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OUTRIGHT

THE PLAYERS' MAGAZINE



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OPENING THOUGHTS



Welcome

This edition of Outright comes to you during one of the more challenging times for the game and indeed our communities in modern history – with the Covid-19 crisis. During the past few months, we have become all too familiar with terms such as Coronavirus, Lockdown, Self-isolation and Social distancing to name a few and it remains to be seen how long this situation may continue to impact all of us.

Like most industries, the 'Stay Home, Stay Safe' requirement initiated here in New Zealand and elsewhere around the world has had a profound impact on sport as a whole and cricket specifically, with many tours and events postponed or cancelled. That said, we can reflect on how fortunate we were that cricket in New Zealand wasn't affected as much as other sports in this country due to the

timing of the situation occurring as it did, at the end of our season.

However, there are still many uncertainties for those involved in the game, not the least being what events and series will be able to take place during our next home summer and how the sport will be impacted financially. We also wait to see when ICC events and T20 leagues will be safely played again.

This edition gets a snippet of the wider effects of Covid-19 with insight from former players, Rob Lynch in London and Stu Mills in New York. Even Paul Ford's regular *The Insider* column cannot ignore the pandemic with a light-hearted observation of a world with no cricket to view.

Of course, our health & well-being is paramount and in times like these we gain some perspective on how fickle life in professional sport can be. This

has resulted in a significant increase in activity by players in the Personal Development Programme with many engaging in study, courses and learning opportunities to enhance their career prospects post playing.

Margot Butcher catches up with current players, Katey Martin, Cole McConchie and Mark Chapman give us the lowdown into their activities outside of the game.

We also bid farewell to some domestic cricket icons as they draw the curtain on their respective cricket careers, plus we celebrate our international players' Player of the Year recipients.

We hope you enjoy this edition of Outright and wish you all a safe and secure winter.

Stay safe

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THE SPARK STILL THERE FOR MARTIN

BY MARGOT BUTCHER

IT WAS A TITLE THAT BELONGED TO JEETAN PATEL FOR SO LONG, NOW IT BELONGS TO OTAGO SPARK AND WHITE FERN KATEY MARTIN.

She's New Zealand's longest serving active Domestic cricketer — and, at 35, has no plans to slow down on either the Domestic or International front just yet.

If you're quietly tut-tutting that she'd better start preparing for a life after cricket, then it's time to learn a bit more about what makes this dynamo tick.

Away from the stumps, Christchurch-based Martin has already built a solid career in IT. She heads the transitions department for national firm Computer Concepts Ltd (CCL), for whom she's worked for the past eight years, after graduating with a BCom from Lincoln and then building expertise in IT transitions with Spark.

Now, she's busier than ever in lockdown — and thoroughly grateful. "At times like this, it really shows the value of having something in your life outside of cricket, doesn't it? I'd be bored out my brain otherwise. There's also a lot of focus on mental health right now, and I think being able to keep yourself occupied, strategise and challenge your brain is really beneficial. I've been missing hitting cricket balls and face-to-face contact, but that's about it."

With many of CCL's clients being essential businesses (from major ports

to DHBs, who use custom virtual reality apps to help train their staff to shift huge containers or rehearse operations), as well as smaller businesses needing assistance to get up and running from home offices, no wonder she's been full on — and Martin herself has had to transition to working remotely from home.

But she's long been good at managing her own time effectively, having learnt to move between work and cricket and keep each mentally distinct — even building a house at the same time, which meant signing off plans by dial-up from Guyana.

"Working in a fairly stressful role, I did use to have problems switching off one or the other, but once I became better — for example, it's a 20-minute drive out to Lincoln, and I learnt to use that time to plan what I wanted to get out of my session, so that it was quality — I would

actually feel quite mentally refreshed from switching my brain to other things.

"As I've got older, I've also just enjoyed my cricket more and more because I've been a bit more relaxed about it. If I got dropped from the team, it wasn't the end of my world; I've still got my life and income outside cricket."

Martin debuted for the White Ferns in 2003, two years after she'd first made the Sparks. She's the only current White Fern to have played Test cricket, and has broken Chris Harris's national record for the most caps for a single Domestic side. But enough of making her feel old.

There have also been times historically where she's parked her cricket in order to focus on developing her career. "So I was in and out, but that has set me up well now. I did think I was going to retire a few times, and you're going to cope better with leaving that stage if you have something else to sink your teeth into. I

thought I was done after the 2017 World Cup [NZ finished fifth; she scraped together just 44 runs from five innings]. But then I surprisingly got reselected and another opportunity — which I was incredibly grateful for. I had a very good T20 season [392 runs and six 50s, her best Domestic summer]. I was really enjoying my cricket, still felt fresh. I've got some great mates in the game that I enjoy playing with, I was able to juggle work who have been terrific to me, so it just made sense to keep playing."

Now the 2021 World Cup, to be hosted on our own shores, is high in her sights and kicking on for a possible maiden tilt at the Commonwealth Games, if she feels she's still physically and mentally sharp. Most of all, she still dreams of running on for her country in her old hometown, Dunedin — on the cards if the 2021 World Cup is played as planned, with a White Ferns game scheduled for Uni Oval.

It's near criminal that neither Martin nor fellow veteran Suzie Bates has ever played an international at their Uni Oval home ground, something that was due to be rectified last season.

