

Saleem Yousuf (Pakistan 1982 to 1990)

Pakistan hosted the West Indies in 1986-87. Expecting a gruelling Test series, Imran Khan wanted known fighters in his team. Zulqarnain had kept wicket in Pakistan's previous Test series against Sri Lanka and in the following One Day International (ODI) tournaments. Anil Dilpat was wicketkeeper in the first of two three-day tour games and in an ODI against the West Indies in October 1986. For the second three-day game, just a week before the opening Test, Imran brought in Saleem Yousuf and retained him for the series. Afterwards Imran felt his choice was vindicated: "In Salim Yousuf, Pakistan had found a courageous player and one who could handle a crisis." When Pakistan toured the West Indies later in 1987-88, Saleem, despite a broken nose from being hit in the face in the first innings, came in at No. 9 in the second and played a vital innings of 28, adding 51 runs, to help set West Indies a testing score at Bridgetown. Wasim Akram considered Saleem "not the tidiest keeper, but he's one of the bravest batsman I've ever seen."

Saleem Yousuf contributed much to Pakistan's rise to the summit in Test cricket from 1986. Successes against West Indies, and series wins over India, England (twice), Australia and New Zealand meant that when Pakistan and the West Indies met in late 1990 the series was regarded as the unofficial world championship. Saleem played only in the first Test in that 1990 series, finishing his Test career by helping Pakistan take the lead. The outcome of the series would be decided by another nightwatchman in very testing circumstances. Saleem Yousuf took on the role six times for Pakistan. Those innings are summarised in the table.

Date	Opponents	Venue	In	Out	Minutes	Score
Oct 1986	West Indies	Faisalabad	19-2	124-4	220	61
Nov 1986	West Indies	Karachi	3-1	16-2	28	10
Feb 1987	India	Calcutta	12-1	116-4	216	43
Jul 1987	England	Leeds	60-2	152-5	154	37
Nov 1989	India	Karachi	92-3	109-4	46	4
Oct 1990	New Zealand	Faisalabad	33-1	61-2	63	13

Saleem Yousuf's NWM Appearances in Test matches

Pakistan v West Indies, First Test, Faisalabad, October 1986

The West Indies arrived in Pakistan in October 1986 on the back of seven successive Test series wins. They had been victorious in 23 Tests in 35 outings and had lost just once, to Australia in the final Test at Sydney in 1984-85 when holding a 3-0 series lead. Pakistan had not been one of the victims in the West Indies winning streak. The sides had not met since the West Indies last toured Pakistan six years previously (when the tourists took the series). The morning of the First Test at Faisalabad saw the cricket sway to the usual Calypso rhythm as Pakistan, choosing to bat, fell in thrall to pace to 37 for five. Imran was then hit first ball by a spitting delivery from Malcolm Marshall. His shoulder quickly swelled up, giving him great pain, but Imran did not go off for treatment fearing that in his absence Pakistan would collapse completely. Saleem Malik had his arm broken by a ball from Courtney Walsh when the score was 90 and retired hurt. Imran soldiered on. Finding an ally in Tauseef Ahmed, 39 were added for the final wicket before Imran fell for 61. Pakistan were dismissed for 159.

The West Indies, without the ill Vivian Richards, struggled to establish their usual fast-scoring tempo. Tauseef carried on his good work by removing Richie Richardson and Jeff Dujon in successive balls and bowling a tight spell in the afternoon. The West Indies shuffled to 192 for five whereupon Wasim Akram ran through the tail. Still, the West Indies had an 89 run lead. In the last 50 minutes of the second day they improved their position. Mudassar Nazar gloved a rising ball from Marshall and Ramiz Raja fell to Patrick Patterson. On 19 for two, Imran feared Pakistan were doomed. The *Jamaican Daily Gleaner* thought a prodigious effort would be required to prevent a West Indies victory. *Cricketer International* predicted another Pakistan collapse.

