

= Keith Miller =

Keith Ross Miller , AM MBE (28 November 1919 ? 11 October 2004) was an Australian test cricketer and a Royal Australian Air Force pilot during World War II . Miller is widely regarded as Australia 's greatest ever all @-@ rounder . Because of his ability , irreverent manner and good looks he was a crowd favourite . English journalist Ian Wooldridge called Miller " the golden boy " of cricket , leading to his being nicknamed " Nugget " . He " was more than a cricketer ... he embodied the idea that there was more to life than cricket " .

A member of the record @-@ breaking Invincibles , at the time of his retirement from Test cricket in 1956 , Miller had the best statistics of any all @-@ rounder in cricket history . He often batted high in the order , sometimes as high as number three . He was a powerful striker of the ball , and one straight six that he hit at the Sydney Cricket Ground was still rising when it hit the upper deck of the grandstand . Miller was famous for varying his bowling to bemuse batsmen : he made sparing use of slower deliveries and would often adjust his run @-@ up , surprisingly bowling his fastest deliveries from a short run . He was also a fine fielder and an especially acrobatic catcher in the slips .

Away from cricket , Miller was also a successful Australian rules footballer . He played for St Kilda and was selected to represent the Victorian state team . He played 50 games for St Kilda , for whom he kicked eight goals in one game against North Melbourne , during 1941 .

Miller 's personality ? love of the contest , rather than victory , and his larger @-@ than @-@ life rebelliousness and carousing ? helped both shape and limit his cricketing career , as he espoused the opposite of the more puritanical values of Donald Bradman , his captain and later national selector . Neville Cardus referred to Miller as " the Australian in excelsis " ; Daily Mail sportswriter Ian Wooldridge 's response was " By God he was right " . This status was reflected when Miller was made one of the ten inaugural members of the Australian Cricket Hall of Fame .

= = Early years = =

Born in the western Melbourne suburb of Sunshine , Miller was the youngest of Leslie and Edith Miller 's four children . He was named after the Australian pioneer aviator brothers Keith and Ross Smith , who were half @-@ way through their historic flight from England to Australia at the time Miller was born . The three Miller boys played Australian rules football in winter and cricket in summer . Their father had been a successful local cricketer and taught the boys to play with an orthodox and classical technique , relying on a solid defence and concentration in the mould of Bill Ponsford . At the age of seven , Miller 's family moved to Elsternwick , in Melbourne 's south east . As a child , Miller was small for his age , which forced him to develop his technique rather than rely on power , something that held him in good stead for the future .

At the age of 12 , he was selected for an under @-@ 15 Victorian schoolboys cricket team . At the time , he stood only 150 centimetres (4 @-@ 9 ft) tall and wielded a sawn @-@ off bat . He lacked power , but impressed with his footwork and style . However , Miller reasoned that , as he appeared destined to be short , a career as a jockey was more likely than one as a cricketer or footballer .

Miller attended the selective Melbourne High School , where Australian test captain Bill Woodfull was his mathematics teacher . Miller was a mediocre student , which disappointed Woodfull ; however , Woodfull quickly noticed Miller 's cricket skills . Aged 14 , Miller was selected for the school 's first XI , scoring 44 . His control and solidity prompted the spectators to call him The Unbowable ? Woodfull 's own nickname . In 1934 , Miller failed all of his subjects , scoring zero in his final exam for Woodfull 's geometry class , and was forced to repeat the year .

Keith Truscott , Miller 's school cricket captain took him to a trial with local club side St Kilda at the start of the 1934 ? 35 season , but Miller could not find a place in any of its five teams . Joining the local sub @-@ district cricket club Elsternwick instead , he did not get to bat or bowl in his first match , and was dropped to the second XI for his poor fielding . Nevertheless , his team @-@ mate , former Victoria state player Hughie Carroll , spotted Miller 's talent and lured him to the rival South Melbourne club . Miller began playing for South Melbourne the following season . It was at South Melbourne that Miller met Ian Johnson and Lindsay Hassett , his future Australia captains . Miller

scored 12 not out on debut , but observers felt he would succeed with a stronger physique ; Woodfull wrote in the 1936 school magazine , " Miller has Test possibilities " .

In March 1936 , Miller played for South Melbourne against Carlton , captained by Woodfull . Miller came to the crease at 6 / 32 . He guided his team to 141 , putting on a stand of 65 with the last man and finishing with 61 . The crowd gave Miller a standing ovation , and newspapers him compared him to Ponsford and Alan Kippax . The Carlton team presented him with a silver eggcup , " for sterling performance " , which Woodfull presented to Miller during an algebra class .

= = Debuts in Sheffield Shield and Victorian Football League = =

During 1936 , Miller underwent a sudden growth spurt , of 28 centimetres (11 @. @ 0 in) in the year , reaching 185 centimetres (6 @. @ 1 ft) in height . This thwarted his career as a jockey . With his increased height and weight , he began to play football with more physical aggression . At the end of 1936 , he completed year 10 and quit high school , taking a position as a clerk .

For the 1937 ? 38 cricket season , Miller transferred to the VCA Colts , where he won the team 's batting trophy for having the best average . At this stage , his method of playing was slow and steady accumulation of runs . Late in the summer , he made his first @-@ class debut for Victoria and hit 181 against Tasmania at the Melbourne Cricket Ground . In 1938 ? 39 , he rejoined South Melbourne and also played four further matches for Victoria , scoring 125 runs at an average of 25 @. @ 00 . However , he was yet to play in the Sheffield Shield competition , having appeared only in one @-@ off matches .

During this period , Miller achieved more success as a footballer , following his brothers in joining the Brighton Football Club in the Victorian Football Association (VFA) in 1937 . A defender , Miller initially played on the half @-@ back flank before moving to full back during his third season , in 1939 . At this stage , he lacked the strength to hip and shoulder his opponents and relied on his running ability and accurate kicking .

Miller finally made his breakthrough in cricket in 1939 ? 40 , when he was selected to make his Sheffield Shield debut , against South Australia at the Adelaide Oval . He managed just four and seven , batting at number five in the order . When Victoria fielded , Miller ran out his future Invincibles captain Don Bradman . One of Miller 's teammates was Percy Beames , who was also his manager at Vacuum Oil . Miller scored 41 and 47 not out in his second match to hold his place . However , against New South Wales , Miller made a pair of 14s , having difficulties against leg spin . In the return match against South Australia , Miller took the initiative against leg @-@ spinner Clarrie Grimmett , aggressively advancing down the pitch and driving . Miller reached 108 , his first century in Shield competition . Apart from the century , Miller had a moderate season , ending with 298 runs at 29 @. @ 80 .

In the Australian winter of 1940 , Miller started his fourth season in the VFA . In a match against Coburg , he was assigned to nullify the greatest forward of the era , Bob Pratt . Miller restricted Pratt to just one goal for the match and was named best on ground . Scouts from top @-@ tier Victorian Football League (VFL) club St Kilda signed Miller on the spot . In a match for St Kilda against Carlton , Miller was king hit by his opponent Ron Cooper at the start of the match . When the teams next met , Miller shoulder bumped Cooper in the first minute , forcing him to leave the field . St Kilda finished second @-@ last that season .

= = War service = =

Miller 's sporting career was interrupted by World War II . On 20 August 1940 , he joined the Militia (army reserve) , and was assigned to the 4th Reserve Motor Transport Company . In late September , Miller began his training . A non @-@ conformist , he had the first of many clashes with authority in November , when he was fined for " using insulting language to a superior officer " . Miller soon lived up to the traditional nickname of Dusty , for anyone called Miller , with his tendency to be involved in fist fights and his rambunctious persona .

During the summer of 1940 ? 41 , Miller was granted leave so that he could play interstate cricket .

In a war @-@ shortened season , Miller scored 140 runs at 28 @.@ 00 and took his maiden first @-@ class wicket . The 1941 VFL season also went ahead . Miller played in defence and attack , depending on match conditions . In 16 games , he kicked 28 goals , including eight in one match . He again showed his disrespect for authority and reputation , striking his boss Beames ? who played for Melbourne ? with a raised elbow at the start of a match . Miller came second in St Kilda 's best and fairest for the season .

Miller 's season ended early when he was recalled to duty . However , he had continued disciplinary problems , and left the Militia on 8 November 1941 . Miller and a friend then attempted to join the Royal Australian Navy . When the navy rejected his friend , Miller tore up his own paperwork , left the recruiting office , and walked around the corner to the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) recruiting office , where he enlisted .

Less than two months after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in December 1941 , Miller was called to active service . He trained at No. 4 Initial Training School , Victor Harbor in South Australia , and gained his wings in late 1942 . He played only one match during the 1942 football season , while posted in South Australia . In December , he was promoted to the rank of flight sergeant and , a month later , he sailed to Europe . The journey included a stopover at a training camp in Boston in the United States , where Miller met his future wife Peg Wagner . In March , he was deployed to Bournemouth , in England , where he continued his training .

