

Daniel Vettori (New Zealand 1996 – 2012)

Daniel Vettori is the youngest man to play Test cricket for New Zealand, and has gone on to play 113 Tests, becoming the most capped Kiwi. Quickly he became a regular in the Test team as his country's leading spinner. However, Vettori grew frustrated with his batting, feeling that poor performances were letting down the team. After all, he had batted up the order in his other representative sides, and still considered himself a guy who could bat. In 2003 Daniel devoted time to his batting.

"I spoke long and hard with Stephen Fleming and New Zealand Cricket's technical advisor Ashley Ross about tightening up. Effectively, I modelled myself on Flem because he'd just overhauled his technique and was proving very successful. We were both tall left-handers ... I don't think we could ever be mistaken for each other ... but there were elements that I definitely tried to copy from him ... playing as late as possible and using the raised back lift but not with cocked wrists ... I think the biggest adjustment was a mental one in that I simply wanted to bat for long periods. I didn't want to throw my wicket away and I wanted to play straight. I worked hard in the nets and I played straight in match situations."

The work paid off. Daniel's batting improved so much that he went on to become only the 8th player to manage the double of 3000 Test runs and 300 wickets (the other seven being Shane Warne, Kapil Dev, Richard Hadlee, Shaun Pollock, Ian Botham, Imran Khan and Chaminda Vaas). Vettori enjoys statistics, and doubtless the figures in this table would be to his liking, as proof of his work in 2003.

Test Span	Inns	Not Out	Runs	Average	Centuries	Fifties
Feb 1997 (v Eng) to May 2003 (SL)	67	10	940	16.49	0	5
Oct 2003 (Ind) to Nov 2014 (Pak)	107	13	3591	38.20	6	18

This striking "before" and "after" is reflected in Daniel's nightwatchman appearances for New Zealand. His batting so improved that he became too valuable to be used in the role. Eleven of his twelve nightwatchman innings came before 2003. So good were his performances with the willow that after Vettori went in early at Chittagong in 2008 he was asked if he had more confidence in his own batting than that of his middle order (Vettori was then captain of New Zealand). Daniel was adamant: "I was there as a nightwatchman."

Date	Opponents	Venue	In	Out	Minutes	Score
Mar 1997	Sri Lanka	Dunedin (Carisbrook)	337-4	343-5	13	1
Nov 1997	Australia	Brisbane	134-3	173-4	59	14
Nov 1997	Australia	Perth	53-2	55-3	18	1
Jun 1998	Sri Lanka	Galle	90-3	90-4	1	0
Mar 1999	South Africa	Wellington	203-5	207-6	13	4
Jul 1999	England	Lord's	239-5	351-9	135	54
Oct 1999	India	Ahmedabad	13-1	29-2	37	3
Dec 1999	West Indies	Hamilton	107-3	162-4	87	29
Nov 2001	Australia	Perth	269-5	272-6	7	2
Mar 2002	England	Christchurch	4-1	65-3	84	42
Jun 2002	West Indies	St George's	205-4	206-5	8	1
Oct 2008	Bangladesh	Chittagong (Divisional)	145-2	298-6	260	76

Daniel Vettori's NWM Appearances in Test matches

England v New Zealand, Second Test, Lord's, July 1999

The New Zealand tourists were not given a warm welcome in 1999 by the home press. Their captain, Stephen Fleming, observed, "It didn't matter what we did the English media couldn't see anything good in us. When we won there would be no great praise, just a massive amount of criticism for the England team."¹ Nasser Hussain was aware of the New Zealander's fight. They had won their only tour match before the first Test by six wickets, despite Somerset running up 554 in their first innings. Indeed, on the eve of the decisive day in the First Test, New Zealand were favoured by the bookmakers to win. Instead, Alex Tudor took the match away from them as nightwatchman.

Hailing that victory, the press belligerently predicted England would wrap up the series at Lord's. After all, the tourists had not won there in a dozen attempts. Those longer on memory and shorter on hysteria recalled the 1994 series. Then, New Zealand lost the First Test comprehensively. On arrival in London for the Second Test, Mike Atherton talked bullishly of a new ruthless England, kicking the Kiwis while they were down and winning the series. As *Wisden* put it: "by Monday evening, however, with their tail-enders hanging on grimly in the gloom, England were relieved to escape with a draw and their 1-0 lead in the series intact."