"But y'know how it goes. It was a perfect, sunny day at training, so we all knew what was coming — rain the next day. It was such an awesome feeling just training on our home ground in our White Ferns uniforms. After having played so many other games elsewhere, to finally have that easy feeling of being at home — it was extraordinary. And, knowing how much local support from Dunedin we would have at that game, a T20 against a really strong South African side, on a great wicket, that would have been a really good game of cricket.... we were *gutted*." ●

Katey Martin in action for the White Ferns at the ICC World Twenty20





MARK CHAPMAN

PROTECTING HIS FUTURE

BY MARGOT BUTCHER



Last summer you would have had to have been blindfolded not to have noticed the new wrist guards popping up on cricket pitches around the globe.

The fruition of Mark Chapman's maiden foray into business, **ESCU Wrist Guards** grew out of unexpected downtime, combined with his experiences both as a cricketer and mechanical engineer.

When Chapman graduated with a Bachelor in Engineering (Hons) from Auckland University a couple of years ago, he'd already had experience with 3D printing in a project that tested 3D-printed knee joints. "It was pretty cool to revisit that in a practical sense," says Chappy, "with an idea we were going to send to market."

The downtime was not quite so cool: shoulder surgery rehab is never much fun. But with a long winter to fill in ahead of last season, Chapman realised it was a perfect opportunity to stoke his smoldering dreams on the business front. "I thought it would be nice to sink

my teeth into a project, and starting a business is always something I've wanted to do. So I thought, 'Right, why not? Let's give it a go.'"

Wrist guards were front of mind thanks largely to Morne Morkel. The South African quick fractured Ross Taylor's ulna at the Basin in 2012, and ever since Taylor has worn protection for his wrist.

"A lot of cricketers like Ross would come up with their own versions following injury," says Chappy. "So the idea of protecting that vulnerable area wasn't new — I've always worn a forearm guard myself, but I thought it would be good to create a protective product that was available in the market, so that it was available for everyone. There was obviously a need for it."

The key was providing functional protection without impeding anyone's bat swing, so Chapman set about working with a university friend on custom designs and sizes that were strapless, lightweight and easy to use

— for both left- and right-handers. "I did a little bit of materials testing, investigating what would actually work, and came up with a combination I liked [a high impact polypropylene shell paired with high density closed-cell foam for impact absorption]. Then we took our 3D models and printed them to see what they would come out like."

Generating the product itself was just the start. Chapman also needed to put a business hat on to learn about the whole shebang of branding, manufacture, packaging, shipping, distribution, marketing, wholesaling, retailing, exporting. "It turned into long days for a few months as I got everything up and running, but it's been quite enjoyable and I've really enjoyed learning the new skills along the way."

The moment he realised how far he'd come came during the Blackcaps' Test in Sydney this summer when 11 out of the 22 players on the field were wearing his fuss-free, elasticated product.

As an Auckland Aces and Blackcaps player himself, getting at least some initial exposure was one area he always had covered — but utilising his network of playing contacts, making noise on social media platforms, helped ESCU burst onto the scene.

"It's been really well received by the professionals. To be able to reach that level in such a short space of time is pretty cool. Just by reaching out to a few people, it was amazing how many were willing to help and lend a hand along the way. I've made good friends through the business side of things, too, but from a cricket industry perspective, at the end of the day it's about selling units. We were one of the bigger products to spark some interest last season. Now we need to use that ground that we've made to build further."

Short balls? There were a few mixed in. Like the disappointment of discovering the initial brand name he had chosen wouldn't fly. "When I Googled it, I came across a similar-sounding name in

Canada, a company that made protective equipment for ice hockey. I consulted IP lawyers around trademarks, and they advised me to change. So, within the space of that week I needed a new name, logo, and brand — and that was a hectic time!

"One of the guys who was helping me with the branding then gave me his thesaurus and said, 'Here, spend a few hours digging through this and see what you can find.'"

It was when he looked at the Latin and Old French roots of 'escutcheon' — an old word for a battle shield with a coat of arms on it — that he found the perfect new brand name. His stylised logo evokes a protective shield.

The other bouncer was Covid-19. His website escusports.com provides for direct online sales and groundwork for the big Australian and UK markets had also already shown exciting retail potential. "But the UK market hasn't really taken off as we had been imagining; for

obvious reasons the stores just aren't taking new stock in at the moment."

The pandemic's impact on shipping channels also messed with plans, stock now having to stay in off-shore storage until it once again becomes practical to ship it over. "But while the UK market is looking like a write-off for ESCU this year, I'm doing prep now for the Australian and New Zealand summers which look more likely to progress."

Chapman discovered that running his own business is "kind of never ending" and it's kept him more than occupied during lockdown — but in a way that works with his cricket goals, as evidenced by his strong 2019/20 Domestic summer.

"It's actually given me really good mental balance. I can still be flexible, choose my hours of work and get out as much as I put in, so it's really up to me." ●



PLAYER AWARDS LOCKED DOWN FOR 2020

TIM SOUTHEE AND SOPHIE DEVINE WERE ACKNOWLEDGED AS THE RECIPIENTS OF THE PLAYERS' CAP AND CPA PLAYERS' AWARD RESPECTIVELY, IN AN ONLINE TEAM PRESENTATION CEREMONY DURING THE COVID-19 LOCKDOWN.

