

WINTER 2024 | No. 056

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Cricket Players Association

OUTRIGHT

THE PLAYERS' MAGAZINE



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OPENING THOUGHTS



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

The 2023-24 season of cricket has come to an end in what can only be described as a wonderful summer compared to the last with the devastation of Cyclone Gabrielle still being felt by many families all over the country.

The last series of the summer involved the White Ferns hosting England with both the T20 and ODI series going the way of the English. After a couple of pre-tour training camps in Lincoln, the White Ferns will get the chance to test themselves once more against the English with 3 ODI and 5 T20 matches, starting in late June.

The Blackcaps have recently completed a tour of Pakistan with the T20 series drawn 2-2 and are now making their way to the West Indies and USA, for the ICC Men's T20 World Cup where they will face Afghanistan, The West Indies, Uganda and Papua New Guinea in pool play.

Inside this edition of Outright we catch up with Mikaela Greig who in addition to her cricket, balances life with farm

ownership as well as a day job with Beef + Lamb NZ. We canvas two past player who are both in the field of education, former Otago player Justin Paul is an Education curriculum specialist and former Firebird Jamie Gibson has become a secondary school teacher post cricket. We also acknowledge and celebrate the careers of a number of players who have decided to pull stumps at the end of the season.

We also recap all the events that have happened over the summer including The Players' Golf Day, past player events, The Players' Conference and the prestigious player voted awards for men and women.

Earlier this year, FICA and Winners Alliance forged a historic partnership where Winners Alliance will manage player group licensing rights on behalf of more than 500 cricketers from across FICA's 13 affiliate countries. The new partnership will protect and optimize players' intellectual property through new global licensing opportunities.

Winners Alliance are experts in group licensing programs, encompassing video games, trading cards, collectibles,

and various related categories. Significantly, this is the first player-led and endorsed group licensing program combining the name, image, and likeness of professional cricketers around the world.

The new partnership will ensure FICA can build on the association's core advocacy work on behalf of players and to ensure better outcomes for professional players in the future.

The deal with FICA, continues to build on Winners Alliance's expanding list of partnerships with athlete groups, after launching upon securing the rights from the Professional Tennis Players Association (PTPA) in August 2022. An agreement that will see Winners Alliance establish the first-ever player group licensing program in professional tennis history.

We hope you enjoy this latest edition of Outright.

Ngā mihi nui

NZCPA

NZCPA | CONTACT US

NZCPA Office
11 Cricket Avenue,
Eden Park, Mount Eden
Auckland 1024

Postal Address
PO BOX 9915,
Newmarket,
Auckland 1149

+64 9 630 3075
nzcpa@nzcpa.co.nz
www.nzcpa.co.nz

facebook.com/nzcpassn
x.com/nzcpa
instagram.com/nzcpa
Linked In search 'nzcpa'

Please see website for staff contact details

Players better together

NEW LIFE LESSONS FOR JAMIE GIBSON

BY AIDEN MCLAUGHLIN



LIFE IS FULL OF LESSONS AND NOW JAMIE GIBSON'S DAYS REVOLVE AROUND THEM AFTER A TEAMMATE OF HIS HAD A LIGHTBULB MOMENT.

Gibson and his Wellington side were on an away trip to Dunedin to play Otago when a random conversation changed his outlook on the future.

"Ben Sears and I were just talking about life after cricket and what on earth are we going to do, and he just ran by me the idea of being a teacher, which is something I'd never, ever, thought of. Once he dropped that idea on me I got quite excited and thought about how it fitted my personality and that sort of stuff and it went from there," says Gibson.

"Ben is a very honest guy so when he says something like that, you know that it's sincere and genuine. He's just very thoughtful and analytical so I've always trusted his opinion in all sorts of categories," he says.

Gibson quickly engaged with his PD Manager Jo Murray who linked him up with a Massey University representative who he could talk to about his ideas of study and how it could work for him. Massey University have an arrangement where they try to be accommodating of athletes who are studying.

"I also applied for funding to get some support for me to do some papers, because when I began in 2021 I had to do an English Certificate, which was four university level papers, so I would be eligible to teach English as a subject at secondary school level. Jo was a huge help in arranging that process with Massey and how to go about it and so on. Jo was a huge support and always has been," says Gibson.

In the following off-season he was a teacher aide at his old stomping ground at Wellington College and so he got used to playing and studying simultaneously and trying to improve as a cricketer whilst developing his future career plans.

"I enjoyed having the luxury of something that I got purpose

from outside of cricket and I feel fortunate that both were happening simultaneously. I could study and prepare myself for life after cricket while I was playing cricket," says Gibson.

The former Firebird is now in his first-year teaching English and Media Studies at Hutt Valley High School after completing his teaching qualifications in 2023.

"The intensity of being a teacher is something I'm still getting used to. The days are a lot busier than being a cricketer. There's always stuff to do, so that's taken some getting used to, but I've found it hugely fulfilling. Just like cricket there's always things to improve on. I love English, I love literacy and helping kids develop their vocabulary and the ideas you get to talk about in an English classroom. I just love the subject and love having a laugh with the kids and building relationships with them. It's a great job," he says.

Gibson and his family moved to Wellington from Greytown when he was six months old and by the time he was at primary



“ THE INTENSITY OF **BEING A TEACHER** IS SOMETHING I'M STILL GETTING USED TO. THE DAYS ARE A LOT BUSIER THAN BEING A CRICKETER. BUT I'VE FOUND IT **HUGELY FULFILLING.** ”

school, encouraged by his mother and father, he had picked up a cricket bat. He started making Wellington representative teams when he was 10 years old before attending Wellington College. However, his hunger to become a professional cricketer didn't really eventuate until he was studying for his Bachelor of Arts in Media Studies in Dunedin. The all-rounder's Ford Trophy debut came against Central Districts in 2015, followed by his first Plunket Shield outing against Canterbury the following year.

Gibson was able to experience cricket overseas, playing multiple seasons in Ireland, as well as England. But in May 2022, when he was at Waringstown Cricket Club in Belfast, he got news that would change his playing future.

"I guess I look back on it fortunately now, but unfortunately the decision [to stop playing cricket] was made for me. I got the call from Cricket Wellington who said that I wasn't going to be receiving a contract. It took me four months or so to process I would say and definitely realise that I wanted to move on. It certainly took me some time just to process the

disappointment and work my way through the emotions. Then I was really motivated to try to become a teacher instead. Now, looking back, I'm glad how it's worked out as it's got me in the classroom a bit sooner," says Gibson.

Gibson knew he wanted to teach at a co-educational public school and when the opportunity came up at Hutt Valley High School, and he was successful in being appointed, he was able to start his new career on a full-time basis.

"I want to try and be an effective teacher and that's all I'm focussed on at the moment, which is quite different to cricket, where it was quite easy to get caught up in selection and your own performance; there were just so many elements that were so easy to think about, whereas I think with teaching, I'm finding it quite a bit more straightforward in my head that it's just about trying to be an effective teacher and that's all."



OUTRIGHT

PRINCIPAL PARTNER



PREMIUM PARTNERS



JARDEN



Players better together

GLENN PHILLIPS HONoured WITH THE PLAYERS' CAP

"He brings the fizz," was the catchphrase amongst the his fellow team-mates when describing live wire Glenn Phillips' contribution to the Blackcaps over the past twelve months. Phillips added even more strings to his bow during the season proving he is a more than capable Test cricketer and a wicket taking spin bowler as he showcased his wide range of skills.

The presentation for *The Players' Cap* was made in Christchurch earlier this week with the players gathered at the team hotel, where Phillips was named as the recipient of 13th edition of *The Players' Cap*.

The Blackcaps all-rounder was humbled and surprised to receive the award "Wow, I didn't see that coming," explained Phillips. "Obviously, I vote for players who I think are going to win it as well. I didn't think I was going to be even close and for the guys to be able to see me that way, it's incredibly special. This group, the camaraderie we have, the enjoyment that we have, the time that we spend together, it definitely means the world when the players are the ones that are voting for it. I don't really have any other way to describe it.