Miller was invited to join a RAAF team in London . The team was officially formed in preparation for the 1943 season and Miller 's selection let to the first of many brushes with death : in April , while away with the team , some of his comrades were killed in a German air strike . Miller played his first match at Lord 's against Warner 's XI , a team that featured past , current and future England players , including Bob Wyatt , Gubby Allen , Trevor Bailey and Alec Bedser . Miller top @-@ scored in the first innings with 45 and added 21 not out , with two sixes , in the second innings . The RAAF played eight matches that season and Miller 's top score was 141 against Public School Wanderers . He went on to play for Dominions against Warner 's XI in August , scoring 32 and two . The match marked the first meeting between Miller and his good friend , England batsman Denis Compton and his bowling began to attract media attention . In the final match of the season at Lord 's between the RAAF and the Royal Air Force , Miller took 3 / 23 and scored 91 . The success of RAAF and Dominions that season , especially the attractive batting by Miller and Keith Carmody , prompted Warner to begin planning for a " Test " series between the respective armed services of England and Australia .

By late 1943 , Miller was based in Gloucestershire . One night , he threatened to punch his commanding officer , resulting in his being sentenced for insubordination to a three @-@ week disciplinary course with hard labour . In mid @-@ November , he was posted to Ouston near Newcastle @-@ upon @-@ Tyne where he trained in the used of radar . During his stay there , Miller sustained a back injury during a wrestling match : the injury was to cause him recurring and enduring problems , particularly diminishing his ability to bowl .

In 1944 , Miller was again selected for the RAAF team . In a match against the British Civil Defence Services at Lord 's in July , Miller reached his century just as a V @-@ 1 flying bomb landed nearby . In a match against an England XI , Miller scored 85 in 100 minutes . He then took match figures of 6 / 28 against the West of England at Bristol .

After ten months of training , Miller was offered a commission as a pilot officer , and was posted to 12 Advanced Flying Unit in Grantham , Lincolnshire on 15 August 1944 , then moving on to Cranfield , Bedfordshire . On a trip back to Ouston to visit former comrades , a night of drunken revelry saw Miller charged with eight offences and facing possible dishonourable discharge . Luckily for Miller , his new Commanding Officer (CO) was his old CO from Ouston ; Miller escaped with a fine .

While training , Miller flew Beauforts , Beaufighters and Mosquitos . He had another near death experience : mechanical problems forced him to make an emergency landing of his Beaufighter . The plane was repaired for use by others , but , on its next flight , the pilot was killed when the problem recurred . On another occasion , Miller avoided colliding with a hangar by centimetres . He then escaped death by skipping a social appointment ; a V1 bomb hit the venue and killed many of

the patrons . In October , he went AWL to watch a concert and was summarily discharged , but the CO revoked his decision after Miller agreed to play for his cricket team . At the end of his officer training , Miller was sent aboard a Royal Navy destroyer as part of an exchange program between the forces . During a mission to Belgium , the vessel fought a German U @-@ boat , which was sunk . Upon his return to England , Miller was promoted to flying officer on 4 November 1944 .

In March 1945 , Miller was deployed to the RAF station at Great Massingham in Norfolk , East Anglia . He was assigned to 169 Squadron , flying Mosquito fighter @-@ bombers . Miller 's squadron took part in missions against targets on mainland Europe in April and May 1945 . They attacked V @-@ 1 and V @-@ 2 production and test launch sites on the island of Peenemünde in the North Sea . On 19 April , Miller took part in an attack on a German installation at Flensburg in Denmark . In May , his squadron was deployed in Operation Fire Bash , to attack Westerland Airfield on the island of Sylt . One of Miller 's bombs failed to release and the load dangled from a wing . Miller was obliged to land the plane with the bomb still attached ; fortunately for him , it failed to detonate . Miller 's next mission was delayed by poor weather , by which time Germany had surrendered . His commanding officer ordered him to fly air force personnel over Germany to view the results of Allied bombing . On one flight , Miller broke away from the flying formation and returned to base late because he wanted to fly over Bonn , the birthplace of Beethoven .

Miller 's wartime exploits were to give him a greater sense of perspective when he returned to the sports field . When asked many years later by Michael Parkinson , about pressure in cricket , Miller responded with the famous quote : " pressure is a Messerschmitt up your arse , playing cricket is not " .

= = = Victory Tests = = =

The end of the war prompted the belated start of the 1945 cricket season . Miller returned to Lord 's and scored 50 for the RAAF against a British Empire XI . Warner had organised a celebratory series of matches between England and Australian servicemen , known as the Victory Tests . However , Australian cricket administrators would not accredit the three @-@ day matches as Tests . England was close to full strength , so the Second Australian Imperial Force and the RAAF teams merged to form the Australian Services cricket team under the leadership of Warrant Officer Hassett . The First Victory Test was at Lord 's and was expected to usher in a new post @-@ war era , which cricket watchers hoped would be more attractive to watch . England batted first and Miller bowled his Great Massingham colleague Bill Edrich to end with 1 / 11 and precipitate an English collapse . Miller came to the crease at and helped Australia take the lead , before cutting loose , eventually finishing with 105 in 210 minutes . The Times opined that his innings was " as good a century as has been seen at Lord 's in many a long day " . Australia went on to win by six wickets .

Miller warmed up for the Second Victory Test by top @-@ scoring for the RAAF against Lancashire and the RAF . In the Test , played at Bramall Lane , Miller went wicketless and scored 17 in the first innings . In the second innings , Miller bowled a fierce spell , hitting Test world record holder Len Hutton and Cyril Washbrook on the arm and head respectively , provoking an angry crowd reaction . At the time , Miller had a leisurely attitude towards bowling , so his success led to calls for him to start taking it seriously , instead of simply jogging in and releasing the ball . Despite this , Australia lost the match .

In the meantime , Miller earned the further ire of his CO by flying unauthorised leisure flights . Not wanting to fly four flights over Germany , Miller lodged bogus reports saying that the Mosquitoes were malfunctioning , causing unnecessary maintenance work . Thus , the CO ordered Miller to take his plane instead , which caught fire . With one functional engine , Miller came back to the air base and bellylanded . The plane broke apart and caught fire , but Miller escaped physical injury and was playing sport an hour later .

The next day , Miller headed to Lord 's to play for the RAAF against the South of England . Chasing 208 , Miller scored an unbeaten 78 in 95 minutes , but rain washed out the match . In the first innings of Third Victory Test at Lord 's , when finally called upon to bowl , Miller measured out a run @-@ up and removed John Dewes , Donald Carr and Hutton , all bowled . He ended with 3 / 44 .

Miller was rewarded with the new ball in the second innings . He removed Dewes , Edrich and Dick Pollard to end with 3 / 42 . This left Australia a target of 225 . Miller saw Australia to the target , unbeaten on 71 . In the Fourth Test , again at Lord 's , Miller scored 118 in the first innings , before an unbeaten 25 in the second innings ensured a draw . The tremendous public reception of the Victory Tests resulted in a fifth match being added to the schedule .

In the meantime Japan had surrendered , and No. 169 Squadron was disbanded . Miller had spent around 550 hours in the air with the RAF , to which his RAAF unit had been seconded . He was awarded the 1939 - 45 Star , France and Germany Star , Defence Medal , War Medal 1939 - 1945 and Australia Service Medal 1939 - 45 .

In the Fifth Victory Test , under overcast conditions against a swinging and seaming ball , Miller struck 14 from his first over and finished 77 not out , in a display that featured strong cutting and driving . Australia could manage only 173 , and England were on top . Miller took one wicket with the ball but managed only four in the second innings as England won , to square the series 2 - 2 . Hassett wrote at the end of the series that " This is cricket as it should be ... let 's have no more talk of " war " in cricket " . Miller topped the batting averages for the series , with 443 runs at 63 @. 28 . His aggregate exceeded those of Hammond and Hutton , and he also took 10 wickets at 27 @. 70 . Of Miller 's batting , Hassett said that " as a strokeplayer he is second to none " , and his performance earned comparisons to Jack Gregory , who had a similar breakthrough after World War I.

The last big match of the season was a one - day off match at Lord 's between England and " Dominions " , a scratch team of players from the British Commonwealth . Miller managed 26 in the Dominions ' first innings of 307 , before cutting loose in the second innings . After settling in , he hit Eric Hollies for two sixes , including one that hit the top of the roof . The next day , he registered his century in 115 minutes , clouting another five balls over the boundary in the morning session . In one 35 - minute passage of play , he and Learie Constantine added 91 runs , before Miller departed for 185 , made in just 165 minutes . The Dominions went on to win by 45 runs in a match described by Wisden as " one of the finest ever seen " . Commenting on Miller 's innings , Robertson @ Glasgow said " From the moment he takes guard he plays each ball just that much below its supposed merits that scratches a bowler 's pride " . Miller had enjoyed his visit to the home of cricket . In eight innings at Lord 's for the season , he had scored 568 runs at 94 @. 68 , with three centuries .

The season ended with a few more matches against English counties . Miller struck aggressive half - centuries in wins against Nottinghamshire and Leveson - Gower 's XI . In first - class matches , Miller had scored 725 runs at 72 @. 50 for the season , finishing second in both averages and aggregates . The success of the Australian Services prompted a fundraising tour of India and Ceylon on their return to Australia .

= = = Services tour of India = = =

Miller , the vice - captain , almost missed the trip to India after turning up late for the voyage . On arrival in India , Miller scored 46 in a draw against North Zone . Miller then captained the Australians in a match against West Zone in Bombay , top - scoring with 106 in a high - scoring draw . In a match against India , Miller took two wickets . At this point , with most of the team suffering from dysentery and the leadership not permitting the team to travel by air , some of the RAAF personnel felt that Hassett should be removed from the captaincy , with Miller as one of the candidates to replace him . This would have increased his prospects of leading Australia . Miller refused to plot against Hassett and the dispute ended when a RAAF plane was acquired to transport the team .