Devine's award completes a remarkable trifecta of consecutive player awards that cements her as not only one of the greats of the game in New Zealand, but also a star in the women's game globally.

In presenting the award Rebecca Rolls noted that "being recognised by your peers is the ultimate accolade for any player and this award is particularly relevant as it allows players to recognise statistical outputs alongside those intangible aspects that contribute toward the team's performance".

The third *CPA Players' Award* bestowed on Devine by her teammates places her alongside Kane Williamson's three-peat (2015-2017) and is a fitting reflection of the contribution Devine has made to the White Ferns team in what has been a remarkable few years.

"It's such an honour to receive the *CPA Players' Award* for a third time," said Devine.

"This is the most special award as it comes from your peers and that's what matters the most. It really does mean a lot," acknowledged Devine.

Tim Southee headed off several players in a very close voting result before ultimately securing his second *The Players' Cap* with a compelling series against India at home. Southee joins Williamson and Ross Taylor as multiple winners of the highly respected player award.

Southee has been a rock for the Blackcaps through the past year, taking on all the big moments in the cauldron of the T20 internationals and continuing to display his vast experience and talent in the battle that is Test match cricket.

Daniel Vettori was on hand to announce Southee as this year's recipient and said "earning the right to receive *The Players' Cap* is difficult – it requires consistency of form, fitness, perseverance and above all

else, meaningful contributions to the team on a regular basis, whatever the format"

"Tim has had a remarkable year and is a truly deserving recipient of this award".

Southee was quick to acknowledge his teammates stating "mostly I am thankful to the other guys. To be part of a group of players with a collective approach toward achieving success is the most rewarding thing and something we can be really proud of as a group."

"It's a real honour to receive this award as it means so much when it's voted on by your peers" said Southee.

Tim Southee deserved the *The Players' Cap* in 2020 but given the quality of performances across the team from other leading contenders like Neil Wagner, Ross Taylor, Williamson and Trent Boult, 2021 is going to be a fascinating year to see who will earn the decade rounding, 10th edition of *The Players' Cap*. 🍎

THE PLAYERS' CAP LEADING VOTE RECIPIENTS PER FORMAT WERE

Test Neil Wagner
ODI Lockie Ferguson
T20i Tim Southee

THE CPA PLAYERS' AWARD LEADING VOTE RECIPIENTS PER FORMAT WERE

ODI Suzie Bates
T20i Sophie Devine

BLENDING BIG APPLE WITH COFFEE

WE RECENTLY CAUGHT UP WITH FORMER WELLINGTONIAN AND FIREBIRD STU MILLS, RIGHT AMID THE COVID-19 OUTBREAK IN NEW YORK.

WE EXPLORE WHAT STU IS UP TO NOW AND WHAT IT HAS BEEN LIKE RUNNING A NEW BUSINESS IN ONE OF THE HOTSPOTS OF THE GLOBAL COVID-19 PANDEMIC.



STU, YOU HAVE CREATED YOUR HOME IN THE BIG APPLE, HOW DID A CRICKETER FROM WELLINGTON END UP THERE?

A lot of the credit must go to my wife Jesse, an American, whom I met on the dance floor at the Establishment Bar on Courtenay Place in 2007. I wasn't quite sure what my post cricket life would look like, but I definitely had a desire to own my own business. Upon reaching the States, I completed an MBA in the hope that I'd discover the perfect business for myself along the way.

No such luck, however, and I entered the corporate world where I spent nearly a decade on the buying side of major retail corporations including TJX, Toys R Us and the Vitamin Shoppe, before starting an office coffee business here in NYC - Xpresso Delight.

📍 Stu Mills working in New York during Covid-19 lockdown.



NEW YORK IS ONE OF THE WORLD'S GREAT CITIES, WHAT HAS IT BEEN LIKE LIVING THERE AND EXPERIENCING SUCH A DRAMATIC CHANGE TO DAILY LIFE?

I think, like a lot of New Zealanders I tend to take changes in my stride. I didn't find NY to be intimidating or overwhelming – quite the opposite really, most people here are super friendly and willing to help out, as long as you aren't being annoying. Americans seem to appreciate my New Zealand accent as well, which I don't think has hurt my cause!

I learned social etiquette fairly quickly and just got on with life. There's a fascination with politics and religion over here which has been a bit of an adjustment. Certain subjects are taboo, and you need to be aware of social cues to avoid wading into deeper water. After experiencing this for many years, Jesse and I went home one Christmas and found ourselves wondering what caused stress for people in New Zealand. I'd forgotten how relaxed and easy-going it is!

NEW YORK HAS BECOME THE MOST RECENT GLOBAL EPICENTRE FOR COVID-19. AND OF COURSE, YOU'VE RECENTLY STARTED YOUR OWN BUSINESS WITH XPRESSO DELIGHT. WHAT IMPACT IS COVID-19 HAVING ON YOUR BUSINESS?

We certainly haven't crushed the Covid as effectively as NZ has. It's probably going to be another few months before we're back to normality over here. With everyone out of office, we've had to suspend all business operations. But I honestly feel pretty lucky. It's great not to have any lease payments due or creditors breathing down my neck. I fully own the assets so there's no financing issues. And once everything is over, everyone will be back in the office and I think it will be business as usual.

