

Register

Jan 'JB' Brittin

Modest, but passionate, cricketer who played a leading role in England's 1993 World Cup triumph and was no mean hockey player

When Jan Brittin took a magnificent running catch over her shoulder to seal victory in the 1993 World Cup final at Lord's she triumphantly hurled the ball high in the air before racing towards her exultant team-mates.

It was an uncharacteristic display of emotion from a player respected for her modesty and widely acknowledged as the most gifted batswoman of her generation. Known to all as "JB", she was England's highest international runmaker.

Brittin was a classic opening batsman, with unwavering concentration. Opponents could only admire her grace at the crease as she unleashed her trademark drives. In an international career that spanned 19 years, she was England's leading scorer with 1,935 runs in 27 Tests, hitting a career-best 167 against Australia in the second Test at Haringate in 1998, and the first woman to score 1,000 World Cup runs.

She was also an outstanding fielder, wonderfully athletic in the covers; her 19 catches in four World Cups is a record. According to Ingrid Jagersma, a former New Zealand wicketkeeper: "JB laid the foundations in almost every innings, but I specifically remember her fantastic fielding. We always described her as the Jonty Rhodes of women's cricket."

After her extraordinary performances against the Kiwis in 1984, when she averaged over 100 in the Tests (112) and one-day internationals (129), she was awarded a case of champagne by the sponsors as player of the series. She shared the prize with her team-mates later in the year on the eve of their tour of Australia. "It would never be allowed now," she recalled later, "but it certainly added to the team bonding."

In common with many gifted sportsmen and women, she was sometimes selfish, but also harsh on herself in pursuit of excellence. She hated getting out. After scoring 50 in tough conditions against India at Arundel she was seething about her dismissal. The only way she could console herself was to go

for a long walk. Over the course of an hour she resolved to quit the game if she could not do better. Later, she completely lost her composure in one match against the Australians, angrily swinging her bat at a group of players after they goaded her while indicating the route back to the pavilion.

She saved her best to the last, though. In her final Test series, against the Australians in 1998, she scored 450 runs, including back-to-back hundreds and two fifties while occupying the crease for 14 hours.

Brittin had made her Test debut playing alongside the renowned Rachael Heyhoe Flint against the West Indies at Canterbury in 1979, bowling out at Worcester in 1998 after opening the batting with 18-year-old Charlotte Edwards, who would go on to become the star of the next generation.

Janette Ann Brittin was born in 1959, the only child of Kevin Brittin, who was a materials clerk at Hawker Siddeley, and his wife, Maggie (née Goodway), who was a comptometer operator. The family lived in Chessington in Surrey. Sport ran in the family. Her father played football for the Tottenham Hotspur junior team and cricket for Surrey

colts. His parents nurtured Janette's sporting talent. When she was ten they took her to a fête where the local cricket club had a stand encouraging youngsters to throw a ball. She made an instant impression and was invited to the nets at Tadworth CC, playing her first game for the club aged 13. At home she happily played with a tennis ball, honing her technique hour after hour.

She went to Fleetwood Secondary School before heading to Chelsea College of Physical Education, in Eastbourne. She soon realised she did not want to be a teacher. After a short stint at Wallington County Grammar School she left to manage a sports shop in Tooting, south London, which was then owned by her parents.

Returning from an overseas tour, Brittin was offered a job by Lord King of



Jan Brittin after an international triumph and, left, batting in the 1993 World Cup

Wartnaby in the British Airways sports department at Heathrow, where she worked for 25 years. She also taught at Danes Hill School in Oxshott, leading them to a national under-13 hockey title.

She had never played hockey at school, but made an impact after joining Chelsea as a defender. In 1979 she was in the team that played in the European Club Championships in The Hague, after winning the inaugural national clubs title the previous year. She joined Ealing in 1980 and enjoyed

further success, representing Surrey, the South and the England indoor team, winning three caps in 1987. Renowned for her reflexes and agility, she would replace the goalkeeper for penalty shootouts. Team-mates recall her extraordinary success in stopping shots.

For Brittin, one of the greatest thrills about playing hockey for her country was lining up before matches as the national anthem was played. "It's something we never do in cricket," she said. "I can't wait to stand with the team and hear the anthem played. I know it will

inspire me." Although she was regarded as an unassuming woman, the raw emotion of great sporting occasions often punctured her soul. She recalled being full of pride before the 1993 World Cup cricket final. "Never before have I gone out with tears in my eyes caused by the wonderful ovation from the members who lined our path through the Long Room, followed by the crowd's reception as we walked out to the middle."

"JB" was also superstitious. She always sat in the same place in the dressing room and was the last to go out on to the pitch.

While many people thought she was a rather "sweet girl", Brittin was tough. One England striker came off distinctly second best when she dropped her shoulder in a tackle and sent the player flying. She could be sweet too. When she retired from hockey and cricket she took up golf and played off a handicap of eight. On one occasion, accompanying her father, she took him by surprise by telling him she wanted to make

She angrily swung her bat at a group of players after they goaded her

someone happy. Spotting one golfer wearing a hideous orange shirt, she went over and told him how lovely it looked. He was completely taken aback; her comment made his day.

