

## Martin Horton 1934 – 2011

**Martin John Horton was a Worcestershire cricketing legend, who had the enviable reputation of being a great player, a top international coach and a fine gentleman. He died shortly before his seventy-seventh birthday.**

As a county cricketer, Martin Horton was in the first rank. He was unrelated to two namesakes, who also played for Worcestershire.

A busy, intelligent all-rounder, he combined the specialist roles of opening batsman and off-spinner so effectively that in 1961 he did the 'Double', with 1,808 runs and 101 wickets, the only opening batsman since the war to perform the feat. He also achieved the all-rounder's everyday benchmark in 1955, but at that time he batted further down in the order.

He made 233, his career highest score, against Somerset at New Road in 1962, an innings in which he and Tom Graveney established a record club partnership of 314 for the third wicket. Horton passed the 1,000-run mark 11 times in first-class cricket, his best tally being 2,468 in 1959.

His finest hour with the ball occurred when he took nine wickets in the second innings of the county's 117-run win over the South Africans in 1955. His figures were: 21.5-6-56-9. Bob Berry took the other wicket, that of Springbok wicketkeeper, Johnny Waite. At Bath in 1956, Martin did the hat-trick against Somerset, when he accounted for Colin McCool, Peter Wight (shown here standing as umpire) and Maurice Tremlett – a handsome threesome by any standard.

In 1959, Horton was chosen, somewhat surprisingly, for the first Test against India, scoring 58 in an innings victory and registering bowling figures of 19-11-20-0 in India's second innings. At Lord's, in another easy win, he took two for 24, and although he failed with the bat, he was unlucky to be dropped and also to be never selected again.



On leaving the county in 1966, he and his family emigrated to New Zealand where he became national director of coaching for New Zealand. There he laid the foundation stones for rising stars destined to take the Kiwi Test team to unprecedented heights.

He returned home in 1984 and took up a coaching position at the Royal Grammar School, where one of his charges was future England Test player, Dean Headley. He resumed his involvement with the county club and became chairman of the cricket committee.

In his early days, Martin Horton played league cricket for Stourbridge CC, and he maintained life-long links with the club – at the time of his death, he had been president of the Stourbridge Cricket Society for 15 years. At the April meeting, Mike Tomkins, Stourbridge CS chairman, paid tribute to 'a good friend to our society; he will be sorely missed'.

Martin Horton was a cricketer's cricketer, popular with team-mates and opponents alike.

Martin expressed a wish for his ashes to be scattered at the county ground, next to those of Worcestershire captain and his erstwhile opening partner, Don Kenyon.

Among those attending the funeral service were Martin's team mates John Aldridge, Roy Booth, Bob Carter, Ron Headley, Peter Robinson, Doug Slade and Norman Whiting. Also present were Rev Mike Vockins, Damien D'Oliveira, Duncan Fearnley, David Leatherdale, Phil Neale and Steve Rhodes. Stourbridge Cricket Society was represented by six members.

**Martin John Horton: born Worcester, 21 April 1934; played for Worcestershire 1952-66, and two Tests for England (1959); married 1956 Margaret Cox (one daughter); died Worcester, 3 April 2011**