

tered by the Australians, and the Don scored several centuries, including a double century, in an innings where he was partnered by Sid Barnes, who also scored a double century.

In those days, we listened to the matches on the radio where skilled commentators, gave us an accurate and exciting account of the state of play. But we did not have the visual pleasure of seeing the brilliant stroke play, or the movement of the ball off the pitch, all supported by action replays in slow motion, which makes the watching of cricket on the screen today no less exciting than seeing it live on the ground. I also heard the cricket commentary of the subsequent Indian tour of Australia in the winter of 1947-48, led by Lala Amarnath, who were also annihilated by the Australians led by Bradman, who continued to score centuries.

I finally recollect our religious presence, in the study of the headmaster of St. Paul's School, Darjeeling, where some of us were invited to come in after supper to listen to the live commentary of Don Bradman's last tour of England in 1948. The record of that tour was brilliantly captured by Jack Fingleton, who was an opening batsman for Australia in the 1930s but went on to be come a famous sportswriter, from where he wrote on that epic tour in his book, Brightly Fades the Don.

Other cricket writers who have left indelible images of the Bradman era in my mind are Arthur Mailey, himself a famous leg spinner who played for Australia in the 1920s, who wrote a famous book on the infamous bodyline test series in Australia in 1932-33, And Then Came Larwood. And finally, Neville Cardus, who perhaps better than all others, wrote of the Bradman era in a series of books beginning from the 1930 Australian tour of England, in an elegant prose which has no equal among sports writers.

Having grown up in an era where the supremacy of Bradman as the greatest batsman of all time, was unquestioned, why do I choose to revisit this question? I have in recent years been pondering this question, as I have directly watched in action on the cricket field, but mostly on television, such great batsmen as Garfield Sobers, Viv Richards, Sunil Gavaskar, Brian Lara, and most recently Sachin Tendulkar.

The most relevant question which comes to my mind is the quality of bowling faced by these great batsmen when they were accumulating their vast treasure trove of runs. Sobers, then Lara, successively went on to score the highest individual test scores. Bradman, with his score of 334 in the 1934 tour of England, held this record until it was broken by Len Hutton, in the final test at the Oval during the Australian tour of England in the summer of 1938.

Hutton had scored a rather laborious, record breaking 364, which prevailed until it was broken by Sobers in the 3rd test at Sabina Park, Kingston, in his massacre of the Pakistani attack led by Fazal Mahmood, Khan Mohammed, and Mahmud Hussain on their tour of the West Indes in 1957-58. It may be mentioned that on that tour, Pakistan's famous opening bat, Hanif