The team played East Zone in Calcutta as the city was in the grip of deadly pro - independence riots . Miller 's friend Denis Compton was batting for East Zone when rioters invaded the pitch . Their leader ran up to Compton and said : " Mr Compton , you very good player , but you must stop " . In later years , whenever Miller opposed Compton , he would quote this remark when Compton came to the crease . In 2005 , the ECB and Cricket Australia decided that the player adjudged the Player

of the Series in the Ashes would be awarded the Compton ? Miller Medal , recognising their friendship and rivalry .

In the second match against India , Services were 2 / 250 in response to India 's 386 when Miller came in and scored 82 , including four sixes in five balls . The match ended in a draw and Miller aggravating an injury . Miller took 3 / 19 against South Zone in Madras , the Australians ' only win in India . He failed with the bat in the third and final match against India , scoring two and seven , but he took 2 / 60 in the first innings as India took the series 1 ? 0 . Overall , Miller had a disappointing series in the international matches , with 107 runs at 26 @. @ 25 and four wickets at 40 @. @ 50 . Australia 's final match was in Colombo against an All Ceylon team . Miller scored 132 as Australia won by an innings .

= = = Services in Australia = = =

Upon returning to Australia , Hassett 's men were assigned to play a further six first @-@ class matches against the state teams . The fixtures were meant to revive cricket and were also used as a lead @-@ up to the international tour to New Zealand in March 1946 . Miller started his campaign with 80 against Western Australia . He finally returned to Melbourne in January , before taking on Victoria . Miller top @-@ scored in both innings with 37 and 59 in an innings defeat .

Miller had another difficult time against New South Wales , as the state side made 7 / 551 and Miller went wicketless . When the servicemen batted , they faced an attack featuring leading leg spinner Bill O 'Reilly and paceman Ray Lindwall , the fastest in Australia . Miller was on 74 as Services limped to 9 / 171 . With only one partner left , Miller attacked , scoring 31 of the last 33 runs to end unbeaten on 105 , and earning plaudits among cricket pundits on Australian soil . Former leading Test batsman Alan Kippax opined that " Australia has unearthed a new champion " , while O 'Reilly said that Miller 's century was " one of the best hundreds ever got against me " . Miller compiled 46 in the second innings as the Servicemen fell to another innings defeat . Miller finished the season with 4 / 49 against Queensland and a pair of fifties against Tasmania .

= = Test career = =

= = = Test debut = = =

At the end of the season , Miller was selected for the New Zealand tour , under the captaincy of Queensland 's Bill Brown . Miller started the tour well , top @-@ scoring with 139 against Auckland . Along with seven other debutants , Miller made his test debut in the match against New Zealand at the Basin Reserve in Wellington , a match that was retrospectively accorded Test status in 1948 . On a sticky wicket , New Zealand won the toss and batted . Miller was not required to bowl in the first innings as O 'Reilly and Ernie Toshack skittled the home side for just 42 . Australia made 8 / 199 with Miller scoring 30 . He was allowed to take the new ball in the second innings , taking 2 / 6 in six overs before a flare @-@ up of his back injury forced him to be removed from the attack . Australia bowled their hosts out for 54 , securing an innings victory .

Despite the scare over his back complaint , Miller returned from New Zealand to play in the 1946 season , which turned out to be his last season in the VFL ; St Kilda 's finished second @-@ last . Miller played with more aggression than during his pre @-@ war years and his high leaping marks were a noted feature of a season that saw him chosen to represent Victoria against South Australia . Miller thus became one of the few players to play at the highest levels of both cricket and Australian rules football .

Miller was discharged from the RAAF on 26 June 1946 , and returned to his job at Vacuum Oil . Miller resented the fact that many of his colleagues had avoided the hazards of war and moved steadily up the ladder and regarded his job as demeaning . Under such circumstances , Miller contemplated quitting Australian cricket and accepting a professional contract with Rawtenstall in the Lancashire League , valued at £ 1 @, @ 000 per year , for three seasons . With advertising and

commercial commitments likely to triple this figure , playing in England would have been approximately ten times more lucrative than continuing in Australia . However , Miller was worried that his impulsive style would be curtailed by the pressures of professionalism . At that time , the Board of Control 's policy stipulated that any player that signed with a professional league in England could not represent Australia . Miller 's contract would see him in England until he was 30 , effectively ending his career for Australia . Furthermore , it would have prevented him from playing Australian football during the winter . Miller weighed it up and opted to sign the contract that tied him to Rawtenstall , with his duties to start with the onset of the English season in April 1947 .

In the meantime , Miller had the upcoming Test series against England in 1946 ? 47 to look forward to . He therefore approached his employers for two months leave so that he could travel to the United States to marry Wagner , which would allow him time to return in preparation for the international series . Vacuum Oil refused , so , with the comfort of job security in England , Miller resigned .

Miller left Australia at the end of the football season in late August , amid press speculation that he might not return . He was reunited in Boston with Wagner after more than three years of separation and they married on 21 September 1946 . Miller and his new bride returned to Australia in November . In the meantime , his contract with Rawtenstall became public knowledge and he was threatened with his Test career being terminated if he began playing for the English team .

= = = First Ashes series = = =

Miller 's season started amid ongoing speculation about whether he would fulfil his contract with Rawtenstall . Miller remained silent . In a Shield match in front of Bradman at the Adelaide Oval , Miller struck form with 188 and 2 / 32 with the ball . Wisden said Miller 's innings was " one of the finest batting displays ever seen at Adelaide " . Bradman saw Miller as a top @-@ order batsman and as the new ball partner for Lindwall . Although Miller was a reluctant bowler , Bradman felt that he was crucial to his strategy of attacking England 's strong batting line @-@ up with express pace .

Miller made his Ashes debut in the First Test in Brisbane . Bradman opted for six front @-@ line bowlers , with Miller as high as number five in the batting order . Australia batted first , with Miller coming in at 3 / 322 . He played aggressively to reach his fifty in just 80 minutes , striking a six onto the roof of the members ' stand at long on , the biggest hit at the ground at the time , before being trapped leg before wicket by Doug Wright for 79 as Australia made 645 . Miller was given the new ball along with Lindwall and he took his first Ashes wicket , bowling Hutton as England closed at 1 / 21 . The following day , the pitch had turned into a sticky wicket following a heavy tropical storm . Miller bowled off breaks at medium pace and mixed in a large amount of bouncers . On the unpredictable surface , Edrich was struck around 40 times on the body . Miller cut through the English top order , removing Edrich , Washbrook , Compton and Jack Ikin on the fourth morning , finishing with 7 / 60 as England made 141 and were forced to follow on . Miller took two wickets , including the dismissal of Hutton with first ball of the second innings as England fell to defeat by an innings and 334 runs and Miller had match figures of 9 / 77 .

During that first Test , an incident occurred , coloured by Miller 's wartime service , that soured his relationship with Bradman and his feelings towards Test cricket . Michael Parkinson described it as follows :

Keith Miller was deeply affected by the Second World War . It changed him ... In the first post @-@ war Ashes Test ... England were caught on a sticky ... [and] Bill Edrich came in . He 'd had a serious war and he survived and Miller thought , ' He 's my old Services mate . The last thing he wants after five years ' war is to be flattened by a cricket ball , so I eased up . Bradman came up to me and said , ' Don 't slow down , Keith . Bowl quicker . ' That remark put me off Test cricket . Never felt the same way about it after that.'

In the Second Test in Sydney . Miller had a quiet match , scoring 40 and taking one wicket on a spin @-@ friendly pitch as Australia secured another innings victory , but showed he was in prime batting form when he returned to the Sheffield Shield . Playing against New South Wales , he

hammered three sixes in one over and made 153 of a 271 @-@ run partnership with Merv Harvey in just over three hours , setting up an innings victory . Bill Ponsford said that it was the hardest hitting he had ever seen . The Third Test was Miller 's first in his home town . He had a mediocre game in a drawn match , scoring 33 and 34 , and taking two wickets .

Off the pitch , Miller privately decided that he would not honour his Rawtenstall contract . He secretly accepted an offer to relocate to Sydney to work as a liquor salesman and play cricket . Back in a good frame of mind for the Fourth Test in Adelaide , Miller took one wicket in each innings , but he shone with the bat . After England had made 460 , Miller came in at 3 / 207 , and was 23 not out by the close of the second day . He hit the first ball of the next day for six , and accumulated 67 runs in the opening 71 minutes , to reach his maiden Test century . The Englishmen utilised leg theory to prevent easy scoring , but as the tail began to be dismissed , Miller accelerated , launching drives into the crowd , despite the presence of four men on the fence . Miller ended unbeaten on 141 but the match petered out into a high @-@ scoring draw . Before the last Test , Miller played for Victoria against England , taking 4 / 65 .

The Fifth Test. saw Miller take a wicket in each innings . Australia were left a target of 214 runs on a wearing wicket . Wright beat Miller with three consecutive leg breaks , but Miller survived and struck consecutive boundaries on the way to reaching the target . Australia had taken the series 3 ? 0 ; Miller scored 384 runs at 76 @.@ 80 and took 16 wickets at 20 @.@ 88 , which placed him second in both the batting and bowling averages , to Bradman and Lindwall respectively . Nevertheless , Miller had become disillusioned with Bradman 's ruthless mentality . Miller was impulsive and cared little for records or ruthlessly dominating his opponents , preferring to play in a flamboyant manner in close contests .

