

When did the Guernsey v Jersey Senior Inter-Insular Cricket Series really start?

In the late 19th century cricket is recorded as being played against visiting teams as well as between teams from Guernsey and Jersey. The most famous cricketer to come from Guernsey before the advent of the Inter-Insular matches was Charles Frederick Grieve, born on 1st October 1913 in Manila, Philippines and died on 1st June 2000 in Ludlow, Shropshire. He played for Scotland at rugby union in 1935 and went on tour with the British Lions to South Africa in 1938. He was also proficient enough to play cricket for Oxford University in 1936 and opened the batting in a match in 1934 for Guernsey against the MCC scoring a century in the first innings. Since then Guernsey has had Lee Savident playing for Hampshire and Tim Ravenscroft also for Hampshire. Recently Will Fazakerley has signed as a professional for Leicestershire.

For Jersey their best player had been Robert Edward Osbourne-Smith, born on 18th July 1908 in St Helier and died on 13th December 1972 at St Aubin. He played one first class match for the Army scoring 11 runs and taking 4 wickets for 134. They have high hopes for Jonty Jenner for Sussex.

There is some confusion over the year of the first Guernsey v Jersey match. The decade is not in dispute but the actual year remains shrouded in conjecture. The alternatives are 1957 when the GCA said they started perhaps as early as 1950.

Up to 1949 the islands played against each other but this seemed to be at club level, such as Sylvans, Beeches Old Boys, GICC etc., these sides going over to the other island to compete. There was one particular match that was more dominant than others, that between the GICC and the JICC, when they played two matches each season on a home and away basis, the first match being on the August Bank Holiday Monday.

The Guernsey Evening Press stated that on Monday 1st August 1949 (Bank Holiday) the GICC would meet the JICC in Jersey in the first of this season's two inter-island matches.

The Jersey Evening Post on Friday 29th July announced that the annual inter-insular between JICC and GICC was to be played at the Victoria College Field on the Bank Holiday with the following teams:

Jersey: Geary (capt), Postill, Knowles, Hopwood, O'Brien, Dugué, Allen, Baton, G Knight, Blomfield, Hyde with Honey as 12th man.

Guernsey: G D Cunningham (capt), C G M Baxter, W F Druce, R A W Foster, A M Hunter, T Knight, H T Stead, J Martel, G Sandercock, F E Stroobant, W E Wiscombe.

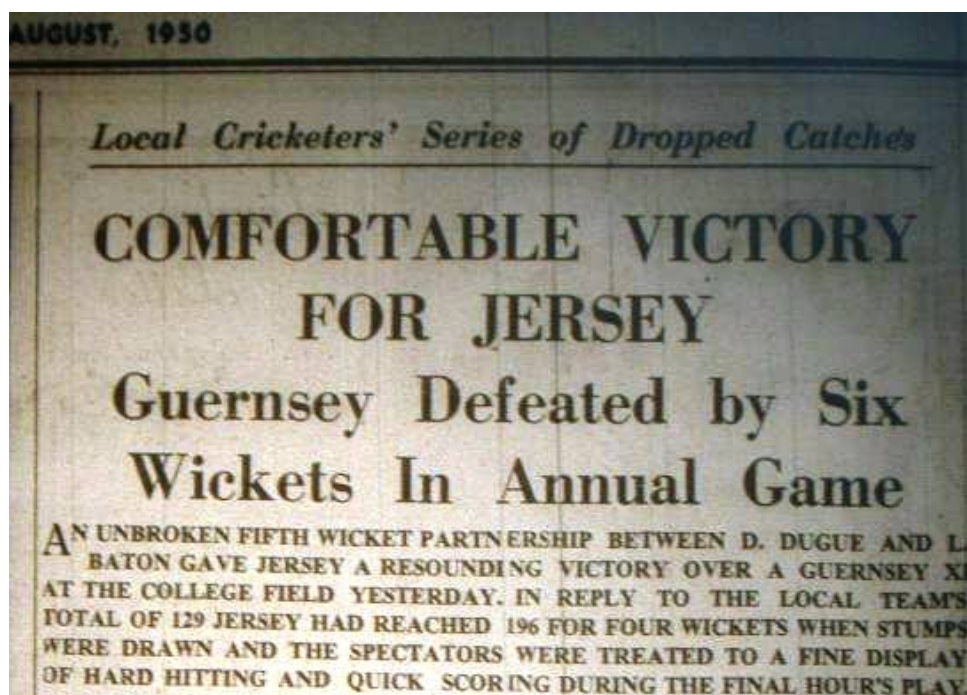
Umpires were to be Dickinson (J) and Rawlinson (G)

