

= Archie Jackson =

Archibald " Archie " Jackson ( 5 September 1909 ? 16 February 1933 ) , occasionally known as Archibald Alexander Jackson , was an Australian cricketer who played eight Test matches as a specialist batsman between 1929 and 1931 . A teenage prodigy , he played first grade cricket at only 15 years of age and was selected for New South Wales at 17 . In 1929 , aged 19 , Jackson made his Test debut against England , scoring 164 runs in the first innings to become the youngest player to score a Test century .

Renowned for his elegant batting style , he played in a manner similar to the great Australian batsmen Victor Trumper , and Alan Kippax , Jackson 's friend and mentor . His Test and first @-@ class career coincided with the early playing years of Don Bradman , with whom he was often compared . Before the two departed for England as part of the 1930 Australian team , some observers considered Jackson the better batsman , capable of opening the batting or coming in down the order . Jackson 's career was dogged by poor health ; illness and his unfamiliarity with local conditions hampered his tour of England , only playing two of the five Test matches . Later in the year , in the series against the West Indies , Jackson was successful in the first Test in Adelaide , scoring 70 not out before a poor run of form led to his omission from the fifth Test .

Early in the 1931 ? 32 season , Jackson coughed blood and collapsed before the start of play in a Sheffield Shield match against Queensland . Subsequently admitted to a sanatorium in the Blue Mountains , west of Sydney , Jackson was diagnosed with tuberculosis . In an attempt to improve his health and to be closer to his girlfriend , Jackson moved to Brisbane . Ignoring medical advice , Jackson returned to cricket with a local team ; however , his health continued to deteriorate and he died at the age of just 23 . It is speculated that , had he lived , he may have rivalled Don Bradman as a batsman .

= = Early life and career = =

= = = Childhood = = =

Jackson , the first son and third child of Alexander and Margaret Jackson , was born in 1909 at Rutherglen , a small town near Glasgow in Scotland . His father had spent part of his childhood in Australia and returned with his family to settle in Balmain , a suburb of Sydney , in 1913 .

Raised as a Methodist , Jackson was a lifelong teetotaler and non @-@ smoker . He attended Birchgrove Public and Rozelle Junior Technical schools and represented New South Wales Schoolboys at football and cricket . Football talent ran in the family : his uncle Jimmy Jackson and cousin James Jackson , Jr. were both professional footballers in Scotland and England , the latter captaining Liverpool .

Growing up near the home ground of Balmain District Cricket Club , Jackson joined the club in his mid @-@ teens where he quickly came to the attention of the captain , Test bowler Arthur Mailey . The Labor politician " Doc " Evatt , a noted benefactor of young cricketers , helped Jackson 's career by purchasing suitable cricket equipment for him . At the age of 15 years and one month , he made his first grade début for Balmain ; cricket historian David Frith believes that Jackson is the youngest cricketer to play at this level .

Jackson left school at this time and worked for a warehouse firm called Jackson & McDonald ( unrelated ) until the demands of cricket compelled him to resign . The Test batsman Alan Kippax employed Jackson in his sporting goods store and became his mentor . In 1925 ? 26 , his second season with Balmain , Jackson led the grade cricket competition 's batting averages and won selection for the New South Wales Second XI to play Victoria .

= = = Selection for New South Wales = = =

Jackson began the 1926 ? 27 season with scores of 111 against St George , 198 against Western

Suburbs and 106 against Mosman . As a result , he made his first @-@ class début for New South Wales ( NSW ) against Queensland at Brisbane and scored 86 in the second innings . He posted a century in the return match against the Queenslanders at the SCG . On NSW 's tour of the southern states , Jackson made a century in a non first @-@ class fixture against Northern Tasmania and then hit 104 not out against South Australia . These performances prompted the former Australian captain Clem Hill to describe Jackson as " ... the biggest find since Ponsford . "

