

MYSTERY SPINNER WHO BROKE DOWN RACE BARRIERS

Profile of Sonny Ramadhin by Ashley Ball

Born in Trinidad in 1929, Ramadhin earned himself a reputation as a fearsome spin bowler and will have his name eternally printed in the history books thanks to his inclusion in the 1951 Wisden top five 'Cricketers of the Year', all this despite coming from almost abject poverty along with his birth certificate not even displaying a first name. However, he was to be known affectionately at school, and for years to come, as Sonny.



Ramadhin impressed sufficiently at a young age for Trinidad to be included in the 1950 West Indies party that toured England in 1950. Ramadhin and his 'spin twin' Alf Valentine terrorised England during the tour with Ramadhin claiming 32 wickets from only four Test matches and playing a pivotal role in the West Indies' first ever win on English soil.

The Trinidadian also broke down race barriers as he was the first player of East Indian descent to represent the West Indies. This has since opened the door for fellow East Indians who have gone on to proudly play international cricket. Since Ramadhin's debut other East Indians Joe Solomon, Shivnarine Chanderpaul and Daren Ganga have also starred for the Caribbean team.

Although Ramadhin was known as a wrist spinner, his leg-break balls didn't turn all that much, so he adopted the tag of 'off-spinner'. Ramadhin's action was one of his noticeable assets as it could not be determined by the batsman in his run-up whether he was going to bowl off breaks or leg breaks.

Ramadhin's career spanned almost 20 years and he collected 758 first-class wickets in total. He also totalled well over a thousand runs with the bat from 184 first-class appearances.

Legend has it that Ramadhin learnt how to spin a ball from bowling with limes on a beach. Another famous story was that while in England he didn't have the traditional initials...until he became known as K.T.Ramadhin; however, his adopted names still remain unknown to this day!

Ramadhin represented both Lancashire and Lincolnshire while in England. He also played for West Yorkshire clubs Liversedge and Golcar in local league cricket. Liversedge's proudest moment came in 1966, while Ramadhin was representing the club, when they won the Heavy Woollen Cup.

Ramadhin still lives in England and his cricketing legacy lives on as his son-in-law Willie Hogg represented both Lancashire and Warwickshire, and Hogg's son Kyle (Ramadhin's grandson) has represented Lancashire, Nottinghamshire and Worcestershire plus Otago in New Zealand.