The Guernsey side had been depleted when some players became unavailable and even after selection J Bichard took the place of Hunter in the match.

In front of 300 spectators Guernsey were bowled out for 84 whereupon Jersey replied with 206 for 3 declared and after tea Guernsey batted again and fared little better. When stumps were drawn they had struggled to 75 for 8.

This was definitely a GICC / JICC fixture as looking at the personnel from both islands they were the people who appeared on their team sheets around that time. It is interesting to note though that cricket was played all day irrespective of either side having won. Interestingly the Jersey Evening Post declares the JICC to be winners by 9 wickets so although the match carried on the result had been reached when the JICC reached 85 for 1 wicket.

The start of the Inter-Insular series is a little hazy with no definite record from either island as to its authoritative beginnings but possibly it can be put down to either 1950 or 1951. 1950 was the last year that a side was not declared the winner once the previous score had been reached or the side had been bowled out. The islands played many draws (before limited over cricket) in their JICC v GICC games so it was possible for the two islands to bat the whole day with neither side achieving a win, but in 1950 Jersey were stated as winners by 6 wickets (which they would have done even if they stopped playing at the time they got to their winning score of 130 for 4 rather than going on to 196 for 4)



Headlines in the Guernsey Press for the 1950 match

The 1950 game was reminiscent of matches at that time where both sides had one innings but if either side was dismissed for a relatively low score the other side just batted the rest of the time to fill the day's play. Remember also the players were giving up a Bank Holiday to play in the initial years so would have made sure they played for as long as possible. If one team travelled all that way then a full day's play is what they were going to have!



A photograph of a handwritten cricket scorecard for Guernsey. The text is somewhat faded but lists several players and their scores. The title 'GUERNSEY' is at the top.

| GUERNSEY | |
|-----------------------------------|----|
| V. G. Collenette, b Geary | 20 |
| A. E. Martin, b Geary | 7 |
| H. J. Van Leuven, c Druce, b Hart | 1 |
| L. Baton | 1 |
| H. V. Stone, b Geary | 1 |
| M. Hart, c O'Brien | 1 |
| Knight | 1 |
| N. Carter, c Druce, b Geary | 1 |
| G. Sandcock, b Dracy | 1 |
| H. F. Rich, c Druce, b Geary | 1 |
| T. M. Knight, c Druce, b Geary | 1 |
| E. J. Stone, c Druce, b Geary | 1 |
| W. F. Stone, c Druce, b Geary | 1 |

Guernsey's scorecard

The game in 1950, although possibly a Guernsey v Jersey match, was confusingly called various things by the media. On 7th August 1950 the College Field match was referred to as the Guernsey v Jersey game but the Guernsey Press on 5th August had stated GICC v JICC and to add more confusion the Star reported on the GICC v Jersey match. Thus all the media agreed it was a JICC v GICC match in 1949 but in 1950 there appeared to be confusion over its name. But it does appear that the players were selected from all the players in the islands rather than one club.



