

# REMEMBERING ST HELEN'S, BY RICHARD BENTLEY

## GLAMORGAN v NOTTINGHAMSHIRE 1927

**AUGUST 31ST - SEPTEMBER 2ND,  
1927**

Nottinghamshire and Swansea are often heard in the same sentence – and it's usually when people are talking about Glamorgan's match in 1968 when Gary Sobers scored his world-record-breaking six sixes in an over at the historic St. Helen's ground.

**“ONE OF THE  
MOST THRILLING  
MORNINGS!”**

But there was another match between Nottinghamshire and Glamorgan at Swansea which was, in many ways, even more remarkable. Certainly at the time it shocked the cricketing world.

The facts were stark – and, for Glamorgan, decidedly unpromising...

Nottinghamshire, top of the Championship table with only one match to play, needed only to avoid defeat against Glamorgan to be sure of being crowned Champions.

Glamorgan, described by one journalist as “consistent only in their inconsistency”, had not won a Championship match all season.



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The outcome was generally regarded as a foregone conclusion. Indeed, it is reported that a band had already been hired to meet the Nottinghamshire team on their triumphant return from Wales, and that a commemorative fund had been set up in the city. But as people never seem to tire of saying: ‘Cricket is a funny old game ...’!

J.H. Morgan, a well-known journalist who reported on Glamorgan's matches for many years after their elevation to the Championship in 1921, takes up the story:

*“With the knowledge that they had to avoid defeat Notts, on winning the toss, batted with deliberate caution, and took nearly all the first day to score 233 runs... Even a fluent player like George Gunn took two-and-a-quarter hours to score his first 50 runs. It was mistaken tactics. Instead of playing their natural game with an eagerness to win the match Notts concentrated on a draw...”*

Glamorgan, however, had ideas of their own! Bates and Bell, both ex-Yorkshire players, enjoyed an opening partnership of 158 in a little over two hours. Eddie Bates

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played "the innings of his life", and batted for just over four hours in making 163 which included one six and twenty-four fours. Continuing to go boldly for runs, Glamorgan scored 375 to give them a first-innings lead of 142.

Before close of play on Day 2, the visitors found themselves batting again – and losing openers Gunn and Whysall to Jack Mercer with only 14 on the board.

J.H. Morgan, who was at St. Helen's reporting on the game, finishes the story:

*"It was a rather dejected Notts team that spent the night at their Swansea hotel. It was raining heavily and they must have suffered agonies of torture with unhappy visions of what Ryan and Mercer would do in the morning. Their worst fears were realised. The sun came out in the morning, and Glamorgan had just the type of bowlers to take full advantage of such conditions. Notts were all out for 61. As each wicket fell the small crowd roared, eager for 'the kill', and it was in an electric atmosphere that the men of Notts met their doom."*

It was "one of the most thrilling mornings in nearly thirty years of cricket reporting".

Glamorgan won the match.

Lancashire, to their great surprise, won the Championship.

And history was made – not for the last time – at St. Helen's.

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