For the 1947 ? 48 Australian season , Miller transferred to New South Wales (NSW) , for whom he played the remainder of his Sheffield Shield career . He also represented the New South Wales interstate football team at the 1947 Hobart Carnival , as vice captain . This made him one of the few players to play both football and cricket for two states .

Miller had a light workload in the 1947 ? 48 home Test series against India , who were on their first tour to Australia . India were well beaten , losing 4 ? 0 , three of the four defeats by an innings . Miller was required to bat just once in each Test , accumulating 185 runs at 37 @.@ 00 , including two half @-@ centuries , while the batsmen ahead of him plundered the bowling . His bowling duties were also light ; his 72 overs yielded nine wickets at 24 @.@ 78 . In both his fifties , Miller featured in century partnerships with his partners , respectively Bradman and Hassett in the First and Fourth test respectively . His 58 in the First Test at Brisbane featured many big hits .

= = = Invincibles tour = = =

Donald Bradman 's 1948 touring party to England has become known to cricket history as The Invincibles , remaining undefeated in its 31 matches . Miller started the tour strongly , scoring a hard @-@ hitting 50 not out against Worcestershire , and an unbeaten 202 against Leicestershire . In the next match against Yorkshire , Miller took 6 / 42 , including the prized wicket of Hutton , as the home team were demolished for just 71 . Australia then struggled to 101 , including a counterattacking 34 from Miller , who took 3 / 49 in the second innings in an Australian victory .

In a later match , against Essex , Miller was involved in a famous incident that is frequently cited when his character is discussed ; it also spotlighted his differences with Bradman . On a day when the Australians set a world @-@ record of 721 runs in a single day , Miller came to the crease with his side already dominating , with the score 2 / 364 . He deliberately allowed himself to be bowled first ball , much to Bradman 's displeasure , in a protest against the one @-@ sided nature of the contest .

Australia then took on the MCC at Lord 's ; effectively a dress rehearsal for the Tests as many of England 's Test players were in the MCC team . Miller scored 163 in 250 minutes , hitting 20 fours and three sixes in another innings win . Soon after , Rawtenstall dropped the contract dispute with Miller after being offered compensation .

Following another good all @-@ round performance against Hampshire , top @-@ scoring in the

first innings and taking 5 / 25 in the second , Miller went into the First Test (at Trent Bridge) in fine form . On the first morning , Miller bowled Hutton and Compton on his way to 3 / 38 , helping Australia dismiss England cheaply and seize the initiative . Miller scored a duck , but Australia took a 344 @-@ run lead on the first innings . In the second innings , he resumed his battle with Hutton and Compton , delivering five bouncers in the last over of the day . The batsmen survived , but Miller received a hostile reaction from the crowd . The next day , he bowled Hutton for 74 and then bounced Compton , causing him to fall onto his stumps for 184 . Australia won by eight wickets , Miller ending with 4 / 125 for the second innings and 7 / 163 for the match .

Miller was unfit to bowl during the Second Test at Lord 's . During England 's first innings , Bradman threw Miller the ball , hoping that he would reverse his decision not to bowl . Miller refused and returned the ball , citing his back . Miller 's action generated news headlines , with journalists believing that he had disobeyed Bradman .

As a batsman , Miller was out for four in the first innings , not offering a shot to an inswinger . In the second innings , Miller 's first ball was a hat @-@ trick ball from English captain Norman Yardley ; he survived a loud leg before wicket appeal and then hit a six into the grandstand , on his way to 74 . Australia declared at 7 / 460 , 595 runs ahead . Miller took three catches as Australia won by 409 runs .

After the Lord 's Test , Miller enjoyed a night out and returned to the team hotel after daybreak the next morning . Australia were due to play Surrey at The Oval that day . With Australia in the field , Bradman sent Miller to the fine leg boundary as a punishment ? between overs , he was forced to walk the length of the field . One of the spectators felt sorry for Miller and lent him his bicycle , which Miller used to cycle around the circumference of the ground .

The efforts of Miller and Lindwall against Hutton had led the English selectors to drop the Yorkshireman for the Third Test . The Australians were surprised by the move and thought that it was a bad move by their opponents . Miller had a quiet Third Test at Old Trafford , taking one wicket and scoring 31 as the match ended in a draw . In a rain @-@ shortened match , Miller again earned the ire of the crowd , after aiming a series of bouncers at Edrich , in apparent retaliation to the Englishman 's bouncing of Lindwall . He struck Edrich on the body before Bradman ordered him to stop .

The teams moved to Headingley for the Fourth Test at Leeds . Hutton had been recalled and the home team batted first . England tallied 496 and Miller took 1 / 43 . In reply , Australia were struggling at 3 / 68 in reply on the third morning . Neil Harvey , playing his first Ashes Test , joined Miller at the crease . The pair launched a counterattack , with Miller taking the lead . He hoisted Jim Laker 's first ball over square leg for six . Miller struck consecutive sixes over long off and the sightscreen respectively . This allowed Australia to seize the initiative ; Harvey joined in and hit consecutive boundaries against Laker . Miller then lifted another six over long off , and another over long on from Norman Yardley . He was dismissed for 58 attempting another six . The partnership had yielded 121 runs in only 90 minutes , and was described by Wisden as a " hurricane " . John Arlott described the innings as the most memorable that he had witnessed . He said " Miller played like an emperor ... Every stroke would have been memorable but each one had bettered its predecessor " . Jack Fingleton said that he had never " known a more enjoyable hour " of " delectable cricket " . The momentum swung and Australia finished at 457 on the fourth day , having added almost 396 in one day 's play . Miller took 1 / 53 in the second innings as Australia were set a world record chase of 404 on the final day . He made only 12 but Australia broke the world record to take a 3 ? 0 lead .

The Australians moved onto the next match against Derbyshire , where Miller scored a half @-@ century and took 3 / 31 in an innings victory . Against Glamorgan , Miller took two wickets before striking a hard @-@ hitting 84 with five sixes . He struck one of the sixes with one hand , sending it 20 rows into the crowd . In a match against Lancashire , Jack Ikin had reached 99 despite being repeatedly hit . Miller refused to bowl to Ikin , saying that he felt the batsman deserved a century . Lindwall was given the ball and promptly removed Ikin for 99 .

The teams proceeded to The Oval for the Fifth Test . After England elected to bat , Miller bowled John Dewes with his second ball and then removed Jack Crapp without scoring , leaving England at

4 / 23 . Miller ended with 2 / 5 as Lindwall (6 / 20) cut down the home team for 52 . In his last Test innings for the summer , Miller scored five . Australia led by 337 on the first innings and Miller dismissed Hutton and Crapp to end with 2 / 22 as Australia won by an innings and took a 4 ? 0 series win . Miller ended the Tests with 184 runs at 26 @.@ 28 and 13 wickets at 23 @.@ 15 . He took eight catches .

In a match against the Gentlemen of England at Lord 's , Miller scored 69 and was dismissed attempting a third consecutive hooked boundary . Australia went through the remaining tour matches unbeaten to end the summer without a defeat .

After the tour , Bradman was full of praise for Miller , though somewhat critical of his aggressive batting :

One of the most volatile cricketers of any age . Long , rangy , athletic type ? drove the ball with tremendous power ? tried to hit sixes with abandon . Many of them would have been prodigious . Would have been a far better player had he curbed this propensity and showed more judgement in his hitting . Dangerous bowler with the new ball , swinging it both ways not much short of [Ray] Lindwall 's speed . [...] In 1948 he was the best slip field in the world . Altogether , a crowd @-@ pleasing personality ... whose limitations were caused mainly by his own failure to concentrate .

Miller totalled 1 @,@ 088 runs for the tour at an average of 47 @.@ 30 , only the eighth highest in the squad . He took 56 wickets at 17 @.@ 58 and held onto 20 catches .

= = = Omission for South Africa = = =

After returning to Australia , Miller played against Bradman in a testimonial match in 1948 ? 49 . Miller bowled three consecutive bouncers at Bradman , dismissing him with the last of the short @-@ pitched deliveries for 53 . Bradman was angered by Miller 's bowling . One week later , the squad to tour South Africa in the following season was announced , and Miller was omitted , despite being ranked as the best all rounder in the world . During the Australian season , which was a purely domestic one , he had scored 400 runs at 33 @.@ 33 and taken 11 wickets at 24 @.@ 09 . He scored one century against Queensland during the season , as well as a 99 against Victoria at the SCG . The surprise omission led to much conjecturing about the reasoning . One was that Miller had stated during the season that he did not want to bowl , so the selectors only considered his batting performances . Another was that Miller 's bouncing of Bradman had provoked his former captain into voting against him at the selection table . Rumours circulated that new captain Lindsay Hassett did not want Miller on the tour because he was undisciplined , which Hassett denied . Another was that Jack Ryder , the Victorian selector and former Australian captain , had voted against Miller in retaliation for his move to New South Wales . Both Bradman and Chappie Dwyer claimed they voted for Miller , leading Miller to quip " somebody 's telling lies " , as there were only three on the selection panel .