A photograph of a handwritten cricket scorecard for Jersey. The title 'JERSEY' is at the top. It lists players, their scores, and bowling figures.

| JERSEY | |
|---|----|
| A. R. Hyde, c Druce, b Hart | 17 |
| D. Digne, not out | 60 |
| G. W. Knight, b Hart | 1 |
| P. O'Brien, b Sandcock | 23 |
| C. J. Porée, c Van Leuven, b Carter | 10 |
| L. Baton, not out | 08 |
| Extras | 8 |
| Total (4 wickets) 190 | |
| C. Smith, A. Geary, S. Dracy, M. C. Allen and G. Norton did not bat. | |
| Bowling: Collenette 5 overs, 1 maiden, 14 runs, 0 wickets; Hart 9-1-33-2; Sandcock 13-2-33-1; Carter 11-2-21-1; Rich 7-1-37-0; Knight 5-0-23-0; Stone 2-0-14-0; Druce 1-0-11-0. | |

Jersey's scorecard

To give support to the notion that it was 1950 when the first game was played it was on 2nd August that the Jersey Evening Post reported that two JICC teams had been selected for matches on Friday and Saturday prior to the Bank Holiday Monday, when the Jersey v Guernsey match would be played, and then listed the two teams. For the Friday match only Allen and Bracy from the Jersey team were named in the JICC team and on Saturday none of the Island players, giving further evidence to suggest that the selection of the Jersey side

at least was representative of the island and not just from JICC in 1950 and that they were saving their island side for the Monday game.

What occurred from 1951 was that the Inter-Insular match was either declared a win or a draw but there were no subsequent 'batting on' after 1950. So it seems that 1950 may probably be the start of what we know as the representative Inter-Insular fixture but it is more a matter of nomenclature as well as the way the teams were selected rather than anything else that changed around this time.



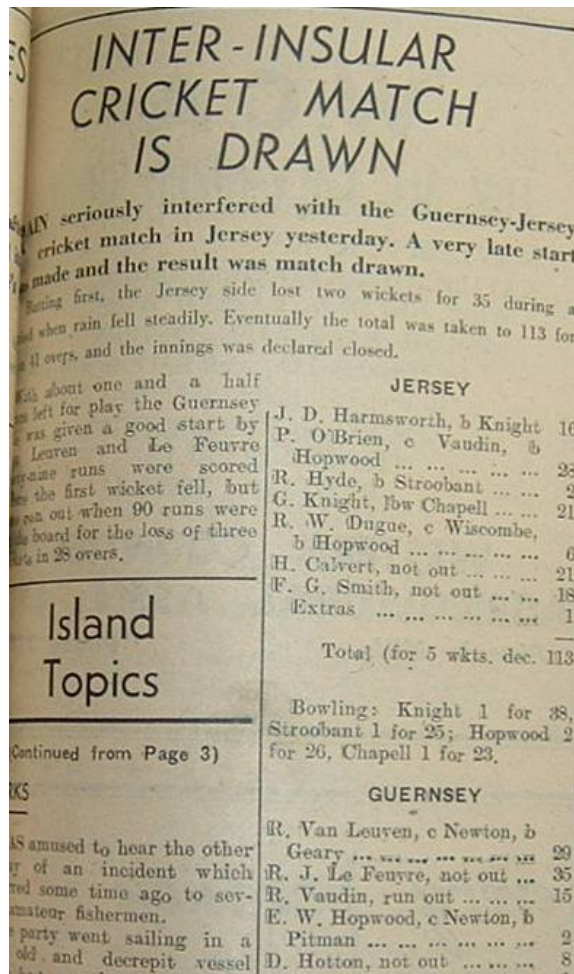
The announcement of the 1951 match between Guernsey and Jersey on Bank Holiday Monday

To sum up, prior to 1949 the JICC and GICC played two matches against each other every season but it was from this time that the game on the August Bank Holiday was designated as the full inter-insular match and the second game became the club match between the GICC and JICC.

1949 was promoted in all the media as GICC v JICC. The players appeared to be selected just from membership of those clubs. Although Jersey batted once and Guernsey twice, it was for the reasons of a full day's play rather than anything else.

In 1950 the teams appeared to be representative of the two islands, but Jersey did bat beyond their winning score but this was not unusual in those days where travel was more difficult and they wanted to play a full day of cricket.

From 1951 the teams were representative, the media started to differentiate between the Guernsey v Jersey matches and the GICC v JICC matches, and there was no more filling the hours of play.



