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Newtown & Chilwell Cricket Club – Celebrating 114 years & 108 premierships

Susan Meaney – a rolled gold, Two Blue champion

by Warwick Hadfield OAM

In her two years with the Two Blues Susan Meaney helped create pieces of history that will stand forever.

As one of Don Royce's fabled Inaugurals, she captained the first-ever Two Blues women's First XI.

As a captain, she led her team to the club's first-ever BWCC premiership.

But according to women's team coach, Phil Twaddle, her contribution goes beyond her ability with bat and ball - and to toss a coin and set fields.

"She was a pioneer herself, learning a whole new sport and excelling at it, just as she did as a netballer," Twads said.

"But more than that, she encouraged others, people who were learning the game for the first time, or returning to it after a long break, to believe in themselves.

"As a result of that, after starting our program after other clubs in Geelong, we were rapidly able to catch up, and in some cases, to be seen as a leader in promoting women's cricket.

"I know many other teams watched how Susan went about leading and encouraging her players and took what they saw back to their clubs.

"And for all my years in cricket, I have to say she taught me as much about preparing for a game, particularly the mental side, as I taught her.

"She also taught me to block out the external noise as we fought to establish our program in the club and just focus on the things that mattered.

"I so look forward to the day when we get our women's honour board at the club and can see Susan Meaney's name up there in permanent gold letters as the first women's First XI premiership captain."

When Phil Twaddle took on the job of creating the women's program at Newtown and Chilwell Cricket Club, the first person he turned to was Susan, whose husband and sons were playing with the club while she sat in a deck chair looking on.

Watching her in the nets training with her boys, it was obvious that batting and bowling were as natural to her as putting a ball through a metal ring.

A question was asked, a partnership forged in trust began.

"We had many long conversations about how it was all going to work," Phil said.

"As an international athlete, and as a respected coach herself, she had her own standards, her own ideas on how a women's program should function in the

21st century environment of women's sport.

"Essentially, we had to show we were fair dinkum or she was out.

"I am proud our club did that, and as a result we have this growing culture of diversity as well as competitive women's cricket teams, both senior and junior.

"Just as I am proud of that premiership we won together.

"I watched her take that last wicket to win the grand final out at Bannockburn and I know how much it meant to her.

"I can only thank her for the joy of that moment that she brought to me and everyone involved at the club, and for everything else she has done, and wish her well in the future."

That future, not surprisingly, includes another Meaney achieving in sport at the highest level.

Olivia Meaney, who has always been handy in the nets herself, is an emerging international gymnast, a sport which will require a total commitment from mother and daughter.

How lucky is Olivia to have a mother who, with her softly spoken and carefully chosen words, is a natural at encouraging athletes of all ages and all levels.

Thank you, Susan Meaney.

David Norman new N&CCC President

At the Annual General Meeting, David Norman, was elected as the club's president, replacing the long-serving Tom Levick.

David played first-class cricket in South Africa, including against Kim Hughes so-called rebel Australians.

Members of that touring party remember David well. According to the team manager, Bruce Francis, himself a former Test player, David was "a very good player, we rated him.

"We wondered what happened to him, nice to know he found his way to Australia and ended up with your club." Mike Haysman, now a leading commentator, remembers David as being a nippy bowler.

When David joined the Two Blues from Torquay, he took part in one of the club's traditional welcomes, apart from the firm handshake, the fabled 10 QUESTIONS.

The Tribune revisits those questions, and David's answers here.

Q1. Did you find Newtown and Chilwell Cricket Club, or did we find you?

DN: Our younger son (Hunter) started playing at NCCC last season as a lot of his mates from Geelong College were playing there. It was a really nice vibe at the club so Joshua (our eldest son) decided to move across here this season. NCCC had an excellent reputation for looking after the younger members and the club has certainly lived up to that reputation with our experience (they even look after the old blokes like me too!!)



The Norman Family

Q2. You played first-class cricket in South Africa, and so join a special group of NCCC cricketers to have done that, tell us about those days.

DN: They were very exciting times for a young 18-year-old kid to be rubbing shoulders with some legends of the game. I was very lucky to come through the under-age system in SA and then play through an era where it was the best class of cricket a South African could play at the time as we were banned from International Cricket. A bit like the Sheffield Shield over here, we had six Provincial (State) sides and the competition was exceptional. You had the best 66 cricketers playing against each other in both the long and short forms of cricket. The crowds were great (similar to what the international players experience nowadays), the exposure we got was amazing and we had a lot of fun travelling around playing on the best grounds in the country. The other benefit of cricket in SA at that time was that with the Rebel sides coming out a lot of the players from those sides got contracted to play Provincial Cricket after the tour as they were banned by their respective countries, so we got to play alongside and against some of the best players from around the world.