The other thing that's happening is, we created a cold brew for at-home workers which is a brand new revenue stream that can bridge the gap for now and then continue as a new source of income beyond the pandemic.

SO, YOU MUST BE REALLY EXCITED ABOUT THE FUTURE WITH XPRESSO DELIGHT?

Super excited. All in all, my experience to date has been really great. I made a goal to transition away from my job and dedicate my full attention to Xpresso Delight when I hit a certain sales target and luckily I achieved that well ahead of schedule.

The first 6 months was just feeling out the business and proving the model. Now it's a case of continuing the momentum from the latter half of the year and scaling it as quickly as I can. It's challenging, but I'm learning so much more than I was in the corporate world and exceeding my goals. I love the fact that it's all on me and I'm in control of my time and my earnings. The more I put into it, the more I'll get out of it.

My business also capitalises on a few trends that I don't think will be negatively influenced by Covid-19. People still want the best quality espresso-based drinks throughout their workday and companies still want to keep their employees happy with great amenities.

Furthermore, our service is so much better for the environment than the alternatives like plastic pod coffee, and I think the pandemic has brought even more awareness to the impact humans are having on the environment. I think the future of my business could actually be stronger than ever before.

DID BEING A WELLINGTONIAN – A RENOWNED COFFEE CULTURE CITY – SPIKE YOUR INTEREST IN GETTING INVOLVED WITH THE INDUSTRY IN NEW YORK?

I've always been passionate about coffee and loved hitting the cafes in Wellington. I'm really proud of the quality of coffee bean we provide to our clients and that's one of the reasons I got involved. It has given me a chance to share great coffee with New Yorkers, the likes of which you can get in cafes back home. I haven't yet come across another office coffee provider who can compete with us on quality or service.

WAS BEING INVOLVED IN A FRANCHISE SOMETHING YOU THOUGHT ABOUT, AND HOW IMPORTANT HAS THAT BEEN FOR YOU?

I knew I wanted to start something on my own but I'd always struggled coming up with business concepts. The benefit of a franchise is there is already a proven business model in place, and you still get the opportunity to grow and develop something on your own.

I primarily was looking at concepts that matched my interests but I explored any opportunity that I thought had the potential to be successful. I really honed in on fitness concepts and anything related to services for children. Being an athlete and father to young children, and with my wife having a Masters in Education, these seemed to make the most sense for me.

Xpresso Delight was introduced to me by a friend who knew that I was considering franchises. It was so out of the realm of what I had been considering that I almost brushed it off. But once I looked into the business model a bit deeper, I discovered that it checked a lot of boxes for me. Inexpensive initial investment with a huge growth opportunity, it's good for the environment, and it fills a void in the market. In the corporate world, it's not always apparent that you're making a difference, but when you're on your own, I know that the harder I work, the bigger the impact I'm having on my business and my future.

XPRESSO DELIGHT IS AN AUSTRALIAN COMPANY, THAT MUST BE GREAT TO BE WORKING AS PART OF AN ANZAC TEAM, TAKING ON THE WORLD.

I must say the connection with Australia has been a nice side effect of this business. We share so much of the same vernacular and love of familiar sports. It's great to be able to discuss things with them outside of the business that I can't with my American friends. Even something as simple as using regular Australian and New Zealand slang has been a nice change.

And like anything good that has ever come out of New Zealand, the Aussies are quick to claim credit for the creation of the Flat White. Not to worry though, every opportunity I get, I teach people the correct history.

THE USA ARTICLES ABOUT YOU AND XPRESSO DELIGHT TEND TO FOCUS ON YOU BEING A 'PROFESSIONAL ATHLETE'. HOW DO PEOPLE IN NEW YORK RESPOND WHEN THEY LEARN YOU WERE A CRICKETER?

It's probably more of an interesting piece about my background than anything. I'd have a fairly vanilla life story without that information – the opposite of clickbait. When Americans find out about my background, mainly they need an explanation of what cricket is, and then that's quickly followed up by an explanation of pay scale compared to LeBron James. The shine wears off rather quickly after that.

I do like hustling people in softball though. I always tell them it's my first swing of the bat. The ball is the size of a planet and it's a lobbed full toss – I'd face that any day of the week.

ACCORDING TO CRICINFO YOU REPRESENTED USA IN CRICKET IN 2011 TOO. HOW DID THAT COME ABOUT?

That's another thing I don't really advertise. Partly because I didn't score any runs, but mainly because it's a political minefield that I don't want anything to do with. It's so political that if you're not from the culture of the people in power you won't get a fair chance. For example, we had blokes on our US team learning how to play cricket on a trip to Canada. Meanwhile I played alongside ex-Windies internationals in NY who couldn't get a look in because they weren't from the right islands in the Caribbean. It was like I was 8 years old again and the coach's son was opening the bowling and batting four. Except this is the pinnacle of the sport over here. The US would field a decent side if they just picked the best players.

DO YOU HAVE TIME FOR OTHER INTERESTS AT THE MOMENT, OR ANYTHING ON THE HORIZON?

