



Eileen Ash at the 2017 ICC Women's World Cup final. Photo: Tom Shaw

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## **ECB pays tribute to Eileen Ash**

The England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) is deeply saddened to learn of the death of Eileen Ash at the age of 110.

Ash, who made her Test debut against Australia in 1937, was a remarkable woman who led an extraordinary life.

A right-arm seamer, Ash (née Whelan) made her Test debut against Australia at Northampton in 1937 and went on to represent her country on seven occasions either side of World War II, retiring in 1949.

Domestically, she represented the Civil Service Women, Middlesex Women and South Women.

Eighty years after she made her international debut, Ash rang the bell at a sold-out Lord's ahead of England Women's memorable victory in the 2017 ICC Women's World Cup final.

Two years later, in 2019, a portrait of Ash was unveiled at the Home of Cricket, a ground at which she was afforded life-long honorary MCC Membership.

Ash – who was the oldest-ever Test cricketer at the time of her death – was a natural high-achiever, on and off the pitch. In the middle of her England career, during WWII, she was seconded to MI6, she played golf until the age of 98, and in 2017, aged 105, she demonstrated her extraordinary energy in a [yoga session](#) with current England Women's captain Heather Knight.

Ash received messages from the cricketing world earlier this year, when she celebrated her 110th birthday in October.

ECB Managing Director of Women's Cricket, Clare Connor said: "Our sport owes so much to its pioneers and Eileen was one of them. I am deeply sad to be saying goodbye to her today.

"Heather and I went to visit Eileen about six months before the 2017 ICC Women's World Cup – she was 105 at the time – and it was one of the most remarkable experiences. Eileen taught Heather yoga, we played snooker, we drank cups of tea and we leafed through newspapers and scrapbooks celebrating Eileen's time as a player in the 1930s and 1940s.

"She regaled us with some amazing stories, including how she came to have her bat signed by Sir Donald Bradman at a French restaurant in Sydney in 1949! I know neither of us will ever forget that day, it was so special.

"Our thoughts and prayers are with Eileen's family as they come to terms with losing such a wonderful woman and the end of an astonishing life."

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