

*The One Hundredth and First Cricketer to have his name*

*added to the infamous Home of Cricket's Honours Board*

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On the twentieth to the twenty-fourth of June in 1974, Dennis ('Sacker') Leslie Amiss scored the one hundredth and first century at the home of cricket, Lords Cricket Ground. The match against India was the second of three tests that year, followed by two one-day international matches and five tour matches against English counties; (Surrey County Cricket Club, Derby County Cricket Club, Oxford County Cricket Club, Gloucester County Cricket Club and Nottingham County Cricket Club).

### WHO WAS DENNIS AMISS?

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Dennis Leslie Amiss (MBE) was born on 7 April 1943 in Harborne, Birmingham. In his teenage years, he suffered a serious back injury whilst playing football, which forced him to start every day of his sporting career stretching before he trained or played a sporting activity.



**Dennis Amiss playing for Warwickshire**

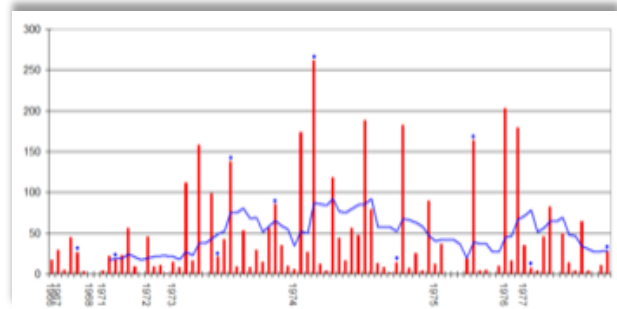
This didn't stop him though as he became one of the more preeminent openers in world cricket.

The whole experience started in July 1960 when Amiss made his first-class debut for Warwickshire against Surrey and his England test debut against the West Indian International Cricket Team in 1966. However, in August 1972, he made his One Day International debut against the Australian International Cricket Team. Notably, Dennis Amiss was the

first cricketer to support and regularly use the now compulsory piece of kit, the helmet.

At his peak, he played as a right-handed opener, but sometimes played down the order, that loved to play shots, especially drives, through the covers and through the midwicket region.

A truly spectacular man to watch, Amiss averaged 42.86 runs in first-class games, 25.06 in List-A, 46.3 in Tests and 47.72 in One Day Internationals. This average in One Day Internationals is the highest of any English batsmen who has completed his career and played less than five times. On the other hand, for Warwickshire, he scored a monumental 102 centuries. Staying with his Warwickshire roots, when he retired in 1987, he served as Chairman of the county's Cricket Committee and he was crowned its Chief Executive from 1994 to 2006.



**A table of Dennis Amiss' test match scores.**

Known locally and internationally, Dennis was appointed an England Selector in 1992 and in the late months of 2007, he became the deputy chairman of the England and Wales Cricket Board.

Arguably one of England's best openers, Dennis Amiss scored 3,612 test runs that included 11 half-centuries and 11 centuries, two of which reached over 200. One of these earned Dennis the nickname 'Sacker'. He had just scored a match-saving 262 at Sabina Park, Jamaica and he was exhausted after playing for nine hours. He was caught drinking brandy in the changing room after the match by Keith Fletcher, who stated that he looked like a "sack of potatoes", and the nickname 'Sacker' took off almost immediately.



**Dennis Amiss with one of his helmets**

Dennis was dropped from the England team in 1975, but made a victorious return against the West Indian National Cricket Team at the Oval in 1976, although his heroic 203 did not provide enough resistance to the Caribbean side. Amiss' last Test came in 1977 as he was omitted thereafter to make way for Geoffrey Boycott's return from self-imposed exile.

Not just a long-form player, Amiss was also indispensable for One Day International Games as he scored 859 runs that consisted of one half-century and four centuries. His top score in this format was 137 against India which remains England's second highest individual score in the Cricket World Cup; the first being Andrew Strauss' 158 in 2011. On the other hand, he scored the first ever One Day International

century. Amiss along with Keith Fletcher is also credited to have shared the first ever partnership of hundred runs in the same match.

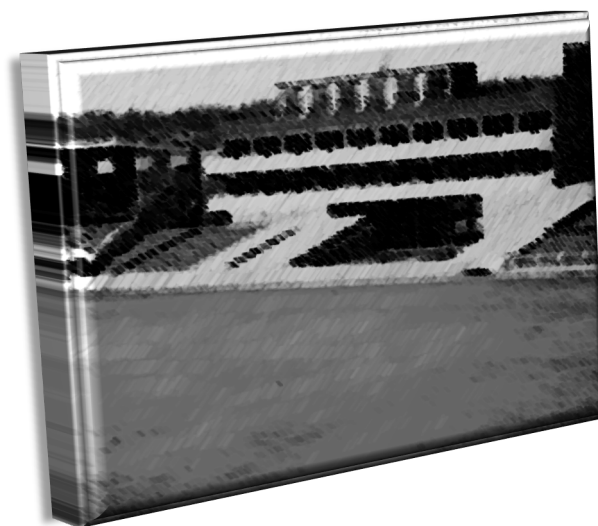
Dennis is the first player in One Day International cricket to have scored a century on both his debut and in his last match, with only one other person, Desmond Haynes, having made this achievement so far. In the first match of the Prudential World Cup (which was also the very first Cricket World Cup to take place) Amiss scored 137 runs in 147 against India that was boosted by 18 boundaries. Thanks to his innings, England gave India 335 runs to chase in 60 overs. This game was the first time that a team would score more than 300 runs in a One Day International game.

