

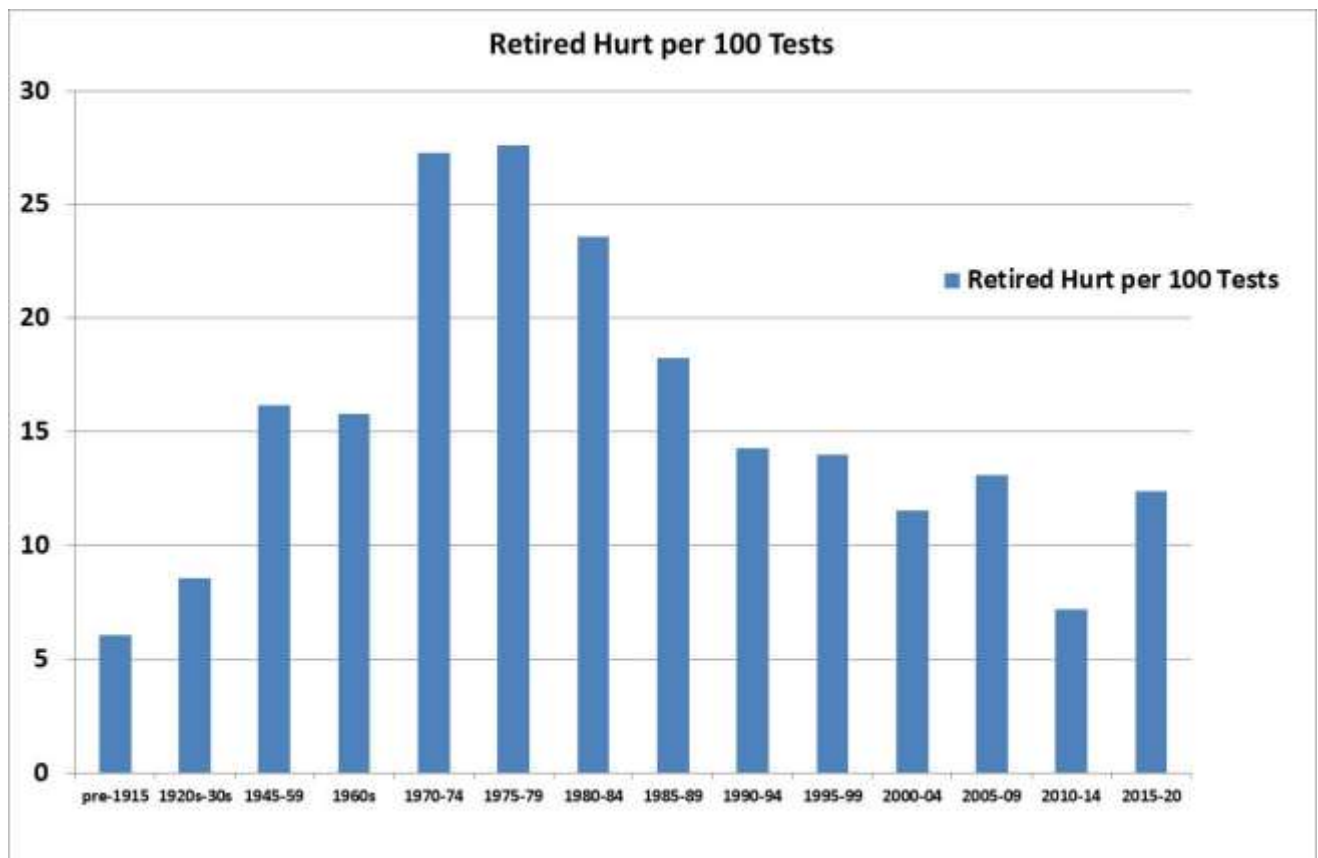
RETIRING HURT: A SHORT HISTORY

I have completed the task of making notes on all cases of batsmen retiring hurt in Tests, recording the cause of each.

There are 342 cases in my list, a handful of which are absent from online sources. *The Wisden Book of Test Cricket* was useful for descriptions of many cases, but many others required wider research.

Of the 342 cases, 216 (63%) were returned to the crease later in the innings.

One effect of the 1975-85 peak in retirements was a peak in catches by substitutes. There were 55 such catches in 100 Tests between 1980 and 1984. The current norm is about 30 substitute catches per 100 Tests.



1975-85 Retirement Rates by Bowling Side

1975-85	RH per 100,000 balls
West Indies	29.3
New Zealand	14.1
Sri Lanka	11.3
Pakistan	10.4
Australia	10.1
England	8.7
India	6.0

Batsmen retire not out for a variety of reasons, many of which do not directly involve a bowler: pulled muscles, illness, cramp, collisions, or previous injuries are among them. The majority, however, retire after being struck by a bowled ball – 269 out of the 342. The bowlers involved are nearly all pace bowlers (cases involving spin bowlers generally involve batsmen edging balls onto the face/head).

The bowlers inflicting retirement on the most batsmen are listed. I have taken care to identify the bowler responsible for the injury, which is not always the bowler active when the batsman actually retires. There are cases where the batsman retired some time after being struck.

Bowlers Causing Most Retired Hurts in Tests

Bowler	RH	Tests	per 100 Tests
CA Walsh	10	132	8
RJ Hadlee	8	86	9
WW Hall	7	48	15
FS Trueman	7	67	10
MD Marshall	7	81	9
CEH Croft	6	27	22
J Srinath	6	67	9
DK Lillee	6	70	9
CJ McDermott	6	71	8
RGD Willis	6	90	7
AME Roberts	5	47	11
RR Lindwall	5	61	8
MG Johnson	5	73	7
VA Holder	4	40	10
JA Snow	4	49	8
JR Thomson	4	51	8
JN Gillespie	4	71	6
B Lee	4	76	5

While Courtney Walsh leads in this category, Colin Croft stands out with six retirements in just 27 Tests. It is also fair to say that Croft was regarded as the most feared and dangerous bowler of his time.

Other bowlers with high 'strike rates' include Silvester Clarke (27 per 100 Tests), Azeem Hafeez (17), Harold Larwood (14), and Neil Adcock (12). However, these bowlers only caused three retirements each during their careers.

The absence of active bowlers from the list is a sign of the decline in batsmen retiring hurt, which in the past decade has been less than half the rate of the peak years 1975-85; this is attributed to improvements in protective equipment. There has, however, been a recent increase in cases due to the increased concern about concussion and its long-term effects. The availability of full substitutes is a corollary.

In the 21st Century there have been more than 130 cases of bowlers injured during an over – to the extent that they could not finish the over – compared to 101 batsmen retiring hurt. This does not include bowlers injured at the end of an over or completing an over in spite of an injury: such cases are difficult to catalogue. Dale Steyn has been unable to finish an over on seven occasions; Allan Donald and Shoaib Akhtar follow, on five apiece.

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2020