

= 1978 Gillette Cup Final =

The 1978 Gillette Cup Final was a cricket match between Somerset County Cricket Club and Sussex County Cricket Club played on 2 September 1978 at Lord 's in London . It was the sixteenth final of the Gillette Cup , which had been the first domestic tournament to pit first @-@ class cricket sides against each other in a knock @-@ out competition . This was Sussex 's sixth appearance in the final , which they had previously won twice , while Somerset had lost in their only previous final .

Both teams entered the competition in the first round ; Somerset faced first @-@ class opposition in each of the four rounds prior to the final . In their semi @-@ final match against Essex , Somerset only progressed as they had lost fewer wickets in a tied match . Sussex played against minor counties in each of the first two rounds , but only beat Staffordshire by two runs to advance from the second round , before more straightforward victories against first @-@ class opposition in the later stages . Somerset batted first , but with the exception of Ian Botham , the batsmen struggled to score runs fluently . They scored 207 runs for 7 wickets , of which Botham scored 80 and Viv Richards 44 . Sussex began their run @-@ chase well , with a first @-@ wicket partnership of 93 , before losing four wickets in quick succession . A second partnership , between Paul Parker and Paul Phillipson led Sussex to victory by five wickets , chasing down Somerset 's total with more than six overs to spare . Parker was named as the man of the match for his score of 62 not out .

= = Background = =

The Gillette Cup was first contested in 1963 , as the first English domestic knock @-@ out competition between first @-@ class sides . Sussex had appeared in the Gillette Cup Final on five previous instances ; they won the tournament in each of the first two years (1963 and 1964) , and were runners @-@ up in 1968 , 1970 and 1973 . In contrast , Somerset had only reached the final of the competition once previously , losing to Kent in 1967 . Somerset were one of only two first @-@ class counties in 1978 to have never won a domestic competition . Tony Greig , who had been the Sussex captain from 1973 to 1977 , was released from his contract midway through the 1978 season .

= = Route to the final = =

Somerset entered the tournament in the first round , in which they beat Warwickshire by six wickets , aided primarily by a score of 139 not out by Viv Richards , who was later named man of the match . In their second round match against Glamorgan , Somerset scored 330 for 4 , the highest total in that year 's competition . Peter Denning scored 145 runs , while Joel Garner bowled six overs and conceded just five runs . Garner 's bowling was once again miserly in the quarter @-@ final against Kent ; he conceded five runs in nine overs , though Colin Dredge was named as the man of the match for his four wickets , which helped Somerset to a five @-@ wicket victory . In the semi @-@ final , Somerset batted first , and helped by another century from Richards , scored 287 for 6 . In their response , Essex kept up with the required run rate , and needed three runs to win from the final ball of the match . The batsmen managed two runs , but Neil Smith was run out attempting the third run , and as a result the scores were tied . Somerset advanced to the final , as they had lost fewer wickets ; six to ten .

Sussex also took part in the first round , facing Suffolk , one of the minor cricket counties who did not play first @-@ class cricket . Suffolk were bowled out for 101 runs , a total which Sussex chased down with 161 deliveries remaining . Another minor county , Staffordshire , were Sussex 's second round opponents , but the margin of victory was far narrower . Sussex batted first and scored 221 for 6 , in which Paul Parker scored his second half @-@ century of the competition . In their response , Staffordshire fell three runs short , finishing with 219 for 9 ; each of Imran Khan and Geoff Arnold collecting four wickets . In the quarter @-@ final , Sussex faced Yorkshire . The match began on 2 August , but after 52 overs of Yorkshire 's innings no further play was possible , even though the match had two reserve days . On 4 August , the match was abandoned , and replaced

with a match in which each side would bat for 10 innings . In that match , Sussex batted first and scored 68 for 6 , and then restricted Yorkshire to 59 for 8 . Imran Khan and Arnold bowled through the entire ten overs , taking three wickets each . A more facile victory provided Sussex with their place in the final ; facing Lancashire , Sussex scored 277 for 8 , helped by another half @-@ century from Parker , and 75 runs from Javed Miandad , and then bowled their opponents out for 141 runs .