The scorecard from The Star in 1951

It would be reasonable to conclude that the Guernsey v Jersey match emerged around 1950 and that this evolution took a year or two for the media to begin to use the names of the islands to highlight the differences between the types of games they were, even though the selection of the teams had begun to be truly representative. In an article in 1976, in the Jersey Post, Bill Custard stated that the inter-insular that year was the 13th draw since the inception of the series in 1950. Additionally John Le Poidevin writing in the Guernsey Press in 1974 stated 'Inter island cricket rivalry is healthily keen and Jersey players and officials readily excused the Guernsey contingent for being so elated. "You've waited a long time for this" was a typical comment. We certainly had. Twenty four years to be precise ... ever since the series started.' Thus both islands agreed that the series started in 1950.

On 10th August 1950 John Le Poidevin wrote:

The pendulum has swung each way over the years – and very firmly against the direction it pointed when a predecessor of mine wrote "... unfortunately from the local viewpoint, cricket is far more popular in Jersey than in this island. Over here baseball is the favourite summer game and quite candidly I think it will remain so for a long time to come ..."

That was in 1949 and he was right. Jersey played more cricket and were better at it. The series, as we know it, started in 1950 at the instigation of Jersey who substituted one of the two JICC-GICC matches with a Jersey-GICC encounter in 1949. Guernsey took the bait and a series of superb encounters has been the outcome. I've seen most of them and recalled a great number of thrilling cricketing moments in a few hours looking through match reports in the Evening Press files.

If one counts victory by default on the two occasions since 1950 that the Guernsey-Jersey cricket match has not been played, then the record reads; Jersey seven wins, Guernsey five and the remaining 12 matches drawn.

In 1954 the Press article reinforced both the nomenclature of the teams and that the teams were selected across all players when it stated "..... Jersey defeated Guernsey by five wickets in the annual representative match."

In the Schola Elizabetha Reginae Volume 4 it cites VG Collenette as being the captain in the first Guernsey v Jersey match in 1950.

Rob Batiste in an article in 2007 looking back on the history of the inter-insular also referred to matches before 1957. He wrote, "Given the palaver and the hype surrounding modern-day inter-island cricket matches, it takes some believing that once Jersey claimed they could not field a team. But it happened, I can assure you [1956], and on another occasion Guernsey arrived at the College Field to take on the might of fifties cricket and the blighters never turned up [1952]. 'Would you believe it?' exclaimed the GEP cricket correspondent of the time. 'Jersey had forgotten to pick a team.'"

Interestingly, there were different reasons why the two matches did not happen. The two matches in question were when Jersey failed to turn out a side in 1952 (at the College Field a Jersey side was chosen but many said they could not play and replacements could not be found in time) and in 1956 (again at College Field and Jersey forgot to select a side). If this were a GICC v JICC match then that would never have occurred as both the GICC and JICC were very active in those days. They played home and away and it is inconceivable that a fixture of this magnitude in their diary of matches could have been overlooked. What was more likely to have happened is that having relinquished one of their GICC v JICC matches to the status of Guernsey v Jersey there was no official management of the event and no-one took it upon themselves to organise a selection committee or appoint anyone to manager the side or make the necessary travel arrangements. One must view this through the eyes of the 1950s when telephones were quite rare and communication was not as it is today!

Another area adding to the confusion is the current quoted starting date of 1957 by the GCA which is clearly wrong but probably came about because of

the complete mess-up by Jersey in 1956. For the few years prior to 1956 the two islands were comfortable to call the game Guernsey v Jersey, the players were representative and the media were in agreement with what to call it. After the fiasco in 1956 there was obviously more determination, especially from Jersey, to put it on a better footing by someone taking responsibility to convene selection committees and a determination that they would not be embarrassed again.

