

Jackschon, Fergie and the Genesis of Advanced Cricket Scoring

It would be fair to say that the name Johann Gottlieb Jackschon is not widely known in cricketing circles. Indeed, even Google claims only a passing acquaintance. But J.G. Jackschon (1846-1931) deserves to be remembered as a pioneer in advanced scoring methods, an area of cricket that is now so ubiquitous that it is taken for granted.

The development of advanced scoring, such as reporting balls faced for batsmen, has a rather long and tortuous history. The pivotal figure here is 'Fergie' (William Ferguson) who scored nearly all of Australia's Tests from 1905 to 1953. I will come back to Fergie; firstly let's look at his predecessor, known as "J.G."

As Wikipedia records, Jackschon was born in Maust in Prussia. His family came to Australia when Johann was six years old and settled in Grafton. His father became a notable figure in Grafton: indeed, there is a Jackschon Avenue in Grafton. The name evidently created difficulty in Anglo-Australia, and is variously reported with other spellings, including Jacksohn, Jackoshon, and Jackson. Johann, often referred to as John or by a variety of nicknames, soon became so thoroughly "Anglo-cised" that he became fascinated by cricket. Of only middling skill on the field, he gravitated towards the scoring/statistical side, where he excelled. He began scoring for New South Wales in 1886 or 1887, and covered Test matches in Sydney from that time.

In *Australia: Story of a Cricket Country*, Ray Webster records how J.G. was sole scorer of the 1891-92 Ashes Test at the Sydney Cricket Ground, and even received a medal from Lord Sheffield himself for his efforts. Things get interesting at this point, when looking at reported statistics of this match. In daily and weekly newspaper accounts, there are scattered references to the balls faced (or "balls received") by batsmen in this match. A report *The Referee* lists the number of balls faced by all batsmen in the match (what a pity they did not persist with this!) *The Argus* and others report that Alec Bannerman faced 612 balls in his epic match-turning 91, a scoring rate for a major innings that remains without parallel in Test matches. Even *Wisden* has a fleeting reference to Attewell bowling 204 balls to Bannerman. They are virtually the only references to balls faced that I have seen for Tests in the 19th Century, and they must have originated with Jackschon. The calculation of these published figures presents something of a puzzle. It is not practicable to derive figures like this from a conventional scoresheet, except with deep and painstaking re-analysis.

A conventional scoresheet of this Test survives in the archives of Cricket NSW. Presumably, it is in Jackschon's hand, but in itself it offers no clue as to how the above figures were derived. Fortunately, more information comes to light in reports for later matches scored by J.G. From time to time, these later reports mention balls faced for certain innings, all of them at the S.C.G. and mostly for Sheffield Shield matches. When some balls faced figures were published for a NSW/Victoria match, *The Referee* on 28 Feb 1906 offered more detail:

Mr Jackschohn (*sic*) has compiled a table of each innings in the Jubilee match, showing how each batsman scored off each bowler, how many balls he received and played from each bowler, and how many he missed, besides other data from which interesting deductions are to be made.

The actual figures given in this report focus very much on batsman v bowler data rather than balls faced for whole innings. ("P.A. McAllister... scored 44 runs off 66 balls from G.L. Garnsey", for example.) It would appear, from this and other reports, that Jackschohn must have kept a separate sheet for each innings where he recorded tables of batsman v bowler data. Sadly, no examples of these sheets appear to have survived, but there is a clue in Keith Booth's charming little book *Knowing the Score* (1999). On page 46 there is a reproduction of a score from 1858 (in Surrey) where each batsman's strokes, rather than being given in order left to right, are arranged in columns, one column for each bowler. Individual balls are not recorded, however.

The use of tables, rather than Fergie-style linear sheets, would explain why the reports tend to hone in on batsman v bowler data. It is possible to derive batsman v bowler figures from linear sheets, but it is a bit tricky and painstaking: a tabular format would make it easy.

At this point, mention should be made of another claimant to the invention of advanced scoring. Richie Benaud's *My Spin on Cricket* (2005), and Bill Frindall's autobiography, both relate how John Pendlington, a scorer in England, scored a match in 1893 (between C.I. Thornton's XI and The Australians) in a way that produced balls faced: specifically, linear scoring.

I have to say that the claims are rather weak. There is no contemporary documentary support for the story, and no mention before 1994 apart from an unidentifiable article in a 1914 newspaper. No actual statistics are offered, nor is there any clear indication of the use of Fergie-style linear scoring. The question also has to be raised as to why it was used for only one match. Perhaps, however, there is something to it. It is an interesting coincidence that the match involved the Australians: did Pendlington hear about Jackschohn's methods from one of the tourists?

