

# **CRICKET ON FILM: A MAJOR NEW COLLECTION ON BFI PLAYER**



**EMBARGO 00:01 9<sup>th</sup> June 2016, London** – As the third of the Investec Test series opens at Lords, the BFI will release online a new collection of rare cricketing films drawn from the BFI National Archive and the UK's regional and national archives, featuring some of the greatest players ever to grace a wicket, with **Cricket on Film** on 9<sup>th</sup> June. The films are all available to view for free on BFI Player and the collection features more than 130 titles, stretching back over 100 years, including newsreels, home movies, television reports, instructional films, and more. The earliest film in this collection is from 1897 and the most recent from 1991.

In a pioneering collaboration between the BFI National Archive and the English Cricket Board the spectators at selected cricket grounds across the UK will be able to see some of these rare films on big screens at Trent Bridge (21<sup>st</sup> June), Edgbaston (24<sup>th</sup> June), Kia Oval (29<sup>th</sup> June) and Emirates Old Trafford (22<sup>nd</sup> July).

Robin Baker, Head Curator, BFI National said, *“We know that cricket fans love watching archive films of the sport so we are delighted to be able to give fans of every generation more opportunities to watch this glorious cricketing collection, drawn from the BFI National Archive and regional and national archives across the UK, both online via BFI Player and as they watch live action at cricket grounds, courtesy of the English Cricket Board.”*

The collection includes a range of historic players guaranteed to excite both die-hard aficionados and the casual cricketing fan.

This is a fascinating chance to compare bowling and batting styles as practised at the highest level of the game across three generations, featuring legendary players such as Don Bradman, Alec Bedser, Denis Compton, Len Hutton, Basil D'Oliviera and many more.

ECB Director of Events, Steve Elworthy said: *"We are delighted the BFI have made these films available – I'm sure cricket fans of all ages will enjoy them."*

*"We are always looking at ways to improve the experience fans have with cricket, so being able to show this series throughout the summer will no doubt add something extra. There may even be a few players keen to watch clips of their relatives in action."*

See the full collection here: <http://player.bfi.org.uk/collections/cricket-on-film/>  
#cricketonfilm

Here's our Top Eleven (and a Twelfth man in reserve) but there's a "century" more where they came from:

**Horsham Cricket Week and Grand Carnival, Thursday July 24<sup>th</sup> (1913)** – a fascinating record from a pre-First World War summer. Link [here](#)

**First in the Field (1927)** Newsreel coverage of the first County match to use the new, smaller ball. Link [here](#)

**Women, Willows and Wickets (1928)** A team of "Enthusiastic girl cricketers" at Sunbury. One team was made up of women from the popular Lyons Corner Houses restaurant chain. Link [here](#)

**Test Cricket: Australia V. England at Sydney (1932)** The first match in the Bodyline series, before it all kicked off. Link [here](#)

**Cohen Personal Film: The Oval (1938)** Bradman carried off injured and England scoring a record in a Test. Link [here](#)

**MCC in West Indies (1948)** A tour of the West Indies, a world away from war-torn Britain. Link [here](#)

**Denis Compton (1954)** A profile of one of England's first "superstar" sportsmen. Link [here](#)

**MCC Expeditionary Force in Australia (1954-55)** England became the first team to defeat Australia at home since the Bodyline series of 1932, featuring Len Hutton, Colin Cowdrey and others. Link [here](#)

**Alec Bedser home movies (1954)** Fabulous close-up insights into the 1954-5 Australia tour. Link [here](#)

**Basil D'Oliveira at Weston-super-Mare (1968) [South West Film Archive]**

Basil "Dolly" D'Oliveira filmed around the time he was dropped from the England team (summer 1968) and then reinstated. An episode that helped highlight the ills of Apartheid to the rest of the world. [link to go live on Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> June only]

**The Summer Game (1970)** A lovely history of the game of cricket. Link [here](#)

**Northampton v Essex – The Benson & Hedges Cup Final (1980) [East Anglian Film Archive]**  
Uproarious applause from the fans as Allan Lamb avoids being caught out by a hair's breadth during the Benson & Hedges Cup Final in 1980, where Northamptonshire play against Essex at Lord's. Link [here](#)

