

SUMMER 2022 | No. 048

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OUTRIGHT

THE PLAYERS' MAGAZINE



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OPENING THOUGHTS



Tēnā Koutou, welcome to the summer edition of Outright magazine.

The summer of cricket has been exciting, albeit impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic once again, which continues to provide a myriad of challenges for our members and all stakeholders in the game.

The biggest of these challenges was the continual amendment of the playing schedule to allow all formats of the game to proceed, and changes to the international calendar saw Blackcaps players turning out for their domestic teams in a well contested and exciting Super Smash. It is wonderful to see all our members contributing so positively to the game and congratulations to finalists Wellington, Otago Northern Districts and

Canterbury for making a memorable finals day, and to the Brave and Blaze for taking out their respective titles.

Special mention can be made to Ross Taylor who announced his retirement from the game and fittingly took the final wicket in his final test against Bangladesh. We speak to the record holder for most appearances in all formats in this edition of the magazine.

2022 also sees us farewell another big contributor to our game, National Personal Development Manager Sanjewa Silva, who after a decade at the CPA is moving on. We look back on his tenure and the incredible growth and development the programme has seen under his watch in this issue.

We catch up with World Cup winner Catherine Campbell and reflect on the last time NZ hosted the tournament and her twenty plus years of contribution to the sport. Better known for his involvement with tourism in Queenstown and veteran's Cricket, John Cushen shares his story about a book he penned for children titled 'Lockdown with the Bears' which raised over \$10,000 dollars for The Cure Kids Charity and we speak with CD player Seth Rance and learn about his off-field activities.

We hope you enjoy this edition of Outright and wish all our members the best over the remainder of summer.

Ngā mihi nui

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Players better together



SETH RANCE JUGGLING MANY HATS

by Margot Butcher

Cricket might be one of the few arenas in which compartmentalising is viewed as a positive life skill. For Seth Rance, it's essential.

For instance, there was that day over the Christmas period this summer when he turned up to Central Stags training fresh off having dealt with a motor vehicle accident the previous day in which a person lost their life.

"The guys, I don't think they realise. They have no idea that you have that in the back of your mind - and that's good in the sense that cricket is its own little world, and that helps take your mind off things."

Rance, 34, is a longtime volunteer firefighter in his home town of Greytown, Wairarapa. He went down to the station when he was 16 - the minimum age - to ask if he could join, and has been off on callouts at all hours almost ever since.

Recently, he was one of the youngest in New Zealand appointed to be a Senior Station Officer - a role that brings added responsibility. And while it's not all taking kids for rides on the firetruck and rescuing cats in trees, that compartmentalisation can be a useful two-way street for sport, as well.

"If I'm not playing as well as I want to or

I haven't had the greatest game, when I go back to Greytown life, it can be a nice distraction.

"That's part of why I like living here. I get a complete chance to get away from the pressures of cricket, have that balance and break with family, and other things in my life - and I'm always busy."

Being a professional cricketer in Greytown means a home game is never at home. Even by CD standards, Rance clocks up a fair few travel miles, as one of the only Stags outside the team's Hawke's Bay epicentre.

But juggling a busy life and time management skills were things he learnt early.

At 18, Rance went straight from high school into a building apprenticeship - a bonus from having volunteered himself as a firefighter. One of the officers in the brigade was in the trade, and offered to take him on.

"It turned out to be a good option for me in several different ways," Rance reflects.

"I loved my sport, but I had injuries, and playing cricket professionally came

along a bit later for me. I did my ankle, and then my shoulder. That put me out for about three years in my early 20s, so that's when I finished my building apprenticeship. The positive side of it is that it allowed me to settle into Greytown life and get a career behind me, without cricket being there."



Of course, if someone had told him then not to worry, he was going to go on and have a significant cricket career regardless and play 10 international matches for the Blackcaps, he might not have quite believed them.

But, he eventually cracked the Stags, making a head-turning HRV Cup debut in 2010 in which he bowled Craig McMillan with an absolute gem amid a T20 haul of 4-13 in Nelson. He played the rest of the season, but missed out on a contract.

"Back then, there were only about 12 contracts. In fact, I think Adam Milne got the last one which at the time I was pissed off about. But I can see why now!"

Rance stayed hungry.

"One reason for that was that building had allowed me to see what was on the other side of the fence. Getting up every day and having to go to work. Waking up at 6am. Digging holes in mud on cold mornings to make a living. I still don't take playing professional cricket for granted."

He was a late bloomer for the Blackcaps as well, 29 when he got the call.

"But in a way, I'm glad that's how it happened. That I started later - because now, even though I'm 34, I feel like I'm a 'younger 34' than perhaps if I'd been playing for 15 odd years. I still have the enthusiasm, and appreciate the opportunities."

This season, things have been going better than ever for the prodigious swinger of the ball. The in-swinging was always a weapon, but the out-swinging used to be a wild child, testing the keeper.

"In years gone by, that's been a work-on. But this season I've been confident to use in a game it's showed that when I'm fit and able to run in hard, cricket can still be fresh and enjoyable. I do feel like I am bowling as well as I ever have, with my outswinger being more of a weapon."

Come May, he will have clocked up 18 years in the fire service. There are some 20 colleagues in the Greytown brigade who can cover when he's away with the Stags, and he and wife Suze and their young kids were able to enjoy an off-season in Furness in the UK a few winters ago.

Greytown always lures him back.

"I LOVE LIVING IN A SMALL TOWN COMMUNITY, AND I'M PROUD OF BEING ABLE TO DO WHAT I DO FROM HERE AND REPRESENT THE WAIRARAPA AS WELL."