It could also be argued that to invent something, but then immediately discard it and keep it hidden, is no invention at all. In any case, the Jackschohn evidence is unambiguous and has priority. An additional claim (in Frindall page 70, based on a secondary source), that balls faced were published for the 1899 and 1902 Ashes series in England, also cannot be confirmed. Extensive checking of Australian and English newspapers found no trace, and on checking with Frindall's source (John Kobylecky, who has been of great assistance in my Test match research), it appears that the information was in error.

Jackschohn returned to Grafton from 1895 to 1905, although it appears that he did still score major matches in Sydney in this period. From 1905 again, he was regular scorer at the SCG and at the Mosman Cricket Club. He was a foundation member, and later a life member, at Mosman (although

he went by the name J.J. Jackson there), and was largely responsible for the establishment of Mosman Oval.

His innovative methods, it must be said, had only limited impact, but one wonders whether they had any influence on Bill Ferguson. Ferguson's autobiography *Mr Cricket* (1957) is curiously vague about the process of the development of linear scoring, and gives no exact dates. Looking closely at Fergie's 1905 and 1909 tour books, the evidence suggests that Fergie was not using linear scoring in 1905, but that he certainly used it in 1909, with a new column in each innings for balls faced added in the later book (he did not score the intervening 1907/08 series). Fergie's 1905 diary, which survives at Cricket NSW, does not mention the innovation.

It seems far more likely that Fergie invented and perfected his system at leisure between 1905 and 1909. It should be stressed that in spite of Jackschoon's earlier work, Fergie's system was most probably quite different, and thus genuinely innovative.

In that intervening period, there had been occasional calls for more advanced data. James Scott of Sydney made such calls for balls faced data in 1905, and there is a detailed article along these lines (by "Scutum") in the *Sydney Evening News* on 4 March 1908.

There are a handful of interesting reports from that 1907/08 series, this time from Melbourne, in *The Argus*. Some balls faced figures are given, and, more intriguingly, some very clear 'Wagon Wheels'. There were a couple of these charts, the first featuring an innings of 48 by Monty Noble in the fourth Test at the MCG. These did not show every stroke, but they did show clearly how many runs were made in each direction. Most noteworthy is the fact that the creator has combined the two ends into one, so that the array of strokes is less visually confusing. This was a feature that Fergie did not use, and I believe it only came into use again in the Channel Nine TV era, with the assistance of computers.

The creator the 1908 charts is not named. I have only seen them reported in this one Test match (what a shame it did not catch on!). It might be a little too speculative to wonder if Jackschoon was responsible: although he was known to travel to Melbourne for Tests (and toured with the New South Wales XI), it is not clear if he attended the 1907/08 Tests. In any case, these are not quite the earliest examples. An earlier wagon wheel, again anonymous, is from the July 1907 Lord's Test between England and South Africa and featuring an innings by Gilbert Jessop. It was published in *The Daily Express* and reproduced in Brodribb's *The Croucher*.

Even earlier examples have recently been found (hat tip Gideon Haigh) with wagon wheels of Stanley Jackson's 144 at Headingley in 1905. They possibly also originated in the *Daily Express*. A report in the *Launceston Daily Telegraph* (17 October 1905) reproduces the charts and describes them as a collaboration between a reporter at the ground, who telegraphed the information, and

editorial staff who drew up the charts. Fergie was probably not the source, but he may well have seen the published charts in the newspaper.

Fergie did talk about his batting charts in his autobiography, but again, he said little about their invention, and provided no examples before 1912. There are clear differences in style between Fergie's wheels and the earlier examples.

Fergie, however, persisted with his wagon wheels, and they did create sustained interest among journalists (and some players, including Bradman and Jardine); there was occasional publication, including Stan McCabe's 187* at Sydney during the Bodyline series. Other Fergie innovations did not catch on for a long time, just as with Jackschoen. Fergie's surviving scores for 1909 to 1912 feature columns for balls faced; the 1911/12 book also indicates, in the bowling section, which batsman received each ball, but Fergie himself did not persist with these features in his scores from the 1920s and thereafter, even though he continued using linear scoring as his primary record.

Even though Fergie was keeping the data, balls faced only rarely made it into print for many years. A Sydney newspaper published complete information on balls faced for the 1920/21 series, but only for that series. It is not certain that Fergie was the source for this. For decades, while little evidence for advanced scoring can be found in print, some of Fergie's successors adopted his methods. The archive of linear scores of Tests in Sydney goes back to 1954/55. At the ABC, Jack Cameron in Melbourne, following his father's lead, scored in linear form from 1956 onwards. Cameron was official scorer on the 1961 Ashes tour, and produced tables of batsman v bowler data from his linear sheets.