The media stridently criticised Miller 's omission , as did former players such as Stan McCabe and Alan Kippax . During the off season , he worked as a journalist and played baseball , but declined a trial with a Major League Baseball club , the Boston Red Sox . Miller captained New South Wales at the start of the 1949 ? 50 season as his colleagues went to South Africa , his first leadership experience in the Sheffield Shield . He scored 80 and took six wickets in the first match against Queensland . After another victory over Western Australia , he received a request from the Australian Board of Control . At the request of captain Hassett , Miller was asked to tour South Africa as cover for Johnston , who had been injured in a car crash . Miller accepted the offer and resigned himself to bowling heavily . Miller almost missed the trip after arriving late at the dock in Perth after a drunken night . The next boat to South Africa would not have departed for several weeks . Despite his recall , there remained tension over his initial omission , as Dwyer was the team manager .

Miller was given the responsibility of batting in the number three position when Hassett was afflicted by tonsillitis . In the First Test at Johannesburg , Miller scored 21 and then took 5 / 40 in South Africa 's first innings , only his second match on tour , resulting in the home side being forced to follow on and lose by an innings . In the Second Test at Cape Town , he scored 58 and then took 3 / 54 in the first innings . On the third morning , Miller crashed his car and arrived late to the ground ,

still putting on his trousers as he entered the playing field . Despite , this he dismissed Dudley Nourse with his third ball . He was wicketless in the second innings , and took only one in the Third Test in Durban and did not pass 10 with the bat . Australia won both matches . He returned to the form in the Fourth Test with 84 , 33 not out and 3 / 75 in a high scoring draw . Miller took match figures of 5 / 66 in the Fifth Test as Australia took the series 4 ? 0 . He ended the series with 246 runs at 41 @. @ 00 and 17 wickets at 22 @. @ 94 , placing in the top six in the Test averages for bat and ball . During the tour matches , he took match figures of 11 / 54 against Natal Country Districts and scored a century against Transvaal .

= = = Ashes in Australia = = =

Miller started the 1950 ? 51 season with an unbeaten 201 in a Shield match against Queensland . At 438 minutes , it was his longest first @-@ class innings . In the return match , he scored 138 not out in just 118 minutes in a successful run @-@ chase , a sharp contrast to his double @-@ century . In a tour match against the visiting England team at the SCG before the Test series , Miller scored 214 , having been 99 not out at stumps on the previous day . He hit 15 fours and three sixes . However , he made ducks in consecutive matches leading into the First Test in Brisbane . Miller scored 15 and eight on a rain @-@ affected pitch , and took match figures of 3 / 50 in an Australian victory , dismissing Dewes twice . He had another quiet match in the Second Test , scoring 18 and 14 and taking a match total of 2 / 55 . After struggling in the first two Tests , Miller rediscovered his batting form with 98 against the tourists for New South Wales .

England had started the Third Test at Sydney strongly . Australia took its first wicket when Miller caught Washbrook from Johnson with a horizontal diving catch at slip . England were still in control at 1 / 128 when Miller came on to bowl . He removed Hutton and Reg Simpson before bowling Compton for a duck . In the space of four overs from Miller , England were now 4 / 137 . Miller had contributed to all four wickets . Miller ended with 4 / 37 as England were bowled out for 290 on the second day . Miller batted patiently on the third day , reaching 96 by stumps with Australia at 6 / 362 . The next day , with his century four runs away , Miller arrived late , leaving his batting partner Johnson waiting at the players ' gate . Miller progressed to 145 not out despite the interruption . It has been a patient innings by his standards , taking almost a day . England collapsed for 123 , leaving Australia to take an innings victory . In the first innings of the Fourth Test in Sydney , Miller scored 44 and did not take a wicket , but he was heading for consecutive Test centuries in the second innings . He reached 99 when a leg break from Doug Wright spun across him and clipped the off bail . The innings helped Australia to set England a target of 503 . Miller took 3 / 27 on the final day , helping to cut through the middle order as Australia won by 274 runs . Miller was out for seven and a duck in the Fifth Test at the MCG . He took 4 / 76 in the first innings , joining Lindwall in cutting down the middle order , despite which England won by eight wickets . Miller topped the Test batting averages with 350 runs at 43 @. @ 75 , and for the entire first @-@ class season , he scored 1332 runs at 78 @. @ 35 , the highest among all comers . His bowling was also strong , with 17 wickets at 17 @. @ 70 , second only to Jack Iverson (21 wickets at 15 @. @ 23) . However , an attack by Morris (182) and Miller (83) in a Shield match dispirited Iverson , and he never played Test cricket again .

= = = West Indies tour Australia = = =

The 1951 ? 52 Australian season saw the first tour by a West Indian team in two decades . The Caribbean team had beaten England 3 ? 1 in 1950 and were regarded as the biggest threat to Australia since Bodyline . The batting was led by the " three Ws " : Everton Weekes , Frank Worrell and Clyde Walcott . The English had also been bamboozled by the leg spin and left arm orthodox of Sonny Ramadhin and Alf Valentine , who took 59 wickets between them in four Tests against England . Miller and Lindwall were charged with attacking the opposition batsmen , testing them with short @-@ pitched bowling . The West Indies batted first in the First Test at Brisbane and were dismissed for 216 ; Miller dismissing their captain John Goddard . Miller came to the crease at 3 / 80

and could not pick Ramadhin . He decided to attack the leg spinner without picking him . He missed some , was dropped twice and hit a six before falling for 46 to Valentine . Australia scraped out a 10 @-@ run lead . Miller took another wicket in the second innings but managed only four as Australia stumbled to a three @-@ wicket victory . Between Tests , Miller took eight wickets in the match as New South Wales beat the tourists in a tour match . In the Second Test at Sydney , Miller came to the crease at 3 / 106 having gone wicketless in the West Indies ' first innings of 362 . He began to pick Ramadhin and finished with 129 in 246 minutes . Miller and Hassett put on 235 , an Australian Test record for any wicket against the West Indies . Ramadhin ended with 1 / 196 and was demoralised . In the second innings , Miller took 3 / 50 with a heavy barrage of short balls and claimed two catches to help Australia to a seven @-@ wicket victory . Wisden decried Lindwall and Miller 's " relentless bumper tactics " .

Miller had a lean Third Test , taking only one wicket and scoring four and 35 , as Australia lost by six wickets . In the Fourth Test at the MCG , the West Indies batted first and Miller removed both openers in the first hour , before returning to end with 5 / 60 as the tourists were bowled out for 272 . He then scored 47 as Australia managed only 216 . He took 2 / 49 , but only scored two in Australia 's run @-@ chase of 259 . The home team won by one wicket . In the Fifth Test , Miller took 5 / 26 in the first innings with another concentrated display of short @-@ pitched bowling , and then scored 69 in the second innings . He took two further wickets in the second innings as Australia fell short of their target . Miller ended the series as the leading bowler , with 20 wickets at 19 @.@ 90 . He was second in the batting , with 362 runs at 40 @.@ 22 . Throughout the series , Miller and Lindwall were repeatedly successful with their concerted bouncer tactics , which were heavily criticised .

After the Test series ended , Miller captained a Commonwealth XI that played against a touring England team in Colombo , Ceylon . England had been on a tour of the Indian subcontinent . Miller scored 106 as the Commonwealth compiled 517 . Miller took three wickets in the first innings and led his team to a victory by an innings and 259 runs .

= = = Captain of New South Wales = = =

At the start of the 1952 ? 53 season , the New South Wales Cricket Association 's five @-@ man selection panel installed Miller as captain in place of Morris . This was despite Morris leading the state to the Sheffield Shield in the previous season . Miller did not lobby for the job , but the Sydney media had campaigned for Miller , suggesting that his flamboyant style would attract more spectators and help stem the financial losses of the NSWCA . Despite this , Morris remained the Test vice @-@ captain ahead of Miller .

In his first match as leader , Miller scored 109 against Queensland . Taking 260 minutes , it was the slowest century of his career . In another match against the touring South Africans , Miller elected to field and reduced his opponents to 3 / 3 and went on to win by five wickets . His players respected him , and some began to mimic his cough , voice , gait and idiosyncrasies . Richie Benaud unbuttoned his shirt in Miller 's mould . He captained in an unorthodox manner , often trying unusual ploys to unsettle the opposition . He encouraged the opposition to attack in an attempt to get a wicket , and often shuffled his batting order to suit the circumstances of his batsmen . He was soon called before authorities after a match against South Australia . Sid Barnes , his 12th man , had come onto the ground with drinks , dressed as a flight attendant . He also brought things such as cigars , mirrors and combs . Barnes ' antics extended the break longer than usual . Miller was called before the NSWCA after the South Australian Cricket Association lodged a complaint , and had to give an assurance that such an incident would not be repeated .

Miller started the Test series against South Africa poorly . Suffering from a throat infection , he scored three in both innings and took 1 / 46 in an Australian victory . In the Second Test at the MCG , Miller performed consistently with bat and ball , taking 4 / 62 and 3 / 51 and scoring 52 and 31 . In the course of the match , he passed the all @-@ round double of 1000 Test runs and 100 Test wickets when he dismissed John Waite in the second innings , but this was not enough to prevent defeat . In the Third Test , Miller scored 55 , putting on 168 with Harvey , and took 3 / 48 and 2 / 33 in an innings victory . Australia 's fortunes took a turn for the worse in the Fourth Test in Adelaide .

Miller scored nine and injured his back after two overs with the ball . Lindwall also broke down . Without their spearheads , Australia were unable to bowl out the South Africans and match was drawn . Both were ruled out of the Fifth Test and the South Africans levelled the series despite conceding 520 runs during the first innings . Australia 's bowlers were unable to stop the South African batsmen without their new ball pair .