I have three kids under five at the moment so that and running a business is really all I have time for right now. I'd love to play more golf but its challenging ducking away for five hours in the weekend when I've not really been helping with the kids during the week. The only goal I've set on the golf front is to become a member of a private course somewhere before I turn 40, because that's when the initiation fee doubles. When I come home I try and play as much as I can – New Zealanders get out and play more golf, you guys don't know how lucky you have it! 🏏



FORMER AUCKLAND PLAYER ROB LYNCH HAS BEEN BASED IN LONDON FOR YEARS. HE HAS BEEN INVOLVED IN SPORT, AND CRICKET, FOR MOST OF THAT TIME, BUT RECENTLY WAS APPOINTED TO A SENIOR ROLE WITH THE PROFESSIONAL CRICKETERS ASSOCIATION – PCA



ROB LYNCH JOINS THE PCA RANKS

FIRSTLY ROB, HOW ARE THINGS IN LONDON AND THE UK DURING COVID-19?

Incredibly surreal would be my immediate description, life as we have known it has been flipped on its head. At the time of writing we are in week seven of a nationwide lockdown and very much living a different existence. On the whole, I feel the country has adjusted well to the reality of the situation and after a state of panic seen here and around the world society is coping well with the necessary restrictions put in place from the Government but I can't see it changing anytime soon.

One positive that has come out of this crisis is we all seem to be being a little nicer to one another, neighbours helping each other, friends and family in regular contact, people waiting for each other to be served and putting the elderly and venerable first. I really hope that when we do get back to normality that this mentality will continue.

SO, AN INTERESTING TIME TO RECENTLY HAVE CHANGED JOBS! TELL US ABOUT THAT ROLE AND WHAT THAT HAS BEEN LIKE SINCE STARTING IN FEBRUARY.

Yes, certainly not what I envisioned when I signed the contract that's for sure! There were three main factors that attracted me to the role. Firstly, after my time at Middlesex I felt it a good opportunity to get another experience to further build my career to help me reach where I ultimately want to get to. Secondly, the opportunity to work for Julian Metherell, Chairman of the PCA and one of the most successful businessmen I've met in London, and Tony Irish the new PCA CEO who is in my opinion, along with Heath Mills, among the most credible and respected CEO's in player led organisations around the world and it was an opportunity I didn't want to miss. Thirdly, the PCA's Commercial operation has significant opportunity for growth and that motivates me.

YOU LIKE TO TAKE ON NEW CHALLENGES, BUT IT SOUNDS LIKE THAT WILL BE EXAGGERATED OVER THE COMING MONTHS, WHAT ARE YOUR IMMEDIATE AIMS WITH THE PCA AT THE MOMENT?

When I started, I was going to use the summer of 2020 to get a good understanding of the organisation and develop a new strategy to launch in 2021. Launching that strategy is still the goal, but unfortunately right now we face the situation of managing a crisis that we need to get through before we can get the plan back on track. It's been sink or swim for me, but thankfully I'm still in the race and doing ok and helping navigate through as best as we can.

We have some massive challenges ahead, understanding the gravity of how big these will be for the PCA and the game as a whole is still very unclear. Currently the official stance is there will be no cricket prior to July the 1st but this timeline is already in doubt. There is a tireless work being done by the ECB, Counties and ourselves on varying scenario planning that range from bad but manageable through to very dire.

As a management team we are working by some very simple principles, one of which is playing the ball that is in front of us and communicating clearly and openly with our members and stakeholders in the game. Every day and week seems to have a different challenge and pace to it, personally I'm focusing on ensuring I do all I can to support Tony, ensuring the welfare and wellbeing of my team, keeping them on task and critically communicating with our partners and clients. What it's forcing us to do is think outside the box and I'm very proud of how we are working together and I'm hopeful this experience will make us stronger in the long term.

DESPITE ALL THIS, STARTING AS COMMERCIAL DIRECTOR WITH THE PCA MUST BE REALLY EXCITING?

As I say above, the opportunity for the PCA to have the most successful commercial operation of similar organisations around the world is vast. Based in a great geography, a big marketplace with much scope for development and creativity very much excites me. That is all still there and

what I want to achieve, it just now comes with the additional challenge of achieving that having to manage an unprecedented and extraordinary situation that we now find ourselves contending with.

YOU SPEND THE PREVIOUS FOUR YEARS IN TWO KEY ROLES WITH MIDDLESEX CRICKET, THAT MUST HAVE HAD SOME REAL HIGHLIGHTS?

It was great and I'm very proud of what we achieved during that time. I began a new role [with Middlesex] and after four years increased the club's revenue significantly, built up a commercial department of four staff, created a healthy partnership with the MCC and moved into the COO role for the last year of my tenure. The easy thing to do would have been to stay at Middlesex where I had a great relationship and friendship with Richard Goatley the CEO and the Board but I felt the time was right for a fresh challenge in the knowledge that roles such as the PCA don't come up every day. It was a tough decision but one day I hope to be back at Middlesex as the club is very close to my heart.

MIDDLESEX'S TRADITIONAL HOME IS THE 'HOME OF CRICKET – LORDS'. THAT MUST HAVE BEEN A BIT SURREAL FOR A KIWI TO BE PART OF CREATING SPECIAL EXPERIENCES FOR GUESTS AT THIS ICONIC VENUE?

