

The Troubled Tour: South Africa in England 1960

A Journey Through Controversy and Triumph

In the annals of cricket history, the 1960 South African tour of England stands as a poignant and controversial chapter. It was a time of great political upheaval, as South Africa's apartheid regime faced international condemnation. Against this turbulent backdrop, an extraordinary cricket series unfolded, revealing the enduring power of sport to both unite and divide.



The Troubled Tour: South Africa in England 1960

by David Potter

★★★★☆ 4.4 out of 5

Language : English

File size : 7979 KB



Text-to-Speech	: Enabled
Enhanced typesetting	: Enabled
Word Wise	: Enabled
Print length	: 208 pages
Lending	: Enabled
Screen Reader	: Supported



The Context: Apartheid and International Isolation

In 1960, South Africa was a deeply divided society under the oppressive system of apartheid, which enforced strict racial segregation and discrimination. This regime had drawn widespread international criticism and led to South Africa's isolation from many major sporting events.

Despite the political turmoil, the South African Cricket Board (SACB) was determined to send a team to England for a five-Test series. The British government initially refused to grant visas for the team, citing the country's apartheid policies. However, after much public debate and pressure from leading cricket figures, the visas were eventually granted.

The Tour: Controversy and Triumph

The South African team arrived in England to a hostile reception. Protests and demonstrations followed them at every ground, as anti-apartheid activists sought to highlight the injustices of the regime. The players themselves were often subjected to abuse and intimidation.



Despite the off-field controversy, the cricket itself was of the highest quality. The South African team, led by the legendary Trevor Goddard, played with great skill and determination. They won the first two Tests and drew the third, putting England under immense pressure.

In the fourth Test at Old Trafford, the match reached a dramatic climax. England needed to win to keep the series alive, while South Africa needed just a draw to clinch the series. The match went down to the wire, with South Africa eventually holding on for a thrilling draw.



The fifth and final Test was played at The Oval, where England finally managed to break South Africa's resistance. However, the series was a resounding success for the touring team, who had proven themselves to be one of the best in the world.

The Legacy: Sport and Politics Intertwined

The 1960 South African tour of England was a pivotal moment in the history of cricket and the fight against apartheid. It highlighted the complex relationship between sport and politics, and the power of sport to both unite and divide.

The tour also had a lasting impact on South African cricket. The success of the team helped to foster pride and unity among black South Africans, who had long been denied the opportunity to participate in the sport at the highest level.

In the years that followed, the South African Cricket Board continued to face pressure to end its ties with apartheid. In 1970, the team was banned from international cricket, a ban that lasted for more than two decades.

Remembering the Troubled Tour

Today, the 1960 South African tour of England is remembered as a time of both controversy and triumph. It was a tour that reflected the deep divisions in society, but it also showcased the enduring power and resilience of sport.

The book "The Troubled Tour: South Africa in England 1960" by David Frith and John Arlott provides a comprehensive account of this extraordinary series. The book includes firsthand accounts from players, journalists, and protesters, and it offers a fascinating glimpse into a chapter of cricket history that is both rich in drama and significance.



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