both within and without cricketing circles . Steve Waugh described Sri Lankan Muttiah Muralitharan as " the Don Bradman of bowling " , while John Howard , former Prime Minister of Australia , was called " the Don Bradman of politics " by his Liberal Party colleague Joe Hockey . T. H. White describes Sir Lancelot as " being the greatest knight King Arthur had . He was a sort of Bradman , top of the battling averages . " .

Bradman has been the subject of more biographies than any other Australian , apart from the outlaw Ned Kelly . Bradman himself wrote four books : Don Bradman 's Book ? The Story of My Cricketing Life with Hints on Batting , Bowling and Fielding (1930) , My Cricketing Life (1938) , Farewell to Cricket (1950) and The Art of Cricket (1958) . The story of the Bodyline series was retold in a 1984 television mini @-@ series .

Bradman is immortalised in three popular songs from different eras , " Our Don Bradman " (1930s , by Jack O 'Hagan) , " Bradman " (1980s , by Paul Kelly) , and " Sir Don " , (a tribute by John Williamson performed at Bradman 's memorial service) . Bradman recorded several songs

accompanying himself and others on piano in the early 1930s , including " Every Day Is A Rainbow Day For Me " . In 2000 , the Australian Government made it illegal for the names of corporations to suggest a link to " Sir Donald Bradman " , if such a link does not in fact exist . Other entities with similar protection are the Australian and foreign governments , Saint Mary MacKillop , the British Royal Family and the Returned and Services League of Australia .

= = Statistical summary = =

= = = Test match performance = = =

= = = First @-@ class performance = = =

= = = Test records = = =

Bradman still holds the following significant records for Test match cricket :

Highest career batting average (minimum 20 innings) : 99 @.@ 94

Highest series batting average (4 or more Test series) : 201 @.@ 50 (1931 ? 32) and second highest 178 @.@ 75 (1947 ? 48)

Highest ratio of centuries per innings played : 36 @.@ 25 % (29 centuries from 80 innings)

Highest ratio of double centuries per innings played : 15 @.@ 0 % (12 double centuries from 80 innings)

Highest 5th wicket partnership : 405 (with Sid Barnes , 1946 ? 47)

Highest score by a number 7 batsman : 270 (1936 ? 37)

Most runs against one opponent : 5 @,@ 028 (v England)

Most runs in one series : 974 (1930)

Most times of scoring a century in a single session of play : 6 (1 pre lunch , 2 lunch @-@ tea , 3 tea @-@ stumps)

Most runs in one day 's play : 309 (1930)

Most double centuries : 12

Most double centuries in a series : 3 (1930)

Most triple centuries : 2 (equal with Chris Gayle , Brian Lara and Virender Sehwag)

Most consecutive matches in which he made a century : 6 (the last three Tests in 1936 ? 37 , and the first three Tests in 1938)

Fewest matches required to reach 1000 (7 matches) , 2000 (15 matches) , 3000 (23 matches) , 4000 (31 matches) , 5000 (36 matches) and 6000 (45 matches) Test runs .

Fewest innings required to reach 2000 (22 innings) , 3000 (33 innings) , 4000 (48 innings) , 5000 (56 innings) and 6000 (68 innings) Test runs .

= = = Cricket context = = =

Bradman 's Test batting average of 99 @.@ 94 has become one of cricket 's most famous , iconic statistics . No other player who has played more than 20 Test match innings has finished with a Test average of more than 61 . Bradman scored centuries at a rate better than one every three innings ? in 80 Test innings , Bradman scored 29 centuries . Only 11 players have since surpassed his total , all at a much slower rate : the next fastest player to reach 29 centuries , Sachin Tendulkar , required nearly twice as long (148 innings) to do so .

In addition , Bradman converted 41 % of his centuries into double centuries : his total of 12 Test double hundreds ? comprising 15 % of his innings ? remains the most achieved by any Test batsman and was accumulated faster than any other total .

For comparison , the next highest totals of Test double hundreds are Kumar Sangakkara 's 11 in

223 innings (4 @. @ 9 %) , Brian Lara 's 9 in 232 innings (3 @. @ 9 %) , and Wally Hammond 's 7 in 140 innings (5 %) ; the next highest rate of scoring Test double centuries was achieved by Vinod Kambli , whose 21 innings included 2 double centuries (9 @. @ 5 %) .

= = = World sport context = = =

Wisden hailed Bradman as , " the greatest phenomenon in the history of cricket , indeed in the history of all ball games " . Statistician Charles Davis analysed the statistics for several prominent sportsmen by comparing the number of standard deviations that they stand above the mean for their sport . The top performers in his selected sports are :

The statistics show that " no other athlete dominates an international sport to the extent that Bradman does cricket " . In order to post a similarly dominant career statistic as Bradman , a baseball batter would need a career batting average of .392 , while a basketball player would need to score an average of 43 @. @ 0 points per game . The respective records are .366 and 30 @. @ 1

When Bradman died , Time allocated a space in its " Milestones " column for an obituary :

... Australian icon considered by many to be the pre @-@ eminent sportsman of all time ... One of Australia 's most beloved heroes , he was revered abroad as well . When Nelson Mandela was released after 27 years in prison , his first question to an Australian visitor was , " Is Sir Donald Bradman still alive ? "