In 1975 Dennis was selected as one of the five Wisden Cricketers of the Year and in 1988 he was awarded a MBE. Also, in 2007, he received a Doctor of the University from the University of Birmingham and in 2015 he received the Ian Jackson Award, made by The Cricket Society Executive Committee.

### WHAT HAPPENED IN THE FIRST TEST?

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The first test took place in Manchester at Old Trafford Stadium. England won the toss and elected to bat, and Geoffrey Boycott and Dennis Amiss walked out onto the pitch to face the first ball. Three players made their debut, Michael Hendrick was in an England shirt for the first time, whereas both Brijesh Patel and Madan Lal Udhouram Sharma wore an Indian shirt on their first of many matches. England were the favourites to win - not just the match but the



**Chalk sketch of Old Trafford in the 1970s**

whole tour, with players such as Geoffrey Boycott, Dennis Amiss, Keith Fletcher and John Edrich.

Boycott fell first, for 10, then Edrich for 7. The captain, Mike Denness headed back to the pavilion for 26 and then Amiss was caught for 56. Derek Underwood followed 23 runs later, but luckily for the home side, a partnership started to build between Fletcher and Tony Grieg. Shortly after reaching his half-century however, Grieg was caught out. Alan Knott followed after 9 balls when he was given out Leg Before Wicket by the umpires without scoring. England declared after the losses of Chris Old and Bob Willis,

leaving Mike Hendrick without the chance to bat. India were 328 runs behind at the end of the innings, with most of the players feeling quite narcoleptic after 143 overs and three balls of batting.

In the first Indian innings, Eknath Solkar was dismissed first for 7, and Srinivas Venkataraghavan followed shortly afterward with only 3 on the scoreboard. Next, captain Ajit Wadekar fell for 6, and then Gundappa Viswanath took his pads off and relaxed after being



**Dennis Amiss comparing his two helmets**

bowled for 40 after an auspicious partnership with Sunil Gavaskar. Patel was caught for 5 and then wicketkeeper Farokh Engineer was bowled for a duck (no runs on the 'board). Lal Udhouram Sharma was out next for 2, and then Gavaskar finally fell down after being run out for 101. Bishan Bedi was bowled for 0 and Syed Abid Ali was caught behind by Knott for 71, leaving Bhagwath Chandrasekhar the last man standing. India finished on 246 all out, off exactly 84 overs, giving England an opportunity to extend their 82 run lead on the match.

13 runs after both openers walked onto the pitch, Boycott was caught behind for 6. Underwood headed back towards the pavilion for 9, caught behind as well. Finally, Amiss fell for 47 even though Edrich and Denness put on another 109 runs together before they declared for 213 for 3 after 70 overs. India needed 296 runs to win the match, a fairly easy score to catch but the most of the England bowlers were on top form.

Solkar was caught for 19, and the captain followed with 14. After India reached 100, Gavaskar was caught for 58 and Patel edged behind to follow him for an inadequate score of 3. Engineer was caught for 12 and debutant Lal Udhouram Sharma faced an ignominious wicket after he hit his wicket when he was on 7. Abid Ali and Vinswath followed shortly for 4 and 50. Bedi was bowled for 0 and Chandrasekhar was stumped by keeper Knott for another duck. India finished the match with a score of 182-10 of 85 overs. England won the match by 113 runs.



**Dennis Amiss striking the ball through the midwicket region**



**Dennis Amiss before the 1974-75 tour of Australia and New Zealand**

## THE SECOND TEST – THE LORDS CENTURY

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The second test in the series took place at Lords Cricket Ground in St. Johns Wood, London. After success in the previous test against India, England were the favourites to win. All-rounder David Lloyd made his debut for England in this five day test match. Similar to the game at Old Trafford, England won the toss and elected to bat.

Amiss and Lloyd started to build a firm partnership, worth 116 runs, until the debutant's inexperience started to thwart him when he was caught by Solkar for 46, four runs away from a maiden test half-century at the home of cricket. Luckily for him though, he managed to face 121 balls; which served to aggrandise his confidence in the games to come.

