

**Brightly fades**

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In this digital age, radios crackled all day with the ageing broadcasts of Bradman at the crease, thwacking willow on leather to score another of his centuries.

While Australia has changed dramatically from the mono-chrome nation when a sandy-haired Bradman sliced the ball with a graceful sweeping stroke to today's multi-cultural melting pot, Bradman's appeal has never waned.

"His memorial is, in a sense, a personal and almost spiritual one, it's the special place he's had in the affections of our community," said cricketing fanatic Prime Minister John Howard.

"He was more than just a great cricketer and a great sportsman, he was a dominant Australian personality in a way that I don't think any other person has been in the last 100 years."

Bradman received some 4,000 letters a week, from young and old alike, and until ill health prevented it answered all. Writers, poets and songwriters have for 50 years tried to explain why Bradman captured not only the hearts of Australians of his generation, but those who were born long after he retired.

"When Auntie Duckie danced with Donald Bradman she said it was the highlight of her life, that wizard of the willow swept her off her feet, along with all Australians, every man on the street, Sir Don you gave us pride in ourselves," sang country western singer John Williamson.

**The world pays**

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hailed as 'the greatest', but Sir Donald's stature has never been doubted or queried." Pollock told website CricketLine.com on Monday.

"It's hardly surprising that he's been described as the greatest Australian ever," Pollock said.

The United Cricket Board of South Africa (UCBSA) described Bradman as "the game's greatest player and ambassador".

India's most famous batsman Sunil Gavaskar lamented the death of Australian icon Sir Donald.

Bradman on Monday said he was a god to cricket fans in his country.

"The cricketing world assumed that like with his batting, he would score a century in life as well," Gavaskar said in a message of condolence. "To Indians, for most of whom cricket is a religion, Sir Donald Bradman was god and there will be immense sadness all over the cricketing world at his passing away," he said from Bombay.

Gavaskar offered his condolences to Bradman's family and Australia which, he said, had lost "one of the greatest men the world has ever known".

"He is probably the greatest cricketer who ever played the game. His loss is a big one, not only to Australia but to world cricket," he told reporters.

Sir Alec Beder, one of the few bowlers to earn Sir Donald Bradman's respect, led the English tributes on Monday to the greatest batsman in Test history.

"I played 10 tests against the Don," Beder recalled. "I got him out six times in seven Test innings. He was the best. He played cricket as it should be played."

Beder headed England's attack against Bradman's Australia side in the 1946-7 and 1948 series with his fast-medium inswinging bowling and devastating leg-cutters.

"He will never be surpassed," Beder said. "He was just extraordinary. I am proud that he considered me one of his greatest friends in England."

"His objective was to get runs, not stay there. He scored 50 an hour every time he played. His record will never be passed. Bradman, in 50 tests, got more runs than people who have played in more than twice as many."

**Everyone wanted a piece of him**

AFP, Sydney  
Sir Donald Bradman was idolised by generations of Australians as the greatest sportsman in the country's history but his latter years were plagued by people trying to cash in on his name.

Last year Prime Minister John Howard personally intervened to protect him from companies trying to use the Bradman name for commercial purposes.

The Bradman Museum in Bowral, on behalf of Sir Donald, had spent months fighting companies from cafes to sex shops trying to use the Bradman name.

Last October the government made changes to the Corporations Law regulations specifically to prevent anyone from using Brad-



A photo taken in Adelaide on August 27, 1998 shows Sir Donald Bradman celebrating his 90th birthday with Shane Warne (L) and Sachin Tendulkar.

**Steve, Sachin savours**

AFP, Bombay  
A stunned Australian cricket team was plunged into mourning at the death of Sir Donald Bradman on Monday, but vowed to use the loss as an inspiration to win the upcoming series against India.

Captain Steve Waugh, preparing for the first Test at the Wankhede stadium here from Tuesday, described Bradman as a "once-in-a-lifetime cricketer" and urged team-mates to be inspired by him.