Recently retired Blackcaps pace bowler Neil Wagner had the honour of presenting *The Players' Cap* and acknowledged his team-mates' achievement, "When I didn't know who was receiving the award, I sat down and thought about a couple of players who could deserve this. Glenn's name came to mind, and I thought it was going to be him. His performance throughout the year and just how hard he's worked on his game. He's developed so much as a bowler, his whole all-round capability - a gun with the bat, what he brings in the field, the energy he brings, and what he gives to the team. He's just growing and growing each year."

Across six tests, Phillips amassed 314 runs with a strike rate 81.55 and an average of 35, but it was the significance of some of those knocks that contributed

so much to the team, not to mention the arrival of Phillips the 'all-rounder' with a man of the match performance in the Test victory in Bangladesh that squared the series. Notably, it was his spin bowling that attracted the attention of his colleagues and cricket fans and is an area of his game that Phillips has been working hard on in recent times.

Previously a bit of a side-project Phillips yielded 17 Test wickets with his off-spin, including a maiden five-wicket haul (5/45) against Australia in Wellington. (Jeetan Patel was the last Blackcaps spinner to achieve the feat in 2008 versus The West Indies). His fielding prowess was equally outstanding, with five spectacular catches throughout the series, the highlight of which was the stunning acrobatic catch of Keegan Petersen in the second test against South Africa.

Three times recipient of *The Players' Cap* Kane Williamson was also full of plaudits for Phillips, "The players are the people on the ground, the people you're standing next to that are there experiencing the performance and the contributions, the direction that they're ideally headed in. So, to see someone like Glenn receive the award, I think is just so fitting and it's not just the numbers that he's put up in all his areas, whether that's catches and runs and wickets, but the way that he goes about it, it's always geared to move the team forward and it's always with a team-first approach. So, to see that recognised that's not always visible from an outside perspective is something quite special."

THE PLAYERS' CAP LEADING VOTE RECIPIENTS PER FORMAT

- **TEST** Glenn Phillips
- **ODI** Rachin Ravindra
- **T20i** Tim Southee



The 2024 cap is the 13th edition of *The Players' Cap*, with the player voted award highlighting the contribution's made from many players across all formats. Glenn Phillips led the player votes in the Test format just ahead of Matt Henry and Kane Williamson (equal second). In white ball cricket it was Rachin Ravindra whose performances through the year saw him take out the ODI voting tally (Daryl Mitchell 2nd and Trent Boult 3rd), and Tim Southee topped the T20 votes, with Finn Allen (2nd) and Mitch Santner (3rd) close behind.

THE PLAYERS' CAP RECIPIENTS

2024	Glenn Phillips
2023	Daryl Mitchell
2022	Devon Conway
2021	Kyle Jamieson
2020	Tim Southee
2019	Ross Taylor
2018	Trent Boult
2017	Kane Williamson
2016	Kane Williamson
2015	Kane Williamson
2014	Ross Taylor
2013	Tim Southee
2012	Brendon McCullum

THIRD CONSECUTIVE CPA PLAYERS' AWARD FOR AMELIA KERR

Amelia Kerr was honoured by her White Ferns team-mates as the recipient of the 9th *CPA Players' Award* for 2024 when the team gathered in Christchurch in late May.

Upon receiving the *CPA Players Award*, Kerr bagged a third consecutive award and in doing so joins an exclusive club alongside Sophie Devine as players to receive the *CPA Players' Award* on three consecutive occasions.

After receiving the award the 23 year old Kerr said, "This award is extremely special, it's the one that's voted by your peers and teammates, that's who you play for every time you go out and represent as well as your family and friends. The other special factor for me is also the fact that my name is alongside Sophie (Devine), Suzie (Bates) and Amy (Satterthwaite) who growing up as a young girl I was pretending to bat with them in the nets. They were my cricketing role models, so to have my name on the *CPA Players' Award* alongside them is incredibly special."

Despite receiving a plethora of accolades and awards Kerr shared how driven she is to continually improve and her strong work ethic, a trait she attributes to her family. "My parents, aunties, uncles and my sister, Jess, are incredible role models where I've seen them get places through work ethic, never giving up and how they've faced adversity. The other thing they've taught me is being a good person first and I know that if I can celebrate other people's success, get around others, be kind and love what I'm doing as well, that's the most important thing and ultimately that's going to help me in the process. Being a White Fern was a dream of mine from at such a young age and I've achieved that goal. For me now it's about moving forward and wanting to be one of the best players in the world and getting better each day."

Over the course of the past year the skilful all-rounder was steady with the bat and ball, featuring with typical standout performances through the tours to Sri Lanka and South Africa, and



the home series against Pakistan and England. Kerr racked up another two ODI centuries over the period and was the Whites Ferns top ODI scorer with 541 runs at an average of 67. With the ball she collected 23 wickets across both white ball formats, including a career best 3 for 11 in the T20 international against Pakistan.

NZC Life member Catherine Campbell presented the award and was delighted for Kerr. "The thing that has impressed me the most about Amelia, is yes, she's got talent, but she works hard at her game and she wants to get better. From a young player, she's strived always to improve, and I believe she's continued to do that. She's had lots of success. She could just rest on her laurels, but she doesn't. She continues to work hard and she just always wants to contribute and wants to get better."

THE CPA PLAYERS' AWARD LEADING VOTE RECIPIENTS PER FORMAT

- **ODI** Amelia Kerr
- **T20i** Amelia Kerr

The *CPA Players' Award* recognises the contribution players make in every match, and comes with the knowledge of the strategies and key moments within each game. This year's voting reflected the stellar international performance that Kerr displayed.

CPA PLAYERS' AWARD RECIPIENTS

2024	Amelia Kerr
2023	Amelia Kerr
2022	Amelia Kerr
2021	Amy Satterthwaite
2020	Sophie Devine
2019	Sophie Devine
2018	Sophie Devine
2017	Amy Satterthwaite
2016	Suzie Bates



JUSTIN PAUL — FROM CRICKET TO EDUCATION TO A PUBLISHED WRITER

BY MARGOT BUTCHER

Justin Paul may not be an overly familiar name to our current crop of players. This, he says with blatant self-deprecation, should come as no surprise.

He paints himself as ‘one of the world’s worst first-class cricketers’, which isn’t quite true. A spinner for New Zealand Under 19 and Otago in the 1990s, either he wasn’t that awful, or it was a truly dire few years nationally in the game.

Either way, after a few seasons in his early 20s, Paul moved onto other things in life. Like having kids — including Cam, now 19, with two Ford Trophy appearances for Canterbury.

Justin himself is the son of a cricketer. His dad, Russell Paul, played Colts for New Zealand (the 1960 equivalent of Under 19s) and Hawke Cup for North Otago. They were both watching on at Hagley Oval this past summer when Cam made his debut, taking three wickets against the Firebirds.

It was a treat. Slipping back into those long-forgotten days when you could while away entirely at a cricket ground, doing a lap and enjoying chats and random catch-ups. Then life gets busy.

Justin: “This sounds terrible, but I do love those apps that let you know when you need to dash down to the ground...”

If we can rewind to the end of his playing days, you’ll see him sitting in University lectures doing an English degree and wondering what the heck he’s going to do for a living as an ex-first-class cricketer with an Arts degree.

“KIDS RELATE TO OUR OWN STORIES SO MUCH MORE AND WHEN YOU PROVIDE THEM WITH RESOURCES THAT REFLECT WHERE THEY COME FROM, THEIR WORLD MAKES A LOT MORE SENSE. THEN THEY ENGAGE WITH LEARNING.”

Fortunately, he fell into teaching English — at his old school, Timaru Boys’ High to begin with, then in the UK and in Darfield, west of Christchurch. That kept him content for a while, and able to feed a family. “I enjoyed the classroom. And I think I went OK,” he mulls.

“But it got to a stage where it took too much. I’d be bringing residual stuff home from school — where I was dealing with kids, pastoral care. I’d pick my own kids up from their school and this stuff kind of got overlaid on how I interacted with them, and I realised, well, this isn’t cool.”

So he shifted to working for Te Kura, New Zealand’s 25,000-pupil correspondence school.

