

C J's SPORTING TIMES - MEMORIES OF SOME GREAT MEETINGS AND
EVENTS.

**GEOFFREY BOYCOTT, OBE - ENGLAND AND
YORKSHIRE C C C**

80 TH BIRTHDAY 21 10 2020

Growing up in the 1970's as a cricket mad teenager, my Retford based friends and myself would spend as many days as possible at nearby Worksop Cricket Club whenever first class cricket was being staged there by Notts - a short bus journey or lift and we could easily watch some of the Country's finest at very close quarters .

This ground was also where my grandfather, JB, played for 17 years many as Captain of Worksop and he also made his debut there for Notts back in 1935

In July 1979 , Notts entertained rivals Yorkshire at Worksop with the great Geoff Boycott opening the batting for the Tykes.

'Following on' after a dire Yorkshire first innings (159 all out) , Geoff held at bay both Clive Rice and Kenny Watson on a bowler friendly wicket for an undefeated 175 . I watched every ball he faced and his innings against such world class bowlers in difficult circumstances made a tremendous impression on myself - it is still one of the most technically finest innings I have ever seen . I even

managed to say "Well played " to Mr Boycott as he came off the field and he looked my way and nodded as if to say , "yes, that was one of my best efforts. "

I've subsequently met Geoff a few times watching either England or Yorkshire and he spoke at the RCC Dinner in 1983 with Brian Bolus & Derek Randall which was certainly a night to remember.

I remember Geoff back in 1977 in the Ashes Test match at Trent Bridge, being responsible for running out our local hero from Retford , Derek Randall. It was a traumatic moment for the all concerned including Geoff and one that took my late dad several months to recover from - his protégé run out in his first Test at Trent Bridge .

Geoff himself recovered his composure , scored a Century (107) in what was his recall to International cricket after a 3 year absence and later in the game in the second innings , he was at the crease with Derek again when England won the Test. It was Derek who fittingly struck the winning run - They both left the field smiling and delighted in each other's success. They remained good friends throughout their respective careers.

In March 1981 , I was in the crowd at the Kensington Oval , Barbados when Michael Holding bowled to Boycott at the

commencement of England's first innings - it is considered by many - including Geoff - to have been the fastest ever opening over of any Test innings and Geoff was bowled for 0 off the 6th and last ball - the WI crowd noise was just deafening- the prized wicket of Boycott greeted as if the match was won in that single moment

The over has become so famous that Holding's shirt from this incident is currently up for auction by Christie's for several thousand pounds.

I was tasked by my Company's MD in the mid 1980's to ask Geoff if he would attend a corporate event for a considerable fee and having secured his willing services was then requested by the same MD a week later to cancel the event and the attendance of Geoff as our chief guest. Throughout this nerve wracking period , Geoff was a perfect gentleman and a consummate professional with myself and I lived to tell the tale !

So Geoff has always been a character in my cricket watching life and I hold him in total respect as a player & commentator - if you needed someone to bat for your life , I'd call on Geoff to do the job - even though he's now 80 !

Geoff 80th birthday was on 21st October and he was featured on the cover of the 'Cricketer' magazine , which also contained an

insightful article by Simon Hughes based upon an interview with Geoff at his home in Boston Spa.

Amongst all the stories and all the opinions of Geoff - some very good and some very bad, some from Boycott haters and some from Boycott lovers - his actual career contains an astonishing list of achievement at the highest possible level.

8,114 Test runs , a then world record ; 22 Test hundreds - England never lost a match in which he made a century ; 17 Test series wins including 4 Ashes series ; On the losing side only 20 times in his 108 Tests ; 151 first - class hundreds (the 5th highest in the history of the game); 48,426 career runs @56.83 in 609 first class matches.

Happy Birthday Geoff - 80 NOT OUT

Chris Hall

Footnote

When I went to Worksop to see NCCC v YCCC in 1983 , Geoff scores 214

not out in the first innings of the match with an opening partnership of 162 with Martyn Moxon - another brilliant innings by Geoff and his talented partner.

***QUESTION Where did Geoff score his first hundred in first class cricket ? 145 @**

Bramall Lane v Lancashire June 3rd 1963 ,aged 22 - batted at No.5

***QUESTION Who held the world record Test match runs before Geoff ? Sir Garry Sobers**

(8,032)

***QUESTION When and where did Geoff end his first class career with Yorkshire - 12 th
September 1986 , Scarborough v Northants.**



