

SHEPHERD, DONALD JOHN (Don) (1927 - 2018), cricketer

Name: Donald John Shepherd
Date of birth: 1927
Date of death: 2018
Spouse: Joan Maureen (née Evans)
Child: Mark Shepherd
Child: Amanda Shepherd
Child: Deborah Shepherd
Child: Victoria Shepherd
Parent: Annie Lillian Shepherd (née Howell)
Parent: Jack Shepherd
Gender: Male
Occupation: cricketer
Area of activity: Sports and Leisure Pursuits
Author: D. Huw Owen

Don Shepherd was born at Port-Eynon on the Gower Peninsula, on 12 August 1927, the eldest of the three children of Jack Shepherd and his wife Lillian (née Howell). The family later moved to Parkmill, 7 miles nearer to Swansea, where his parents were responsible for running the family shop and where Don helped with the daily delivery of newspapers. He married Joan Maureen Evans in 1953, and they had three daughters, Victoria, Deborah and Amanda, and one son, Mark.

Educated at the local primary schools he won a scholarship to the Gowerton County School for Boys. Following National Service undertaken in the Fleet Air Arm and a trial with Worcestershire County Cricket Club he became an apprentice Glamorgan county player and was accepted on to the Lord's ground staff for the 1948 season.

He played his first match for the Glamorgan second team in the Minor Counties Championship at the end of August that year and was considered to be the fastest bowler in the county's squad. In the following season, having played in all ten of the second team matches, he was the leading wicket taker with 28 wickets at 29.07 runs per wicket. In 1950 he became a regular member of the first team and played in 22 of the 28 Championship matches, taking 49 wickets with a best performance of 5 for 74 runs, and thereby contributing significantly to Glamorgan's first ever victory over Middlesex.

He was awarded his county cap in 1952, and achieved his best ever bowling performance in 1954, taking nine wickets for 47 runs against Northamptonshire at Cardiff Arms Park. A change of bowling style, henceforth bowling off-spinners and medium-pace cutters, resulted in 1956 proving to be his most successful season with 177 first-class wickets taken at an average of 15.36. His bowling achievements also included six wickets for five runs against Nottinghamshire in Newport in 1961, and in two matches at Swansea, a total of nine wickets for 93 runs in 69 overs against the Australians in 1964 and nine for 48 in the second innings against Yorkshire in 1965.

A hard-hitting lower order batsman, his highest scores included 73 against Derbyshire at the Cardiff Arms Park in 1961, 66 against Hampshire in his benefit match in 1960, and 51 against the Australians in 1961, both at St Helen's Swansea. He occasionally captained Glamorgan and one memorable occasion was the defeat in 1968, under his leadership, of an Australian team at Swansea. A testimonial was awarded to him by Glamorgan in this season. He gave loyal support to the various captains under whom he played, and Tony Lewis, captain of the Glamorgan team which won the County Championship in 1969, described him as 'the perfect adviser both on the field of play and in the dressing room'. In that year his 81 wickets contributed significantly to the team's success in winning the County Championship, and he was named in 1970 as one of the five Wisden Cricketers of the Year.

He retired at the age of 45 in 1972, having made a record 647 appearances for Glamorgan, and taken a total of 2,218 first-class wickets at 21.00, the most by anyone who never won a Test cap. He had taken 100 wickets in a season 12 times, the most successful bowler in Glamorgan's history. Despite these statistics, and repeated suggestions that he should have been selected for England, his representative appearances were confined to various tours to East Africa, Zambia, Pakistan and the Far East. Richard Benaud, the Australian captain commented that 'had he been an Australian he would have played many times for his country', and John Arlott, the radio commentator, described him as 'the most effective bowler in county cricket.

Following his retirement he worked for BBC Radio Wales as a summariser on Glamorgan matches for over 30 years, and soon developed into an excellent broadcaster. Edward Bevan, his colleague in the broadcasting studio throughout this period, paid tribute to his numerous qualities including his willingness to 'always offer advice to any young cricketer hoping

to make his way in the game'. He was described by Robert Croft, another successful Glamorgan bowler, whom he coached, as his 'mentor, idol and friend.'

Don Shepherd died on 18 August, 2018, six days after his 91st birthday.

Author

D. Huw Owen

Sources

Douglas Miller, *Born to bowl: the life and times of Don Shepherd* (Bath 2004)

Andrew Hignell, *A who's who of Glamorgan County Cricket Club 1888-1991* (Derby 1992)


Wisden's Cricket Almanack, 2018 [155th edition]

Further reading

Wikipedia Article: [Don Shepherd](#) 

Additional Links

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