

# ENGLISH INTERNATIONAL BATS FOR RUDELLS

“A beautiful little innings, selfless and stylish”, writes Andy Bull in the Guardian. How marvellous – and rather timely - to read this in a national broadsheet describing the very same sportsman I am due to speak to, that very same week. The long-awaited interview with one of our greatest batsman of all time was finally in the diary and my goodness was it worth the wait!

Ian Bell is a prodigy. In fact he was described by a leading coach as ‘the most talented 16 year old I’ve ever seen’. That leading coach just so happens to be Dayle Hadlee, whose brother is Richard Hadlee, New Zealand’s best ever player and one of the world’s all-time greats. Bell’s story is a fascinating one on many levels; he has taken time to fulfil his prodigious existence, with a tempestuous early England career.

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Once described by The Times as an ‘exquisite rapier’, Bell is currently one of the most talented batsmen in the England team. Awarded an MBE for his role in the successful Ashes campaign of 2005, he was awarded the prestigious Emerging Player of the Year award by the International Cricket Council. Experiencing highs and lows, one notable low on the Ashes tour to Australia in 2006-7, where he struggled with the rest of the team in a 5-0 defeat. Going Down Under proved to be a blessing, a significant turnaround for Ian as a person, a sportsman and as a future top-class world cricketer. Bell grew up in Perth...



He went back to play for Warwickshire where he was made Captain. He was the youngest player to make a County Championship century for them when he was 19 years old. He re-discovered his spirit of steel and inner confidence, perhaps lacking in his youth. Over the past nine months since his recall to the England team, he has shown his true class and is now, arguably, the best batsman in the world today. In 2009, Ian Bell was recalled to the England squad to replace the injured Kevin Pietersen in the third Ashes Test at Edgbaston. In 2011, Ian scored his first Ashes century, 115 in the fifth Test, coming at the end of an excellent Ashes series for England and Ian Bell himself.

Born in Coventry in 1982, Ian was a kid sensation; excelling at the sport was his focus, his dream, his ultimate life goal. As a thirteen year old right-handed batsman, he gave the sport his own personal stamp – and unflinching support – by playing ceaselessly for five successive national age-group sides. Unsurprisingly his name was on the lips of all cricket-related authorities, making an impact and he climbed fast through the ranks. However the game which had been within his grip fairly fluidly throughout his teenage years, suddenly struck out and gave him a run for his own good. In 2004 at the Oval, his test debut was against the West Indies. He

had been included in the England squad as early as 2002, after only 13 first class cricket appearances.

Almost within his grasp, just missing being picked for the First Test of the 2002 summer, he started to struggle for the first time in his vocation. Understandably, he was incredibly concerned, and so were those same authorities. Concerned about his game, about cricket and if the truth be known, much only about cricket in fact.

‘It doesn’t really get any better than this’, remarks Ian nonchalantly, in his characteristic laidback, upbeat style. Right now, English cricket is going through a rather successful patch, what with the countless successes over the last few seasons. Let’s not forget the testimonial in Warwickshire, the May events in the Midlands and of course the Ashes in Australia, the pinnacle of any England player’s career. ‘There has been a progression in English cricket; we have been fitter and stronger for the past two and a half years’. A true sportsman, he puts the recent triumphs down to the immense spirit of the team and the unique bonding amongst each player. He is ultimately grateful to be part of such a close-knit unit, noting the individual success as much as the team successes. ‘We’ve pretty much grown up together; there is something special about this group’.



Easy to see why Rudell’s of Harborne is the jeweller of choice for Bell. A West-Midlands man and long-time customer, Bell prefers to shop for life’s luxuries at the family-owned fine jewellers. “I always go to Rudell’s for advice. I trust everyone who works there”. An obvious selection it seems, rather than the larger more often than not, face-less global brands. In the current consumer climate, it is becoming more and more apparent that we have come full circle with regards to retail; trust and personal service are once more at the top of the agenda. With trust as a major component in Rudell’s business model, actually it is how the much esteemed jewellery company functions. A dedicated customer of Rudell’s, Ian Bell, is actually on first name terms with all of the team in the Harborne store, and indeed a very good friend of the late Mr Rudell. With all the jewellery brands of the world at his disposal, it was at Rudell’s where Bell chose for his wife’s engagement ring.

With a summer ahead and immense success in Sri Lanka and India for the recent World Cup earlier in the year, Bell is currently doing a count-down to England becoming the World Number One. In his free time, he loves to play gold and listen to music, he follows Northampton rugby union team and supports Aston Villa. Philanthropy is incredibly important to Ian; in fact he dedicates an enormous amount of time focussing on charitable causes, working hard to support Cure Leukaemia and the Acorn Children’s Hospice.

Article written by Juliet Rowe