Te Kura became New Zealand’s first digital school and that helped upskill him for his next career move: working in the Ministry of Education’s Christchurch office, for a couple of years. He was involved with the NCEA Change Programme that brought in the most significant reforms since the NCEA qualification was introduced in 2002 — including a more Kiwi-centric curriculum that embraced Mātauranga Māori and Pasifika perspectives.

In turn, that grounded him well for his current role working for national e-learning provider Education Perfect — some 40,000 students use EP resources for Year 10 Maths alone, and the business encompasses 90 per cent of all secondary schools in New Zealand.

Among many other things, Education Perfect provides resources for teachers

to help them incorporate Māori and Pasifika knowledge and perspectives.

“So the scale of it is pretty cool, knowing that it can be challenging for teachers who have had no background in Mātauranga Māori to find themselves having to teach it in the great new curricula that we now had, underpinned by Te Tiriti. It’s about us creating resources that provide a bit of a bridge for that.

“To put it simply, do we really need to dust off Lord of the Flies and To Kill A Mockingbird for year after year when we can source texts from brilliant Māori and Pasifika writers right here in New Zealand? Kids relate to our own stories so much more and when you provide them with resources that reflect where they come from, their world makes a lot more sense. Then they engage with learning.”

You can feel the passion and Paul feels lucky to have worked on such stimulating projects — albeit the change of government has now cast a cloud over the future curricular direction.

“We’ve made so much progress, and there has been so much investment, that it doesn’t make any sense to stop and go back, though. I can’t see us, as a country and as teachers, turning our backs on it.”

So that’s brought you up to speed, a metaphorical million miles from the cricket fields of his youth in the pre-professional days, but somehow having landed on his feet — and now with a kid following in his spiked footsteps (only bowling pace, like grand-dad. not spin).

Paul’s eldest is meanwhile on her London OE. He has a pre-teen stepson, and his youngest lad is just hitting school age. They’re all the reason you’re reading this article now, the kids having inspired Paul to start thinking about his cricket again.

Not playing. Pah! He did venture back to a net for a while to coach Cam “when he was a nipper, and through his age stuff until he was 14. Then, much as my own dad did with me, I said, ‘OK you’ve got the skills, now off you go!’ I didn’t want to get involved in any sort of politics or nepotism as the coach of his teams.”

It was around the time of lockdowns when the writing started, after his elder kids asked him what they were like when they were the same age as his younger kids.

He decided to put pen to paper — which he does very well, and enjoyed it so much that suddenly he was writing a mini-memoir, in the form of a long letter to his youngest son about his youthful cricket obsession and pot-pourri of recollections from backyards in Timaru to trips to watch Tests with his father at Lancaster Park.

“There seems little point in trying to explain cricket. I may as well explain the sky,” he writes, but that didn’t stop him from carrying on — literally writing enough to fill a book.

The essays got published by The NightWatchman (thenightwatchman.net, a UK-based, Wisden-associated quarterly edit of cricket essays from around the world). Then Kiwi journalist Dylan Cleaver put it on his own online platform, The Bounce, and it took off.

>> Continued over the page





JUSTIN PAUL –

“MOST OF ALL, IT WAS JUST COOL TO RECONNECT WITH ALL THESE PEOPLE I KNEW 25 YEARS AGO.”

“It was really like someone going into a shed and banging in a few nails — another thing I can’t do that well! I’d just tried and put pen on paper instead, and came up with something.

“Then one day Gary Stead, one of my oldest friends, was talking about it with me and he suggested I get some stories out of other cricket people we knew — what cricket meant to them and how cricket affected them and their lives. The positive and negative experiences.

“Steady said, ‘Start with me!’ So I did, and that was the start of a really cool year reaching out to people whom I’d played with or bumped into through the game. I ‘selected a team’, as it were, that ended up as 14 people talking about their life in cricket.”

The team is quite a roll-call. Besides Stead, there’s Mark Richardson — Paul and Richardson used to flat together in Dunedin. John Aiken, cricketer turned psychologist who now has millions of people watching him on Australia’s Married At First Sight. England’s Mark Butcher, John Crawley and Aftab Habib; Zimbabwe’s Andy Flower, Australian Neil Maxwell, West Indian Garfield Charles — all with Kiwi connections. And local legends Adam Parore, Dion Nash, John Bracewell, Shane Bond and Jeff Wilson.

“It wasn’t hard to go find interesting people, and although I haven’t found a publisher yet — which would be wonderful, because they were all fascinating, and it would be lovely to share it — one or two of the interviews have been published on The Nightwatchman.

“Most of all, it was just cool to reconnect with all these people I knew 25 years ago. It was a good time to do it. Bondy

was coming back from a tournament overseas, and had to be in an MIQ hotel, for instance, for a week. So he had time to talk. Mark Butcher was similarly locked up in a hotel in the West Indies. We suddenly had time again, just like the old days.”

Now that the world is back in full swing, Paul’s creative outlet has gone back to being his regular day job — but as he settles into the role of being a spectator to his son’s career, he can’t help but keep on contemplating the game, and trying to explain the sky.

“I still talk to Cam about cricket, but — he’s just so serious about it! It’s far more full on now for young players. That’s a clear change. But then, there’s also genuine, long-term career options that my cohort never had.”

The conversation turns to the dark side of sport when he reflects on Cam then dislocating his shoulder, wrecking the debut summer in an instant.

“Sport — it’s highs and lows, isn’t it? To go from 3/17 on Canterbury debut, to the next week where he’s on his hands and knees clutching his shoulder, and missing out on the Under 19 World Cup trip... I thought to myself, where’s the middle ground here!”

While the game, at various times in his own youth, devoured all his time, made him obsess, and generally encouraged him to be an unrounded individual, at 51 Paul “probably” still wouldn’t have had it any other way.

“What did cricket give me? Friendships. You spend a lot of time with people,



don’t you? And the nature of it is, those people are sometimes not doing well. Being a batsman can be a pretty dark place, at times — so cricket friends matter. Bowlers get more than once chance, so they’re more jovial! But yes, the friendships. They’re what bind you.

“And the discipline, really, is the other thing it gave me that I’m grateful for. I was a spin bowler, and the amount of practice that it takes, that is painful — literally. I had a terrible time with my fingers, constantly tearing the skin on my index and middle finger.

“John Bracewell’s method of peeing on the fingers to toughen the skin didn’t work... but the discipline it teaches you, that is a good thing, and you have it for life.”

Now we just need to get that manuscript in front of a smart publisher, for all the rest of us cricket disciples.



WORLD PLAYERS ASSOCIATION

PLAYER DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE 2024

The 7th World Players Association Player Development Conference was recently held in Scottsdale, Arizona in April 2024. This year’s conference, generously hosted by the Major League Baseball Players’ Association, was attended by over 100 Players Association representatives from Player Welfare teams based around the globe — including Lesley Elvidge and Paul Hobbs from the NZCPA.

Prior to arriving in Scottsdale, Lesley and Paul transited through Los Angeles where they were able to hold a quick Personal Development team meeting with Jo Murray who happened to be in the US with family at that time!

After the joys of flying domestically in the States (made more difficult by Paul Hobbs’ tendency to attract the attention of security officials), Lesley and Paul arrived in the 36-degree heat of the desert in Arizona. They spent the first few days in conference with their FICA cricket colleagues (from Australia,

England, South Africa, the West Indies and Ireland) discussing the successes and challenges of each Association’s Personal Development programmes over the last two years — including how we can all better service the modern global cricketers’ needs. On behalf of the NZCPA, Lesley presented on the *Belonging – Whanaungatanga* sessions rolled out to our teams this year and Paul presented on his work in The Cricketers’ Trust space. The sharing of knowledge between cricket players associations was incredibly valuable, but what was arguably more valuable were the relationships established with our global cricket colleagues.

The World Players Association Player Development Conference which followed over the next three days introduced the NZCPA representatives to amazing global speakers covering a full remit of topics from Vulnerability in PD practice, using Gamification, a Challenge Mindset and Artificial

Intelligence in our PD programmes and using Design Thinking Principles with a real focus on serving the athlete of the future. Each session was designed to challenge our thinking and look for new ways of doing things. Delegates also had the opportunity to spend time together in small group sessions discussing current issues they were facing — many of which (not surprisingly) were consistent across all sports. Attendees were also treated to some fabulous American hospitality at BBQs and meals out and, in Paul’s case, an opportunity in the batting cage.