- Seth Rance

"The firefighting is an extra dimension to that and gives me a brilliant balance between cricket and coming home.

"There have been times when I have come back from a game of cricket and literally within 10 minutes of saying hi to the kids, I've got the callout and had to go. That's what you need to be ready to do to help people out in the time of need, and you're meeting people in the community, building those relationships that are pretty key in a small town, and it's something different every time. Plus, there's no greater satisfaction than to be



able to help someone in serious need, and then you bump into them in the street six months later and they're here and doing great."

His life of high-energy pursuits has made him a better person, he feels. He's learned how to work in different environments, around different teams and personalities, and under pressure.

"In cricket, building and fire-fighting, people are depending on you to do a good job. You're under pressure in all three to make good decisions consistently, that affect the outcomes. I enjoy being busy, and I think the three work together for me well now.

"It's nice as a player, too, to know that I've got my business, and I can lean into that in the future if I have to pull the pin on cricket, or it suddenly stops. My wife Suze has also got a hair salon that we manage. Looking back now, it's great to have been able to grow these things and it's allowing me to keep playing cricket for as long as I can." ●

LOCKDOWN INSPIRES VETERAN CRICKETER JOHN CUSHEN TO BECOME AN AUTHOR



"I've never written anything except report cards and a few exams prior to this," joked former Otago and Auckland First-Class cricketer and teacher of twenty-eight years John Cushen who penned a children's book during lockdown aptly titled "Lockdown With the Bears."

The inspiration for the book came during lockdown as New Zealanders placed teddy bears in the window to cheer up children. "You couldn't see our window from the street, and lots of people were going for walks, so I decided to take my wife's collection and put it in by the fence in front of our place in Quail Rise," explained Cushen. "Someone said is there a story to go with the display, so I started writing a little ten-line thing then I began getting phone calls and emails with people saying you've got to do something tomorrow the kids love it and want to come back."

Cushen stayed up each night thinking of different scenarios and story lines the bears could face. "My mate from the harbour master let me borrow his official jet ski so we had a pirate adventure, we had a rock band who were trying to come up with a band name, they thought The Beatles, no The Eagles, no The Animals no and in the end Poppa Bear

thought The Bears, and we made little guitars, costumes and so forth. A flight operator lent me a model airplane so in one story Paddington and Winnie the Pooh flew in from England thinking that the Queen was here in Queenstown, each morning we had a new display and story up from around quarter to eight."

When asked if there were any cricket references, Cushen (72), a veteran cricketer for both Otago and New Zealand, laughed and said "of course, in one story when the trans-Tasman bubble opened up, we got a visit from a one-eyed Koala who brought gifts of sandpaper and underarm deodorant with him."

After 46 days of lockdown and 46 tales, the former pace bowler decided to spend a week editing down the yarns into 18 chapters and compile the stories into a book. "I talk enough BS so I thought why not write some. I didn't want to make any monetary gains from the book so I called up the CEO of Cure Kids and asked if I could include a Cure Kids logo on the book and donate all the proceeds to them and they were ecstatic." In late October 2021 Cushen handed over \$10,000 dollars to Cure Kids' CEO Frances Bengel from the sales of the book.

"I get a bit emotional when I talk about it," Cushen explained, "I got more out of it than the kids or their parents, I am very fortunate to have been able to do this."

And when the topic of cricket comes up and representing New Zealand in the Over 60's Cushen is just as passionate, reflecting on the way the game has changed over the years. "It wasn't quite the professional era we see nowadays, we had no cell phones for photos, you didn't have ice baths after the game, you had a beer and the language was completely different. You bowled straight rather than bowled channels, you bowled quick rather than bowled with heat, almost on a different planet compared with today."

After the success of the first book are teddy bear fans across the country likely to see a sequel? "Probably not but never say never," Cushen said "one little girl told her mum I hope lockdown comes back so we can have some more teddy bear stories." For now though he has his sights firmly locked on the remainder of the veterans' cricket season and sharing a few yarns with some mates after a game. 🏏



CATHERINE CAMPBELL

A LIFE OF SERVICE TO THE GAME

by Margot Butcher

Saturated after a couple of decades in sport, many a retired player heads away from the game once they stop playing.

Not Catherine Campbell.

As NZC's GM Cricket Operations, Campbell's amateur hobby had become a professional career before she had even stopped playing for Canterbury and New Zealand.

She'd started work with NZC in 1997. She finished playing for New Zealand in 2000, with a bang, in Lincoln — the same place you'll still find her scurrying around on the phone today. It was her fourth and final Women's Cricket World Cup, the last shot in her 94-match White Ferns career.

The World Cup Final was on 23 December 2000, against Australia, a famous, last-over four-run victory that produced New Zealand's first cricket world trophy of any kind.

Over the next decade or so, that didn't stop the players that day from going on to read about how New Zealand had never won a Cricket World Cup. The game was still viewed by default through a male prism. But that's changed significantly in recent years, with greater appreciation of female sport — while Campbell, a pioneer female administrator after the men's and women's sports had integrated, has risen through the ranks of NZC to hold a key role in ensuring our cricketing summers are delivered smoothly, as well as managing everything from match officials to Under-19 tournaments.

Campbell played 72 consecutive ODIs for New Zealand. That's consistency. It's the same kind of form and tenacity she's shown in her post-player pursuits.





CRICKET JUST GETS INTO YOUR SYSTEM... AND THEN YOU CAN'T STOP WATCHING IT OR READING ABOUT IT OR CHATTING ABOUT IT

in which teams are going to travel, Campbell will typically start talking with the broadcaster about where matches will be played, looking at all the things from the best time to play in a certain area, to the spread of matches throughout New Zealand and the sometimes complicated world of broadcast logistics.