= = = 1953 Ashes tour = = =

Australia proceeded to the 1953 Ashes tour . During a stopover at Naples , Miller was locked inside after entering a private opera rehearsal without authorisation , but managed to escape and rejoin the boat as it was about to leave . During his career , several cricket books were published under Miller 's name , and he was embroiled in further controversy when one ghost @-@ written tome , which was printed as the team left for England , criticised his captain Hassett as being too cautious .

The burden on Miller and Lindwall increased when Johnston broke down in an early tour game . Miller was wicketless against Worcestershire , but succeeded with the bat , scoring an unbeaten 220 in just over six hours . He then scored 159 not out against Yorkshire . At this point , Miller had scored 421 runs in the week of May , and the media began to speculate that he could score 1000 runs in one month , something that had been done on a tour only by Bradman .

Miller 's love of horseracing then interfered with his quest . Wanting to attend an afternoon race meeting , he opened the batting in the morning against Cambridge University . Not intending to play a long innings , he attacked the bowling and was out for 20 , before heading for the track . He stayed at the track until late afternoon , and returned to find the Australians walking out to field . This was followed by a match against the MCC at Lord 's where he took four wickets of English Test players . Miller then took match figures of 5 / 27 against Oxford University . In the match against Essex , Miller pulled rib muscles , meaning he could not bowl in the First Test at Trent Bridge . He scored 55 and five in a rain @-@ affected draw .

Australia travelled to Bramall Lane under the captaincy of Miller . Captain Hassett and his deputy Morris were rested and stayed in London with the team manager . After the first day 's play , he organised a party for that lasted until the next afternoon ? the rest day . He woke up with a hangover the next day just minutes before the start of play . Improvising , Miller arrived at the ground in a hearse . When it was Australia 's turn to bat , Miller was the last man to be dismissed , having scored 86 despite his hangover .

The Test series moved to Lord 's . Miller resumed bowling , sending down 42 overs and taking a total of 1 / 74 . He managed 25 in the first innings , but promoted to number three in the second innings , he batted patiently to reach stumps before reaching his first Test century on English soil the following morning , but England held on for a draw . More than half of the Third Test at Old Trafford was washed out , resulting in another draw . Miller took 1 / 38 bowling fast off breaks and scored 17 and six . Australia then played Middlesex at Lord 's , where Miller scored a hard @-@ hitting 71 .

Australia elected to field on a wet wicket in the Fourth Test at Headingley . Miller dismissed Edrich and Graveney and ended with 2 / 39 from 38 overs as England were bowled out for 167 . Miller made only five in the first innings . In the second innings , Miller and Lindwall launched a short @-@ pitched barrage and dismissed Watson and Simpson in consecutive balls . England were 5 / 177 a stumps on day four , leading by 78 . The pacemen were booed from the field . The next day , Miller dismissed Evans early , before Trevor Bailey began his resistance . Frustrated by Bailey 's defensive style and time @-@ wasting , Miller lost his cool and aimed a beamer straight at Bailey 's head , further angering the crowd . Miller ended with 4 / 63 from a long spell of 47 overs . England held on for another draw after more time @-@ wasting by Bailey . The teams headed for the Fifth Test at The Oval tied 0 ? 0 . Miller 's last Test performance was his least productive ; he scored one and a duck and took a total of 2 / 89 . England won the match and regained the Ashes . Miller 's returns were below his career standards , with 223 runs at 24 @.@ 77 and 10 wickets at 30 @.@ 30 . He took two catches .

Miller scored 67 against the Gentlemen of England at Lord 's and then played against the

Combined Services at Kingston . He reached his century before lunch and then proceeded to 262 not out with 24 boundaries . This included a 377 @-@ run fourth @-@ wicket stand by Jim de Courcy in only 205 minutes , in particular targeting Fred Trueman 's bowling . He then took 3 / 17 with the ball . He finished the English summer with 1 @,@ 433 runs at 51 @.@ 17 , the second highest average behind Harvey among batsmen with over 200 runs . He was the only Australian to hit two double centuries and also took 45 wickets at 22 @.@ 51 . For his efforts that summer , Wisden Cricketers ' Almanack named him one of its Five Cricketers of the Year .

= = = Overlooked for Test captaincy = = =

Miller returned to Australia and led New South Wales to the Sheffield Shield title in 1953 ? 54 . He topped the Australian first @-@ class batting averages with 71 @.@ 10 , but had his poorest season with the ball , taking only 16 wickets at 38 @.@ 75 . The season was purely domestic with no touring side and therefore no Test matches . The season was also a transition point in Australian cricket , as Hassett retired upon return to Australia . Initially , Morris and Miller were the two frontrunners for the captaincy . Miller was the state captain , but Morris was the vice @-@ captain of the Test team ahead of Miller . At the time , Johnson had been dropped from the Australian team , but inherited the Victorian captaincy from Hassett , who accused him of not trying . Hassett told Johnson that he could become Test captain if he regained his form and his Test position . As the outgoing captain , Hassett was believed to have an influence over the selection of his successor . Miller had also criticised Hassett in his book , and there was talk that Hassett was upset about Miller 's departure from South Melbourne and Victoria . Johnson returned to form with 45 wickets at 22 @.@ 75 for the season .

England toured Australia in the 1954 ? 55 season . Johnson was selected to lead an Australian XI in a tour match against the Englishmen before the Tests , an indication of the selectors ' inclination . He took 6 / 66 in England 's only innings . The build @-@ up featured a media war , with Melbourne newspapers stumping for Johnson while the Sydney journalists trumpeted Miller . Miller warmed up for the Tests with 86 for New South Wales against England . On 18 November , the Australian Board of Control selected Johnson as captain , with Morris as his deputy . Miller 's irreverent nature was cited as a possible reason for the board 's selection . Johnson was regarded as a superior diplomat , while Miller had a reputation for turning up late and being undisciplined . Miller had frequently been in dispute with Bradman , who was a member of the board and the chairman of selectors . Miller had also questioned where revenue that the board collected from ticket sales was being used . Others claimed that Johnson was appointed because he was part of the establishment ; his father Bill was a former Australian selector . The decision was bitterly criticised by the Sydney press .

There is strong feeling amongst cricket enthusiasts that horse trading on a state basis rather than objective evaluation of cricket skills has dominated selectors discussions . The operating principle seems to have been " you look after my man and we 'll look after yours . "

Miller scored 49 in the First Test at Brisbane as Australia amassed 8 / 601 , before dismissing Simpson and Hutton as England fell to an innings defeat . A knee injury forced Miller to miss the Second Test at the SCG , which England won . Miller returned for the Third Test at the MCG , but was initially unavailable to bowl due to lingering knee problems . However , upon receiving an inquiry about the health of his knee before the match by Prime Minister of Australia Robert Menzies , Miller agreed to try to bowl for a short period and lift his team . England elected to bat and Miller removed Hutton , Edrich and Compton with his outswinger . He ended up bowling for the entire first session of play and had 3 / 5 at lunch from nine overs , before finishing at 3 / 14 . England were bowled out for 191 . Miller struggled with the bat , scoring six and seven as Frank Tyson 's pace saw England inflict a second successive defeat on Australia . Australia needed to win the Fourth Test in Adelaide to keep the series alive . Miller scored 44 and 14 as Australia were bowled out in the second innings to leave England with 94 for victory . Miller made a late burst , removing Edrich , Hutton and Colin Cowdrey in consecutive overs to leave England at 3 / 18 . He then took a difficult catch from Johnston to dismiss Peter May . England were then 4 / 49 but hung on to win by five

wickets and secure the Ashes . It was the first time that Australia had lost three consecutive Tests since the Bodyline series of 1932 ? 33 . Miller made 19 and 28 in the rain @-@ affected draw in the Fifth Test . He ended the series with 167 runs at 23 @.@ 86 , his lowest ever at international level , and took 10 wickets at 24 @.@ 30 .

He had more success as domestic level . New South Wales beat Victoria in two days at the SCG to win the Sheffield Shield ; Miller taking five wickets in the second innings . He also led his state in a 45 @-@ run win over the tourists , their only defeat apart from the First Test . The match was marked by a quickfire 71 in 57 minutes and his team 's attacking strategy .

= = = West Indies tour = = =

After leading his state to another Sheffield Shield title and a win over England , Miller replaced Morris as the vice @-@ captain for the tour of the West Indies that started in early 1955 . Australia was looking for its first series win against any team in three years , having lost two consecutive series to England . Australia batted first in the opening Test at Sabina Park in Jamaica . Miller came to the wicket at 2 / 137 and put on a 224 @-@ run partnership with Harvey . Both ended with centuries and Miller scored his highest Test score of 147 , striking 15 fours . When Valentine and Ramadhin had conceded 100 runs , he respectively shook their hands . Australia finished at 9 / 515 . Johnson had been injured when hit in the foot by a yorker so Miller was left in charge of the team on the field with Australia one bowler short . Miller attempted to unsettle the batsmen by placing many men close to the bat in an attempt to insult their batting capabilities . He took the new ball at 5 / 239 and the hosts collapsed to be all out for 259 . Miller had taken 2 / 36 , and enforced the follow @-@ on , which was questioned as paceman Ron Archer had broken down . With Australia two bowlers short , the West Indies moved to 1 / 114 . When Weekes arrived at the crease , Miller unsettled him with delaying tactics , and he was out for one . He then placed two silly points and two silly mid @-@ ons in an attempt to unsettle Walcott , who fell to Lindwall soon after . Miller then took two wickets and the hosts had lost three wickets in as many overs . The West Indies were bowled out and Australia won by nine wickets . Miller had taken 3 / 62 in the second innings .