Saleem Yousuf, nightwatchman, and Mohsin Khan saw Pakistan to close of play on 28 for two, and the following morning embarked on a grim battle. The West Indies pacemen gave them a torrid time. "Nightwatchman defies West Indies pace barrage"; headlined the *Guardian*. Scoring was slow; only 155 runs were to be scored during the day's play. Given few loose balls to score off, Saleem and Mohsin attempted to push on by scoring off short-pitched deliveries. They had some luck, about a dozen miscued shots falling safely between the close-in and boundary fielders. By lunch they had reached 80 for two. During the afternoon, Pakistan inched along. Saleem reached his maiden Test fifty. After 46 overs of determined batting, his favourite shot, the sweep brought his downfall; Gordon Greenidge catching him at backward square leg. His captain delighted in his "gritty innings" of 61, containing eight fours and lifting Pakistan's score to 124 for four and their morale rather higher.

The *Jamaican Daily Gleaner* thought he had led Pakistan, overshadowing Mohsin's fine effort, with an inspirational innings. Other commentators thought the spirit in which Saleem Yousuf had played rubbed off on the rest of his team. Javed Miandad batted with great discipline (*Wisden*) for over three hours in scoring 30 and at the end of the third day Pakistan were 183 for four. Carrying on the fight Wasim Akram then made his best Test score, and Saleem Malik emerged to face fourteen balls with his arm in plaster while Wasim plundered 32 runs. With everyone pitching in, Pakistan reached 328.

Imran had chosen to bat believing the Faisalabad wicket would crumble later in the Test. Set to win 240 in four sessions, the West Indies fell apart much faster and more completely than the pitch. "West Indies overthrown by Qadir's bloodless coup" ran one headline. "West Indies humiliated as Pakistan go one up", hailed another. Abdul Qadir, finding bounce and turn, razed the West Indies in the final session of the fourth day to 43 for nine. Qadir snared Marshall the next morning to finish with 6 for 16 as the West Indies were dismissed for 53, their lowest Test score. Jackie Hendricks, the tourists' manager, thought that from Pakistan's 19 for two the match had "turned turtle": "Pakistan were able to come back from what looked as though was the brink of defeat - all credit to Imran and his team" (*Trinidad Guardian*). Saleem Yousuf had started the revolution and his team-mates all dug in. Imran thought the win the most satisfying of his career: "West Indies at the moment are easily the best side I have played against. They are such a professional organisation and to have beaten them is marvellous. It has given us a boost."

Pakistan 1st Innings 159 and West Indies 1st innings 248		
Pakistan 2nd Innings (overnight 28-2: Mohsin Khan 3, Saleem Yousuf 9)		
Mohsin Khan	c Haynes b Walsh	40
Mudassar Nazar	c Haynes b Marshall	2
Rameez Raja	c Gray b Patterson	13
Saleem Yousuf	c Greenidge b Harper	61
Qasim Umar	lbw b Walsh	48
Javed Miandad	c sub (Logie) b Gray	30
Imran Khan	c Harper b Marshall	23
Abdul Qadir	lbw b Gray	2
Wasim Akram	st Dujon b Harper	66
Tauseef Ahmed	b Walsh	8
Saleem Malik	not out	3
Extras		32

Total (117.5 overs)		328
FOW: 1-2, 2-19, 3-113, 4-124, 5-208, 6-218, 7-224, 8-258, 9-296		
West Indies 2nd Innings 53		

The West Indies had fallen, just as they had in Sydney to Bob Holland, to a leg-spinner. Jim Swanton reckoned the idea of the West Indies being humiliated by anyone had been “unthinkable for over a decade”, and Michael Manley observed the dismay felt at home as arguments raged in bars, offices and supermarkets. “Just when it seemed that the Caribbean would succumb to a sort of choking hysteria, attention was mercifully diverted by the Second Test at Lahore.” Here on a fast pitch with unpredictable bounce, the West Indies gained revenge, shooting out Pakistan for 77 in their second innings, the host’s lowest total in a home Test match.