Lesley and Paul returned home reinvigorated with fresh ideas for the Personal Development programme but also extremely proud of the work our PD team is currently doing. We may be small in terms of size and resource, but that is where the beauty of our programme lies — in the individual relationships we are able to build and maintain with our members.



PDM’s Paul Hobbs, Jo Murray, National PDM Lesley Elvidge.



Netball PDM Debbie Christian (left) with PDMs from FICA Member Associations.



MIKAELA GREIG

MASTERING THE ART OF CHAOS

BY MARGOT BUTCHER

THEY SAY IF YOU WANT SOMETHING DONE, GIVE IT TO A BUSY PERSON – AND THEY DON'T COME MUCH BUSIER THAN MIKAELA GREIG.

2023/24 WAS GREIG'S 11TH SUMMER FOR THE CENTRAL HINDS AND ENDED WITH A NEW ZEALAND A DEBUT, CAPTAINCY, A CAREER BEST, AWARDS, AND A WHITE FERNS CALL-UP. THE MOST REMARKABLE PART IS THAT SHE NEVER SAW ANY OF IT COMING – AND AT ONE POINT, DIDN'T THINK SHE'D EVEN BE PLAYING THIS PAST SEASON. FIND OUT WHAT CHANGED HER MIND.

LET'S START WITH THAT MOMENT IN MARCH WHEN YOU GOT THE TAP ON THE SHOULDER FROM THE WHITE FERNS. HOW DID THAT UNFOLD?

Mikaela Greig: "It came as a complete shock. We were playing a New Zealand A T20 against England A that day in Queenstown, and Liz Green found me after the game and asked if we could have a chat. I think there'd been some prior announcement that players would be called into the White Ferns for one game to cover for Sophie Devine and Melie Kerr's delayed arrival from the WPL, but I was so oblivious to the idea that I might be one of them that the penny didn't drop until we were halfway through the conversation.

"Liz said she didn't know whether I'd be playing or not, but I just assumed I would be running the drinks. I couldn't tell the rest of the A's so then I had to secretly pack up my cricket gear and wheel it out of the changing room without everyone seeing! Next morning I drove to Dunedin, and during the trip I got the call from Ben Sawyer to tell me I'd be playing.

I wasn't expecting to hear that, either. It turns out I'm not very onto it with picking up signals!"

IT MUST HAVE BEEN HECTIC?

"The most crazy, whirlwind 24 hours of my life. But, probably quite a good way for it to happen for me because there was not a lot of time to think about it. I got to the team hotel at 2pm, had headshots, had a team scouting meeting, went out for dinner with Hannah [Rowe] – and then it was game day and there I was on the field with the White Ferns. I hadn't even trained with the team! Woke up the following day and they were already gone, off to their next game in Nelson."

YOU'D ALREADY PLAYED THE TOP ENGLAND SIDE ONCE BECAUSE NEW ZEALAND A PLAYED THEM IN A WARM-UP MATCH. DID THAT HELP?

"Well, I'd been quite shocked just to have been invited to play the North v South games a couple of weeks before that to be honest, so getting to play for New



"WE'VE GOT 1400 EWES, SO IN SPRING WE'LL HAVE CLOSE TO 2000 LAMBS; AND WE'VE GOT 100 HEAD OF CATTLE, AND SIX DOGS."

sleep well. I didn't think I was feeling that nervous about it, but it must have been in my subconscious that I'd never captained the Hinds. And, it's only in the last few years that I've batted in the top/middle order. Prior to that, I was batting seven or eight for the Hinds, without much faith in myself that I could be a genuine number four batter. So I had to work through quite a bit of residual early career trauma!

"But this season had been different. In the Hinds, we'd talked a lot about being the one to stand up to do the job. Do you want to be that person winning it for the team, or leave it to someone else? So I was saying to myself, 'Right, come on, I'm taking this game on myself' – that mentality clicked in during that game.

"And I felt awful to begin with, in that innings. I actually felt the worst I've ever felt. We all know I like hitting boundaries, and it took me a long time to hit one. I faced a lot of balls for only five boundaries, and two of those were off consecutive balls. So, I did not feel good that day. Proving I had the ability to get through that, and that you don't always have to feel real good to get a job done, that was a big 'win' moment for me."

LET'S DETOUR AWAY FROM CRICKET HERE AND TALK ABOUT WHAT YOU'RE DOING OFF-FIELD. YOU MENTIONED EARLIER THE NEED TO JUGGLE WORK WITH CRICKET. WHAT DOES THAT LOOK LIKE?

"I started a new full-time job last year as an Extension Manager for Beef + Lamb New Zealand. That means I put on about 60 events a year to upskill and educate the 4,000 farmers in my region, which extends from Wellington to New Plymouth, across the Desert Road and down. The events support farmers with ideas to take home and implement on their farm to hopefully make them more profitable, as well as providing a chance to connect with other people like themselves.

>> Continued over the page

Zealand A was quite unreal. In 12 years, I'd never played any level higher than Hinds – I'd never even been to a camp before that was anything higher than a Hinds camp.

"So this was next level. And then the White Ferns as well, so three levels up at once! But the way it happened so quickly kind of helped. Joining any new team is quite a big thing, let alone three new teams, so by the time the White Ferns happened, in my head it was just the same process of fitting into another new team. It was all a really cool experience."

WITH THE NEW ZEALAND A SERIES BEING A NEW THING FOR EVERYONE, WHAT WERE THE EXPECTATIONS?

"We knew we could play good cricket, but I don't think you'd have expected us to dominate England A the way we did in the one-dayers [winning the Series 2-1, after having lost the T20s]. We'd gone in knowing they were all professional, while half of us were juggling our jobs

and lives and having to look after work at the hotel before the game and that sort of thing.

"But the way we all pulled together as a team – that is something I'll never forget. For me, these teammates had been the 'enemy' – the people I'd played against my whole career, and now suddenly we were 100 per cent behind each other. We got beaten in the second one-day game so it was all on the line at one-all, but we were all completely committed to each other, pumped, and did something really special together to go out and win that series. So the connections and relationships that we made off the field, as well as the really cool things we did on the field, are what I'll remember."

YOU CAME IN AS CAPTAIN FOR THE DECIDER, AND GOT YOUR BEST ONE-DAY SCORE OF 84 – BATTING AT FOUR IN A 133-RUN WIN. QUITE A DAY?

"Normally I'm a very good sleeper, but the night before that game, I did not



“NOW I’M TRUSTING MY OWN GAME, BACKING MYSELF TO PLAY MY BEST CRICKET INSTEAD OF GOING INTO A SHELL. BECAUSE THAT SHELL WILL JUST STOP YOU FROM PLAYING YOUR BEST CRICKET.”



“Before this, I did almost three years teaching at Awatapu College in Palmerston North. That was after doing my teaching qualification and working as Director of Sport at Waiopahu College in Levin, where I’d been to school myself.”

AND, YOU’RE A FARMER YOURSELF?

“Yeah, we’ve got a bit going on! Bradman [Greig’s fiancé] and I bought a farm near Shannon. We’ve got 1,400 ewes, so in spring we’ll have close to 2,000 lambs; and we’ve got 100 head of cattle, and six dogs. Buying a farm, obviously you’re in a lot of debt when you start out. We both have to have an off-farm income to make it work. Bradman works as a shearer, and for me it’s a lot of planning and juggling and heading off to events every week. Sometimes I can organise to work from home and be there to help get cattle or sheep on the truck or whatever on a big day.

“We try to keep the farm low maintenance, purely so that we can work outside the farm to keep it going, but there is pressure. And it’s tough, financially and mentally. There are some early mornings and late nights, and some awful weather at times, to get everything done. Being picked for cricket teams or trips just adds extra carnage!

“To be honest, if it hadn’t been for Bradman saying, ‘Nah, you’ve got to keep going’, I probably wouldn’t have played this past season because the easier thing to do, with time and money and all those sorts of considerations, was not to play. He’s been such a great support. He busts a gut to make sure that I can keep doing this as long as I want to.