"He united the country after the second world war and inspired so many people," Waugh said. "I don't think there will be someone else like him."

"We can take inspiration from the way he played the game."

"He tried to be one step ahead of the others and set standards."

"That's what we want to do even today. We can use him as an

inspiration," Waugh said. Australia are looking to win their first Test series on Indian soil in 31 years after coming off a record streak of 15 consecutive Test wins.

"I had a one-to-one meeting with him last year (before the tour of Sri Lanka) and it was fantastic," Waugh said.

"He was very humble about his achievements and wanted to see himself as a normal person."

"That's the humility. It is something we can all learn from."

The Australian Cricket Board (ACB) made no moves to have the Test match postponed, but decided to wear black bands during play in Bradman's memory.

"Sir Don would not have wanted that (a postponement) to happen," ACB spokesman Brian Murgatroyd said. "He would not want to disturb anything."

India's star batsman Sachin Tendulkar, who Bradman said

resembled his own style, was stunned at the passing away of the legend.

"What can one say, it is a great loss for not only the fans but for all cricketers," a visibly shaken Tendulkar said.

"Whatever he has achieved is always a dream for other batsmen. They want to be like him, but it is probably impossible to get there."

Tendulkar, one of the few modern cricketers to have been granted an audience with the reclusive Bradman, said his words will remain etched in memory for ever.

"Meeting him itself was a great dream that came true for me. I was very privileged to have spoken to him."

"I asked him about his batting, he also gave me tips which have held me in good stead."

"When someone like Sir Don speaks about batting, you listen very carefully. That was a very special moment for me."

**Aussie skippers mourn**

AFP, Sydney  
Australia's greatest sporting champion, Sir Donald Bradman, said in his last interview, in 1996, the thing he would most like to be remembered for was integrity.

Bradman, then 87, holds by far the greatest batting record of all but said then he had seen "many cricketers who had more ability than I had."

"Why they didn't make more runs than I did, I don't know," he told The Channel Nine television network in an exclusive two-hour interview.

He nominated West Indian Brian Lara and India's Sachin Tendulkar as the two best batsmen in the world today, the West Indies' Gary Sobers as "undoubtedly the best all-round cricketer I've ever set eyes on" and Australian leg-spinner Shayne Warne as "the best thing that's happened to the game for many years."

The late Harold Larwood, England's Bodyline bowler of the 1930s, was "very good and very fast", the late Australian leg-spinner Bill O'Reilly was the best Bradman ever faced and England's Frank "Typhoon" Tyson was the fastest he saw.

Bradman regarded the record 334 he scored at Leeds in 1930 as "technically flawed" and said the 254 he scored at Lord's was much better.

"Every ball went exactly where I wanted it to go until the ball that got me out," he said.

He also recalled the last time he strode to the crease at The Oval in 1948 with the England team and fans singing "For he's a jolly good fellow" he had tears in his eyes as

lift to have the greatest understand."

Border said he anticipated that current Australian captain Steve Waugh would ensure a fitting tribute to their country's greatest sportsman would be paid ahead of the first day of the Test series with India which starts in Mumbai tomorrow morning.

"It almost a national day of mourning in Australia," said Border. "It wouldn't surprise me to see this day remembered for years to come."

"Statistically, Bradman can lay claim to being the greatest sportsman ever. It is hard to imagine anyone equalling what he did in cricket," added Border.

"Steve Waugh is particularly fond of cricket history. I am very sure they will do something special."

"He was a fair old age and it wasn't totally surprising but it has hit us hard."

Mark Taylor who stepped into Border's shoes when he retired, said Bradman's influence on the game was never-ending.

"Fifty three years after playing his final Test match, he was still revered around the world, held in incredible esteem," he said.

"As a cricketer, the world has known no equal. He was the true symbol of fine sportsmanship, the benchmark that all young cricketers aspired to."