The final Test to decide the series was another grim battle. Replying to West Indies’ 240, Pakistan conceded only a one run deficit as Ramiz Raja batted for almost seven hours for 62. The West Indies were then pegged back by Imran who, despite having suffered a stomach upset, took five for 10 in six overs. Under his assault West Indies fell from 185 for five to 211 all out. Seeking 213 to win the Test and the series, Pakistan were staggered by Malcolm Marshall’s three early wickets. From a precarious 25 for four, Ramiz again opted for attrition, this time taking four hours for his 29. Mudassar was obdurate, but at tea Pakistan were 97 for seven and facing defeat. Imran and Tauseef Ahmed had delayed the West Indies in their first partnership of the series in the First Test and they did so again in their last partnership of the summer. They batted unbeaten for an hour and a half through the last session of the match until bad light ended play nine overs early with Pakistan on 125 for seven. So, Imran, on his 34th birthday and winning the man of the match award, had led his team to a drawn series against the West Indies.

India v Pakistan, Second Test, Calcutta, February 1987

Two months after the West Indies series, Pakistan began their tour of India in an atmosphere of tense confrontation. In January 1987, 340,000 Indian and Pakistani troops faced each other along a 250-mile stretch of the Punjab frontier. At the end of 1986 India had run Operation Brass Tacks, a military exercise to test new concepts of mechanisation and mobility supported from the air. The exercise featured the largest peacetime military manoeuvres in South Asia since the Second World War. Although it was run in the deserts of Rajasthan, rather than in the touch-paper regions of the Kashmir or the Punjab, the activity worried Pakistan, whose army was less than a half the size and possessed no mechanised units to match India’s.

In response Pakistan mobilised an Army Corps and Southern Air Command near to the Punjab. In turn, India moved her forces opposite. At the height of the tension, senior scientist Dr Abdek Qadeer Khan confirmed Pakistan had developed a nuclear bomb. General Zia-ul-Haq warned India: “If your forces cross our border by even an inch, we are going to annihilate your cities.” Quite apart from the reaction in Delhi, these announcements gave America an awkward problem. During President Reagan’s administrations, Pakistan had remained a vital ally for the training and supply of Afghan rebels fighting Soviet troops, and as a counter to the long ‘special relationship’ between India and the USSR.

A six-year \$3.2Bn US aid programme was coming to an end in October 1987. Under the Symington Amendment, America could not provide aid to secretive nuclear states. Public confirmation of the possession of a nuclear weapon, therefore, was embarrassing. However, President Reagan was not to be dissuaded of Pakistan’s importance as a bulwark against the “Evil Empire”, and Congress was pressed to pass another six-year aid programme of \$4Bn¹. The apparent threat to use nuclear weapons drew in the international community, urging conciliation between India and Pakistan. On 4 February, during First Test, a programme was agreed for the withdrawal of troops from each side of the Punjab border.

¹ A peace settlement for Afghanistan was signed in Geneva in April 1988. The two protagonists together with Pakistan were signatories, with the US as a witness. The Soviet Union agreed to withdraw its troops, but the accord did not oblige the parties to end military support for the various factions in Afghanistan. The training and arming of Islamic fundamentalists, largely with US funds, was to reap terrible harvests.

The border tension was mirrored to an extent in the behaviour of some of the Indian crowds to the Pakistan players. Wasim Akram remembered being pelted with stones twice during matches and found the tour extremely demanding: "we were well treated by the Indian players and officials, but the crowds were often very hostile." Among cricket supporters the series did not, however, excite much enthusiasm. India had already hosted Australia and Sri Lanka that summer, and Pakistan were thought to have weak batting, and bowling which was unlikely to cause the Indian batsmen much trouble. The pitches prepared for the Tests were slow and Wasim Akram thought India just wanted to bat out the series to avoid any chance of defeat with no real interest in winning.

The First Test at Madras was drawn after two large first innings totals. At Calcutta a replay seemed probable, evidently in slow-motion. By tea on the third day Pakistan were 178 for two in reply to India's 403. Then, in the evening session, the heat haze and smog combined to make the ball swing. Roger Binny took full advantage, taking 4 for 9 in 30 balls and reduced Pakistan to 207 for seven. India gained a first-innings lead of 174. On the fourth day, with the wicket having deteriorated, India's winning prescription was to score quickly enough to give Binny plenty of time to administer another dose of late afternoon medicine. However, India's progress was lethargic. Pakistan had to face only five overs in the evening. Still, Binny managed to administer the treatment to Shoaib Mohammad, bringing in Saleem Yousuf as nightwatchman to prevent further loss.