The awarding of 'caps' has also contributed to the muddying of the waters. In 1960 the GCA awarded GCA caps to people who had either played in the Guernsey Cricket Association v Jersey Cricket League match or had contributed in some way towards the GCA organisation. For some reason at a later date they 'backdated' the caps to 1957 and initially presented caps to all those who had represented Guernsey in an inter-insular match since that date. If that was in fact what they did they left out two players – E H C Yates and P K Smith who played in 1957 – but surprisingly missed nobody else subsequently. Towards the end of the century caps became known as 'Island caps' and were presented when a player represented Guernsey in the Inter-insular match. Warren Barrett also had a hand in the history of the game when his Guernsey Touring Cricket Club had sweaters made for their tours with the Guernsey crest on them, which later became a symbol of a player who had represented the senior Guernsey island cricket team. With the introduction of ICC cricket in 2006 players were then awarded caps for representing Guernsey in these tournaments and not in an inter-insular. Ross Kneller was the first to be awarded a cap in 2009 for the ICC WCL division 7 tournament in Guernsey before he had played in an inter-insular match. The awarding of caps has changed considerably over the years from GCA caps to inter-insular caps to Guernsey representation caps at senior level. Subsequently a list of capped players for Guernsey has now been subdivided into those who have represented the island in ICC European 50 over games, European T20 games, World Cricket League games, and Inter Insular matches.

1957 became the date from which the series was said to have begun by the GCA. Reporters from both islands also quote different starting years, sometimes referring back to 1957 and at other times to around 1950. This has all added to the confusion over the starting date as well as the GCA publishing inter-insular data from 1957.

Bill Robilliard (who first played in 1953, played 9 times and captained in 1966) remembers that in the early days the GICC and the GCA both had representatives on the selection committee and that it was understood that one of the players would be from Elizabeth College. They were providing the venue remember. The captain was also changeable – one year from GICC, the next from GCA.

Alan Bisson (who first played in 1957, played 13 times) remembers Bill Stone as an outstanding player for Guernsey and O'Callaghan, Ces Poree and Phil Le Cras for Jersey. He has fond memories of the Victoria College ground where he scored 92 in 1960 and on another occasion hitting a ball clean out of the ground to hit the College school building without bouncing.

After a considerable amount of research of the records in the newspapers from that era in both islands and taking everything into consideration it is reasonable to assume that the Guernsey v Jersey matches be considered to have a starting date from the match in 1950 and all scorecards, match reports and statistics have this date as the start of the series known as the cricket inter-insular.

Unless you know differently?

Inter Insular Timeline

Time line of important milestones in the Guernsey / Jersey Inter-Insular matches

- 1950 First Inter-Insular match played at Elizabeth College
- 1951 First match at Victoria College
- 1952 Jersey failed to turn up for match
- 1953 Highest aggregate of 492 runs scored in 113.1 overs
- 1954
- 1955
- 1956 Jersey failed to select a side for the match
- 1957
- 1958
- 1959 R F B O'Callaghan (Bush) scored 105
- 1960 D Le Marquand becomes 50th player to appear for Jersey. Guernsey award caps for first time
- 1961 P Le Cocq becomes 50th player to appear for Guernsey
- 1962 Stan Cleal scores 103
- 1963
- 1964
- 1965
- 1966 First sponsorship – Players Gold Leaf Trophy

1967

1968

1969 Guernsey dismissed for 47

1970

1971

1972

1973

1974 Guernsey won by 10 wickets

1975

1976 J Holmes becomes 100th player for Jersey, R Mills and W Barrett put on record 151 for 3rd wicket

1977

1978 Sponsor changed to Haig Scotch Whisky, limited over matches and man-of-the-match introduced

1979

1980 First match at Grainville, Jersey dismissed for their lowest score of 96

1981 K Clark becomes 100th player for Guernsey

1982

1983

1984

1985

1986

1987

1988

1989 Sponsor now Carlsberg Lager, Stuart MacKay scores 100*

1990 Warren Barrett plays in record 23rd match and achieves highest aggregate with 523 runs

1991 Barry Middleton plays last match having claimed a record 51 wickets

1992

1993 Chris Searson claims 9 wickets for 46, M Smith becomes 150th player to appear for Jersey

1994 Tetley Bitter become sponsors

1995

1996

1997 First match at KGV

1998 Flemings now sponsors, Ralph Anthony plays in his 23rd consecutive match

1999

2000

2001 Jersey won for 10th consecutive time

2002 Deutsche Bank sponsor for one year

2003 Cherry Godfrey take over as sponsor, T Duke becomes 150th player for Guernsey

2004 Bowlers limited to 10 overs

2005 Jersey and Guernsey become Affiliate members of ICC, Guernsey score a record 284, highest aggregate of 479 runs scored in 93.2 overs since limited overs