Absolutely, I get a real thrill of seeing people enjoy events and experiences that we have put on. That ranged from seeing 28,000 at the ground for a T20 through to a private bespoke dinner for ten in the home dressing room, and much in between. But it is still your workplace, where you spend too much time, get frustrated by and that your wife complains about you being at for so long! I got a real buzz showing various visitors from NZ around the place, to see their amazement when they enter the Long Room or dressing room was a great reminder of just how special and lucky I was. I'm looking forward to returning to watch cricket and enjoy my MCC membership at some stage in the future as well!

I've had a relationship with Lord's for some time having spent the summers there in 2000 on the MCC Young Cricketers programme and 2001, 2002 working in the Cricket Office, I have a lot of passion for the Home of Cricket.

AND WHAT ABOUT YOUR OTHER INTERESTS, DO YOU HAVE TIME FOR ACTIVITIES OF YOUR OWN THESE DAYS?

My life is pretty simple, I have two beautiful daughters who make it all worthwhile and keep my wife and I busy. I'm very consumed with my work and think that has to be my main focus at this stage of my career but when I do have downtime I try and spend with family and friends. I don't play cricket as I get too frustrated that I can't hit the ball anymore (you can put a fair argument that I never could) but did take up tennis as my wife is a tennis player. When we met she asked if I wanted a game and I laughed and said sure, she then beat me 6 - 0, 6 - 0 and then told me she's the number two in Essex. I pledged to keep playing until I beat her which I can say I finally did when she was 7 months pregnant with our first child. 🏏



CLEANING IN THE COLE FACE OF CORONAVIRUS

BY MARGOT BUTCHER

Canterbury captain Cole McConchie and his parents Brent and Lynne are well established in the commercial cleaning game in Christchurch. Between them they run a successful, family-owned business called Master Cleaning. Think rest homes, supermarkets, schools, medical premises, commercial kitchens, offices, retail spaces — all businesses that rely on fully professional cleaning schedules to stay pristine and hygienic each day. So when Covid-19 touched down on our shores late this summer, McConchie's off-field life was about to become more essential than ever, at the coalface of unprecedented times...

Cole, first of all thanks for taking the time for a chat as no doubt you're a busy man. What's it been like being an essential worker?

The lockdown weeks certainly went by quickly and I do feel fortunate, in that regard, to have had the business to take my mind off things. Many of our clients were essential services, so we were also deemed an essential service — and there was so much work to be done.

People were relying on us to do a very good job and even as the Covid-19 situation first started unfolding, we had to be on top of it very quickly. We have a large number of staff who go out and work on sites so it was necessary to put in important new on-site safety practices from the outset. We had to run a short re-training process for all our staff, including the use of PPE, that was going to be required on our clients' sites. It was a busy situation.

I was also getting around all our clients and making sure their needs were attended to; organising our staff; trying to do as much as I could on the

communication front with our staff through Zoom — and occasionally I did also need to get out of the house myself to our clients' premises, to see and assess what their needs were.

Was it unnerving?

Yeah, I was nervous when Covid-19 first broke, as I suppose any small business owner would be — but there was nothing to do but put our heads down and get stuck into it. Between myself and Dad, we have about 65 staff to manage, so there was that responsibility you feel as an employer, and making sure you keep those people in their jobs.

Commercial cleaning is probably not a niche that many twenty-somethings would be drawn to, so how did this all start for you?

My old man had worked for Air New Zealand for a number of years, then he looked to change tack and own his own business. He's owned his own commercial cleaning business in Christchurch for 12 years now, and that's Master Cleaning. Not long after, when I was coming out of school and transitioning into the workforce myself, I started out by doing some work for him as his operations manager.

I found out I actually really enjoyed it — the leadership, the management side of things. So then the thought of owning or running my own company really started to appeal to me. I was very fortunate to have Dad to advise me so we discussed it, and ultimately I got on the path to starting up my own entity under the same Master Cleaning brand. It's a bit of an uncommon arrangement: we're both branded "Master Cleaning" and share certain elements like a website, but we're two separate

businesses, with our own clients. And we have a bit of competitive banter as we go about chasing down those new clients around Canterbury, too!

How do you manage to run all this alongside your cricket career — especially captaining, and all the extra time and meetings that go along with that?

It's been five years now with the business, and in that time it's definitely something I've had to work at balancing. But I now think having the business really does help my cricket.

So you did find that taking it on impacted negatively on your cricket, at least initially?

I'd be lying if I said it hadn't, because yeah, I struggled to get the balance right between the two. You don't want to be standing on a cricket field thinking about work, or vice versa. Over the last five years, though, I've just learnt to deal with that better. Our mental skills coach here in Canterbury, John Quinn, really helped me distinguish between those conflicts. He'd help me set some really clear focuses for my day to the point where now I find the positives of having a working life really does outweigh the negatives.

How does it help your cricket?

I think it stops me stewing over things. In the past, I would have really stewed over a bad training, or a bad game. Two low scores in a row and I would have been worrying whether I was in form or not. But when you've got to switch your focus quite quickly, you don't have time for that (and there's not point in stewing over those things anyway). So the business has become a good leveler, mentally. Whether I've had a good or bad training, even if I've broken my arm as happened this season, I've still had to go off and focus on my work. That balance is now a constant that keeps me quite mentally level, and mentally fresher.