NOTES TO EDITORS:

**STILLS: A selection of images for journalistic use can be found at [www.image.net](http://www.image.net) under BFI UK Publicity > BFI > Britain on Film > 2016 > Cricket**

**USE OF FOOTAGE: Embed codes for individual films can be used to promote the collection on websites by arrangement with the Press Office**

**INTERVIEWS: BFI National Archive curator and Cricket programmer: Steve Bryant is available for selected interviews**

#### **About the BFI**

The BFI is the lead organisation for film in the UK with the ambition to create a flourishing film environment in which innovation, opportunity and creativity can thrive by:

- Connecting audiences to the widest choice of British and World cinema
- Preserving and restoring the most significant film collection in the world for today and future generations
- Championing emerging and world class film makers in the UK - investing in creative, distinctive and entertaining work
- Promoting British film and talent to the world
- Growing the next generation of film makers and audiences

The BFI is a Government arm's-length body and distributor of Lottery funds for film. The BFI serves a public role which covers the cultural, creative and economic aspects of film in the UK. It delivers this role:

- As the UK-wide organisation for film, a charity core funded by Government
- By providing Lottery and Government funds for film across the UK
- By working with partners to advance the position of film in the UK.

Founded in 1933, the BFI is a registered charity governed by Royal Charter.

The BFI Board of Governors is chaired by Josh Berger

#### **About the BFI National Archive**

The BFI National Archive was founded in 1935 and has grown to become the one of the largest and most important collections of film and television in the world with over 180,000 films and 750,000 television programmes. For over 80 years the BFI has been an international leader in film preservation and guardian of Britain's unparalleled film and TV heritage. The BFI is an innovator in presenting films to audiences in new and dynamic ways, from cinemas to film festivals, outdoor

events to online video-on-demand. At the heart of all its activities is the BFI's central aim to ensure that everyone in the UK has access to the widest possible range of film and their own film heritage. That heritage includes all time great British directors Alfred Hitchcock, David Lean and Powell and Pressburger; and the rich vein of documentary filmmaking, in which Britain led the world, including the lyrical work of Humphrey Jennings. The archive also boasts a significant collection of filmmakers' papers as well as extensive stills, posters and production and costume designs along with original scripts, press books and related ephemera.

Expert teams undertake the time-consuming and complex task of restoring films at the BFI John Paul Getty Jr Conservation Centre in Hertfordshire. The BFI's most precious film materials are kept in optimum conditions in the world-leading Master Film Store in Warwickshire.

#### **ABOUT BRITAIN ON FILM AND UNLOCKING FILM HERITAGE**

Britain on Film is one of the largest and most complex archival projects ever undertaken and is part of the BFI's Unlocking Film Heritage programme (2013-17). Unlocking film heritage for everyone in the UK to enjoy is a key strategic priority for the BFI, and Britain on Film is the public launch of a vast programme of work, which has been ongoing for over three years. Bringing together a partnership with Regional and National Film Archives and rights holder collections across the UK, this work has included a sophisticated programme of data capture, cataloguing, copying to archival standards, meticulous preservation of original materials, thorough searching of archives across the country, new state-of-the-art equipment and digital storage facilities and the transfer of films to the BFI's online video platform, BFI Player.

Unlocking Film Heritage and Britain on Film are thanks to £15 million funding from the National Lottery and the additional support of the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation.

**Britain on Film is a project from the BFI National Archive and the UK's Regional and National Film Archives**

#### **ABOUT THE REGIONAL AND NATIONAL FILM ARCHIVES**

The English Regional Film Archives and other National Film Archives (listed below) hold significant collections of film and video material specifically relevant to their regions or hold dedicated collections (such as Imperial War Museums), preserved in specialised storage facilities and made widely available for education, research, communities and the wider public.

East Anglian Film Archive  
Imperial War Museums  
London's Screen Archives  
Media Archive for Central England at the University of Lincoln  
North East Film Archive  
North West Film Archive at Manchester Metropolitan University  
Northern Ireland Screen Digital Film Archive  
Scottish Screen Archive  
Screen Archive South East  
South West Film & Television Archive  
National Screen and Sound Archive of Wales  
Wessex Film and Sound Archive  
Yorkshire Film Archive

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