2006 HSBC become sponsors

2007 Jersey gain Associate status with ICC

2008 Guernsey gain Associate status with ICC

2009 Lee Savident scores 102*

2010 Marlborough latest sponsors and coloured clothing first introduced

2011 Jeremy Frith scores 129

2012 Jersey won by 9 wickets. Guernsey total 10 000 runs in Inter Insular matches

2013 Jersey total 10 000 runs in Inter-Insular matches

2014 NatWest sponsor. First game at Farmers Field

2015 Odey Wealth sponsor. First game at Port Soif. E Miles becomes 200th player for Jersey. 50th year of sponsorship

2016 No sponsor (Jersey responsibility). P Gough became captain of Jersey most times. P Gough became 1st player on either side to score 3 consecutive half centuries (2014-2016)

2017 Odey Wealth sponsor. C Perchard captain of Jersey for first time. M Stokes and O Newey set new Guernsey partnership record for 2nd wicket of 103 after 44 years.

2018 No longer format game.

T20 InfraSoftTech sponsor for first time. J Butler captain of Guernsey for first time. New format of three T20 games to form part of both countries' preparation for the European T20 qualifiers to be played in the Netherlands later in the month.

2019 This was the first year that there were three T20 games played in preparation for the European T20 finals as well as the longer format game. Ollie Newey became the 29th captain for Guernsey. It was the first game to be decided by the D/L/S system after a rain interruption after the first innings. C Bisson and N Greenwood set new Jersey partnership record for 4th wicket of 75 after 40 years.

Inter Insular Man-of-the-match awards

The first award for man-of-the-match was made in 1978, since when the recipients have been:

Man-of-the-match awards – longer format

- 1978 Derek Breed (J)
- 1979 Steve Burrow (J)
- 1980 John Appleyard (G)
- 1981 Barry Middleton (J)
- 1982 Miles Dobson (G)
- 1983 John Holmes (J)
- 1984 Barry Middleton (J)
- 1985 John Ravenscroft (G) and Ralph Anthony (G)
- 1986 Mark Bailey (J)
- 1987 Ian Damarell (G)
- 1988 Peter Vidamour (G)
- 1989 Stuart Mackay (G)
- 1990 Colin Graham (J)
- 1991 Miles Dobson (G)
- 1992 Steve Carlyon (J)
- 1993 Chris Searson (J)
- 1994 Simon Short (J)
- 1995 Tony Carlyon (J)
- 1996 Tony Carlyon (J)
- 1997 Tony Carlyon (J)
- 1998 Colin Graham (J)
- 1999 Matt Hague (J)
- 2000 Ward Jenner (J)

2001 Craig Douglas (J)

2002 Jeremy Frith (G)

2003 Ami Banerjee (G)

2004 Stuart Le Prevost (G)

2005 Jeremy Frith (G)

2006 Ami Banerjee (G)

2007 Steve Carlyon (J)

2008 Ryan Driver (J)

2009 Lee Savident (G)

2010 Jeremy Frith (G)

2011 Jeremy Frith (G)

2012 Ben Stevens (J)

2013 Peter Gough (J)

2014 Peter Gough (J)

2015 Matt Stokes (G)

2016 Peter Gough (J)

2017 Matt Stokes (G)

2019 Corey Bisson (J)

4 awards by Jeremy Frith (G)

3 awards by Tony Carlyon (J), Peter Gough (J)

2 awards by Barry Middleton (J), Steve Carlyon (J), Miles Dobson (G), Ami Banerjee (G), Matt Stokes (G), Colin Graham (J)