Perhaps it was to be 13th time lucky for the tourists? The 1999 New Zealanders were made of stern stuff. Their coach, Australian Steve Rixon, deliberately instilled more aggression into their attitude and their play. England won the toss and chose to bat first at Lord's, hoping the sky would clear. Alec Stewart and Nasser Hussain scored fifties, but the clouds remained into the afternoon eventually curtailing play. No-one else reached double figures until Andrew Caddick in the tail as England collapsed to 186 in the face of Chris Cairns (6-77) and Dion Nash (3-50). The hosts hospitably just carried their innings on into the second day, when a bright blue sky heralded perfect batting conditions. Matt Horne laid the foundations of New Zealand's reply. England made inroads at the other end, but Roger Twose and Horne then added 120 for the fourth wicket. With New Zealand on 232 for three, England were disappearing from contention.

Dean Headley brought England back. He dismissed Twose. Horne reached his patiently built century, but with the new ball three overs later Headley ended his day. Horne was given out caught in gully, somewhat controversially as replays suggested he had played the ball directly into the ground. His six hour innings had taken New Zealand on 239 for five. Nightwatchman Daniel Vettori saw out the last three balls of Headley's over. Craig Macmillan fell in the next over. These three late wickets heartened England. The tourist's first innings lead might now be limited to manageable proportions.

England began the morning in fine attacking style. Andrew Caddick hit Vettori on the body with a bouncer. Vettori and Adam Parore struggled to settle; Daniel particularly getting into difficulties against Headley's short deliveries. Although the batsmen were being struck regularly, it was England who suffered injury. Hussain, fielding in the gully, dived to stop a well-timed shot from Parore and fractured the top joint of his middle finger on his right hand. England recovered from the loss of their captain and took a wicket. Parore dragged the ball back onto his stumps with a poor back foot shot. New Zealand, now on 275 for seven, had lost four recognised batsmen for 43 runs. England felt they were getting back into the match.

¹ Fleming would have agreed with Harold Macmillan who, commenting on a different field of endeavour, said; "I have never found, in a long experience of politics, that criticism is ever inhibited by ignorance."

Vettori responded with aggression. He took eight runs off Caddick's next over, including a savage cut for four. Vettori continued to play with "breezy authority" (*Cricketer International*). Daniel's approach helped Cairns, who had started uncertainly. He slowly gained in confidence from watching his junior partner bat so well. As their partnership developed, news came that Hussain's finger would need three weeks to recover, and he might struggle to make the final Test. To add to the injury the New Zealand pair added 70 for the eighth wicket before Cairns was unluckily dismissed by Caddick. The ball, going down leg side, struck Cairns on the pad and rebounded off his right boot to hit off stump. On 48 Vettori was clearly tense and all at sea at the crease. Having been made to wait while Tufnell paused to tie his shoe-laces in an attempt to play on the batsman's nerves, Daniel reached his fifty by dancing down the track to the spinner and driving beautifully to extra cover for four.

At lunch New Zealand were 350 for nine, a lead of 164 which the *Times* reckoned was "beyond what was comfortable for England." Vettori took off his sweat-dampened shirt and hung it over the balcony to dry over lunch. Sadly, his preparations for the afternoon proved unnecessary. Having added a single, he was dismissed, like Cairns rather fortuitously. Throwing the bat at a Tufnell delivery, the ball took the edge but the wicket-keeper could not react quickly enough to take the catch. His gloves however deflected the ball high in the air, and Thorpe was able to run back from slip to complete the dismissal. The *New Zealand Herald* felt "it was a vital innings from the nightwatchman at a time when New Zealand needed to kick on from the platform laid by Horne." *Cricketer International* considered Daniel's knock "wrenched the game away from England's straining grasp."

England 1st Innings 186		
New Zealand 1st Innings (overnight 242-6: Vettori 2)		
MJ Horne	c Hussain b Headley	100
MD Bell	lbw b Headley	15
SP Fleming	c Read b Mullally	1
NJ Astle	c Read b Mullally	43
RG Twose	c Caddick b Headley	52
CD McMillan	c Read b Caddick	3
DL Vettori	c Thorpe b Tufnell	54
AC Parore	b Caddick	12
CL Cairns	b Caddick	31
DJ Nash	c Mullally b Tufnell	6
GI Allott	not out	1
Extras		40

Total (119.1 overs)		358
FOW: 1-43, 2-45, 3-112, 4-232, 5-239, 6-242, 7-275, 8-345, 9-351		
England 2nd Innings 229 and New Zealand 2nd innings 60-1		

New Zealand were soon all out, but the 172 run lead was too much for the hosts. England, sans Hussain, made 229 in their second innings - Caddick top-scoring - and New Zealand romped to a nine-wicket victory. "England were out-batted, out-bowled, out-fielded and out-sledged by a New Zealand side as passionate and committed as any", commented the *Times* in vindication of Steve Rixon's approach. Stephen Fleming was relieved with his team's performance: "We'd been extremely disappointed after the First Test, but then we had a great run with our preparation, and played a pretty good Test match."