"His innings may have closed but his legacy will forever live on in the hearts of millions of Australians."

Ex-skipper Bill Brown said Sir Donald Bradman was a great Australian who finished his career

without a blemish on his character.

The 88-year-old former Test captain during the 1930s and 1940s told ABC radio he played many games with Sir Donald.

"You could sum it up saying he was a great Australian. He was sincere, honest and certainly cricketers ... respected him very highly both from a cricket point of view and from a personal point of view," he said.

His best memory of Sir Donald was "running up and down the other end while he hit bowlers all over the place."

Not only was he an inspiration for up and coming cricketers, "he was the pinnacle of Australian cricket."

"I think he'd like to be remembered as someone who certainly did his best for Australia and as far as I can recollect, I'm sure I'm right, there was not a blemish I can remember on his character," he said.

"I think all you can say about Don is that he was a very fine Australian," he said.

Famous commentator and former captain Richie Benaud said Bradman epitomised the Australian dream.

"He showed that it was possible in Australia to be a young country boy, with no pretensions, someone who was a very promising country cricketer, who could then go on to play for Australia and captain Australia."

"He is probably the most important Australian of all time", added Benaud.

Another ex-skipper Bill Lawry said, "We're just lucky he was born an Australian."

**At a glance**

- REUTERS, Sydney  
Following is a factfile on Australian cricketer great Sir Donald Bradman who died on Sunday aged 92:
- 1908: Born Donald George Bradman, August 27 in Cootamundra, New South Wales. Son of George and Emily.
  - 1911: Family moved to Bowral, 80 km (50 miles) southwest of Sydney.
  - 1920: Scored first century, for Bowral High School against Mittagong.
  - 1926: Joined St George in the Sydney club competition after they agreed to pay his commuting costs from Bowral. Run out for 110 on debut.
  - 1927: Made first-class debut for NSW against South Australia, scoring 118 and 33 batting at number seven.
  - 1928: Made test debut against England in Brisbane, scoring 18 and 1. Dropped for second test but recalled for the third match, making 79 and 112.
  - 1930: Set first-class world record of 452 not out for NSW v Queensland, which remains an Australian record.
  - 1930: Made first of four Ashes tours to England, scoring 974 runs at 139.14. Made four centuries including then world record of 334 not out (including 309 in a single day) at Leeds.
  - 1932: Married childhood sweetheart Jessie Menzies in Sydney on April 30.
  - 1932-33: Scored 396 runs at 56.57, including one century, in the infamous "Bodyline" series. England captain Douglas Jardine instructed his bowlers to deliver short-pitched balls at the Australian batsmen's bodies in an attempt to curb Bradman's scoring. England won the series but the practice soured relations between the two countries and the tactic was later outlawed.
  - 1934: Scored 758 runs at 94.75, including a triple century at Leeds and a double century at the Oval, on tour in England. Almost died when he was struck down by an appendicitis.
  - 1936: Moved from Sydney to Adelaide, building a new home and a career as a stockbroker. Appointed Australian test captain later that year.
  - 1938: Appointed national selector. Served until 1950.
  - 1939: Son John born.
  - 1940: Joined Australian airforce, then transferred to the army. Invalidated out the following year because of back problems and poor eyesight.
  - 1941: Daughter Shirley born.
  - 1947: Scored his 100th first-class century, against India for an Australian XI, at the Sydney Cricket Ground.
  - 1948: Played his last test series, leading the "Invincibles" in England. Made a second ball duck in his final innings, bowled by Eric Hollies, at the Oval when he needed just four runs for a career average of 100. He finished his 52-test career with 6,996 runs at an average of 99.94, including 29 centuries.
  - 1949: Played his final first-class match, scoring 30 for South Australia against Victoria. During his career, scored 28,067 runs at an average of 95.14, including 117 centuries.
  - 1949: Knighted for services to cricket.
  - 1954: Reappointed national selector, served until 1971.
  - 1960: Appointed chairman of Australian Cricket Board, serving on and off until 1972.
  - 1989: Howral opened a museum commemorating his achievements.
  - 1997: Jessie died, aged 88, from cancer.
  - 1998: Mark Taylor equals Bradman's Australian test record 334 against Pakistan but decides not to pass him, declaring his innings closed out of respect to Bradman.
  - 2000: Son John reclaimed the family name after decades of living under the alias Bradsen, to avoid public attention.
  - 2001: Died in his sleep on February 25, aged 92.