No Test matches were scheduled for 1927 ? 28 , although the New Zealand team briefly toured Australia on their return journey from playing in England . Jackson scored 104 against the visiting side and shared a century partnership with Kippax , scored in just over 30 minutes . After a brief run of low scores , a boil on Jackson 's knee forced his withdrawal from the match against South Australia at Adelaide . His replacement was another rising teenage batsman , Donald Bradman , who made his first @-@ class début in the match . On his return to the team , Jackson was promoted to open the batting and scored a century in both innings in the return match against South Australia . At the end of the season , he toured New Zealand with an Australian second XI , while Bradman missed out . The side consisted of a few established Test players mixed with promising youngsters . Australia were unbeaten on the tour and Jackson scored 198 runs in four matches at an average of 49 @.@ 50 .

= = Test cricket = =

= = = Test selection = = =

During the 1928 ? 29 season , a strong England team captained by Percy Chapman toured Australia for a five @-@ Test Ashes series . Seeking selection in the Australian Test side , Jackson failed twice in a match designated as a Test trial in Melbourne . In the next match , against the English for New South Wales , he scored 4 and 40 while his team @-@ mates Bradman and Kippax both made centuries . Both Bradman and Kippax were selected for the First Test at the Brisbane Exhibition Ground , Jackson missed out . Keeping his name in front of the selectors , he scored 162 and 90 against South Australia . After Australia lost the first three Tests and the Ashes , the selectors gave Jackson his opportunity , selecting him for his Test début in the fourth Test at the Adelaide Oval . Arthur Mailey , his club captain and the only other Test player from Balmain CC to that time , ran from his office at the Sydney Sun to Kippax 's sports store in Martin Place to tell Jackson the good news .

England batted first and made 334 . In reply , Jackson opened the batting with Bill Woodfull . Before the Test , the Australian skipper , Jack Ryder , approached Kippax for his opinion about such a young player as Jackson being given the responsibility of opening the batting . Kippax replied , " I am sure he expects to open . " After Australia lost three wickets for 19 runs , Ryder joined Jackson at the wicket . Playing in an unhurried manner , Jackson looked confident against the pace of Harold Larwood and punished Maurice Tate when his bowling strayed down the leg side . In 105 minutes , Jackson and Ryder added 100 runs . Jackson reached his half century , followed by Ryder and at stumps on the second day , Australia 's total was 3 / 131 .

The exertion had left Jackson exhausted . His team @-@ mate " Stork " Hendry said that Jackson was limp when he returned to the dressing room . " We had to mop him with cold towels " , he said . Early the next day , Ryder was dismissed and Jackson was joined by Bradman . The two young batsmen shared a long partnership , with Jackson on 97 at the end of the session . As they returned to the wicket after the interval , Bradman advised his younger colleague to play carefully to secure his century . Jackson made no reply , but responded by hitting the first ball from Larwood to the point boundary for four runs , the ball rebounding back on to the field in front of a cheering crowd in the Members ' Stand . After this , he cut loose , with deft glances from the faster balls and cut shots reminiscent of Charlie Macartney . Jackson was eventually dismissed for 164 , making him the youngest Australian batsman to score a Test century , a record beaten by Neil Harvey in 1948 . It is still the second highest score on Test début by an Australian , only one run fewer than Charles

Bannerman 's 165 not out in the first @-@ ever Test in 1877 . This innings saw Jackson hailed as a national hero and he was showered with tributes including a public meeting called in his honour by the Mayor of Balmain .

In 1929 ? 30 , ill @-@ health restricted Jackson to just five first @-@ class matches and five innings for Balmain . Despite his health , Jackson had a successful season , and scored 168 not out against Arthur Gilligan 's English team , which toured Australia briefly en route to New Zealand . He was seen as an automatic selection for the 1930 Ashes tour of England . He confirmed his selection with 182 in a Test trial , an innings regarded by many as the best he had ever played . Another scare with illness saw him hospitalised in Adelaide after the Christmas match against South Australia , missing the next two state matches . His health problems continued after an operation to remove his tonsils ; a procedure that was arranged by the Australian Board of Control despite Jackson never having previously suffered any problems with his tonsils . Bill Ponsford had suffered from tonsillitis during the previous tour and the Board were anxious to avoid similar occurrences . Complications resulting from the operation saw Jackson lose a stone ( 6 @.@ 4 kilograms ) in weight .