Q3. Who is the best player you have played with, and played against?

DN: Always a tough question to answer as I was lucky enough to play against a number of great players both in SA and in the UK. I played against Lillee, Shastri, Holding and Geoff Lawson (amongst others) in the Lancashire League in the UK which was an amazing experience. Played against Graeme Pollock (in the latter stages of his career) in South Africa and played with the likes of Peter Kirsten, Kenny McEwan, Garth le Roux, Jonty Rhodes, Allan Donald and Hansie Cronje to name a few of the better players at that time. However, the highlight for me was playing in a joint testimonial game for Richard Hadlee and Clive Rice at Trent Bridge in the mid-1980's. Rice picked a SA XI and Hadlee a World XI for a one-dayer. They must have been pretty short of SA players to choose from that season in the UK so I was invited to play in the SA XI and was awestruck by the quality of players I was playing against (a pinch yourself moment for me). So best player I played with would have been a toss-up between Peter Kirsten and Clive Rice and the best I played against was a toss-up between Richard Hadlee and Graeme Pollock. Best captain I had the privilege of playing under was Kim Hughes (he captained our State side for three years. A great leader that despite me being an average first-class player, he always got the best out of me.

Q4. For most of your first-class career, South Africa was banned from international cricket: How tough was that?

DN: To be honest we didn't know anything different and for an average first-class player like me it was an amazing experience to play at the highest level of cricket that could be played in the country at that time. We always played in front of big crowds (very different these days) and got a lot of support and the cricket was competitive. It opened a lot of doors for me including the opportunity to play in the UK and come across to Australia.

Q5. The former South African captain, Ali Bacher, organised controversial unofficial tours during that time, did you get to play against Kim Hughes' so-called Rebels?

DN: I was lucky enough to play a couple of one day games (for my State) against Kim's side which was another incredible experience for a young cricketer. Playing against players that had been very successful on the world stage like Kim, John Dyson, Terry Alderman, Rodney Hogg etc was very special.

Q6. A South African umpire of that time described some of Hughes' team as as rough as goat's knees, did you find them that way?

DN: Definitely not. We had a really great time with the Australians. They played hard on the field but were genuinely good guys off the ground. Some of the fondest memories of those tours for me were the opportunities we had to sit in the change rooms after the game (sometimes till late into the night) with some legends of the game and have a few beers and listen to their stories. A number of them came back to play for the State sides in SA after the tour so they became good friends. Really nice bunch of guys.

Q7. What brought you to Australia?

DN: I met a beautiful young lady when she was on holiday in SA and followed her back to Australia and she is now my wife!!

Q8. Before you came to us, what were you doing cricket-wise here in Australia.

DN: I was lucky enough to get a coaching contract with VCA when I first came here (they had a no overseas player policy at the time so I couldn't get a playing contract and as my wife was in Vic this is where I wanted to be) and got a playing contract as a Coach at Werribee in the Sub District Comp in Melbourne. Had 10 years there and absolutely loved my time there where we managed to play in finals most years and won the Premiership 3 times. After moving from Ballarat to Torquay and having 2 boys we joined up at Jan Juc CC where the boys played their junior cricket and Joshua and Hunter both made their First debut at 15. I was lucky enough to play a few games at the club and was able to play in a Premiership with both boys as well as play a Firsts game with both sons which was really cool. Now, after having a bit of time away from playing, looking forward to playing a few games at NCCC (my wife, Rachel, calls me the John Farnham of cricket ... another comeback!)

Q9. You cut quite the figure on KFC Oval on debut on November 21st, resplendent in your two blue sleeveless jumper and looking every inch like a bloke who had played the game at a high level, how do you rate our ground and our facilities?

DN: I think the ground and facilities are great. Great ground and great clubhouse. The club seems to be in good shape with a lot of good juniors coming through which is always a sign of a strong club.

Q10. After watching Sammy Mitchell hit fours all over the ground in round two, you already have a story about him, but maintaining the club tradition, do you have a story about his father Russell yet?