I find I also tend to notice now if other players are feeling under a bit of life stress — whether it's around university exams or jobs outside the game. You can see those stresses getting on top

of them at times, so it's nice to be able to pass on a little bit of my experience, if they need some help with getting that balance right in their own life.

Did you study at all?

No I haven't. When I first came into the Canterbury set-up, I didn't have too much else happening in my life at all other than helping out the old man. I spent my first three years out of school basically going over to the UK to play cricket, then things were starting to happen here in Canterbury from when I was 20. But I've prioritised and learnt real-world business skills through the process, and I'm very grateful to have had that opportunity.

I was really fortunate to have Dad there to share his business knowledge as a mentor, and also, to give me a kick up the backside if I needed it. He's a really switched-on guy and offers me a lot of support and advice. I'd like to think I've been able to teach the old man a little bit as well, for instance around our website. We enjoy working together each day on aspects of our businesses which is a really nice thing to be able to do.

Lesley Elvidge [NZCPA's Christchurch based PD manager] has also been a good support for me and we are in the process of finding a business mentor for me here in Christchurch to keep learning and moving forward.

And you still want to give cricket a good nudge?

Absolutely. But if anything this year's brought it home that cricket is notoriously an environment that can change fast. Whether it's through form, injury or unforeseen circumstances, your plans can turn upside down very quickly. I'm very grateful for being involved in the game right now — and long may that continue, but everyone's got an end date and needs to consider the future beyond playing cricket." ●



PULLING

REPRESENTING YOUR COUNTRY IS THE ULTIMATE FOR ANY CRICKETER; IT'S WHAT YOU DREAM OF AS A KID.

DANIEL FLYNN

STUMPS



The autumn edition of Outright usually provides a chance to recognise notable cricket retirements.

This year is no different. However, at the end of the 2020 season we bid farewell to a posse of our most accomplished, experienced, and decorated players – Daniel Flynn, Andrew Ellis, Craig Cachopa and Todd Astle (from red ball cricket). Each of them noted by various media as stalwarts of their domestic teams - and if being loyal, reliable and hardworking captures the essence of being a stalwart, then that is exactly what this group of cricketers are!

But collectively they represent something more profound - a generation of cricketers who were ushered in as fresh-faced talented cricketers, in the emerging years of growing professionalism, but leave as well-rounded men whose contribution to the game will be remembered for many a year.

Flynn and Ellis were both selected to the Blackcaps leaving each with

cherished moments they can fondly recall as they relax into a next summer without the prospect of countless hours in the nets, gyms, ovals, and dressing rooms around New Zealand. A transitional time that is both contemplative but also filled with opportunity.

Astle will blend his ongoing white-ball commitments and Blackcaps reselection goals alongside his own business, and as covered in the last Outright, Cachopa will be chipping away on building sites as he nails down his building industry future.

This summer Andrew Ellis was balancing a part-time role as Regional Manager with HPSNZ, which he commenced in July 2019 while still playing cricket. Ellis is also an advocate for the Sport NZ 'Balance is Better' programme, which sees him 'champion' and reinforce that New Zealand's youth should explore lots of different sports and to encourage better sports environments for coaches, parents and volunteers.

Ellis's 18-year cricket career saw him become the second player in New Zealand Domestic history to play more than 100 game in each format - 117 T20s, 109 List A (one-day) matches, and 105 first-class games. Ellis won the NZC award for Domestic Player of the Year (men's cricket) in 2014/15 and again in 2016/17 season - making him the only male player to win this accolade twice.

Ellis finishes his career with 8,644 runs and 494 wickets across the three formats in the red and black, and also includes 10 centuries and 11 five wicket bags.

Despite bowing out with a slightly shorter career than Ellis, Daniel Flynn's 16-year career did see him join the Cantabrian and Luke Woodcock (who reached the milestone first) in reaching the milestone of 100 matches in every format - signing off with 135 first-class, 113 List A (one day) and 109 T20 matches.

Flynn made his debut for ND in a one-day match in December 2004 as a

19-year-old, then made his first-class debut the following month against Otago at Harry Barker Reserve in Gisborne. The following summer Flynn notched the first of his record 20 first-class centuries for ND. He was unlucky not to record a Test century when being adjudged LBW (after review) for 95 against the West Indies in Dunedin.

"Representing your country is the ultimate for any cricketer; it's what you dream of as a kid, so to have achieved it is something I look back on with immense satisfaction," Flynn reflected at the time he announced his retirement.

"The people I've played alongside throughout my career stand out for me; they're not just good cricketers, but good people, who I've learned plenty from both on and off the field," he said.

Flynn says he can't even begin to list all the people who have helped him in his career. "First and foremost, I have to acknowledge my family; my wife has had to raise two young kids on her own throughout the last few summers and she's done a heck of a job," he said.

"After that, there are just too many other people to name who have helped me".

Craig Cachopa was another to make special mention to those who helped him during his cricket career.

"I would like to show my gratitude to all the coaches and mentors over the past 10 years, the Wellington Firebirds for an initial opportunity to play professional cricket, Sussex County Cricket Club for making the dream of playing County Cricket a reality, ACA for always being my constant base and the NZCPA for the guidance and encouragement to find a career outside of cricket.