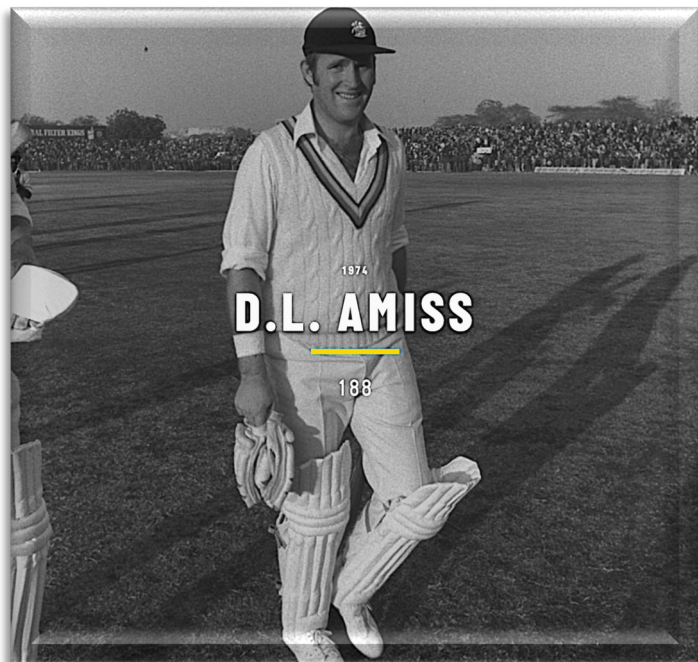
Edrich fell next, after an even more prodigious partnership than Amiss and Lloyd's, as this was worth 221 runs and it overlapped into day two.

On day two though, Dennis Amiss could only add one more run to his score of 187 that he scored on day one and he was given the dreaded finger when he was struck on the pads by bloodcurdlingly good off-break bowler Erapalli Prasanna.

Edrich fell 2 runs later for 96, most likely livid with himself for wasting a great run of form that he was in that should have led to his name being added to the Lords Honours Boards. Fletcher was the next man to go, for 15, but Grieg and Denness put on 202 afterward. Unfortunately for England, Grieg was caught and bowled by Abid Ali for 106.

Captain Denness was dismissed soon after for 118. Old fell next, for 3 and Geoff Arnold fell after being bowled by Bedi for 5. Wicketkeeper Knott was caught of the bowler for 26 and Underwood left Hendrick stranded on 1 when he was dismissed for 9. England had put on 629 off 182.5 Overs, with centuries from Amiss, Denness and Grieg and a half-century from Edrich. England had a run rate of 3.44 runs an over, pretty manageable for 90 or so overs but many teams would struggle when filling so many overs.

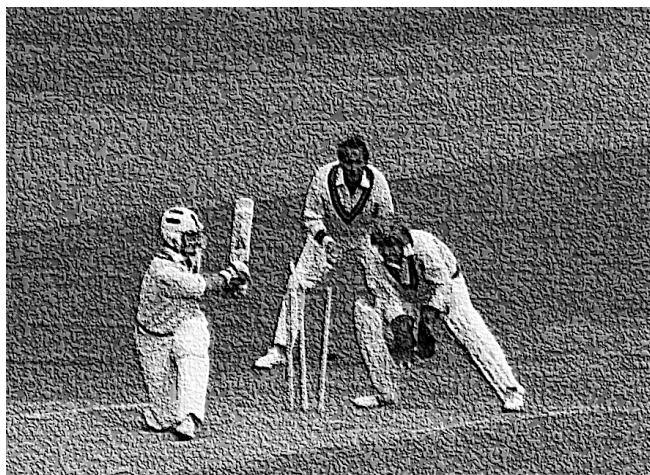
India started their innings on a high, with a partnership of 131 between Gavaskar and Engineer but Sanil was caught behind for 49. A collapse soon occurred though after Engineer was caught by Denness for 86. Wadekar and Patel followed suit in the collapse for 18 and 1. India brought back their game though until Vinswath departed for 52 after being knocked over by Underwood.



**Dennis Amiss at Lords in 1974**

Abid Ali fell for 14 and Lal Udhouram Sharma departed for a duck. Solkar was caught for 46 and Prasanna was the victim of another catch in the outfield. Arnold finished Bedi when he was on 14 leaving Chandrasekhar alone with a score of 2 not out.

India scored 302 of 101.5 overs with a run rate of 2.96, allowing the chance for England to enforce the follow on and press for the win by bowling again.



**A formatted picture of Dennis Amiss being stumped**

Disaster struck early after Sunday's rest day when Engineer was dismissed for just 2 and Wadekar was out for a miniscule 3. Vinswath followed for 5 with Patel following suit after scoring 1. Gaveskar was given Leg Before Wicket when he was on 5 and Abid Ali was caught for 3. Lal Udhouram Sharma was out for two and both Prasanna and Bedi were bowled by Old for 5 and 0. As if things couldn't get any worse, Chandrasekhar didn't bat because of injuries that meant he would not have the chance to bat. After a painful 17 overs,

India were 42 all out, leaving England the win by an innings and 285 runs.

A massive win for England had secured many names on the Lords Honours Board, including Dennis Amiss, the one hundredth and first cricketer to score a century at the Home of Cricket.

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*All phrases used in describing the scorecard are my own words since no online commentaries are available from this period. I have been to many cricket matches and therefore have picked up various cricket phrases to help enhance my writing.*

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