“We have a great crew supporting us without whom we wouldn’t be able to do this. I’m also really fortunate

that Judy [Clement] is from a farm, so Judy’s been a helpful sounding board for me at the CPA, like an aunt that I can call who understands.”

YOU CAME OUT OF THIS SEASON AS THE HINDS’ HALLYBURTON PLAYER OF THE YEAR AND PLAYER’S PLAYER, SO YOU MUST BE A PRETTY GOOD JUGGLER?

“I think in a weird way, training less has worked for me. When I was younger, I poured my life into cricket as much as I possibly could and probably overdid it. I had really high expectations of myself, but I didn’t know how to deal with the peaks and troughs and disappointments of cricket very well. Now, if I have an opportunity for just an hour to go and train — I find I use that hour really well. Really focus on what I am doing, then draw a line under it.”

WHAT WAS BEHIND THE HINDS’ BIG TURNAROUND THIS SEASON - MAKING THE DREAM11 SUPER SMASH FINAL FOR THE FIRST TIME IN YEARS?

“There were a lot of changes in our mindset. A big one was having the ability to have tough conversations: that ability to take on critical feedback, for the betterment of the team. We needed to replicate what we were always doing in training, when we were on the field. We’d been guilty of not doing that. So it was realising what we individually needed to do, and how to take those ‘blocks’ away. Myself included. I had to look at what had been going on in my head, and was that self-talk helping me or hindering me. Often when I was going out to bat, the things that had been going through my head weren’t helping me at all.

“I used to find ways to make myself feel better when I didn’t go well, especially when I was out batting. ‘Oh, I had a bad

training week’. ‘Oh, it was raining this week’— all those excuses that actually don’t make you a better cricketer. So mentally, this season was like the flick of a switch. I was thinking, ‘This could be my last season so I don’t want to have any excuses. No excuses. If it’s raining, get out there and do your running session’. Now I’m trusting my own game, backing myself to play my best cricket instead of going into a shell. Because that shell will just stop you from playing your best cricket.”

AND ALL THIS WHILE YOU STILL HAD NO INKLING OF WHAT COULD BE JUST AROUND THE CORNER, IN THE FORM OF NATIONAL TEAMS AND OPPORTUNITIES?

“Yeah, I was 28 and I’d got to stage of my career where I never thought I was going to get any higher honours, and I was OK with that. I had so many other things going on that it wasn’t a major driver for me, anymore. I just wanted to focus on playing well for the Hinds, for us to do really well as a team. So the whirlwind that happened after that was a nice surprise, an added bonus, in a summer I’d already enjoyed a lot.”

WHAT’S THE FUTURE LOOK LIKE NOW?

“We’ve locked in a wedding date for March next year — that was me trying to work around one Hannah Rowe, trying to find a window that hopefully has neither Domestic nor international cricket clashing with it. We’ve booked a cool little venue between Levin and Shannon that used to be my nanna’s family farm growing up, and Bradman also learnt to shear there. They don’t do weddings there anymore, but made an exception for us which is really nice. Cricket-wise, in my head, I think nothing’s changed for me. I still want to just play really well for the Hinds, play with enjoyment, and play our best brand of cricket.”



THE PLAYERS’ GOLF DAY

Above: Matt Henry with The nib Team.

The Players’ Golf Day has built a reputation as a great day out and this year the conditions at Windross Farm were the perfect setting to deliver on that again. After a long and busy cricketing summer, the 28th of March dawned as a perfect Autumn day, albeit the afternoon breeze did settle in and keep the scoring in check.

Raising funds for Charity is the purpose of the day, and we were delighted to have an excellent turnout with 22 teams participating in the golf and activities, all in aid of The Cricketers’ Trust.

The ambrose format allowed the Blackcaps players hosting each group to get to know their team through the day and despite the course providing a perfect mix of challenge, fun and reward, there was some excellent scores posted.

Matt Henry welcomed and acknowledged everyone for attending and shared how important the work of

The Cricketers’ Trust is to the Blackcaps players. He thanked for everyone for their support and opened the day with his warm and welcoming address.

There was room for both good and bad golf and as is always the case with this format, and a few sideways glances as the results and winners are announced. But this year it was team KFC taking out the overall team prize in their debut appearance, proudly hosted by Cole McConchie (also making his debut!). The bragging rights for the longest drive among the Blackcaps players resides with Martin Guptill, who showed he still has plenty of power in his swing.

It was fantastic to welcome our outstanding NZCPA partners along to this marquee event, as well as the key support from New Zealand Cricket and the Major Associations.

Overall, the day was a wonderful experience and showed why the Players’ Golf Day is held in such high

regard by those in attendance. We are delighted to have raised in excess of \$10,000 for The Cricketers’ Trust this year and thank the Blackcaps players for their commitment to this event and this Charity which is so important to our playing group.

We are grateful to our golf day event partners – especially to Boundary Road Brewery and to NZC and the Major Associations for facilitating access to the Blackcaps, and the Windross Farm staff who supported us so well through the day.

We look forward to having everyone back again next year.



THE CRICKETERS’ TRUST



Martin Guptill putting for a birdie.



Golf Day winners, team KFC with Cole McConchie (second from right).



HAMISH RUTHERFORD



COLIN MUNRO



NEIL WAGNER

PULLING STUMPS

BY MARGOT BUTCHER

HAMISH RUTHERFORD, OLLIE NEWTON, SOPHIE OLDERSHAW, GREG HAY, SETH RANCE AND JACINTA SAVAGE ALL HAVE TWO THINGS IN COMMON. RETIREMENT OVER THIS PAST SEASON, AND STAYING LOYAL TO ONE NEW ZEALAND MAJOR ASSOCIATION THROUGHOUT THEIR CAREER.

Collectively, they represent a wealth of almost 1,000 matches (996, to be precise!) in NZC Domestic competitions — Hamish Rutherford having played several County summers as well.

To pick out a few stats, he retired as the Otago Volts' most capped T20 player (129 games). Hay finished as the Central Stags' second most-capped first-class rep and runscorer (104 and 7,142, respectively). Savage pulls stumps after 97 one-day and 75 T20 Canterbury Magicians caps: only a handful have played more in either arena for the Mags.

Neil Wagner and Colin Munro have meanwhile formally farewelled the Blackcaps. Wagner remains available for Northern Districts next summer; Munro will continue starring around the world, but we whip out the calculator again and that's a line drawn under 225 collective appearances for the Blackcaps from Wagner, Rutherford, Munro and Rance.

From a Test century on debut to finishing as one of the top all-time run scorers in all three formats for the Volts, Hamish Rutherford can reflect on plenty of highlights from 16 years of cricket. And, on a trough of tough times. The second part plays to one of the aspects of his career that means the most to him.

"I'm very proud that I played for Otago through my whole time," he says.

"It was hard initially, with the facilities we used to have here — and it's not easy when you don't win trophies for that many years. Everyone likes winning. When you don't win, you're overthinking. Cracks open up, but I'd like to think I was resilient. Every April, I would sit down and

"I DO LOVE CRICKET AND I REALLY ENJOYED THE RIDE. I'M FORTUNATE AND GRATEFUL TO HAVE HAD THE CAREER I DID, INCLUDING THE HARD TIMES ALONG THE WAY."

HAMISH RUTHERFORD

look at stats, strip it all back, be brutally honest and try to pave a way forward. I was always trying to get better. Would it have looked different elsewhere? Of course, but the thing that held me here was that pride for Otago."

He debuted at the end of 2008. At the start of that year, he'd been in Malaysia with a strong New Zealand Under 19 team at the World Cup. He put all his eggs in the cricket basket. He even skipped seventh form (Year 13 for you young ones) to play in Scotland. He did a little bit of work for his ex-Blackcap father Ken, who was Head of Sports Betting for Singapore Pools — on the way home, before getting accepted for an Architectural Draughting course.

"Then I was picked for the U19 World Cup team. I asked if I could take those three weeks off, and they said, 'No way'. So that was the end of my study dream."

The young left-hander didn't have an Otago contract for his first four years. He got by from working in cafés and bars, but eventually did a Bachelor of Applied Management. He's now also just a few papers away from completing a Diploma of Construction Management, with Quantity Surveying as a side. But there was nothing concrete lined up in his post-cricket future until — just as the 'R' word was coming into sharp focus, a chance conversation last year led to him being invited to do a three-day-a-week internship that he ended up continuing into November.