Managed Isolation has been the curve ball over the last two years of COVID that have added a niggly 10 to 14 days onto the tour at the start, plus, teams then need a little bit of time afterwards to train.

"And of course, everyone was already fairly congested in their scheduling before this happened, countries going from one series to the next, so a tight window became ever tighter with a domino effect on the next tour. If you have a three-week window for a two-Test tour, and suddenly 75% of that time has to be in isolation, how do you do it?"

Suffice to say that Campbell is probably looking forward to the end of MIQ even more than most. "New Zealand is probably the last of the ICC Member countries to still be quite strict around quarantining,

and the other big difference has been that our government runs our MIQ, whereas in other countries the hosts can make the quarantine arrangements themselves, so more aspects are in their hands. So we've had to explain all that to the countries, and that's probably been more of a challenge than juggling the domestic competitions around it, to be fair.

"We've got quite a busy programme coming up in the winter too, so it's pleasing that we're moving to a situation where players can just self-isolate."

Somewhere in the midst of all this hurly burly of work, slowly the days have been ticking closer to the first Women's World Cup to be played in New Zealand since that incredible day 21 years ago that remains so vivid to anyone who watched it — televised live, a cultural landmark in the sport.

"I still look back on it really fondly. It doesn't feel like 21-odd years ago. I still see a few people from that time, but there are also people I haven't seen for a long time, and it will be really cool if we do get the chance to have a reunion get-together during this World Cup. That team has a bit of an invisible thread

through it. When you meet up, we are right back there. It was a good time."

A time when the women's game seemed to have made big strides — but now, the White Ferns are more professionalised than they ever were back then. Standing watching all the high-tech audio-visual glitz, glamour and media fanfare of the World Cup NZ team announcement in Christchurch recently, Campbell might have cast her mind back to 1993 when a congratulatory phone call from then-NZC CEO Chris Doig was a first, and knocked the players' socks off.

"The whole upswing of women's sport has been an awakening. And, it's become obvious to all that a lot of people are genuinely interested in it. It's a pity there are going to be no crowds for this World Cup, but it's good that we are going to see it on TV and I think, nowadays, because we're seeing so much cricket product on TV, people tuning in have some familiarity with not just with our players but international players as well. They'll know the Australians if they've been watching the WBBL and so forth. That helps you connect to what's happening."

"Exposure on TV always brings a little pressure too, but it can be good for players. It's always really exciting playing at home. It makes the team grow a few inches taller, with the home interest and coverage."

She probably wouldn't say 'tenacity'. She says enjoyment. "Cricket is always interesting," she says with an upbeat inflection. She must mean it, because she's been known to just lie on the grass at the local park just watching kids learning to play.

"I do really like watching the game at all levels. I'm not really into coaching, but I spent about a month this summer helping Gary Stead's daughter Libby's team, just took my chair down, sat and enjoyed watching and giving encouragement where I could. Cricket just gets into your system... and then you can't stop watching it or reading about it or chatting about it on the sidelines. Because on the whole, cricket people are good people, aren't they? We normally love all sport, and there's always time for chatting and watching the game."

Campbell, a.k.a. Dot which is a ball she bowled frequently, played 94 matches in total for the White Ferns, including nine Tests which is certainly one way to date a female player. She started as a young thing with Otago in 1979/80, but enjoyed the bulk of her career for Canterbury, taking 98 one-day and 139 first-class wickets for the red and black.

They were days when cricket was a weekend activity that somehow you fitted into a normal, busy life trying to make a living.

"I was watching the women's Ashes the other night and listening to Alex

Blackwell talking about how that amateur era was still a fantastic time — people played with their heart and soul. I probably played cricket every Saturday for 20 years, and occasionally on Sundays, and training twice a week down at your club and putting the nets up and taking them down and probably going to the clubrooms afterwards and heading home at about half past eight, while studying or holding down a fulltime job. When you finally finish and realise you have a two-day weekend, it's incredible. You wonder to yourself, 'Would I do it all over again?' But of course you would, because you loved it."

Campbell segued from playing for the White Ferns to managing the White Ferns team, and increasingly that also involved all the nitty gritty background stuff of helping arrange the tours, working with cricketing colleagues all around the globe

When, in 2009, the team manager job was disestablished as part of a transition to a professional coach structure, a team tournament operations manager role was created, effectively with her name on it.

Today, Campbell's vast operational experience with domestic and international cricket in both the men's and women's spheres sees her not only at the forefront of arranging International series, but acting as a significant mentor to those following in her footsteps.

Her role still sits across both men's and women's cricket at international

level, but predominantly the Blackcaps necessarily occupy her time. This summer, that's been more challenging than ever.

"People naturally want certainty, but with the changing environments of COVID and MIQ, we just weren't able to give teams and Major Associations certainty when there were lots of scenarios and we couldn't pre-empt which one would happen.

"There's also a load of work that goes into scheduling, so the other aspect is you do all that work, and then find you did it for nothing, possibly at the expense of other things that need to be done.

"So, we tried to stay calm and hold our nerve as long as possible on a lot of things and, so far, we have got through.

"We have had to reschedule a lot of matches both internationally and domestically, but across the entire domestic summer we've ended up losing just one Ford Trophy game plus the Elimination Final that we just couldn't fit in. And I say that with fingers crossed, with eight weeks or so still to go. But given all the challenges and added dimension of MIQ and so forth, it's been really rewarding that we have still had a pretty full programme of cricket for everyone this summer."