Fleming's team played another good Test match in the next game, dismissing England for 199 and replying with 496 for nine declared. Manchester rain saved England, but not two of their selectors. Graham Gooch and Mike Gatting were sacked so that the coach-in-waiting Duncan Fletcher and Nasser Hussain could have more say in the composition of the team for the winter. The new regime took to work with alacrity; five changes being made for the series finale at the Oval, although the selection of three No. 11s (Ed Giddins, Alan Mullaly and Phil Tufnell) seemed a novel experiment.

The match was thrilling. New Zealand batted first and had Vettori to thank for a 51 which, with his captain, saw 78 runs added for the ninth wicket. Replaying to 236, England slid to 153 all out, but then turned the tables by reducing the tourists to 37 for five. New Zealand were rescued by Cairns' 80 and set England 246 to win. England closed on 91 for two with Atherton and Thorpe well set. Fleming recalled the team meeting before the last day's play; "basically just emphasised that this whole campaign, based on our vision of being better than before, was going to come down to one day." Nash was adamant that he would be the one to win the series the next day. Atherton and Thorpe started well, adding 30 runs. Shayne O'Connor then had Thorpe taken in the slips by Fleming. Nash tore into England, removing Atherton and Mark Ramprakash in successive balls and Alec Stewart in his next over. England's long tail was thus exposed. Six overs later New Zealand took the series.

Fleming wryly commented; "it was funny in a way, the idea of New Zealand winning the series fair and square was seen as a huge backward step for the Poms – it was like the death of English cricket all over again." Daniel Vettori, one of the heroes, rejoiced; "if there was one defining moment in my early years with New Zealand it was that 1999 excursion. I'm sure New Zealand supporters will still be talking about it in fifty years time – the first Test win at Lord's and only the second Test series win in England." England's defeat left them at the bottom of the ICC Test rankings.

Bangladesh v New Zealand, First Test, Chittagong Divisional, October 2008

Nine years later, Bangladesh were eyeing a defining Test victory. Since their entry into Test cricket in 2001, Bangladesh had played 53 Tests. In their 35th in January 2005 at Chittagong they recorded their first victory, having scored 488 in the first innings against Zimbabwe. Bangladesh had to play very well to draw the Second Test, batting through the last five sessions of the match compiling 285 for five. Their coach Dav Whatmore considered the draw better than a win, as Bangladesh had shown they could occupy the crease when necessary. That was the only Test victory and series win Bangladesh had managed by the time New Zealand arrived in 2008. They had drawn four other Tests, three of those matches being affected by rain. The other, against the West Indies in May 2004, was achieved with "gutsy resilience; an honourable draw" (*Wisden*). Another success would be welcome and the prospects for Chittagong looked quite bright against a touring team in transition.

Daniel Vettori was now captain of New Zealand, this being his fifth series in charge. Three of his previous four series had been lost (to South Africa and twice to England), the other ending in a 2-0 victory at home against Bangladesh. Vettori was leading a young side, with little experience of subcontinental conditions. The batsmen suffered especially. Before the Test series began, three ODI were played. In the first two, New Zealand shuddered to 79 for six and 86 for five. In the third, they made 249 but four of the top six batsmen mustered only 26 runs.

The tourists had no more chances to acclimatise before the First Test and their batting woes were to continue at Chittagong. Bangladesh had their share of trials too. In good conditions, they started very cautiously. They lost only one wicket in the morning session, but 20 of the 32 overs were maidens. Bangladesh lunched on a meagre 34 for one. After the interval three wickets fell quickly, but Mehrab Hossain Jnr (79) and Mushfiqur Rahim (59) took their team to a close of play score of 183 for four. They were the lynchpins of the innings. Mehrab was soon out on the second day but Mushfiqur went on to bat for almost five hours for 79, as Bangladesh made 245 in their first innings. They took control of the match by taking seven wickets before New Zealand reached triple figures, Shakib Al Hasan taking five of them on the way to 7 for 36. Vettori, batting at number eight, scored an unbeaten 55 to pull his side up to 171. Poor batting rather than alien conditions had let Bangladesh bowl tightly and wait for calamities: "the wicket did a little bit but not so much to put us in that position [100-7]", said the captain. Daniel had almost single-handedly kept his team in the match, as he had also taken 5 for 59 in the hosts' first innings.

Which Bangladesh then reprised, slipping to 47 for four. Shakib Al Hasan played the counterpart to the New Zealand captain. Perhaps with the bowler's long-lived lament at having to do all the jobs himself, his 71 (a maiden Test half-century) lifted Bangladesh and inspired his fellow bowlers to chip in in sympathy. With New Zealand set 317 to win *Wisden* considered Bangladesh firm favourites. New Zealand had a poor record in chasing targets. The *New Zealand Herald* agreed. Under the headline: "New Zealand need historic total to claim win", the paper noted "ominously for New Zealand they have never overhauled a fourth innings total in excess of 200 in 41 attempts [on foreign soil], their best is the 164 for 4 made to beat Australia in Perth in 1985." New Zealand's highest fourth innings total on the subcontinent was 272 for six in the draw with India at Ahmedabad in October 2003.