Johnson resumed the leadership on the field in the Second Test at Queen 's Park Oval in Trinidad . The match was a high @-@ scoring draw , but Miller scored only three and took match figures of 1 / 148 . In the Third Test at Georgetown , Guyana , Miller removed both openers in the first innings and then scored 33 as Australia by eight wickets . He took 3 / 51 for the match . In the Fourth Test at Bridgetown , Barbados , Miller came to the wicket with Australia at 3 / 226 on the first day . The tourists lost two more wickets to be 5 / 233 . Miller and Archer launched a counter @-@ attacking partnership of 206 . Miller reached 137 and then walked after edging a ball , even though none of the opposition had appealed . Australia reached 668 and the West Indies were struggling at 6 / 147 , with Miller having dismissed Weekes and Collie Smith in the same over . At the time , Miller was bowling at medium pace , but Johnson felt that the new batsmen Denis Atkinson and Clairmonte Depeiazza were vulnerable to express pace . Johnson ordered Miller to bowl fast , but was turned down . Johnson replaced Miller with Lindwall , who was tired and was hit around the ground . The pair seized the initiative and compiled a world Test record of 347 for the seventh wicket and the Australians were tired after failing to break the partnership . Miller attacked Johnson in front of the other players , saying " You couldn 't captain a bunch of bloody schoolboys ! " Johnson then offered to resolve the dispute " out the back " , implying a fisticuffs .

Miller declined the offer and stopped . The match resumed the next day and the West Indies were eventually bowled out 158 behind . Miller had been punished by the batsmen , taking 2 / 113 from 22 overs . Miller scored 10 and took 1 / 66 in the second innings as the match ended in a high @-@ scoring draw . Miller then took 6 / 107 in the first innings of the Fifth Test in Jamaica . He removed John Holt , Walcott and Smith , before taking three tail @-@ end wickets as the home team were bowled out for 357 . When Australia batted , Miller arrived at the crease to join Harvey with the score at 3 / 302 . He added his third century of the series and ended with 109 as Australia reached 8 / 758 . He took 2 / 58 in the second innings as Australia completed a 3 ? 0 win . It was Miller 's most statistically successful series , with 439 runs at 73 @.@ 17 and the 20 wickets at 32 @.@ 05 made

him the equal leading wicket @-@ taker along with Lindwall .

= = = Final domestic season = = =

Miller started the 1955 ? 56 season , which was purely domestic , with 164 against Queensland in Brisbane . On the final day , Miller set the hosts 275 for victory in three hours . He lengthened the innings break by seven minutes , by remonstrating with officials to pause the match for the running of the Melbourne Cup . They agreed and the match was stopped for 13 minutes for the race . Queensland lost seven wickets but held on for a draw , aided by the 20 minutes lost by Miller 's love of horseracing .

The next match was against South Australia in Sydney . New South Wales had declared at 8 / 215 and the visitors were 0 / 2 at stumps on the first day . Miller 's wife gave birth to their fourth child , and Miller was drinking into the next morning . He then arrived at the SCG , having forgotten to pick up team @-@ mate Peter Philpott as arranged , so he had to rush back and the pair arrived late for the day 's play . Miller was still in a tuxedo as play was about to start . Miller completed the unfinished over from the previous night and felt that the pitch did not offer any assistance . He then told Alan Davidson to bowl the next over from his end . However , as Davidson was about to bowl , Miller changed his mind and took over . Miller bowled Les Favell in the over . He kept on bowling and finished with 7 / 12 from 7 @.@ 3 overs , clean bowling five of his victims . The visitors had been levelled for 27 , the lowest score in the history of the Sheffield Shield . Miller then asked South Australia to follow @-@ on , but showed little interest in bowling again , delivering only six overs despite the bowler @-@ friendly conditions . Philpott said that " this was typical Miller . He was never an accumulator of records , not particularly concerned with figures . " In another incident , Miller had been making a speech at a civic reception for the New South Wales team in the town of Maitland . In front of the mayor at the town hall , he praised the hospitality , before turning around to his players and asking what the name of the town was . Miller then turned up late to a coaching clinic the next day and instead of teaching , he made a speech , advising the children to play tennis as there was more money on offer .

In January 1956 , Miller injured his back in a match against Queensland . He suffered spasms that forced him to miss the rest of the season . He had scored 403 runs at 80 @.@ 60 and taken 19 wickets at 14 @.@ 94 . New South Wales again won the Sheffield Shield .

= = = Final Ashes tour = = =

Miller was selected for the 1956 Ashes tour , but could not bowl for a month because of a back injury from the first match . Miller captained the Australians against Leicester . Coming in at 3 / 175 , Miller made his highest first @-@ class score of 281 not out , striking 35 fours in six and a half hours . A tougher fight awaited against Surrey at The Oval , who had England 's Test spin combination of Laker and Tony Lock . Miller came in at 3 / 124 and struggled , scoring 18 runs in his first 120 minutes , his slowest two hours of scoring in his career . As his partners continued to fall Miller ended unbeaten on 57 as Australia were bowled out for 259 ; Laker taking all ten wickets . Australia lost by ten wickets , its first loss to a county since 1912 . As a result , sections of the Australian media began campaigning for Miller to replace Johnson as captain .

By the First Test at Trent Bridge , Miller was shouldering most of the bowling load . He sent down 52 overs in a rain @-@ affected match , taking match figures of 6 / 127 . He struggled with the bat , making a duck and four . The teams headed to Lord 's where Miller had to carry the pace attack without the injured Davidson and Lindwall . Crawford and Ken Mackay were called in to make their debut and support Miller with the pace duties . Australia batted first and Miller managed 28 . Australia managed only 285 and Crawford injured himself , exacerbating the burden on Miller . Miller had Peter Richardson and then bowled Tom Graveney with an outswinger . England were 2 / 32 and their captain Peter May received an inswinger from Miller first ball , which he inside edged onto his stumps , but the bail was not dislodged . The next day , Miller beat May four times and then had Watson caught in the gully in his third over . He then removed Bailey and Trueman . Miller 's 5 / 72

was largely responsible for England falling for 171 . Australia was in difficulty at 3 / 69 when Miller came to bat , hitting a counterattacking 30 . Australia set England 371 to win . Miller removed Graveney at the start of the run chase . Resuming the next morning , he bowled Watson , and had May and Evans both caught behind . He bowled Johnny Wardle and took his only ten @-@ wicket match haul in Tests . Australia won by 185 runs and Miller had bowled 70 @.@ 1 overs for the match . His knee had taken a heavy toll and Miller was given an extended break had to play purely as a batsman in the Third Test at Headingley . Australia were caught on a wet wicket in response to England 's 325 , and Miller top @-@ scored with 41 and Australia were forced to follow on . He had attempted to keep Laker and Lock at bay with his pads . In the second innings , Miller fell for 26 to Laker . Australia lost by an innings , for the first time in a Test in 18 years .

The Australian press attacked the team , and called for changes , including the omission of the captain , Johnson . Johnson , Miller and Gil Langley were the tour selectors . Langley and Miller were willing to omit Johnson only if the captain volunteered to stand aside . Johnson did not volunteer , so the others did not discuss the topic . Miller and Johnson had both been appointed as Members of the Order of the British Empire (MBE) in the 1956 New Year Honours , and between the Tests they attended their formal investiture .

The curator at Old Trafford had been ordered to prepare a dusty , spinning pitch for the Fourth Test . A win for England would see them retain the Ashes . Miller bowled 21 wicketless overs as England amassed 459 . Miller was out for six and a duck and fell twice to Laker , who took a world record 19 wickets as Australia lost by an innings . Wisden reported that the Australians were said " to be extremely bitter over the condition of the pitch " .

Miller then took 5 / 84 against Surrey , before leading the team against Warwickshire . He had received death threats in the lead @-@ up to the game , ordering him to lose . He scored 46 not out and took 2 / 13 as Australia won by an innings . He then took 5 / 29 in the second innings against Lancashire and made 50 and took match figures of 5 / 78 against Essex .

On the eve of the Fifth Test at The Oval , Miller announced that the tour would be his last , so that he would retire from cricket after the tour of the Indian subcontinent on the return voyage . In his final Test on English soil , he took 4 / 91 in the first innings . Miller came in to bat at 5 / 47 and helped Australia recover to 202 , top @-@ scoring with 61 . He took another one wicket in the second innings and was unbeaten on seven when stumps were drawn in the second innings . The series ended 1 ? 2 . He ended the series with 199 runs at 28 @.@ 43 and topped the bowling with 21 wickets at 22 @.@ 23 . He topped the first @-@ class bowling for the Australians with 50 wickets at 19 @.@ 60 .

Australia played Pakistan at Karachi in the first Test between the two countries on a matting pitch , rather than the more familiar grass pitch . Miller top @-@ scored in the first innings with 21 , as Australia fell for 80 . He took 2 / 40 and then scored 11 in the second innings as Australia fell to defeat . It was the last Test of his career , as his knee injury deteriorated to the point that he could not play in the three Tests against India , and retired upon his return to Australia .