The international programme itself is determined by the ICC's Future Tours Programme of course, and once agreement is gained on the window





BRILLIANT IN THE BAY

THE FOURTH INSTALLMENT OF BLACK CLASH AVOIDED THE RED-LIGHT TRAFFIC SETTING BY THE SKIN OF ITS TEETH. A MERE 24 HOURS LATER AND THE COVID REGULATIONS WOULD HAVE PREVENTED A SOLD-OUT BAY OVAL IN EXCESS OF 10,000 FROM EXPERIENCING A WONDERFUL EVENING OF ENTERTAINMENT.

That is what Black Clash is – entertainment. It’s fun, it’s different, it’s a great event to be part of, and for the players to reignite some of their old skills and put them on show. The cricket purist would probably scoff at the spectacle as being frivolous and meaningless, even the modern day T20 fans might find it a bit peculiar. But what it does spectacularly is attract a different group of people to the game, for many it’s their first experience with cricket – and welcome they are.

Sure, watching All Black stars like Will Jordan and Jordie Barrett whack a

few ex-Blackcaps around the park is enthralling, compelling viewing even. And that’s what people seem to enjoy – a contest which showcases the range of talents some of our best ever rugby players possess (Richie McCaw), pitted against some greats of the cricketing realm, albeit maybe with a bit more greasing of the joints required these days.

As a contest it was captivating. Kieran Read guided Team Rugby to victory with a score of 84 from just 55 deliveries, after Will Jordan set the chase alight with a sparking 63 from 37. Up am coming rugby star (and former NZ U19 cricket captain) Kaylum Boshier showed his pedigree as well, and by the time Brendon McCullum came to the crease for team rugby the match was already swaying toward Graham Henry’s men.

McCullum managed a few special moments in the decisive ‘double play’ over, which sees runs doubled (another concept for the cricket follower to sneer at). A towering six back over Shane Bond’s head was the first dozen and on the final delivery a repeat of this ‘12’ with a McScoop reminiscent of ‘THAT’ one off Shaun Tait at Lancaster Park. While McCullum’s fearless approach was admirable, it was equally great to see Shane Bond striding into the crease again – and at a pace that enabled McCullum’s scoop to carry the boundary.



Watching the mastery of Dan Vettori is always a pleasure, a genuine master at work. And the dismissal of McCullum – bowled Vettori, stumped Parore, was one for the cricket purists to recall with absolute joy. Both showing why they were long considered at the absolute pinnacle of their art.

Joining the regular crew of players this year were recent retirees and former ND teammates BJ Watling (Team Cricket) and Anton Devcich (another gnarly recruit by the wise eye of ‘Ted for Team Rugby’). Shot put sensation Tom Walsh showed that he too spent a bit of time at the crease before he traded the willow for small circle barely big enough to contain his shoulders – scoring a popular 36 from 24 for Team Cricket. The highlight being the pirouette boundary

he hit where the bat almost landed over the boundary as well.

Once again, the game will go down in the record books as a successful, highly entertaining event with cricket emblazoned in the consciousness of New Zealanders for another magnificent day.

Special thanks go to the entire team at Duco Events, and in particular to Carlena Limmer and David Higgins for the wonderful support the NZCPA and NZRPA receive as a result of this event. We most certainly look forward to the ‘first ball’ again next year!

Take a bow Team Cricket and Team Rugby. Kiwis loved it! 🏏

TEAM RUGBY

Kieran Read - C
Richie McCaw
Jason Spice
Will Jordan
Kaylum Boshier
Jordie Barrett
Ofisa Tonu'u
Harry Plummer
Jock McKenzie
Ruben Love
Anton Devcich
Brendon McCullum

TEAM CRICKET

Stephen Fleming - C
Grant Elliott
Nathan McCullum
Hamish Marshall
Adam Parore
Shane Bond
BJ Watling
Kyle Mills
Daniel Vettori
Jacob Oram
Tom Walsh



CDCA LAUNCHES ALUMNI PROGRAMME

People and connection lie at the heart of every sport and, this summer, Central Districts Cricket has taken a key step to ensure those connections stay strong.

Central Districts Cricket has launched a new Central Districts Alumni programme aimed at maintaining connections and

fostering relationships between its former players that are living all over New Zealand and the world.

To all former Stags and Hinds players, if you haven't already registered - it's free, it's quick and you can get it done online at www.sporty.co.nz/cdcricket/CD-Alumni/cd-alumni



JOEY YOVICH BRINGING PEOPLE TOGETHER

BY MARGOT BUTCHER

How about throwing a three-day, multi-event celebration for a couple of hundred people from all over the country during a pandemic, with a lockdown, and oscillating red Alert levels/restrictions for good measure? Northern Districts legend Joey Yovich found himself in just that situation as Whangarei's City Cricket Club approached its 75th jubilee this summer.

The 75th jubilee project was not only a complicated exercise, but a meaningful one to Yovich. His late father Frank had joined City in the 1960s, helped build its original clubhouse and became a president and life member of the family-friendly club. As a boy, Joey practically grew up at the old Cobham Oval.

A quarter of a century ago when City celebrated its 50th, the photo on the cover of its commemorative book was a saucer-eyed kid lunging into a sweep, still sporting a black eye from slipping on a banana skin at intermediate school high jump that week: a 12-year-old Joey Yovich.

Funny how things turn full circle.

Planning any bespoke public event is layered with obstacles, masses of teamwork behind the scenes, and getting all the important nitty gritty right. So, the challenges of hosting a special event in these uncertain times were always going to be amplified, but Yovich says the club was determined to continue the legacy.