The best partnership of his life... Sir Donald with his wife Jessie.

**Remember him for integrity**

AFP, Sydney  
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He also recalled the last time he strode to the crease at The Oval in 1948 with the England team and fans singing "For he's a jolly good fellow" he had tears in his eyes as

he took strike. His dismissal without score became the most famous duck in cricket history because not only was it so uncharacteristic, but it meant Bradman would retire with an average of just under the magic century.

"I'm very sorry I made a duck," he said. "I'd have been glad if I'd made those four extra runs to have an average of 100."

"I didn't know it at the time and I don't think the Englishmen knew it either. I think if they had known it they may have been generous enough to let me get four."

But he denied that he got out because of tears in his eyes.

"Of course that's rubbish. I was certainly emotional, but I wasn't that bad. But I was very sad walking out. I felt I'd let the people down."

The man whose achievements are still the stuff of legend and who brightened Australian lives through the dark days of the Great Depression enjoyed a marriage to Jessie stretching back more than 60 years.

Asked when he fell in love with her, he said: "I think that would be the day she came to live with us when I was about 12 years of age."

"I remember the day very well because I'd been sent by my mother on a mission to buy some groceries and I'd run into the doctor's car and had an accident, had my bike smashed up."

"When I got home she was there, having just been delivered by her father because she was going to stay with us. That was the day I fell in love with her."

What would he like best to be remembered for? "Integrity," said Bradman.

**Down but never out**

AFP, Sydney  
Some of Sir Donald Bradman's best cricket was played despite being plagued by debilitating illnesses.

He needed an emergency appendectomy and almost died from peritonitis in 1934 and later had to battle the muscular ailment fibrositis that had cricketer's greatest batsman unable to raise an arm to comb his hair.

Sir Donald's health problems initially surfaced in 1931 when he complained of feeling "off colour", the book images of Bradman says.

He put his ill health down partly to the stress of too much cricket and later complained that a public wrangle with the Australian Cricket Board had affected him.

The board ruled he could not write for newspapers and play Test cricket at the same time unless solely employed as a journalist.

Sir Donald later revealed in his book, Farewell to Cricket: "You can imagine my mental state when this decision was conveyed to me."

Then came the Bodyline series in which the England fast bowlers broke with cricketing convention and bowled short-pitched deliveries aimed at the batsmen's bodies.

The series started without Sir Donald who was consigned by illness to being a spectator at the first Test.

After the series, in which he was restricted to a modest 56.57 from four Tests with just one century, Sir Donald confessed to still feeling the strain of "playing, thinking and talking" cricket.

He started the 1934 tour of England again in indifferent health and was persuaded to play the tour opening match against Worcestershire by captain Bill Woodfull.