The worn pitch was slow, making stroke-play very risky. India had hopes of forcing a win, despite an injury to the spinning finger of Maninder Singh. Anyhow Pakistan had little chance of scoring the 340 runs they needed on the last day for victory, so they set about securing a draw. Ramiz Raja struggled in the morning and was dismissed quickly to give India some hope. Saleem Yousuf, however, "looked dependable from the start" (*Times*), which was just as well, as Rizwan-uz-Zaman fell just before lunch playing back across his stumps to Ravi Shastri.

After lunch, Javed Miandad, realising the importance of his wicket, played very cautiously. Kiran More, the Indian wicketkeeper, missed a simple run-out chance against Saleem, which would have been a tonic for India. After this brief remission, Saleem reverted to his usual course of defence, with very occasional drives or sweeps only against anything especially loose. He and Miandad batted on through the afternoon, looking increasingly secure. Indeed, "the only threat to their safety came when some of the 70,000 crowd threw rotten fruit on to the pitch" (*Guardian*). Shortly before tea, Saleem Yousuf, expecting some turn, went to cut Maninder and was beaten by an arm ball. Saleem had endured for more than three and a half hours and "played a match-saving innings of 43" (*Pakistan Television Commentary*). Pakistan "owed a great deal to their nightwatchman" (*Times*) and to Miandad, who stayed for four hours.

India 403 & 181-3 declared and Pakistan 1st innings 229		
Pakistan 2nd Innings (overnight 16-1: Rameez Raja 7, Saleem Yousuf 4)		
Shoaib Mohammad	lbw b Binny	5
Rameez Raja	c More b Binny	29
Saleem Yousuf	b Maninder Singh	43
Rizwan-uz-Zaman	b Shastri	8
Javed Miandad	not out	63
Saleem Malik	lbw b Kapil Dev	20
Imran Khan	not out	5
Extras		6

Total (5 wickets; 87 overs)		179
FOW: 1-12, 2-37, 3-73, 4-116, 5-170		

The Third Test was memorable but not for the play. 'Cricket diplomacy' broke out as General Zia-ul-Haq attended, at the invitation of the Indian government, on the second day. "Cricket for peace is my mission", he said, adding, "I confess I do not know the difference between one ball and another." Indian officials were a little discomfited by the General's likely intention over a state dinner to press the Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi to sign a non-aggression pact. The hosts favoured further negotiations rather than a premature agreement. More embarrassment was to be felt by Indian officials. In the wake of General Zia's visit, a thunderstorm and high winds had blown away the covers and soaked the pitch. But when the players arrived after the rest day, they found the pitch sprinkled with sawdust. Pakistan objected to this repair. India claimed the sawdust had been blown there from the outfield. The umpires dithered. Imran threatened to refuse to bat. The diplomatic solution was found: play was abandoned for the day thus ensuring another draw.

The next Test at Ahmedabad became the eleventh consecutive draw between the two teams, but was most notable for Sunil Gavaskar being the first to reach 10,000 Test match runs. The match was notorious too as on the fourth day Pakistan outfielders were pelted with stones. The umpires took the players off. Gavaskar and Kapil Dev appealed to the crowd for calm while tea was taken. When play resumed after the loss of an hour, Pakistan players emerged to field wearing helmets.