"I THINK YOU JUST HAVE TO REMIND YOURSELF OF THE PEOPLE THAT DID IT FOR YOU WHEN YOU WERE COMING THROUGH."

"You're the custodian now, so a lot of the driving force for me was out of respect for those who had gone before us and put on the 50th jubilee for us in 1996."

He was encouraged by the late Norman Wilson, a great character of City and Northland cricket who died in 2018.

"Norm gave us the title and theme for the 75th jubilee and book, which was *The Tale of Two Cities*," says Yovich — referencing City's famous move from the 'old Cobham Oval' to the purpose-built 'new Cobham Oval' of today that's now an international venue.

"He wrote a little anecdote to get us started, and said it was important we write it all down, because when people go, so do their stories. We had to follow through, get the job done. But it was bigger than Ben Hur! Two years and 5000 hours later, we had a book!"

Former Northland and City cricketer and Life Member Martin Kimber had written the 50th jubilee book and took on the scribe's task again. But now the digital revolution meant there was much more in the way of information to comb through, so Yovich took on the job of research assistant.

"I spent a year every Sunday going to the library and scrolling through microfiches of newspapers and ended up with more

photos and information than we could ever publish. The ironic thing was that when COVID and lockdowns first came along, it allowed me and Marty to work on that, and give it more detail. It gave us that breathing space, locked away at home. Then when we were allowed out again, I had a lot of coffees with people, collecting their anecdotes. So it's full of funny stories, characters and cricket, and the way it's been received has been very humbling."

When Yovich stopped playing for ND in 2013, he deliberately switched off from world of Domestic cricket and instead put his energy and spare time into his club.

"Norm had wanted me straight in there to lead it through the next era, so I became President. We all learned a lot from Norm. He was a cricket tragic, and he was able to get on with everyone, young and old in the club. He was always about bringing people together. Providing people with jobs, helping people through tough times - a club can be all of that, and he knew that."



Away from cricket, Yovich had transitioned into a role for Sport Northland as a Regional Connector, which in simple terms means helping the 40-odd sports organisations in Northland to thrive and survive and administering the Northland Sports Coalition which is a voice to speak on behalf of sport and recreation within the Northland region.

"People say I've got more contacts than an eyewear company and I suppose that's utilising my strengths. I learned a lot of that from my time in cricket as an ND player. It's never just you playing, never just you, the team. There's an array of personnel all working to make it happen as well, from councils to stakeholders to funders, and it's making and building relationships with everyone connected to what you're doing. You can take those relationships into the future for whatever may lay ahead of you. I've found that really beneficial."

Part of his first role at Sport Northland was running the annual Northland Sports Awards for 500 people, and that proved invaluable experience ahead of the moving ball game that the club jubilee turned into. The 75th was originally set down for Labour Weekend 2021, but the Delta lockdown scuppered that.

"As it turned out, it poured with rain that whole weekend anyway — so it was lucky for us, in a perverse way."

Yovich already had a back-up plan because who wouldn't in these times. "I'd had a funny feeling, so I had an email already written that was ready to go out to all our guests and stakeholders the moment things changed, and sure

enough, it did. The second dates we had up our sleeve were Anniversary Weekend in January 2022 but I'll be honest, I never had a third date planned!"

"PEOPLE WERE COMING FROM ALL OVER THE COUNTRY, IT WAS A BIG DEAL TO CHANGE AT THE LAST MINUTE, AND THE REALLY LOVELY THING WAS ALMOST NO ONE PULLED OUT FOR THE NEW DATES."

Then Northland moved into Red under the new Protection Framework, and it was clear the big gala dinner to cap off three days of activities couldn't be hosted indoors at the club's ready-made venue, the Indoor Centre. Meanwhile, the greens of the golf course the club had booked for its Ambrose golf day had turned to custard thanks to a lawn-eating fungus (a problem for many a bowling green and golf club during lockdowns) and Yovich had to source a new golf club.

In a moment of inspiration or madness — possibly both, the decision was made to move the Gala dinner outdoors on to Cobham Oval itself, in two wedding-style banquet marquees that could hold 100 people each and therefore comply with Red restrictions — Northland having stayed in Red due to lower vaccination levels. Then Yovich was informed he wouldn't be permitted to peg the tents into the playing surface of the ground. Fortunately the clubs naming rights sponsor came to the party supplying their organisation's product being heavy Redi-Rock retaining wall boulders as well, and that's what ended up being trucked and craned into the ground to hold down the tents without making any holes in the grass.

Frank Yovich, a cornerstone of the club, only just made it to the 50th jubilee. He had passed away at 51, just a fortnight after his son had played the first of what would become 262 matches for ND. Joey Yovich has never needed any reminding that you make the most of your time, and there was never any question the show would not go on, but perhaps Frank had a hand in the weather all Anniversary weekend — a perfect balmy evening laid on for the outdoor Gala, with the tents creating a magical atmosphere and guest speakers - including former City reps Blackcap Bryan Young, All Black Derren Witcombe and Black Stick Ella Gunson - on a naturally elevated grass stage by the sightscreens.

"It was always more than a jubilee, to be fair," says Yovich who may not have slept much for those three days in January, making sure every last thing went to plan. "It was an event that turned out to be something for people's wellbeing as well, to reconnect them with one another, after a tough few years of the pandemic."

"I overheard people saying they hadn't seen each other for 40 years, or since the last jubilee, and then you'd see the recognition flash up in their eyes as they quietly worked out each other's voices, and that was special. People who had been great mates in the 1970s and just lost touch. All the tears and hugging, that's what makes it."

