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## New Richards-Botham Trophy to recognise two of England and West Indies greats

England and the West Indies will compete for a new Richards-Botham Trophy when they next meet in a Men's Test series to pay tribute to two of their greatest players whose rivalry and friendship embodies the close relationship and mutual respect between the two sides.

Today's Third Test between the two sides will be the last time the two sides compete for the Wisden Trophy, the England and Wales Cricket Board and Cricket West Indies have announced.

In its place the new Richards-Botham Trophy will now be designed ready for when the teams next meet in a Test series.

The title honours Sir Vivian Richards, one of cricket's greatest batsmen who scored more than 8,500 runs in a 121-Test career, and Sir Ian Botham, the legendary all-rounder who scored more than 5,000 runs and took 383 wickets in 102 Tests. Fierce competitors on the pitch, the pair developed a great friendship off it which still endures, and the new trophy is a fitting way to celebrate the warm relationship between the nations and to honour the gladiatorial spirit of contests past and present.

The Wisden Trophy, first introduced in 1963 to commemorate the hundredth edition of the Wisden Cricketers' Almanack, will now be retired and will be displayed at the MCC Museum at Lord's where it has traditionally been kept.

Sir Vivian Richards said: "This is a huge honour for my good friend Ian and myself. I am delighted to know that the game that I have shown my love for since a little boy is naming such a prestigious award in my recognition of what I managed to achieve as a cricketer. When I had the opportunity to go to England and represent Somerset, one of the first persons I met was Ian Botham, who would later become one of my best friends. We are friends for life.

"To have this trophy – West Indies vs England – named in honour of our work on the cricket field is great. What I think is also remarkable is that it says a lot about our relationship off the field as well. We were competitors on the field, but we showed we were brothers off the field. I'm proud to have my name on one side of the trophy with him on the other side."

Sir Ian Botham said: "Viv was the finest batsman I ever played against. He's a great friend but we've always been competitive, not least when we were on the cricket field, and there was no one else's wicket I would treasure more.

"Playing the West Indies was always one of the toughest tests in cricket, and it's an honour for this trophy to bear our names. I hope future series will be just as exciting as the one we've all been enjoying this summer."

Sir Vivian averaged 62.36 against England across his career with eight hundreds. He dominated the 1976 series between the two sides, scoring 829

runs at an average of 118.42 in the series which West Indies won 3-0. This included 232 in the first Test and 291 in the fifth. He also made what at the time was the fastest Test hundred in the game against England in 1986, taking just 56 balls to reach his century. It is still the equal second fastest of all time.

Facing the best team in the world at the time, Sir Ian took 61 wickets at an average of 35 against the West Indies, with three five-wicket hauls and a best of 8/103 at Lord's. He also scored four 50s, with a best of 81 in the same game at Lord's in 1984.

Colin Graves, ECB Chair, said: "England and the West Indies have produced many magic cricketing moments over the years, and this series has been no different even though it's been played in very different circumstances. We remain very grateful for West Indies travelling here to play this series, and it's fitting that we've got such an exciting final test in store as the teams compete for the Wisden Trophy for the final time."

"The Wisden Trophy was introduced nearly 60 years ago to mark the 100<sup>th</sup> edition of the Almanack, and we've been extremely proud to contest it since then. Both we and Cricket West Indies felt that the time was right to honour two of our greatest modern players. Sir Vivian and Sir Ian were fierce competitors on the pitch but great friends off it, exemplifying the spirit of the contests between our two cricketing nations and providing perfect inspiration for those who compete for the Richards-Botham Trophy in years to come."

Ricky Skerritt, President of Cricket West Indies, said: "Sir Viv's phenomenal West Indies track record against England, both as a player and captain, and his longstanding friendship with his former Somerset teammate and England rival, Sir Ian Botham, presented an excellent opportunity to honour two uniquely suited living legends. Both honorees put their heart into the game, and always gave their all for their teams and countries. There are other West Indian cricket legends whose names could also have been chosen for this honour, but none more deserving than Sir Viv."

## Notes to editors

The Wisden Trophy was first introduced in 1963 to commemorate the hundredth edition of the Wisden Cricketers' Almanack. Since then there have been 27 series between England and the West Indies, with England winning

9, West Indies 14 and 4 drawn series. West Indies are the current holders after regaining the trophy with a 2-1 victory in the Caribbean in 2019. The series has seen some of the greatest cricketing achievements in modern times including Brian Lara's world record scores of 375 and 400\*.

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## Contacts



**Kate Miller**

Press Contact

Director of Communications

[media@ecb.co.uk](mailto:media@ecb.co.uk)



**Jonathan Reed**

Press Contact

Head of Media & Publications

[media@ecb.co.uk](mailto:media@ecb.co.uk)

+44 (0) 7525 596 621



**Danny Reuben**

Press Contact

Head of Team Communications

England Men's team

[danny.reuben@ecb.co.uk](mailto:danny.reuben@ecb.co.uk)

+44 (0)7825 723 620

**Matt Somerford**

Press Contact

Communications Manager - Domestic Cricket

[media@ecb.co.uk](mailto:media@ecb.co.uk)

+44 (0)7551 134 716

**Hen Cowen**

Press Contact

Senior Communications Manager (they/them)

[hen.cowen@ecb.co.uk](mailto:hen.cowen@ecb.co.uk)

+44 (0)7585 987 302

**Chris Tuttlebee**

Press Contact

Corporate Communications Lead

[chris.tuttlebee@ecb.co.uk](mailto:chris.tuttlebee@ecb.co.uk)

+44 (0)7824 551713

**Emily Liles**

Press Contact

Communications Manager - Performance (England Women)

[emily.liles@ecb.co.uk](mailto:emily.liles@ecb.co.uk)