= = Style and personality = =

Miller combined classy strokeplay with big hitting , his front foot play especially devastating . He had a rifle like straight drive , played pull and sweep shots with a minimum of effort and was able to cut elegantly . He combined this elegance with unorthodoxy , hitting two sixes over square leg with a backhand tennis shot and once beginning the day 's play in a Test match with a six . One straight six that he hit at the Sydney Cricket Ground was still rising when it hit the first deck of the M.A. Noble Stand . Len Hutton said he was " the most unpredictable cricketer I have played against " .

As a bowler , Miller had a classically high arm action , moving the ball sharply either way and able to make the ball rise from a good length . His action caused opposition batsmen to perceive that his deliveries were gaining pace after pitching . He was often able to generate more pace than his new ball partner , Lindwall . He was always willing to try something new if the batsman were set , varying his approach from fifteen paces to five and vice versa . A round arm delivery often managed to capture a wicket , surprising the batsman . Compton said that Miller " often had no preconceived

idea what he intended to bowl even as he turned to start his run " . Miller often mixed slow leg breaks when he was bowling off a run . He once bowled English opening batsman David Sheppard with a googly during a Test . Hutton opined that Miller was the bowler who was least concerned with the position of his bowling mark , and said that he " never felt physically safe against him " . His use of bouncers at Trent Bridge during the 1948 tour was seen as excessive by the English crowd , who booed him . Miller simply sat down until the barracking had subsided . He was often required to bowl through pain , pressing a disk into place at the base of his spine before sending down the next delivery .

Miller and Lindwall formed an opening partnership that was regarded as one of the greatest of all time . Hutton said that the pair was the most hostile that he faced during his career . Alan Davidson , a bowling all rounder who supported Lindwall and Miller for New South Wales and Australia , said that " Ray Lindwall was the best bowler I ever saw of any type ; his control was just perfect . At the other end you had Miller , who was unpredictable ... It really was a perfect team . " He was an acrobatic slips fielder , who would take freakish catches with nonchalant ease , often immediately returning to his discussion with those around him as if nothing was unusual .

Miller often required a contest to retain interest in the game . He deplored Bradman 's ruthless attitude towards annihilating the opposition and sometimes refused to try when Australia was in an unassailable position . At Southend in 1948 , as the Australians scored a world record 721 runs in a single day against Essex , Miller , coming in to bat when the score was 2 / 364 , allowed himself to be bowled first ball . Indeed , he " turned to the wicketkeeper and said : " Thank God that 's over " . " His teammate Sid Barnes said that if Miller " had the same outlook as Bradman or Ponsford he would have made colossal scores " and become " the statisticians ' greatest customer " .

Miller never captained Australia in a Test , as his attitude to the game tended to alarm the authorities . About Miller , Ashley Mallett wrote , " He loved tradition , but hated convention . His unstructured way of playing and living would be anathema to cricketers now ... He played as he fought the war , by impulse and mood . " He sometimes set his field by saying to his players : " scatter " . On another occasion , he is reported turned to his players , after being told that NSW was taking the field with one player too many , and asked for one player to volunteer to " piss off " .

A larger than life character , Miller is the subject of many stories , often apocryphal . One story had Don Bradman answering a knock on the door late one night to see Miller dressed in a dinner suit . Miller advised Bradman that , as demanded , he was in bed at curfew and was now going out . His relationship with Bradman was one riddled with friction and mutual antipathy , " ... one a roundhead of massive influence , the other a cavalier and maverick " . As Bradman moved from batting hero and team captain to selector and administrator , his influence grew ; this " ... almost certainly cost Miller any chance of captaining his country " .

One night , following a duel with Messerschmitts in his Mosquito , he made an unauthorised detour over Bonn because it was Beethoven 's birthplace and he was a lover of the classics . Despite his fame , Miller remained a humble man ; when asked his favourite cricketing memory , he would recall no incident concerning himself , but " a South Australian team @-@ mate walking onto Lord 's to a thunderous ovation a few weeks after his release from a POW camp " . The cricket broadcaster , John Arlott said " that for all the glamour that attached to Miller , he was staunch and unaffected as a friend " .

When asked how he managed to take seven wickets for just 12 runs against South Australia , Miller replied :

There 's three reasons , First , I bowled bloody well . Second , I , errr ... second ... " [pause] . " You can forget about the other two reasons . "

= = Later life = =

After retirement , Miller remained in the public eye , augmented by persistent " unsubstantiated rumours of an affair with Princess Margaret " . He made a living as a journalist and columnist , employed by the Daily Express as a " special cricket writer " for twenty years . As during his career , Miller was a proponent of attacking and bright play . He praised the aggressive leadership of his

protege Richie Benaud but criticised the style of play pursued by Australia under Benaud 's successors Bob Simpson and Bill Lawry . In the mid @-@ 1980s , when Australia was struggling , Miller called for the removal of Allan Border , an obdurate and defensive batsman , from the captaincy .

He later worked for Vernons Pools , owned by the millionaire horseracing entrepreneur , Robert Sangster . However , Miller " was happiest at the cricket or at the races " . He also worked as the head of a lobby group in promoting Australian rules football in his adopted New South Wales in the 1980s . At the time , the VFL was the dominant league and there were no top @-@ flight teams in his adopted state or Queensland .

Miller 's later life was plagued by ill health . In November 1991 , he was hospitalised with a stroke , and soon after fell over and broke his hip , necessitating two further operations . He had skin cancer , caused by his insistence on always displaying his mop of hair and not wearing a hat . He accepted these vicissitudes equably . " Some grieved to see him reduced , but not him ; these were life 's deliveries . He knew only that one would get him out eventually . " He had an earlobe removed . The cancer also attacked his legs , and coupled with his hip injury , severely curtailed his mobility , forcing him to use walking frames and wheelchairs . Asked at 75 about death , he said : " Never think about it . No regrets . I 've had a hell of a good life . Been damned lucky . "

Despite his illnesses , he continued to travel to England in the 1990s to watch cricket and meet up with Compton , Edrich and other war and cricket colleagues on an annual basis , although he became increasingly isolated as he outlasted his friends , both English and Australian .

In late 2002 , Miller divorced his wife Peg , with whom he had four sons . He did so to marry his long @-@ term mistress Marie Challman , with whom he had been living since 1999 . Challman was a hospital receptionist and Miller reasoned that he would receive more effective medical treatment by moving to Melbourne to live with her , as his specialist doctors also lived there . He had other long @-@ term mistresses , including an Australian beauty queen with whom he was photographed in public . During his later years , his illness contributed to what his family felt was a deteriorating attitude and he fell out with his sons , but they were reconciled shortly before his death .

Miller died in October 2004 after being in persistent poor health . He was given a state funeral by the Government of Victoria , which saw hundreds of mourners stand outside the packed cathedral , and was broadcast across the nation on ABC Radio .

= = Legacy and statistical analysis = =

Miller 's achievements were recognised by a host of awards during his lifetime and posthumously . Miller was one of the ten inaugural inductees into the Australian Cricket Hall of Fame in 1996 . In 2000 , he was named in the Australian Cricket Board Team of the Century as its vice @-@ captain . In January 2010 , Miller was inducted into the ICC Cricket Hall of Fame .

He is also one of only four Australian cricketers , (the others being Bradman , Victor Trumper and Shane Warne) to be honoured with a portrait in the Long Room at Lord 's in London . Miller is one of only three men (the others being M.H. " Vinoo " Mankad and G.StA. " Garry " Sobers) to have his name on both the batting and bowling honours boards in the visitors ' dressing @-@ room there , for scoring both a century and for taking five wickets in a test at the ground .

Miller 's abilities as an all @-@ rounder led to enormous success as both batsman and bowler . The ICC player rankings have been applied retrospectively to cricket history and Miller achieved top ten rankings with both bat and ball . As a batsman , he peaked at ninth in the world in 1952 , and was a top @-@ 20 player from shortly after his début and for the rest of the duration of his career . Miller 's bowling abilities led to even greater success . By the end of 1946 , he was already ranked sixth in the world and thereafter never slipped lower than ninth ; for much of his career , he was the second @-@ best bowler in the world according to the ratings , remarkably , for a 36 @-@ year @-@ old , peaking at the number 1 slot for a few months in 1956 . As an all @-@ rounder , therefore , it is unsurprising to find that he was peerless for most of his career , ranked as number one in the world for most of his career , including an unbroken eight @-@ year run from June 1948 until his retirement .

Miller 's statistics are an inexact measure of his worth to the side . Many of the Australia teams he played in featured very strong batting line @-@ ups , restricting his opportunities as a middle @-@ order player . His verve and enthusiasm were also important contributors to Australian success , as was his ability to produce the unexpected (particularly with the ball) and help break partnerships . It is for this reason that he is remembered for his personality and his one @-@ off feats , more than statistical accomplishment ; in Ian Chappell 's words " People who saw it still talk of Keith Miller 's monster shot that hit the Members Stand clock at the SCG in the 1950s " .

= = Honours and awards = =

Member of the Order of Australia (AM) : Awarded 26 January 2005 for service to sport , particularly cricket as a player , journalist and commentator

Member of the Order of the British Empire (MBE) : Awarded 2 January 1956 for services to cricket
1939 ? 1945 Star

Air Crew Europe Star

Defence Medal

War Medal 1939 ? 1945

Australia Service Medal 1939 ? 45

Centenary Medal

= = Test match performance = =