"Clubs exist to bring people together and that's what we did. As one of the life members Bill Crowley said to me, it's in true City style that we just find a way to make it happen." ●





ROSS TAYLOR'S TIME'S UP IN TESTS

When Luteru Ross Poutoa Lote Taylor was a young boy growing up in the Wairarapa he knew he wanted to be a Blackcap and has openly said he would have been happy to play one game for New Zealand let alone become our nation's most capped player. Over the past sixteen years Ross has played over 440 games, amassed over 18,000 runs across all formats and become the first cricketer to play over 100 internationals in each of those formats. Achieving all this and much more whilst balancing a family and sitting on the Board of the NZCPA for the past seven years. We sat down with one of our founding members to reflect on his incredible career and wider contribution to the game.



ROSS, FIRSTLY CONGRATS ON ANNOUNCING YOUR RETIREMENT IN WHAT HAS BEEN A FANTASTIC CAREER. AT THE TIME OF THIS INTERVIEW, THE BLACKCAPS HAVE GOT THE NETHERLANDS STILL TO COME. WHAT MADE YOU DECIDE NOW WAS THE RIGHT TIME TO RETIRE?

It was something that I'd been thinking about for probably a good eighteen months to two years, it just felt like it was right for me and my family. Obviously COVID has been a tough period for a lot of people and not playing as much cricket has hindered me a little bit. I also wanted to finish at home after winning the World Test Championship and with South Africa touring, I thought I might try and hang on to finish at the Basin Reserve, but the way things have turned out I'm glad I didn't and finished it in front of family and friends at Hagley Oval against Bangladesh.

WAS IT A DIFFICULT DECISION TO MAKE, DID YOU GO BACK AND FORTH IN YOUR MIND A FEW TIMES?

I sought some opinions and talked to a lot of people so it wasn't just my decision but one thing I did find out was at the end of the day you can talk to as many people as you like but ultimately it was my decision and I've got to be happy with it. You

can't think what other people are going to think – if it's right for you, then it's right for you. It was a tough decision; cricket and the Blackcaps have been a big part of my life and I still want to play domestic cricket and cricket around the world, it's just pulling the pin on an international career. When you do finally pull stumps on your whole career that might be a little bit strange and emotional at the same time as well.

TAKING THAT LAST WICKET AGAINST BANGLADESH WAS AN INCREDIBLE MOMENT FOR YOU AS ALL YOUR TEAM-MATES SWAMPED YOU WITH BIG HUGS AND HIGH-FIVES. WAS THERE A QUIET PERIOD AFTER THAT GAME WHERE YOU'RE SITTING THERE AND YOU THOUGHT OKAY THIS IS THE LAST TEST, THIS WAS NUMBER 112?

I was surprised I bowled that day, it's quite funny leading into that game the situation was we needed 10 wickets and there was still a little bit of life left in that wicket. I can remember saying to Victoria and the kids before I left, this could be my last day of test cricket on day three, which it might not have been as well. I got to the ground and was still thinking that it could be my last day and then I bowled a couple of balls just to have a bit of a laugh to Matt Henry. They were half-trackers so I wasn't really holding my breath but Matt said, "Na that's not bad Ross they'd be good to tail-enders." I don't know if he was just trying to pump my tyres or he generally thought they were ok. I couldn't have scripted it any better though, there was a moment where the ball went up in the air and I'm looking and I'm looking and thinking no way, I'm going to get a wicket to finish my test career. Trent didn't



IT JUST FELT LIKE IT WAS RIGHT FOR ME AND MY FAMILY. ROSS TAYLOR

want to catch it; I think it was closer to Trent than it was to Tom Latham, but it was a fantastic catch in the end and nice to finish with the wicket. Obviously the cricket gods didn't think I deserved a 70 or 100 but I deserved a wicket. The emotion and surprise of getting a wicket took my mind away from it being my last test, which was good from an emotional point of view.

YOUR MUM HAILS FROM SAMOA AND YOU'RE JUST THE SECOND PLAYER FROM SAMOA BEHIND MURPHY SUA TO REPRESENT THE BLACKCAPS NOT TO MENTION LUTERU TAYLOR IS THE ALL-TIME LEADING RUNS SCORER IN THE GAME (ALL FORMATS). HOW IMPORTANT IS YOUR POLYNESIAN HERITAGE FOR YOU?

It's massive and I think there's still a long way to go. To this day people don't actually know that I'm a Samoan, which I'm not sure why that is. However, I've said it in interviews right from when I was young that I think it's an untapped market and I'll try and use my profile as much as I can to promote the game of cricket to Māori and Pacific Islanders. I hope in time we can see more playing the game, not necessarily just for the Blackcaps but in domestic cricket also. We've had a few players like Sean Solia playing for Auckland and there have been a few that have played over the last few years. In rugby and rugby league the Polynesian Community is well represented where I think cricket is definitely not as well represented as it should be.

WHAT ARE YOUR THOUGHTS ON HOW WE COULD GET MORE MĀORI AND POLYNESIAN CHILDREN INVOLVED IN CRICKET?

I think the NZCPA is doing its bit with 'The Hooked on Cricket Programme'. If you can get people exposed to the game then hopefully they get to fall in love with it and I think T20 is the best avenue for getting these kids of all ages into our sport, not only just for cricket but to be active as well. It's not only cricket, but a lot of sports are struggling to hold on to these athletes once they get into their high school years. So if we can just keep them in there as long as possible and go into schools a little bit more it is probably a good place to start, in particular Auckland which has the biggest Polynesian Community.