= = Match = =

= = = Summary = = =

In his preview of the final , John Woodcock , the cricket correspondent for The Times rated Somerset as the favourites . He cited the talent of Richards as their primary asset , but asserted that they were " not a one man side " . He noted that Sussex also relied upon their overseas players , Javed Miandad and Imran Khan , but that they would need to be backed up by Sussex 's other players for them to have a chance of victory . The match was played at Lord 's in London , as had every previous final of the competition , and play began at 10 : 30 , with a lunch break scheduled for 12 : 45 to 13 : 25 , and a 15 @-@ minute tea interval after 25 overs of the second innings .

The Sussex captain , Arnold Long , won the toss and chose to bowl first , hoping that morning dew might give his bowlers an advantage . Brian Rose scored 14 runs from the first over , bowled by Imran , who later took Somerset 's first wicket , bowling Denning before the batsman had scored a run . That brought Richards to the crease , and Long immediately changed both of his bowlers , replacing the quick bowling of the openers with the slower deliveries of Giles Cheadle and John Spencer . Cheadle dismissed Rose in his first over , caught down the leg side by the wicket @-@ keeper , Long after scoring 44 runs . Peter Roebuck also got out to Cheadle , scoring nine runs before being caught by Mendis . Botham joined Richards in the middle , and immediately scored a four with a straight drive , followed by two hooks for sixes . Cheadle and Spencer each bowled their entire allocation of 12 overs without a break , and were followed by the introduction of another slow bowler , John Barclay . Although Richards finished as the competition 's leading run @-@ scorer , Woodcock said that he struggled to score fluently , particularly against the spin bowling of Barclay and Cheadle . In the Wisden Cricketers ' Almanack 's summary of the season , Jack Alridge praised Long 's captaincy in the final , highlighting the use of slower bowling against Richards and Ian Botham as being particularly commendable . Vic Marks , who also played in the match for Somerset , suggested that Botham was the only Somerset batsman to play with freedom , and said that the rest of the team were nervous and intimidated by the prospect of winning Somerset 's first trophy . Richards scored 44 runs , and Botham 80 , including three sixes , but none of the rest of the middle- or lower @-@ order batsmen made a significant score and Somerset finished their innings on 207 for 7 . Along with Barclay , Spencer bowled particularly economically for Sussex .

Sussex began their run @-@ chase well ; Barclay and Gehan Mendis scored 93 runs together , surviving a spell of attacking fast bowling from Garner and Dredge early on . Mendis had broken his thumb shortly before the final , and in the third over , it was fractured again , but he continued to bat . When Somerset did make a breakthrough , after 24 overs , they collected four wickets for the addition of seventeen runs . Mendis was the first man out , caught by Marks off the bowling of Graham Burgess , followed by Barclay who was caught hooking a delivery from Botham . Miandad was dismissed without scoring , and shortly thereafter , Imran was caught and bowled by Botham for three . Rose then chose to replace his bowlers , and against the less incisive bowling of Keith Jennings and Burgess , Parker and Paul Phillipson were able to establish a 97 @-@ run partnership , which brought Sussex to within five runs of their winning target , before Phillipson was by caught by the wicket @-@ keeper , Derek Taylor off the bowling of Dredge . Woodcock thought that Botham in particular bowled too short against Phillipson , who he suggested would have been susceptible to a yorker . In Wisden , Eric Hill opined that Botham 's short @-@ pitched bowling , which was a feature of his play late in the season , was due to him being overused by England and Somerset through

the year . Parker scored the winning runs to secure a five @-@ wicket victory for Sussex with 41 deliveries remaining .

= = = Scorecard = = =

Umpires :

Dickie Bird and Barrie Meyer

= = Post @-@ match = =

Parker was selected as the man of the match by Ken Barrington . Somerset , who had started the weekend with the potential of winning both the Gillette Cup and the John Player League , returned to their home ground in Taunton needing to avoid defeat against Essex to guarantee winning the latter competition . They lost by two runs , prompting Alan Gibson of The Times to write " So we are saying , as we have said at the end of so many seasons , ' well tried Somerset ' , and no more than that . " Somerset returned to the final in 1979 , when they beat Northamptonshire to win their first trophy . Sussex did not reach the final again until 1986 , though they won the 1982 John Player League in the interim .