"I must also thank my family and my fiancé, who have been through the

many highs and lows with amazing support and love" said the 28-year old as he called time on his cricket career.

Todd Astle entered the Canterbury scene in 2005, not long after namesake Nathan Astle's retirement. Astle... Todd, proceeded to create his own legacy that sees him bow out of red ball cricket with a similar, if not greater, contribution to the Canterbury team he was such a fixture of over the past 15 years.

As is the case for many spinners from New Zealand, Astle's Test career was somewhat sporadic, but his performances at domestic level were remarkable, capturing 334 first-class wickets (best of 8 for 148), alongside 4345 runs, including a two first-class centuries, 22 fifties and a best of 195.

Astle reflected on his red ball career as he closed that chapter in February, "red-ball cricket is the pinnacle, but also requires a huge amount of time and effort. As I have got to the back end of my career, I've found it harder to maintain the level of commitment required to be fully invested in this version of the game".

But Astle is not completely done just yet. His leg-spinning talents will remain on show in white-ball cricket this summer as he keeps a lazy eye on the upcoming T20 World Cups over the next two years.

We bid all our stalwarts... a happy retirement. 🏏

Far Left: Andrew Ellis
Below: Daniel Flynn





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THE INSIDER

NOT ALL THE PEOPLE STAYED HOME

by Paul Ford

And the people healed. And, in the absence of people living in ignorant, dangerous, mindless, and heartless ways, the earth began to heal.

Irish teacher Kitty O'Meara penned a coronaviral poem entitled 'And the people stayed home' last month and even the one and only Oprah Winfrey was frothing about it.

O'Meara's poem suggests that social distancing allows us to undertake purposeful activities like meditation, exercise, and dancing, and a kind of global healing is the result.

Well that may be true, but as she rattled through all of these seemingly wholesome, meaningful activities it rammed home for me the absence of cricket. At one point during lockdown loneliness I chastised myself on behalf of Ms O'Meara for getting distracted by the thought of how amazing it would be gorging on a glorious multi-match Test series from the comfort of one's bubble. All those endless days of leather on willow with fewer distractions than ever and so much time - but alas it was not to be.

The only cricket I've had on my radar - aside from the mind-blowing highlights from robelinda2 on YouTube, and Sky's fantastic archive trawling - has been BYC with my 12-year-old son.

One triumph was setting up the Crazy Catch as the 'bowler' with the wicketkeeper huffing the ball from behind the batsman and have it rebound toward the wickets. Have the batsman up-end the bat and defend the stumps with bat handle rather than the blade, set up your in-bubble slip cordon and you're away.

Paul Ford is the co-founder of the Beige Brigade and one-seventh of The Alternative Commentary Collective. He has never been to Vanuatu but likes the look of the red wine and the commentary set-up.

By the way, old mate Robelinda2 is seeing monstrous amounts of traffic blazing to his online postings like never before in the midst of this painful cricketing drought. As one reporter put it: "The world, in a time of dearth, looks towards a hero and the cricket world has found a superhero in the form of Rob Moody the world's biggest cricket video archive."

As he heads toward a billion views on his YouTube channel, it's worth thinking about the incredible amount of time and dedication he has put into his golden cricketing content. He has thousands of hours of footage and has 3000 DVDs and 4 terabytes of hard drives on the go.

And it is staggering to think that he earns exactly zero cents for all his efforts: "I don't earn anything from my channel, it's just sheer love for cricket. I'm taking this time to fulfil more requests on Twitter and YouTube and also backing up some old footage."

But then in week four of lockdown - or was it week 5 - I stumbled across some actual live cricket. It glowed like an oasis in the cricketing desert. What was this magic before my eyes? It was coming from none other than the Vanuatu Cricket Association and in robelinda2-esque fashion it had captured many eyeballs of cricket fans yearning for their beloved game.

The broadcast was the brainchild of the VCA and its CEO Shane Deitz - former South Australian keeper/batsman and Firebirds assistant coach. (I remember Deitz being amazed by the commitment of the players in the lower echelons of cricket, when he was coaching the Vanuatu team a few years back: "We are preparing for Division 5 but if you saw the boys training you would think it was for

the World Cup... Players get \$2 a training session and train every day during the week. The bus return trip is \$3.")

The matches were played at the Vanuatu Cricket Grounds in the capital Port Vila, on the island of Efate. Deitz said it all started with an office water cooler chat that "we could be the only sporting event in the world going on" - the idea of the live broadcast via Facebook erupted.

In the tiny Pacific nation, there have been no recorded coronavirus cases, so it was opened for business - and that meant open for cricket too. The VCA national league's grand final had once been on the radio, but never been on TV or streamed to the masses.

In the end an eye-popping 450,000 people worldwide tuned in - pretty amazing for a country with a population of around 300,000! As Deitz told media, his organisation was just filling a void and doing what it could to provide a dose of cricket to the world during unusual times.

"It was just to raise awareness of cricket in Vanuatu and give someone a talking point and something to do. The internet didn't show up until two minutes before the game started. The cameraman didn't know the rules of cricket and where the ball comes from."

Now I know this is not the sort of contemplative global healing that Kitty O'Meara was wanting us to get stuck into during lockdown, but it was my sort of global healing. Bless you Shane and the VCA - 450,000 of us are thankful the people didn't stay home in your neck of the woods.

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