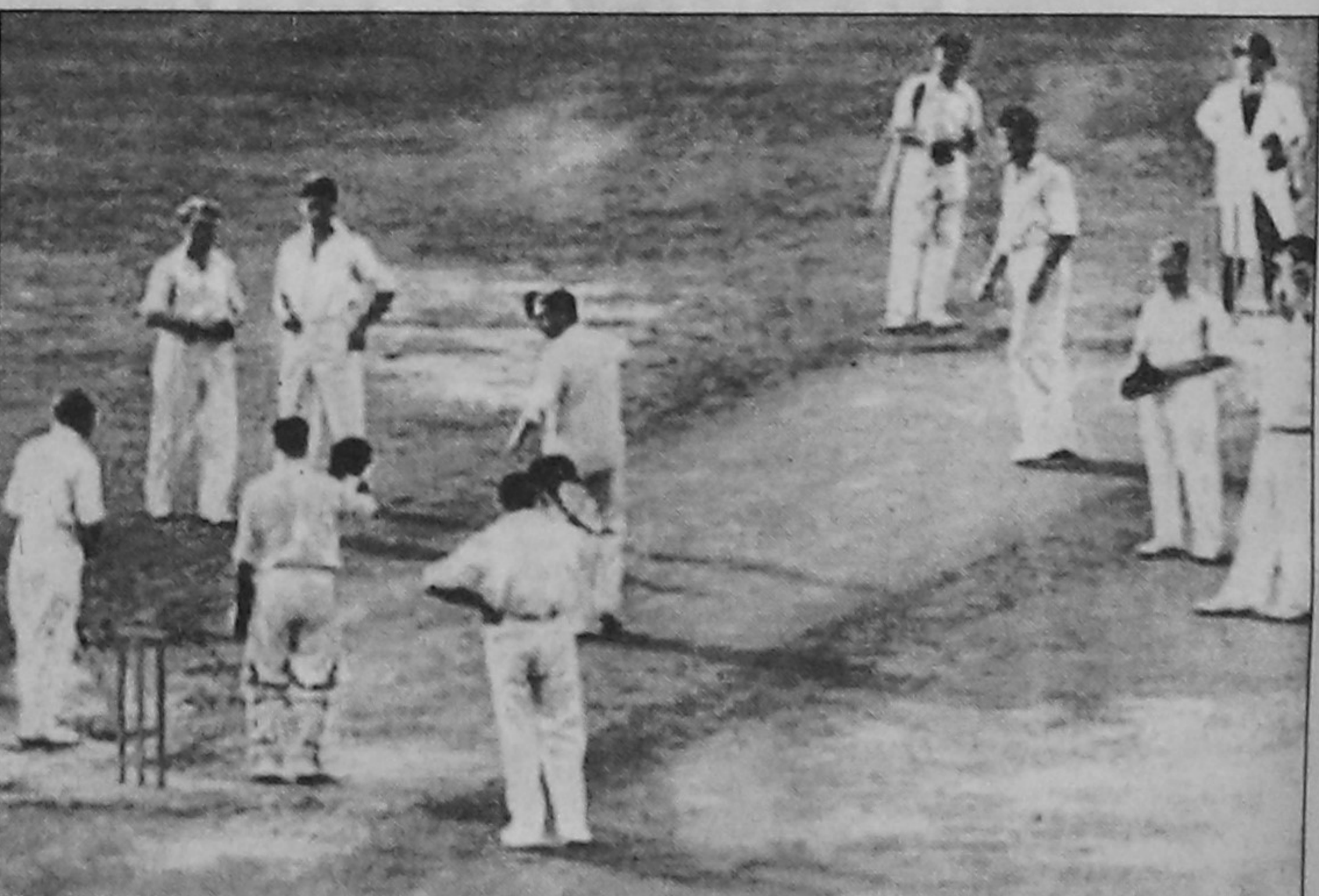
"I played and under considerable strain, steeled myself to see through an innings of 206," Sir Donald later wrote.

"It was made in quick time and obtained a cordial press but I was the only one aware of the drain on my resources."

On the eve of the team's departure for home, Bradman suddenly fell ill.

"He underwent an emergency appendectomy and hovered close to death for several days with peritonitis," Images of Bradman says. "Bradman was considered lucky to have survived the ordeal."

His wife Jessie rushed to be at her husband's side and Sir Donald was operated on by Sir Douglas Shields, a London-based Australian surgeon.



The Don comes to the crease for his last innings against England at The Oval in 1948.