ROSS YOU'RE ONE OF JUST TWO FOUNDING MEMBERS OF THE NZCPA STILL PLAYING (NEIL BROOM THE OTHER), YOU'VE SAT ON THE BOARD FOR SEVEN YEARS, HOW HAVE YOU SEEN THE NZCPA GROW AND DEVELOP IN THAT TIME?

I was a youngster coming through the CD age group and Salty (Glen Sulzberger) and Jacob Oram took me under the wing as they were trying to make things more professional for the players. The strike was probably a last resort but when you're a youngster you don't know the ins and outs, so you respect those older guys. The way that Salty and Jacob led the group as well as other players at the time made my job a lot easier and I've learnt a lot from them

as I've got older. Quite often a young player doesn't have an opinion on things so you almost have to break it down for them and try to make your decisions based on what's in the interests of the collective not just yourself or a certain few. I believe the NZCPA has grown massively as has the game of cricket. Overall I think NZC CEO David White and CPA CEO Heath Mills probably have a really good relationship where at the time it was a little bit shaky and possibly put us back a few years. Where we are now as an organisation compared to where we were back then is chalk and cheese and each group of players have a different legacy that they leave. Flems (Stephen Fleming) and the Chris Cairns' left that legacy for us and the legacy today's players are leaving that I've been a part of are things like the hardship fund, the superannuation fund that the guys are involved with and being able to have six weeks at the IPL. Players were available for the five games in the first year whereas we can play the whole IPL tournament now and then exciting for women's cricket to come on board. I've also learned a lot being on the Board of the NZCPA, both when it comes to the day-to-day decision making and for life after cricket. Hopefully over the next little while we will see domestic women getting paid more significantly. That will be a big step forward not only for the Players' Association but for women's sport and women's cricket and in time young women like my daughters can aspire to be cricketers not only at international level but at domestic level and get some support while doing it.

LOOKING AHEAD IS STAYING INVOLVED IN THE NZCPA SOMETHING THAT YOU YOU'D LIKE TO DO?

Yes, you've got to help out and in any way. If you ask any player they want to help but at the same time I think you do need new voices and ideas on the board and whatnot. The NZCPA has played a big role in my career and it's a big year ahead for the for the collective, hopefully over the next few years the Black Clash is still successful and continues to grow and just maybe I might have to accept Heath Mills' invitation to make an appearance down the track. 🏏

END OF AN ERA SANJ SILVA BIDS CPA FAREWELL



Whilst travelling from Hamilton to Auckland after visiting a NZCPA member one thing becomes clearly evident in regards to the man in the passenger's seat of the vehicle, outgoing National PDM Sanj Silva, and that is his huge level of humility.

The two-hour journey was the perfect time to chat and ask Sanj to reflect on his ten-year career at the NZCPA. For the entire trip he was constantly downplaying the impact and legacy he leaves with the CPA's highly regarded Personal Development Programme (PDP), using phrases such as "we did it," "it was a collective effort," "I didn't do it alone."

The reality is closer to the way NZCPA CEO Heath Mills describes "Sanj has done an outstanding job in growing and developing our Personal Development Programme into what I believe is one of the best of its kind in the world. I have no doubt he has been able to grow the

programme to what it is today because of his personal qualities which are so aligned with his work. He is very capable, totally committed and always professional. But most importantly he is kind, caring, patient, considerate and will always help anyone in need – he is a great guy whom we've been lucky to have at the NZCPA for so long.

Through his work in the development of the PDP he has had a huge impact on our game and its professional players – he leaves the NZCPA with a programme that is world class, respected but most importantly delivers for our people. He can be very proud of the contribution he has made."

When Sanj started in the role at the NZCPA, he was the only person looking after the needs of all our professional players - in a programme which had poor engagement (around 20-30%), limited resources and with the majority

of players unsure of what they wanted to do when they exited from cricket. What was implemented over the next decade evolved into the four key pillars which form the foundation of the programme – Education, Risk Management, Self-Development and Well-Being.

Sanj's leadership began with the employment of a second Personal Development Manager in 2014, and the success of the programme has enabled further expansion to what is now a PD team of five full time employees catering for our current and past playing members.

As our trip continued so did his humility. The proud father and husband understating how he recognised the importance of the programme being totally independent from cricket's high-performance system and team based PDMs. The priority being to ensure members can trust the programme and its people completely being the

foundation of what Sanj has built within the programme and the PD team. This independence and being focussed solely on a player as an individual, with no consideration or involvement of their cricket performance has always been key.

"I just did my job and we did it as an organisation," Silva said.

The Mental Well Being Programme which was created in 2013 is one of the key and most used services by our members, another feather in Sanj's cap. Along the way the former Auckland, CD and Sri Lanka A representative worked collaboratively with the NZC High Performance team to portray the importance of the programme alongside their performance on the field.

NZCPA Board Member and Blackcap Ross Taylor was full of praise for the man who has become a close friend stating "when Sanj started there wasn't a lot of buy-in or support for players, little by little he kept adapting the PD Programme to suit player need and into what we have available today.

"Sanj and the PD team have always been there and looked after current and past players' well-being. It is no exaggeration that he's played a big part in my career."

Ish Sodhi is another player with a long-

standing relationship and respect for Sanj, sharing "I've known Sanj since I was 14, well before he started with the CPA. He has had an incredible impact on many of the players that he has worked with, and I am no different.

We will miss Sanj dearly, his work with the PD programme has always gone above and beyond and we could not be more appreciative. I know if I was ever in the ring, I'd have Sanj in my corner! We wish him nothing but the best with his future endeavours."