In England, there was a core of traditional County scorers whose methods would not modernise for decades, and official MCC Test match scores sometimes lack the statistic even into the 1980s. Nevertheless, the scorers at the BBC, with prompting from radio and television commentators, had begun to record more and more information from the 1950s onward. Books of tours to England in the early 1960s sometimes refer to balls faced. The surviving 1963 BBC scores are linear sheets; the method was adopted in 1966 by Bill Frindall, who expanded the system by recording additional information adjacent to every ball. Linear scoring was at one time referred to as the 'Frindall method', although Frindall himself never claimed to have invented it.

Linear scoring was certainly in use in South Africa for the 1957/58 and 1966/67 series, with the *Rand Daily Mail* and the *Cape Times* pioneering the publication of full tabular records of minutes, balls and boundaries with their scores. However, this was not widespread, and only in the late 1960s does balls faced information begin appearing at all regularly in Australian published match reports, and even then only as incidental text comments. Eventually, systematic reporting of balls faced appeared in the *1975 Cricketer Annual* (Eric Beecher ed.), and in Frindall's published tour books beginning in the same year, and by the 1980s extended to a wider variety of annuals and newspapers.

The introduction of Allan Miller's Annuals in 1988, with their extensive scoresheets, raised the bar again. Reporting of great detail became easier as computer use became more extensive. Not all publications could follow suit, given the space constraints that inevitably come into play, and *Wisden*, to this day, has made few concessions to detail in its Test scores. Television coverage, however, continued to develop its statistical coverage. In the 1990s, the Internet, effectively free from space limitations, began to allow the full exploration of the potential for detail and analysis, and sites such as *Cricinfo* now offer immense, dizzying detail for every international match.

In later life, J.G. Jackschohn, even when well into his 80s, would rarely miss a match at the SCG; he would doubtless have been delighted at such a cornucopia of information. His work marks him as a man distinctly ahead of his time. Even if his innovations had to be reinvented by others at a more opportune time, he deserves recognition as a pioneer of his field.

I would like to recognise the assistance of Sreeram Iyer in Chennai, who uncovered a number of obscure references to Jackschohn, using the powerful Trove database of the Australian National Library. Colin Clowes at Cricket NSW, and Ray Webster, were also of great assistance.

Charles Davis

Melbourne, March 2015

PHASES OF THE GAME.

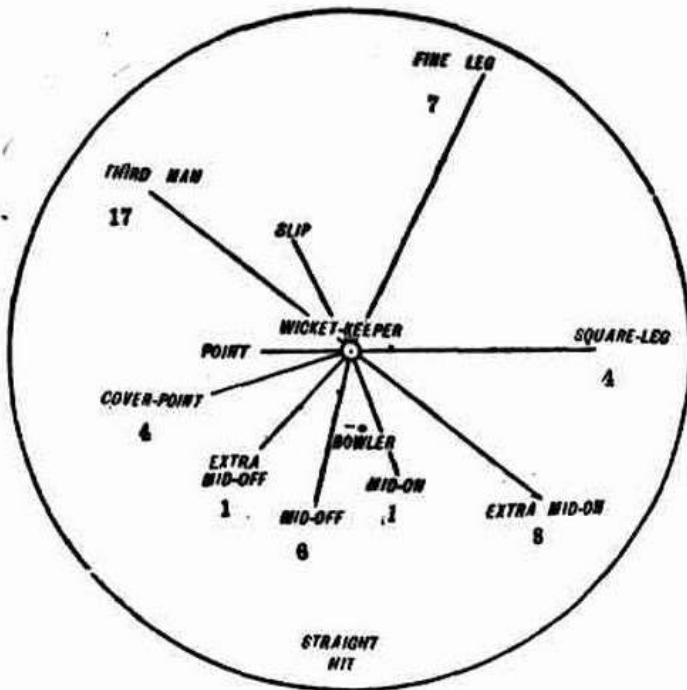


DIAGRAM SHOWING WHERE NOBLE SCORED HIS RUNS.

M. A. Noble, who made 48 runs in an hour and 51 minutes, had 116 balls bowled to him. He scored off 29 of these. He made 63 unproductive strokes, allowed 23 balls to pass, and missed only 2 balls that he played at, and one of these bowled him. The diagram shows that he scored 28 runs on the off side and 20 on the on side, made up thus:—Third man, 17 (including 1 boundary); cover point, 4 (a boundary stroke); extra mid-off, 1; mid-off, 6 (including 1 boundary); mid-on, 1; extra mid-on, 8; square-leg, 4; leg, 7 (including 1 boundary). He scored 15 off Rhodes, 10 off Fielder, 5 off Braund, 6 off Barnes, and 12 off Crawford.