= = = Ashes tour of England = = =

Jackson was included in the Australian squad to tour England in 1930 . The bonus for Australia from England 's 1928 ? 29 visit was the emergence of Jackson and Don Bradman and now much was expected of them in a rebuilt Australian squad that retained only four players from the 1926 tour of England . But Jackson was frequently ill and his unfamiliarity with English pitches resulted in patchy form . Even so , he was described at the time by former England player Cecil Parkin as , " a better bat than Bradman " . He was left out of the team for the First Test at Trent Bridge , the only defeat suffered by the Australians all tour . After the Second Test at Lord 's , Jackson recovered some form . Ponsford and Fairfax both fell ill and as a result Jackson was included in the team for the Third Test at Leeds . He scored one run in his only innings while Bradman made a then @-@ record Test score of 334 . Jackson was omitted for the Fourth Test , but a century against Somerset helped him to force his way back into the side for the Fifth and deciding Test at The Oval .

In this match Jackson , batting down the order , played a brave innings on a dangerous wicket facing hostile bowling from Larwood . He took repeated blows on the body while scoring a valuable 73 runs . He shared a stand of 243 with Bradman , who scored 232 , and Australia won the Test by an innings and 39 runs to regain The Ashes . Overall , Jackson 's tour was modest , scoring 1 @,@ 097 runs at an average of 34 @.@ 28 with only one hundred , made against Somerset . Wisden Cricketers ' Almanack , in its report on the 1930 Australians , described Jackson as the " ... great disappointment of the team ... with [ his ] well @-@ deserved reputation for grace of style ... at no time did people in England see the real Jackson . "

On return to Australia for the 1930 ? 31 season , Jackson was selected for the first four Tests against the West Indies . After scoring 70 not out in the First Test in Adelaide , his form tapered away and managed only 124 runs at an average of 31 @.@ 00 for the first four Tests , resulting in his omission for the Fifth and final Test in Sydney . In Jackson 's absence , the West Indies defeated Australia for the first time in a Test . The West Indies captain Jackie Grant , in a daring move , declared his team 's innings closed twice in order to catch the home team on a " sticky wicket " . Jackson , in his capacity as twelfth man , came in as a runner for an injured batsman on the final afternoon , making what was to be his final appearance in first @-@ class cricket .

It was during this Australian season , during a match in Brisbane , that Jackson was introduced to Phyllis Thomas , a trained ballet dancer , who later became his fiancée . In March 1931 , Jackson felt his health had recovered sufficiently to join an exhibition tour of Far North Queensland , led by Alan Kippax . He found the tour exhausting , with arduous travel and damp weather , but played well enough to top the aggregate with over 1 @,@ 100 runs at an average of 93 @.@ 00 . In a letter to his childhood friend and New South Wales team @-@ mate , Bill Hunt , he wrote , " Our tour of North Queensland has now concluded and thank goodness ! ... I would never make this trip again unless I was guaranteed ? 100 , and that 's not enough ! "

= = Illness and death = =

Jackson began the 1931 ? 32 season in form and seemingly in good health , scoring 183 for Balmain in grade cricket against Gordon . He was selected for the NSW team to play Queensland in Brisbane . Before the match commenced , Jackson collapsed after coughing up blood and was rushed to hospital . Jackson believed he was suffering from influenza and he was discharged after five days , when he returned to Sydney . Within a week of his return , the Board of Control arranged for Jackson to be admitted to a sanatorium at Wentworth Falls in the Blue Mountains . After a few months at the sanatorium , Jackson moved into a cottage at nearby Leura to be cared for by his sister .