Not widely publicised due to its sensitive and confidential nature is the work Silva has done with many past players who have fallen on hard times – for them, this has often been life changing. Sanj identified early that The Cricketers Trust was a great safety net, but there was an opportunity to be more proactive before this got to fire – which led to the focus on services for past players which ultimately created a Past Player PDM role to focus on career transition and to more closely case manage those past players who required help and support.

Through Silva's efforts over the past decade, that low member engagement in 2012 has been turned completely around, with meaningful player engagement numbers now consistently exceeding 90%. That is incredible and shows just how ingrained, relevant and valued the

PD service is to our membership. The benefits are not just reflected indirectly in cricket performance, but increasingly flowing through into a more deliberate and planned transition into a career and life outside cricket.

When our car pulled in to drop Sanj off at home after our trip (which was typically another meaningful engagement with a player) Sanj shared one last point. "The number one thing for me was to make sure that we looked after our members holistically, and to put a structure in place that services their needs. I've loved my time at the NZCPA and have no doubt our new National PDM Lesley Elvidge will take things to the next level when I go."

Silva's legacy is that he has converted a problem into a strength for the NZCPA. The investment made by players into the PD programme is something they are all very proud of, and all our members are hugely indebted to the way Sanj has curated the programme for their ongoing benefit.

Although we are sad to see Sanj go, being a life member, he will forever be a part of the NZCPA in future. We wish Sanj all the best in his new role and thank him greatly for what he has done for the NZCPA and our members over the years. ●

UPCOMING EVENTS

Due to Covid-19 restrictions and disruption many of our events are being rescheduled or planning is being deferred until we have more certainty.

PAST PLAYER EVENT

Dates TBC - Covid Restrictions dependent

HOOKE ON CRICKET

Dates TBC - Covid Restrictions dependent

QSCC CHARITY GOLF DAY

Christchurch Date TBC - Covid Restrictions dependent

THE PLAYERS' GOLF DAY

Date TBC - Covid Restrictions dependent

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THE INSIDER

MULTI-LAYERED CRICKETERS

by Paul Ford



Wow, how good is that Rafael Nadal? 21 Grand Slam tennis titles and counting – balding, fiddling, punishingly slow to serve but phenomenal at his chosen sport. That tennis success is all well and good but how is his outswinger, cover drive and dab to third man?

I guess we will never know about Rafa's cricketing prowess, unlike his fellow Australian Open winner **ASH BARTY** who swapped tennis racquets for pads a few years ago and whacked a few around for the Brisbane Heat in the inaugural season of the Women's Big Bash competition.

"She's probably hit more balls than most of our cricket players coming through," Queensland coach Andy Richards said of her transferrable skills. "It might not have been a cricket ball, but it's a ball at 120km+ an hour."

Oh how I love a multi-threat sportsperson. And of course we've all had a recent taste of it here in Aotearoa with the cricketing carnival that is the Black Clash. It was a hell of a lot of fun, but not completely bereft of competitive spirit. It comes as no surprise to anyone that lots of the blokes who have gone on to be professional football players are pretty handy with leather and willow in hand.

It got me thinking about my all-time favourite multi-talented cricketers. These players are from golden multisporting eras that have passed us by as sports increasingly demand athletes to be fully focused all-year round on their chosen field. That is a shame.

ELLYSE PERRY is a freak and the only sportsperson to have played in a Cricket World Cup and the FIFA Women's World Cup* (where she scored a sumptuous goal). She was a dual international for six years through until 2013 having made her respective cricket/football debuts as a 16-year-old. After that she decided to

hang her football boots to focus on cricket and she has gone OK there with more than 250 international appearances, 4 World Cups, an all-round record to die for and icon status in the sport.

PHIL HORNE: Ben's dad is one of the top buggers in and around New Zealand sport. Notoriously light on his feet Balsa was a legend on the badminton scene and went to the Commonwealth Games in 1986, before making the Black Caps side in 1987 where he opened the batting and was a panther in the field. "There wasn't the professional environment so much, and you could play one, finish, and then switch into another one," he said. "I think it was a bit of an advantage being quite fresh, and doing something a bit different."

CB FRY: If you Google one person after this, make sure it is Charles Burgess Fry – described as the most "variously gifted Englishman of any age" by John Arlott. Fry was an unbeaten captain of England at cricket but also played football for England and in the FA Cup final for Southampton and equalled the long jump world record in 1893. He also had a party trick where he would face a mantelpiece, crouch down, leap up and turn then land and bow with his feet planted on the shelf.

YUZVENDRA CHAHAL: A former national Under-12 chess champion, Chahal represented India at the World Youth Chess Championships and still has a world chess ranking. He has played since he was six years old and reckons chess taught him patience: "Chess has helped me a lot in that way. I have learnt to be patient and get batsmen out."

JEFF WILSON: A seven-time Black Cap – in two stints a preposterous 12 years apart – as well as a 60-Test All Blacks rugby legend. To do what Goldie did in the professional era shows what a rare beast he was. To be fair, he was arguably eclipsed by Eric Tindill who played international cricket and rugby, then doubled down to become a test cricket umpire and international rugby referee to boot.

*West Indian legend Viv Richards played for Antigua in the FIFA World Cup qualifiers, but not the finals tournament.



JEFF WILSON

PHIL HORNE

CB FRY

ASH BARTLY

ELLYSE PERRY

Paul Ford is the co-founder of the Beige Brigade and one-seventh of The Alternative Commentary Collective. He has not represented New Zealand at any sports and is much better at falling off mantelpieces than jumping onto them.



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