

# ARKLE THE CAP DOFFER!

## Profile of Derek Randall by David Brenchley

After calling first-class cricket a day, former Nottinghamshire batsman Derek Randall decided to turn to local league cricket. At the age of 41, 'Arkle' turned out for Thongsbridge as a professional during the 1993 season.

Randall made his Nottinghamshire debut in 1972 against Essex and played there until his retirement in 1993 – a career spanning 20 years. He made 52 centuries and won the County Championship twice (1981 and 1987). His best match came against Middlesex in 1979. After a first innings total of 209, he then went on to score 146 in his second innings.



He also had a distinguished, if sometimes inconsistent, international career. He made his One Day debut in 1976, a year before his Test match debut, against West Indies and India respectively. He marked his arrival on the one-day scene by taking two catches and scoring an impressive 88 as England lost by 36 runs. 88 remained his highest one day score.

Despite an unimpressive Test average of 33.37, Randall made 12 50s and seven centuries. His greatest innings came in the Centenary Test of 1977 when England faced the great Australia. With some of the greatest ever players watching, England needed to chase 463 for victory. Randall's well-renowned agility helped him to evade a bouncer from Dennis Lillee, a ball he acknowledged by doffing his cap! By the end of the match, Randall had sufficiently impressed the watching Don Bradman by scoring 174 and taking his team within 46 runs of what would have been a famous victory.

His greatest strength was his agility - this made him a formidable fielder and with himself and David Gower either side of the wicket, sides thought twice about taking quick singles. The Ashes series of 1977 encapsulated all Randall was about. During the Fourth Test, at his home ground of Trent Bridge, he was run out by Geoffrey Boycott. In the final Test, he went from the ridiculous to the sublime as he amazed everyone at Headingley to run out Rick McCosker before taking the catch that clinched England the series.

After turning out for Thongsbridge, Randall made a comeback at the ripe old age of 49. He played in the Natwest Trophy for Suffolk, opening the batting and scoring 4 as his team lost to Lancashire Cricket Board by 4 wickets. He has also coached Cambridge University and Bedford School – where he recommended Alastair Cook to be picked for the ECB National Academy. His legacy also lives on at Trent Bridge, with 'The Derek Randall Suite' named after him.