Now, he has an entry level position with the same national project management company. The company is RCP, New Zealand's leading provider of independent project management and strategic advisory services to the property and construction industry. They

work on the client side, and in Dunedin they're managing the new hospital build for Health New Zealand — a long-term project. Rutherford is starting out on the ground floor as Assistant Project Manager, working in an office for the first time.

"It's my first proper job outside cricket, and I'm incredibly grateful for the opportunity to learn and the offer that came along with crazy good timing. A big change from cricket where you get feedback daily. What I'm discovering is that in a job, it's not quite like that!"

Rutherford played all three formats for the Blackcaps, chiefly between 2012/13 and 2014/15, with a T20 recall in 2019. His Test ton on debut, 171 against England in Dunedin, was the perfect script, but would be his only New Zealand hundred.

He captained the Volts of course, made 5,207 first-class runs in 79 matches for them; 2,552 one-day runs from 77 games, 2,758 runs in 129 T20s. That includes a T20 century, eight Ford Trophy tons (knocks of 154 and 155), and 12 Plunket Shield hundreds, including a defining 239 at Uni Oval. There were a couple of agonising first-class 99s, too.

The Dunedin weather didn't turn up for his Super Smash Volts swansong this summer, but it didn't bother him. He's southern, after all — doesn't like fuss. The upside, now? More time with the kids. Gracie is six, Oscar, two. "I didn't make it to one of Gracie's birthdays until she was four, and kids love birthdays of course

so to be able to be there from now on is going to be great. I've done school drop-offs and pick-ups for the first time. We've also sold our house and we're building a new one."

Rutherford helped coach club side the Albion Eagles this summer alongside Josh Tasman-Jones, but now he believes it's time to step back.

"I do love cricket and I really enjoyed the ride. I'm fortunate and grateful to have had the career I did, including the hard times along the way. It all shaped the journey — and I really enjoyed my journey."

•••

The past season also marked the end of a journey for Wellington paceman Ollie Newton. The 35-year-old put away his bowling boots after The Ford Trophy in Dunedin — where he'd grown up and played for the Otago Under 19s, before eventually making his T20 debut for the Firebirds in 2015.

His 2017 first-class debut was, in his words, even more "surreal". He took three wickets in his first over (opening the bowling with Hamish Bennett at the Basin), and four in the session as Wellington rolled the Aces for 62 before lunch on the first day. Then Michael Papps went out and scored an unbeaten triple century in a monster record opening stand with Luke Woodcock.

Newton's best figures ultimately came with the white ball: three one-day five-fors, including 6/33 two years ago in Palmy, and a bag against the Stags

in the Super Smash at Pukekura, too. He enjoyed being part of a successful Firebirds group that's won a lot of trophies over the past decade, back-to-back Super Smash titles included.

The respected lower order fighter retires with 60 first-class, 64 Ford Trophy and 39 Super Smash wickets in all, as well as a New Zealand A one-day wicket against India A.

"But when I sit back and reflect, it's all about the people you played with and against, the friendships that you forge. That's what stays with you. It's a tough game, and I was fortunate over my entire playing career in Wellington to be surrounded by awesome players and staff who made managing the ups and downs of cricket a lot easier."

A commercial law and accounting graduate, Newton's successful business career — he worked full-time for a couple of years before gaining his first cricket contract, and kept working full-time during his off-seasons — has seamlessly transported him into life after cricket.

He's now a year into his latest role: Commercial Manager for Gilmours, the major food and beverage wholesaler that's been supplying supermarkets, grocers and dairies and so forth for more than a century, and is now part of the Foodstuffs empire. It sees him work closely with senior management to drive business performance across a landscape of seven cash'n'carry stores and ten distribution centres in the North Island.

>> Continued over the page



OLLIE NEWTON



SOPHIE OLDERSHAW



JACINTA SAVAGE



SETH RANCE



GREG HAY

It was an industry he was particularly interested in, with future aspirations of getting into the Foodstuffs ownership programme himself as a store owner. He and his wife also have two young mouths of their own to feed, both high energy boys under five.

Newton opted out of the Domestic contracting process ahead of last season after he recognised his own changing priorities. He committed to play white-ball only in his last summer, but he's not going to be lost entirely to cricket — staying involved as an NZCPA Board Member.

"I'm not really a coach or anything like that, but I love the game and wanted to find my own way to stay involved," he says.

"When you talk to people outside the cricket world about what this organisation is, and the service it provides for players, they're always amazed. It's pretty special, what we have, and it's my way of giving back.

"And I'll be on the bank next summer, watching the Firebirds."

...

Sophie Oldershaw leaves the Otago Sparks as a champion, having helped the team on the way to the Hallyburton Johnstone Shield crown this summer.

The tall leg-spinner with a rare and effective right-arm googly packed in 89 appearances across the two female

“**IT'S ALL ABOUT THE PEOPLE YOU PLAYED WITH AND AGAINST, THE FRIENDSHIPS THAT YOU FORGE. THAT'S WHAT STAYS WITH YOU.**”
OLLIE NEWTON

formats from 2017/18. Devastating on her day, it's hard to go past her best one-day bowling figures — a stunning bag of 5/19 — in 2019/20 against the Canterbury Magicians.

Often delivering crucial blows during the death overs, Oldershaw magically combined Sparks cricket with her full-on profession as a musculoskeletal physiotherapist, and retires at just 25 to pursue her off-field career.

Christchurch born and bred, **Jacinta Savage**, meanwhile called time on her Magicians career in May, at 28. Savage's right-arm pace produced 40 one-day and 39 T20 wickets in a 12-year career highlighted by her brilliant HBJ 6/18 in Whangarei against ND in 2020/21.

That stands as the second biggest haul in the Magicians' history, behind only former White Fern Rebecca Steele's freakish 6/8 in 2006. The most remarkable part is that for much of her early career for the team, Savage was behind the stumps as the team's wicketkeeper in both formats.

A true all-round cricketer and athlete, she could also chip in handy runs, retiring with seven one-day fifties.

The Stags have been a consistent first-class force over the last half dozen years, and lifted both white-ball trophies. Like the Blackcaps in the same period, the team has benefited from a tight core of senior players, but retirements are signalling a changing of the guard.

Greg Hay and **Seth Rance** both leave big boots to fill. Hay started as a Young Player to Lord's in 2003, and hangs up his bat in 2024 on the cusp of his 40s. As a Plunket Shield captain and player, his outstanding record is all the more impressive given his track list skips over four years when he was theoretically in his prime. But his hunger was only extended by the four "lost years" when he bizarrely wasn't playing Domestic cricket at all.

A change of coach in 2013 brought him back, and the rest, as they say, is history. He finished in March with 18 Plunket Shield centuries, and his final innings of 179 over three days will surely be worth a whole chapter in this season's New Zealand Cricket Almanack. "Haysie", the "Sweepologist" also came within a whisker, this season, of becoming the first Stags captain to lift three Plunket Shields. He'll settle for two, alongside Vic Pollard.

Unlike Hay, Seth Rance sadly didn't get to go out the way he wanted, following a devastating shoulder injury in the 2022/23 season.

A Lattimus dorsi tendon rupture is so rare that specialists only see a couple of cases a year in New Zealand. After surgery to re-pin the tendon, Rance initially had hopes of returning for the Stags in the 2023/24 white-ball summer. He got back on the park for his beloved Wairarapa, but it became clear that his body would no longer put up with the special rigours of top level bowling.

The king of late in-swing formally signed off from the Stags in March, more than a year after his last game. It was never easy, but he is proud of having conducted his entire professional cricket career from his small-town base of Greytown — a career highlighted by 10 Blackcaps appearances, 152 first-class wickets and 186 Stags caps across the formats.

His Super Smash bag of 5/19 was also one of many highlights, and he retires as the Stags' second highest T20 wicket-taker, after Blair Tickner snuck past him this summer.

The NZCPA wishes our departing players the very best as you transition into new chapters of life. We are proud to have supported you throughout your wonderful cricket careers both on and off the park and look forward to supporting you in the next phase of your journey.