Despite this history, and their dismal batting thus far on the tour, New Zealand made a spritely start to the chase with Aaron Redmond leading the way. When it seemed they might end the fourth day almost unscathed, Jesse Ryder attempted an unnecessary second run to third man and was well short of safety when Mashrafe Mortaza's return hit the stumps. With less than three overs before the close of play, Vettori went in as nightwatchman. Another 172 runs were needed on the final day. Redmond and Vettori were helped by a wicket which was surprisingly true after four days of wear, but had to make painstaking progress against good bowling. Redmond was dismissed after an innings of five-and-a-half hours.

Daniel Vettori continued on, playing a steadfast innings with long periods of defence as he "marshalled New Zealand's painstaking pursuit with a resolute 76" (*New Zealand Herald*). Several commentators considered his presence at the wicket helped control the pace of the chase and demonstrate to his batsmen how the job should be approached. Ross Taylor and Brendon McCullum failed to receive the message, however, and New Zealand slipped to 216 for five. Daniel Flynn proved a more willing pupil and stayed in the middle for 157 minutes. The pair remained composed in the face of a sequence of excited appeals from Bangladesh, which instead of raising the umpire's finger drew a mild rebuke from Daryl Harper². "Vettori had all but decided the match when he got out attempting a slog-sweep, his first false stroke [in over four hours of batting], with only 19 required" (*Wisden*).

Bangladesh 245 & 242 and New Zealand 1st innings 171		
New Zealand 2nd Innings (overnight 145-2: Redmond 62, Vettori 0)		
JM How	b Abdur Razzak	36
AJ Redmond	c Junaid Siddique b Shakib Al Hasan	79
JD Ryder	run out	38
DL Vettori	b Abdur Razzak	76
LRPL Taylor	c sub (Mahbubul Alam) b Mashrafe Mortaza	9
BB McCullum	lbw b Abdur Razzak	2
DR Flynn	c Naeem Islam b Shakib Al Hasan	49
JDP Oram	not out	8
KD Mills	not out	1
Extras		19

Total (7 wickets; 137.5 overs)		317
FOW: 1-55, 2-145, 3-185, 4-209, 5-216, 6-298, 7-316		

² Harry Pearson related one argument with an umpire, who also delivered a rebuke, albeit delayed. The Australian Cec Pepper ranted at umpire Harry Wood about his eyesight and his parentage after an appeal was turned down. At the end of the over, Cec apologised and Wood graciously conceded: "no need to worry; in the heat of the moment we all say things we may later regret." In the next over Cec appealed to Wood for a leg before. Wood: "Not out, you fat, bald, Australian bastard." All ended well, Pepper, at Wood's urging, took up the job after his playing career ended, and he umpired in County Cricket until 1979.

Vettori explained that he felt he would do well as a left-hander against the Bangladesh spinners.

"I think the most important thing a captain can do is lead with performance ... Our batting hasn't always stood up to the test but over the last day and a half it was very pleasing, particularly the performances of Aaron Redmond, who was playing in his first Test in the subcontinent, and Daniel Flynn. The conditions weren't easy but for those two guys to stand up and show that they want to perform is very exciting for us as a team."

"The epitome of a captain's knock", summed up the *New Zealand Herald*. Vettori became the first player to score two fifties and take four or more wickets in both innings of a Test. Mohammad Ashraful, the Bangladesh captain, praised his opposite number: "The difference between the two sides was Daniel Vettori who was brilliant with the bat and ball. Also they planned their second innings really well and did not repeat the mistakes they made in the first innings." The Second Test in the series was drawn.

New Zealand struggled over the next few years. Under the remainder of Vettori's captaincy they won only two more Tests in 20 attempts, losing ten. Daniel relinquished the reins to Ross Taylor. A year after his match-winning knock in Chittagong, Peter Roebuck affectionately wrote:

"The sole discernible merit in [Daniel's] batting is that he scores runs. Oh yes, and he watches the ball, knows his game, hits the ball to unusual places, has the heart of an ox, and manages to remain rational in the heat of battle. Otherwise he is hopeless".

Under Daniel Vettori's studious captaincy, New Zealand gained the ICC Spirit of Cricket Award: "Vettori has not merely served New Zealand cricket with distinction, he has treated the game itself with unwavering respect."



Danny Vettori clips through the on side at Chittagong ... (AFP)



... and drives without a helmet (AP)

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