

# Smiling Goochie shows off his extra cover

By JOHN HUXLEY

STANLEY  
MOON - HEALD  
3/24/96

He once described himself - forgiveness for someone who captained England at cricket on occasions - as "a miserable-looking sod". But Graham Gooch was smiling broadly yesterday as he swept through Sydney, showing off his new head of hair.

Gooch is the old halding Gooch, who with his lugubrious eyes, bushy brows and bristling moustache looked, at times, like Joe Stalin after a hard day fiddling the productivity figures from the tractor factory.

In his place came a more relaxed, slightly raffish character, cheerfully offering all and sundries a feel and a fiddle of his new extra cover (especially as personal hair stylist Paula was on hand to put any errant hairs back in place before he had his picture taken).

Even his Essex county cricket team-mates say he looks a new man. And it's not Elton John. Maybe they are a bit envious, for at 42 years of age, Gooch has become a bit of a sex symbol back in England.

Yes, he admits, girls started screaming when he first rolled out the "rug" last year. But, no, he is not yet on personal terms with Princess Di. That was another captain, another sport. "And anyway, I come from the less fashionable side of London and cannot afford the fees at the gym she goes to."

So how did he come to replace his hair? Gooch denies he tore it out while playing against Australia. "Nice theory. But it was more gradual. Receding, like. It wasn't as though I was particularly sensitive about the whole thing, but when I was on the Ashes tour in Australia last year I got talking to Greg Matthews one day."

Yeah, yeah, you guessed it - conversation among the two cricketers quickly turned to topics trichological. Hair replacement had worked for Mo - who is now more famous for his hair than any heroics on the cricket field - and for another cricket captain, Australian Graham Yallop. It could work for Goochie.

The \$5,000 treatment - which was provided free by Australian-based Advanced Hair Studio in return for Gooch's promotional efforts - does not involve a wig or hairpiece. Instead, it is a permanent process by which real, matched hair, mainly bought in Russia, is attached to an ultra-fine membrane that is integrated into existing hair.

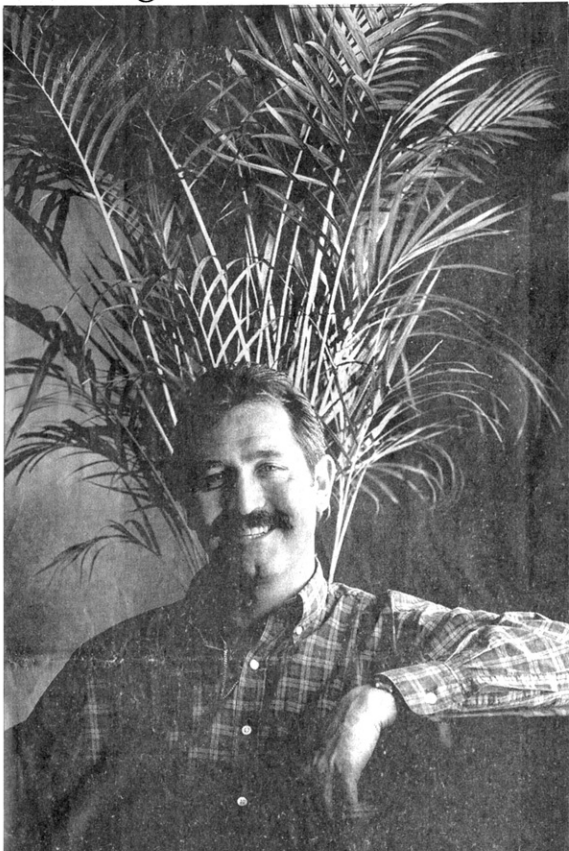
All very technical, but quite painless, says Gooch, who earned the respect and admiration of Sydney crowds in a distinguished 20-year Test career that began with a pair of ducks against Australia.

Anyway, that's it. And that's the hair, he says. Gooch would dearly like to lose another five kilograms before the next English cricket season starts in April, but basically he has never felt better.

"Feel 10 years younger." Young enough to press for a recall to the England team? "Well, perhaps, not that young."

And with that he rushed off for a head-to-head with follicly challenged rugby league commentator Peter Sterling.

Watch that space.



A sex symbol . . . Graham Gooch before (above right) and after, in Sydney yesterday. Photograph by GREG WHITE