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From Left to Right: Jayden Lennox, Matt Boyle, Hannah Rowe, Dane Cleaver, Flora Devonshire, Heath Mills.

PLAYERS' CONFERENCE 2024

The annual Players' Conference serves as an essential tool for the organisation and its members, providing players with the opportunity to review, discuss and debate key matters within the cricketing landscape, as well as developing greater depth of understanding of the wider cricket environment and issues collectively important to players.

Held on April 9 and 10 in Auckland, the two-day workshop style conference enabled the 30 attending players from all 14 male and female playing groups to interact and discuss topics in detail, before presenting their thoughts back to the group. NZCPA staff were on hand to facilitate and lead this process which ensured that all players were able to contribute fully over the course of the two days.

For Player Services Manager, Evan Jones, the conference stands as a cornerstone event for member engagement. "For us, it's a great opportunity to get a range of players in the room together talking about what's going well, what's not going well, but almost more importantly they're able to bounce off each other and find out what one MA is doing well, what another MA could pick up, or where there's issues across the system collectively."

White Ferns bowler Hannah Rowe echoed the sentiment, "I think it's really important that we all get together. Often you can have your own views but when

you get together and get to talk to players from other associations, both the men and the women, it's really cool that we can work together and start to figure everything out on a much larger scale."

Given the diverse cricketing backgrounds of players, their input holds immense value in shaping the future of the game. The conference, which builds upon the NZCPA's strong engagement with the playing groups throughout the summer, aims to reinforce solidarity among members while addressing crucial issues.

MAJOR FOCUS AREAS

- » Reviewing and discussing the results of the annual Player Survey.
- » Evaluating the international and domestic high-performance environments and domestic competition structure. (and presenting the player's views back to NZC and Major Association representatives.)
- » Updating and identifying key priorities for the Personal Development Programme.
- » Discussing FICA and the global cricketing landscape.
- » Discussing the formation of the NZCPA Health and Wellbeing Initiative.

Key insights gleaned from the Annual Player Survey laid the foundation for discussions during the conference, shaping strategies to address players' concerns effectively.

One of the major topics of discussion was high performance environments and domestic competitions and what areas require continued refinement to enhance the development of players for international cricket. Another area of discussion centred around the key skills and attributes that should be focused on and developed in our coaching cohorts.

A NZCPA Health and Wellbeing Initiative was also discussed amongst the group to ensure we continue to meet the changing needs of our members, both in the short and medium term. We also updated our members on the launch of the FICA Leagues Hub. The Leagues Hub consolidates key information across each major league, including the status of each league and reported issues within them.

NZCPA Board Member and Blackcaps bowler Kyle Jamieson commended the collaborative spirit of the conference, emphasising its role in driving positive outcomes for the sport. "To come together, put the time aside in the calendar to discuss these things, and to have a chat with NZC, I think it's a great collaborative approach. This is a good forum to get a lot of voices in one room and to have those discussions so we can as a partnership move the game forward in the right direction."

Overall, the 2024 Players' Conference achieved remarkable success in fostering a deeper understanding of the professional cricket landscape in New Zealand, underscoring the importance of collective effort in advancing the sport.



Above: Superlife Staff with NZCPA Staff and Members.

SuperLife Supports Cricketers Through New Alliance with NZCPA



SuperLife, and the New Zealand Cricket Players' Association (NZCPA) are delighted to announce an exciting new alliance that will build upon the existing foundation and connection between the two organisations. SuperLife began working with the NZCPA by becoming the association's superannuation provider back in December 2015 and now SuperLife will work even closer with the NZCPA to advance our existing financial education programmes to our players.

This partnership will support the NZCPA to advance the existing financial education programmes delivered to current playing members and to further embed the holistic support that is so critical to all NZCPA members.

To mark the occasion Superlife, NZCPA staff and NZ players Mark Chapman

and Finn Allen gathered at the New Zealand Stock Exchange (NZX) for the traditional "Ringing of the Bell", with the honour handed to Chapman who made sure the bell was heard loud and clear. Pomp and Ceremony aside Chapman is well aware of the significance of the relationship between Superlife and the NZCPA. "I think it's really important for our members to be educated financially and we're lucky enough to play the sport that we love for a living. Alongside that we have to be smart with our investments to help set up our careers and finances outside of the game. Superlife and the NZCPA are playing a really big role in assisting and educating us to do that."

NZCPA CEO Heath Mills welcomed the alliance with SuperLife, "We

are delighted to have a respected business like SuperLife come closer to our organisation and to help us to deliver programmes that advance the lives of our members. Working with the SuperLife team to build upon our existing education programmes and member support is incredibly exciting and we look forward to working alongside them in the coming years."

Echoing this sentiment, Smartshares CEO Anna Scott said, "We are absolutely thrilled to build on our long-standing relationship with NZCPA and support their members. By offering our team's financial expertise we help our nation's best cricketers to be well positioned for their future beyond the game."

Tavendale and Partners Partnering with NZCPA



We are also excited to announce a new partnership with Tavendale and Partners, a national law firm which assists individuals, families and businesses across Aotearoa to navigate challenges and open up opportunities.

The partnership builds on the values of creating opportunities and opening doors to success. Whether it is protecting your family legacy or guiding your business through complex legal issues as you expand into new markets,

we know that Tavendale and Partners will be a fantastic new contributor to NZCPA and our members.

Partner Henry Moore says, "The firm is delighted to be able to support NZCPA and its members through this relationship. We have a shared belief in doing the right thing, supporting them in protecting their brand equity and associated opportunities well beyond their competitive days."

NZCPA Commercial Manager Glen Sulzberger said, "The NZCPA and our members are delighted to re-connect with Henry Moore through this partnership and the shared value will come from working with the talented group of Tavendale and Partners staff. This is an exciting way to bring an organisation with close values into our growing mix of partners."



Left to Right: Paul Hobbs, Shane Robinson, Marty Croy, Shane O'Connor, Greg Dawson

Dermot Payton, Paul Hobbs, Joe Smelle, Stephen Hotter, Toivo Vaikvee, Bruce Edgar

Ginny Fail, Willy Marshall, Paul Hobbs

THE INSIDER

10 WAYS TO MAKE CRICKET BETTER (OR MAYBE WORSE) BY PAUL FORD



PAST PLAYER EVENTS 2024

BY PAUL HOBBS, PAST PLAYER PDM

As we head into the cooler winter months, it's a good time to look back on the number of connections and reconections made at our past player events over the summer.

In total, the NZCPA held 5 past player events over the 2023/24 cricketing summer.

With the Australian men and the English women's team all touring here within a few short weeks, we decided to host our events in conjunction with games played around the country involving those two teams.

We held events in Auckland, Christchurch, Dunedin and two events in Wellington were jointly hosted with the Wanderers Cricket Club.

The turnout at all the functions was excellent with people coming from around the country to meet up with some of their old cricketing mates and create new friendships with past players from different generations. At one of our events in Wellington, we even had female past player, Yvonne Taylor come

over from Australia to join the day in the Peter Field Clubroom high at the top of the RA Vance stand at the Basin Reserve.

We only experienced one small hiccup when we discovered a little known rule at the Basin Reserve that when the last wicket of the game falls, the external bar licences expire. Fortunately, quick thinking from Cricket Wellington enabled us to relocate to the Norwood Room. Great work Jasmine!

I'd like to thank a few past players in each of the cities who worked hard to corral attendance at the functions – Ben Harris, Shane Robinson, Peter Holland, Hamish Marshall, Penny Kinsella, Di Goodall and Prue Hyman ...

One thing we have realised is that over summer, people are travelling and visiting places all around the country. We hope to send out a schedule of events to all past players, so everyone can see if there's a get-together near where you are.

Thanks to everyone who supported our events over the summer and we wish you a safe and warm winter.

As we all know, cricket is close to perfect in every way. But part of its magnetism is its complexity, its 42 laws and labyrinthine interpretations, and the frequent advent of every game unfurling some uncanny and quirky incident that has never been seen before. It is a glorious blend of trivialities and rules and inconsistencies: a convoluted and arcane ritual that we love.

There is a greyness in the nooks and crannies of the game that attract aficionados and endless debates about what could be done to make the game better. It will evolve and it is our duty to sit on our couches, get parallel on grass embankments, pontificate via our keyboards and debate how this could be done.