The Hindu considered India's strong batting line-up had not been threatened during the series, whereas Pakistan's had had to scramble twice to avoid defeat. The final Test seemed to confirm the analysis. On a Bangalore wicket from which the ball turned square from the start, Pakistan chose to bat and were shot out for 116, their lowest score in India. Wasim Akram thought the game was up, but Imran disagreed, "We'll bowl them out cheaply too. We'll win this game." Dilip Vengsarkar thwarted this ambition by batting aggressively, hitting the occasional ball over the top, to take India to an excellent position of 119 for four. A big lead seemed destined, but Vengsarkar's fine innings of 50 was ended with his first mistake. Iqbal Qasim and Tauseef Ahmed exploited the impetus by running through the rest of the order to dismiss India for 145. Noting the success of Vengsarkar, Imran sent in Miandad to open the batting with orders to attack. Kapil Dev persisted with Maninder even though the bowler was struggling and on a worsening pitch, Pakistan managed to compile 249.

After looking wildly optimistic, Imran's forecast now appeared realistic. Chasing 220 to win, India quickly lost Kris Srikkanth and Mohinder Amarnath to successive balls. Before the close Vengaskar and nightwatchman More had gone too. *Wisden* reported that even off-spinners were able to bowl bouncers the next day, but Gavaskar "gave a masterly exhibition of technique and judgement". India progressed to 180 for seven under his hand. Having stayed in for almost five and a half hours, for 96, Gavaskar was undone by a ball spitting off a good length. India on 185 for nine appeared doomed. Roger Binny then treated Pakistan harshly once more in the late afternoon, this time with the willow, throwing the bat to good effect yet managing to shield Maninder. Just as Wasim was beginning to doubt, Binny edged behind. Pakistan, winning by 16 runs, had taken a series in India for the first time. "The match was one of the tensest I have ever played", maintained Wasim. Pakistan, having ended the West Indies' winning streak against expectation and having fought hard in India, were on the rise. "My ambition of winning a series in India has been fulfilled and now I am looking forward to the England tour."

England v Pakistan, Third Test, Leeds, 3 July 1987

If India had treated them lightly, Pakistan felt England regarded them with disdain. The English press were also looking forward to the tour, albeit with much complacency following the regaining of the Ashes during the preceding winter. Despite the expectation, the summer was ugly. There was bad blood between the teams after a *Perth Challenge Cup* ODI in Australia the previous winter. Mistrust grew after the pre-series meeting when the TCCB rejected Pakistan's request for David Constant to officiate in only one Test, if at all, and then leaked details to the press, which roundly condemned Pakistan.

Like India, Pakistan objected to the standard of Constant's umpiring in an earlier tour. In the Third Test at Headingley in 1982, Pakistan were recovering from a delicate situation to set England a testing total for victory. From being 128 for seven, 147 ahead, Imran and Abdul Qadir had added 41, and Sikander Bakht was helping Imran in a 9th wicket stand when Constant gave Bakht out caught behind off Vic Marks. "A truly bizarre decision" said Imran. *Wisden* admitted television pictures showed the ball clearly missing the bat. England went on to sneak home after many alarms, but Pakistan believed Constant had cost them the match and the series.

Further detracting from the appeal of the 1987 tour, the hotels in which Pakistan were accommodated were much inferior to those Wasim was used to as a Lancashire player and the food at grounds was rationed. Ugly scenes during the ODI at Edgbaston with fights breaking out in the crowd, fuelled by alcohol and racism, further heightened the tension before the Test series began. Rain, providing a pause for moderation, ruined the first two Tests. The pause helped Pakistan, as Imran had strained a stomach muscle and Abdul Qadir was late in arriving as his wife was unwell. The Third Test at Leeds loomed. John Woodcock in the *Times* feared a repetition of Edgbaston; "there have been unhappy instances in the last two or three years of racial abuse at Headingley." Sylvester Clarke, Vivian Richards and Joel Garner had been among the victims. Bans on banners, promises of arrests for spectators making racist comments and a large police presence sustained order. This time, however, the unsightliness was in the pitch, which both captains condemned as unacceptable for a Test. Mike Gatting observed that this had been the case at Headingley for the last six or seven years, and said: "Deliveries were shooting straight along the ground quite regularly by the end of the third day. I don't just mean they kept low - they never left the ground."