It is interesting to note that M'Alister received 127 balls, and scored off 34. Ransford received 84 balls, and scored off 25. Armstrong received 72 balls, and scored off 14.

In bowling, Fielder bowled 132 balls, 32 of which were scored off, and 6 went to the boundary. Crawford bowled 145 balls, of which 32 were scored off, and 4 went to the boundary. Barnes bowled 138 balls, but only 19 of them produced runs, 4 of which went to the fence.

HOW THE BATSMEN SCORED.

The following extracts from the score-book will show how the four leading scorers got their runs:—

M. A. Noble,	1,1,4,1,1,1,3,1,1,2,1,2,1,1,1,4,1,1,1,1,2,1,3,1,4,6,1,1,1	b Crawford	48
P. M'Alister,	1,1,1,4,4,1,1,1,1,1,1,1,2,3,4,1,1,1,1,1,1,2,1,1	c Jones, b Fielder	37
W. W. Armstrong,	1,1,4,1,1,1,2,1,4,1,1,5,4,4	b Crawford	22

COUNTRY NEWS

BALLARAT AND DISTRICT.

At the annual meeting of the Ballarat district branch of the British Medical Association on Thursday night Dr. Champion was elected president, and Dr. Robert Scott vice-president. Dr. Morrison delivered the annual presidential address.

The Water Commission, having determined to construct a portion of the Moorabool scheme for giving an additional supply of water to Ballarat, the engineer (Mr. Mahony), at a meeting of commissioners on Friday submitted plans. The proposal now agreed to omits provision for a reservoir, and allows the water being taken from the Moorabool River. It is understood that the reservoir will be constructed at as early a date as practicable. With respect to the utility of the proposal, Mr. Mahony pointed out that during an exceptionally dry year in 1902 there was available from the Moorabool 6,000,000 gal. of water per week. The cost of the work is estimated at £20,000. It was resolved that the plans should be signed and forwarded to the department.

Mr. T. Maxwell and Mr. C. Richards have been elected representatives of the local branch of the A.M.A. on the Mining Board.

Forty-five recruits were yesterday sworn in in the 7th Regiment A.I.R. The numerical strength of the regiment is now in excess of the establishment.

In moving the adoption of the report and balance-sheet at the half-yearly meeting of the Ballarat Banking Company yesterday, the chairman (Mr. Andrew Anderson) said that the reserve fund had now reached £70,000. The reserve was a real one, and the directors were fully determined to continue the policy pursued for many years by adding to the fund, and thus increase the stability of the bank. Mr. P. Papenhagen, who seconded the motion, which was subsequently agreed to, said that the reserve fund nearly equalled the paid-up capital of the bank, namely, £83,000.

A presentation of a case of pipes has been made to Captain G. Dowling by the officers of the 7th A.I.R. Owing to business reasons, Captain Dowling has found it necessary to be placed on the unattached list of the regiment.

Mr. Thomas H. Leusk, president of the Pitfield branch of the Miners' Association, was on Friday sworn in by Mr. H. R. Murphy, P.M., as a justice of the peace.

BENDIGO AND DISTRICT.

On arrival of the Swan Hill train at Bendigo on Friday evening Plain-clothes Constable Currie arrested a passenger named Percy Lindsley. The Bendigo police had received a telegram from Swan Hill stating that a warrant had been issued for the arrest of Lindsley on a charge of larceny as a bailee of £9. Lindsley is stated to have acted as clerk of courts at Swan Hill up to within a day or two ago, when he resigned.

A four-roomed house in Casey-street, Back

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A pioneering 'wagon wheel' (M.A. Noble 48) from the fourth Test of the 1907/08 series, published in *The Argus* (Melbourne). The source of the illustration is not named.



J. G. Jackschon.

A. L. Park.

Harry Hilliard.

THREE VETERANS.

J. G. Jackschon was official scorer to the New South Wales Cricket Association from 1885 to 1896, and on his departure in the latter year for Grafton was presented by the association with a watch. He is an ardent worker in the cause of cricket, and was instrumental in having established at Grafton an association, of which he is at present secretary. A. L. Park is a well-known cricketer, who did good service to this State in many important matches. Harry Hilliard was playing cricket in the '50's. He attends all the important matches.

Snapshots at the Victoria v N.S.W. Cricket Match.

J.G. Jackschon at the Sydney Cricket Ground in 1902 (*Sydney Mail*).