Here are my suggestions for the egg and bacon brigade at the MCC, the lords and custodians of the seriously capitalised Laws of Cricket. Some are dead-set serious and some are predictably delusional and whimsical:

1. Cricket needs to get into baseball mode and do its darndest to ensure as much of a game is played as possible when there is *inclement weather to navigate*. Baseball is sensational at shuffling its schedule – and that might be moving a start time earlier or later to dodge a storm, or even altering the day of the game. Our game can try harder here.

2. The batting team cannot be rewarded with the benefit of a wide if the batter does not *have a crack at hitting the ball* – I am changing this rule to ensure the batter at least attempts to play a shot. Batters can continue to believe in the leave, but they won't be getting nay runs for doing nothing on my watch. And I know there will be some utterly preposterous 'shots' attempted as batters navigate this new rule.

3. If a batter is incorrectly given out LBW by a bamboozled umpire, the ball remains live and *all the runs that flow from that crappy decision count*. So if a batter snicks a ball, is wrongly given out LBW, DRS is invoked and the ball thunders into the boundary toblorone as fielders celebrate recklessly, it will be four runs and not a dead ball to be rebowled. Yes there will inevitable be some mass confusion and pandemonium but I am here for it – and the batter should not be punished for a bad decision.

4. If a fielder stops the ball from *touching the boundary rope or beyond then it is play on* and not a four or a six. In the olden days (aka the 1980s for me) a white picket fence with a savage concrete drain in front of it was the boundary. I want to give the fielder's carte blanche to go full kamikaze on their outfielding, so if you keep that ball behind the rope any which way you can, you win.

5. In a limited overs series *the toss is only held for the first game* and then for the rest of the series the batting/ bowling innings are alternated to ensure a variety of matches. And in Test matches, the toss becomes an 'away team choice' with the blazered visiting captain choosing their poison on the morning of day one, in an imperfect attempt to adjust for home advantage.

6. Former Indian opener Aakash Chopra has pondered *why the 'free hit' continues to exist*: 'The basic premise of cricket is that an error has consequences, but as a batter if you make a mistake on a free hit, you will escape punishment.' The sanction of providing the batting team with penalty runs, amnesty from various forms of dismissal, and the ball needing to be rebowled is savage enough methinks.

7. I know it goes against the increased specialisation and 'anti-allrounderism' being foisted upon us by the IPL's rules around impact players and post-toss team naming, but in my IPFL* *every player has to bowl at least one over* in white-ball cricket. Just as we love watching an ill-equipped number 11 striving for a lower-order miracle in a run chase, we would now be seeing wicketkeepers and top order batsmen eking out liquorice all sorts from the bowling mark. It seems only fair that batters must bowl, just as bowlers must bat. Viva la all-rounder!

8. Broken bone or destroyed hamstring during a game? You can be replaced if you are deemed unfit to play on by an independent medical professional. At the moment it is essentially only allowed if you have monstered your head or neck – or gone down with Covid19 (the 'Ben Lister' regulation). And to avoid self-serving tactical injury shenanigans, *the opposition choose your replacement* from your bench in a throwback to the schoolyard selection process.

9. Let's get rid of the administrative punishment that comes with the third umpire in a booth at the back of a stand getting in the standing umpire's ear and *checking for a no ball after the fall of a wicket*. It is one of the great deflationary acts in the game, and it must go. If the batter thinks they are the victim of a no ball then they can absolutely use one of their DRS reviews to make sure, but let's not all have to suffer the anticlimax every damn time.

10. *All fielding restrictions abandoned*, except the Bodyline-inspired changes that allow a maximum of two fielders behind square on the leg side. That said, the scales are tilted so far in favour of batters in 2024, and willow-wielders are much more inventive 90 years after the behavior that inspired the law change: so are we sure we still need even that restriction?

* the International Paul Ford League

Paul Ford is one-third of The BYC Podcast, and a co-founder of the Beige Brigade.



Vaughan Brown, Ben Harris, Jenny Olson, Paul Hobbs



Martin Snedden, Rod Latham, Anup Nathu, Max Bremner



Jane Anderson, Denis Aberhart (background), Lesley Elvidge, Ben Harris, Jenny Olson

PRINCIPAL PARTNER



PREMIER PARTNERS

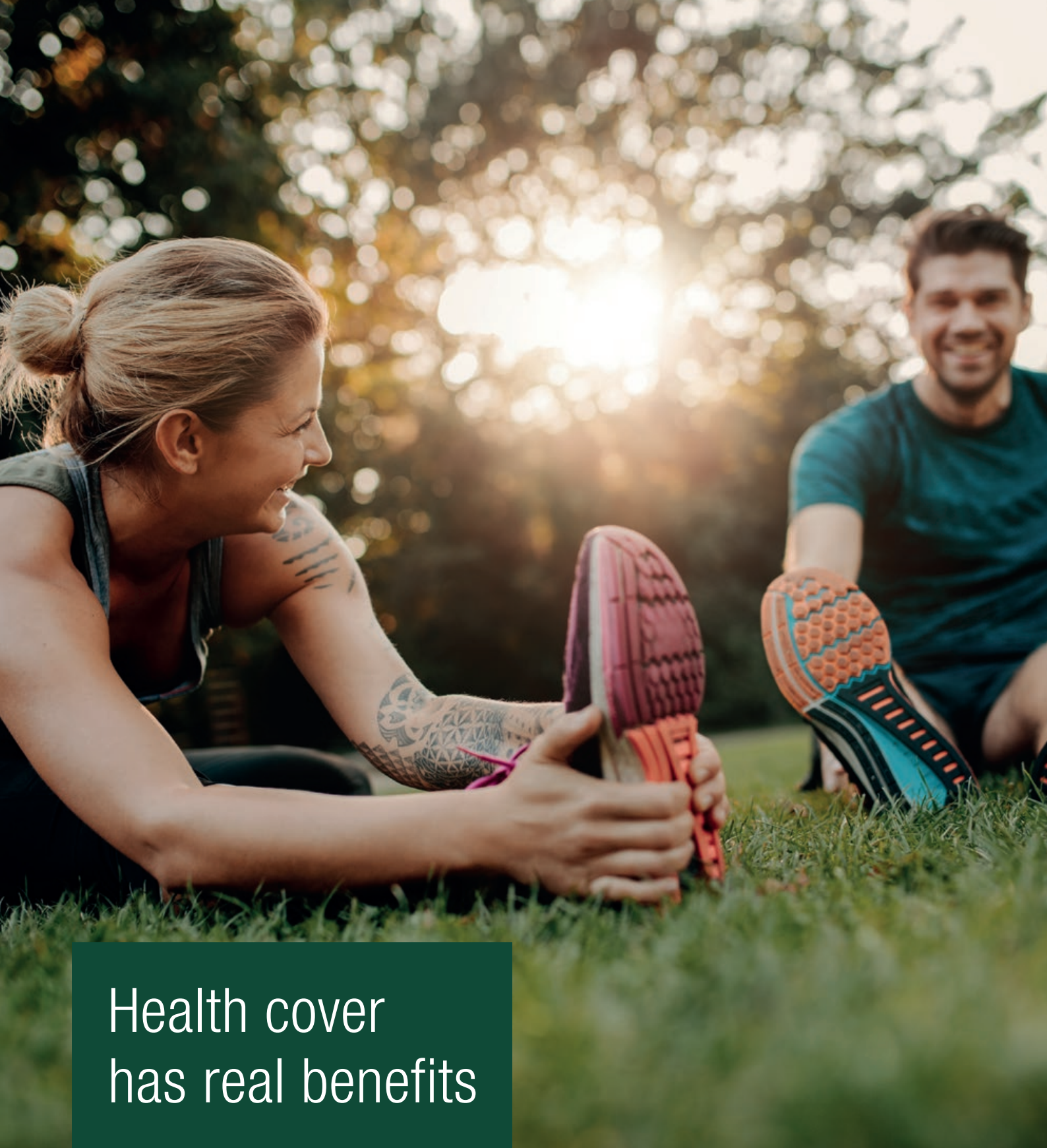


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