= = = Tuberculosis = = =

Seeking treatment for psoriasis , Jackson travelled to Adelaide in July 1932 . During his time there , he felt well enough to have an occasional training session in the nets . At the same time , a confidential report was sent to the New South Wales Cricket Association confirming that Jackson had , " ... pneumonary tuberculosis with fairly extensive involvement of the lungs . " He returned to Leura and made plans to move to Brisbane , in the belief that the warmer climate would aid his recovery and to be closer to Phyllis .

In Brisbane , Jackson offered his services to grade club Northern Suburbs , against the advice of his doctors . Despite suffering from a chronic shortness of breath , he averaged 159 @.@ 66 over seven innings and drew record crowds to the club 's matches . The media and public were keen to see him selected for the early tour matches against the touring English team ; however , medical advice prevented his inclusion . Jackson took work as a sales assistant at a sports depot and wrote a column for the Brisbane Mail . He wrote extensively on the Bodyline tactics employed by the English team during the summer . Jackson insisted that Bodyline was legitimate , held no threat to the game , and that it could be combatted ? a minority view in Australia at that time .

= = = Death = = =

In early February 1933 , Jackson collapsed after playing cricket and was admitted to hospital . Aware of the serious nature of his illness and the possibility of his death , Jackson and Phyllis announced their engagement . As the Brisbane Test between Australia and England began , Jackson suffered a severe pulmonary hemorrhage . His parents made their way to Brisbane to see him and many members of the English and Australian teams visited him in hospital during his last days . On 16 February 1933 , Jackson became the youngest Test cricketer to die until Manjural Rana in 2007 .

Jackson 's body was transported back to Sydney by train , which also carried the Australia and England teams for the next Test . Thousands of mourners lined the streets of Sydney for his funeral and the pallbearers were Woodfull , Ponsford , McCabe , Bert Oldfield , Vic Richardson and Bradman . He was buried at the Field of Mars cemetery and a public subscription was raised to install a headstone on his gravesite . The headstone , reading simply He played the game , was unveiled by the Premier of New South Wales Bertram Stevens .

= = Style = =

Jackson was seen as a stylish and elegant batsman , with a genius for timing and placement . His footwork was light and his supple wrists allowed him to steer the ball square and late . He held the bat high on the handle and his cover drive was executed with balletic grace . He was seen as possessing the comely movement and keenness of eye of the great batsman of cricket 's Golden Age , Victor Trumper . Bradman described Jackson as " tall and slim , rather lethargic and graceful in his movements " . Jackson professed a love of applying the maximum velocity to the ball with a

minimum of effort . His one identifiable fault was an occasional failing outside off @-@ stump , being prone to unnecessarily dab at away @-@ swingers and being caught in the slips cordon .

His contemporaries noted his classical style . The journalist A.R.B. Palmer described his cover drive as " ... perfectly balanced and true ... the bat seems a whip in his hands . " Clem Hill , the former Australian captain , noted Jackson 's sparkling footwork , watching close enough to notice that his toes turned in as he walked . Like Kippax , whose style was uncannily similar , Jackson wore his shirt @-@ sleeves almost down to his wrists . This was not in imitation but to conceal the blemishes on his arms caused by psoriasis . Kippax was not seen by some as the best person to imitate , with Charles Kelleway critical of Jackson 's flourishes , wishing he would not be so , " ... cramped in copying other batsman 's styles " .

Inevitably , he was compared to his New South Wales and Australian team @-@ mate , Bradman . In contrast to Jackson , Bradman made not even a pretence of being a stylist . A writer , comparing the two after Jackson 's Test début , stated that Bradman had " forced his way to the top by sheer natural ability , a straight bat , cool cheerful temperament , determination and enterprise " , but Jackson was " the finished batsman , the batsman who knows one stroke for each ball ... [ and ] executes that stroke with an artistry that has no parallel to this day " . Before the 1930 tour of England , experts such as Frank Woolley , Percy Fender and Maurice Tate rated Jackson as more likely to succeed in English conditions ; Bradman was seen as too unorthodox or even cross @-@ batted for softer English wickets .