Away from sport she was rather shy, but popular. Her private life was kept distinctly private, and those with a window on her world kept it that way. She is survived by her parents.

"JB" will be remembered, though, as a great cricketer, "the ultimate team player", according to her former England team-mate Jackie Court. "You just knew she would always play a great innings in difficult circumstances. She would make batting look easy on a pitch where the ball spat at you... she looked after herself when the rest of us were happy to eat rubbish and have a few drinks. She was a model professional in an amateur era."

Janette Brittin, MBE, cricketer, was born on July 4, 1959. She died from cancer on September 11, 2017, aged 58

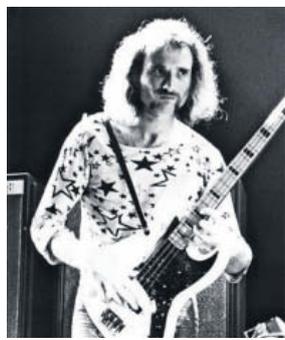
Holger Czukay

Enigmatic bass player and founder member of the Krautrock band Can who later collaborated with Peter Gabriel and Brian Eno

In 1967 Holger Czukay was teaching in a private school in Switzerland. After studying under the controversial conductor Karlheinz Stockhausen for three years, his heart lay in the musical avant-garde. Then one of his students played him *I Am the Walrus* by the Beatles — and his life changed.

The next year he formed Can, which went on to become one of the giants of experimental music emanating from Germany known as Krautrock. Along with compatriots such as Tangerine Dream, Neu! and Kraftwerk, Can tore up the rock'n'roll rule book. Seminal albums such as *Tago Mago*, *Ege Bamyasi* and *Future Days* demonstrated the band's modus operandi: extended improvisations edited down, incorporating tape-splicing musique concrète techniques years before the advent of digital sampling, and using shortwave radios as instruments — what Czukay termed "radio painting".

Enigmatic and intense, he appeared on nine Can albums, playing bass and taking on engineering and recording duties. After he left in 1977 he went on



Holger Czukay in 1973 playing with Can

to make several albums, on his own and in collaboration with artists including Peter Gabriel, Brian Eno, the Eurythmics — and Ursula Kloss, the singer and musician known as U-She or Ursa Major. They later married.

Holger Czukay was born in 1938 in

what was at the time the Free City of Danzig, but was incorporated into Poland as Gdansk after the Second World War. The family fled the city as the Red Army advanced, although the young Holger remembered being given sweets by friendly Soviet soldiers. They were scheduled to board the MV *Wilhelm Gustloff*, a transport ship that was evacuating civilians, soldiers and Nazi officials. "We didn't make it on board," he recalled. "My grandmother said, 'I don't trust ships. We must find a way to escape overland.'" The vessel was torpedoed, killing about 9,400 people, the biggest maritime death toll in history.

The family were sent to a Russian camp, but escaped and made it to the West. His father changed the family name to Schüring, a Dutch name, but Holger changed his back when Can was formed. His first musical exposure was to church music, he recalled, and in his teens he worked in a radio repair shop, where he first conceived of the possibilities of using shortwave radio as a musical instrument. He studied music and formed a jazz band, playing guitar and

establishing his avant-garde credentials. "We were playing in a festival and the jury came into the dressing room and said, 'Sorry, but we don't know what category to put you in.'"

He worked at a radio station for a while, then in 1963 applied to study under Stockhausen. He told the composer: "Whatever I tried, nobody wanted me. They said, 'You are not talented.'" Stockhausen replied: "Wonderful story — I'm taking you on."

Czukay remained with Stockhausen until 1966, then taught French and music in Switzerland. One of his pupils was Michael Karoli, a young guitarist. When he left school he moved in with Czukay. They were soon joined by the keyboard player and composer Irmin Schmidt, who had hung out with New York minimalists such as Steve Reich; the drummer Jaki Liebezeit — known as "the human metronome" — who was tiring of his work in free jazz; and the flautist and composer David C. Johnson. They were later joined by the American poet Malcolm Mooney, and a young Japanese singer Damo Suzuki,

who had been busking round Europe.

After exploring song-based structures, Can moved into a fluid improvisational groove based on the bedrock of Liebezeit's "motorik" drumming. They toured Britain several times.

Can's output gradually became more commercial, and in 1976 they played *Top of the Pops* to promote their hit single *I Want More*, with Czukay on double bass. "We wanted to have them on at the beginning of the show, but then realised we couldn't have a Can opener," Noel Edmonds said when introducing them. However, Czukay was gradually pushed to the margins of the group, and he left in 1977.

His subsequent output was relentlessly experimental, and he made several albums with his wife, Ursula. She died in July, and Czukay's body was found by a neighbour in the Cologne flat that was once Can's studio.

Holger Czukay, musician, was born on March 24, 1938. He died of unknown causes on or before September 5, 2017, aged 79