England won the toss. On a sunny morning with only a light breeze they chose to bat; a decision Imran would have made in Gatting's boots. After an hour England found themselves 31 for five, the pace and swing of Imran and Wasim offering the only pretty sights. Pakistan dismissed England for 136, but then had 27 overs to face. Botham, sporting an ugly bruise on his instep from a ball from Mudassar, could not take the field. Eyes were averted as three slip catches went begging² off the excellent Neil Foster. Foster then sensibly avoided butter fingers in that area by doing all the work himself; snaring Mudassar Nazir lbw and having Shoaib Mohammad caught behind. Among the unsightly fielding, John Emburey, substitute fielder at Botham's usual second slip position, dropped a sitter off nightwatchman Saleem Yousuf. Pakistan closed on 76 for two.

Imran said, "I would not have fancied chasing 100 on that pitch". Overnight the media agreed that England would find defeat hard to avoid if they conceded even a half-decent first innings lead. In the morning, however, Foster delighted England by continuing his sterling work. He removed Mansoor Akhtar and Javed Miandad in five balls levelling Pakistan to 86 for four and raising English hopes. Thereafter, "Yousuf stayed most usefully as Pakistan sold their wickets dearly in a most determined and professional manner" (Christopher Martin-Jenkins). Joined by Saleem Malik, Saleem batted through the morning session facing testing spells from Foster. Saleem forced the last ball before lunch through the covers for four to level the scores. In the afternoon session, after two and a half hours on a dodgy pitch, Saleem Yousuf finally fell to second slip off Foster: Bill Athey, having replaced the hapless Emburey, taking a fine low catch. Saleem had played an important innings; "[he] finished with 37, assisting Saleem Malik in ensuring England would have scant chance of drawing let alone winning" (Ivo Tennant). The match was completely taken away from England by Malik and then, the following day, by Ijaz and Wasim. Pakistan gained a lead of 217. England were dismissed for 199 to lose by an innings. Saleem Yousuf provided the final piece of ugliness by claiming a catch off a clear bump ball, for which he heard the riot act from Imran.

² Fielding standards at Headingley were normally austere. In 1925 Madame Tussaud's suffered a fire, and needed to replace certain models. George Macaulay, of Yorkshire, hearing about this asserted acerbically: "They can have yon three buggers in my slips".

England 1st Innings 136

Pakistan 1st Innings (overnight 76-2: Mansoor Akhtar 24, Saleem Yousuf 4)

Mudassar Nazar	lbw b Foster	24
Shoaib Mohammad	c Richards b Foster	16
Mansoor Akhtar	lbw b Foster	29
Saleem Yousuf	c Athey b Harper	37
Javed Miandad	c Gatting b Foster	0
Saleem Malik	c Gower b Edmonds	99
Imran Khan	c Richards b Foster	26
Ijaz Ahmed	c Athey b Foster	50
Wasim Akram	c Edmonds b Foster	43
Abdul Qadir	b Dilley	2
Mohsin Kamal	not out	3
Extras		24

Total (131.2 overs)		353

FOW: 1-22, 2-60, 3-86, 4-86, 5-152, 6-208, 7-280, 8-318, 9-328

England 2nd Innings 199

England had a chance to level the series in the next Test. Both captains later agreed that the batsmen's vast experience of one-day should have enabled England to chase down 124 in 18 overs. Run outs hampered the effort and Athey could score only 14 runs from seven overs. Pakistan should have won the Oval Test. England, following on 476 behind, lost their first four wickets for 139. Reservations about umpire Constant re-surfaced when he gave Botham not out on 20; sparking the Pakistan manager, Haseeb Ahsan, to an intemperate outburst in the evening's press conference and further complaints from Imran. Thankfully, a veil was soon to be drawn over the summer. England's opinion of her cricket was deflated. Pakistan and Imran, however, continued their impressive progress, winning a Test series in England for the first time. The success was greeted rapturously by Pakistanis everywhere, barely having recovered from the delirium from victory in India, and for whom the previous year had been one of great beauty.

Pakistan went on to beat England at home, but more importantly they drew their series in the West Indies in 1987-88. Saleem continued with Imran on Pakistan's journey to the top of Test cricket, his career ending after victory in the first Test against the West Indies at Karachi in November 1990.

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