DN: Sammy was brilliant on the weekend and was great to watch. I was fortunate enough to have my first beer with Russ after the game on Sunday which was an absolute pleasure. Loved hearing the stories and came away thinking it would be a good move to stay on the right side of Russ. It didn't take me long to have a story about Russ though. Whilst watching Sam and Tegs take on the new ball from the central umpire position on Sunday, I noticed Russ walking around the boundary after he shouted "Great Shot" when Sammy got a genuine edge past first slip for four. Next over, Tegs cut the spinner and it was racing to the boundary with a Highton player giving chase. Out of nowhere, Russ took it upon himself to shepherd the Highton player from being able to dive to prevent the four and then looked around as if nothing had happened. Needless to say the Highton boys were not overly impressed and called Russ every name in the book. Russ was clearly not concerned about this at all as he stared them down. Great guy to talk to and enjoyed hearing his stories.

Local entrepreneurs Olympic champs

Abby Walter

It's been a whirlwind recently for two Geelong raised men who helped the Olympics come to life behind-the-scenes.

Shannon Gove and Bennett Merriman (pictured) are the founders behind Rosterfy, a software for recruitment, screening, training, scheduling and recording time and attendance of volunteers at major events.

Between the pair they have recently been to Germany for a major football event, received an award nomination and been to the Olympic Games in Paris.

While Rosterfy was not the official volunteering platform for the Games, it was used by On Location, which ran hospitality and guest services across France.

Mr Gove said On Location had a workforce of about 5000 people.

"Rosterfy helps to recruit, screen, schedule, track time and attendance, and payroll of these staff who are making the games come to life," he said.

"Bennett was very fortunate to be there in Paris with a few of the Rosterfy team, they saw a few events like the volleyball underneath the Eiffel Tower, the golf and the triathlon."

Rosterfy has just ticked over 100 million volunteer



hours powered through its platform in 35 countries.

Mr Gove said the team returned at the end of July from Germany, where they delivered the volunteering platform for the men's European Football Championship (Euros).

He said more than one million hours of volunteering were delivered during the event through the platform.

"Volunteers are the heart and soul of what these events are," he said.

"Something we believe in is even if you were to fulfil

these roles with paid staff it wouldn't give the same outcome because people are giving up their time for free because they are passionate about where they live and they want to show it off."

To add to the excitement, Mr Gove was nominated as a

finalist for the Young Entrepreneur of the Year in the Geelong Business Excellence Awards 2024.

The duo, along with fellow founder Chris Grant, were also recognised in the top 100 young entrepreneurs in Australia earlier this year.

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N&CCC Yearbook 2024

<https://two-blues.com.au/lib/x8pfdp/Yearbook2324-1-lv7fyvwh.pdf>

150 QUEENS PARK ROAD



NCCC JUNIOR CRICKET

NEWTOWN &
CHILWELL
CRICKET CLUB

Newtown & Chilwell Cricket Club is seeking junior participants for our girls and boys junior programs for the 2024/25 season.

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N&CCC honours two great servants

Paul Anderson BEM and Graeme Chisholm *appointed as club patrons* by Warwick Hadfield OAM

At Newtown and Chilwell Cricket Club, service is both a privilege - and greatly appreciated.

That was to the fore at the Annual General Meeting in July when Paul Anderson OBE and Graeme Chisholm were appointed as co-patrons.

Paul Anderson will be known as a passive patron, Graeme Chisholm as an active patron.

They take the position held with great dignity by David Shaw, the former First XI captain and club administrator who died last year.

Shaw was, as was noted at his funeral and again at the AGM, the Godfather of the Club; creating a template for service on and off the field from which over many years Anderson and Chisholm, along with many other Two Blues playing officials, have taken their inspiration.

Like David Shaw's, the service of Paul Anderson and Graeme Chisholm is selfless - never waiting to be asked, and never asking of others what they wouldn't do themselves.

Another of the club's enduring servants, Don Royce OAM, spoke to the appointment of Paul Anderson.

He noted that for many, Paul's contribution to the club, and to the community - they didn't award OBEs for nothing - may be unknown to more recent generations. In his methodical way, Don filled the gaps.

"Paul's record of achievements on the field and in leadership off the field absolutely qualify him for this honour," Don Royce said.

"His appointment will not come with an expectation of him to

resume active duties but will be an additional honour to his existing Life Membership awarded in 1970.

"Also, Paul was awarded a British Empire Medal by the Queen for his services to education and young people in the Geelong region.

"Thanks to our living treasure and club historian David Barnes we have a summary of his outstanding playing career which helps us to understand his selection in the N&CCC Team of the Century as the wicketkeeper when announced at the Club's Centenary Dinner.

"A selection of his stats includes 284 club matches, 187 in the First XI from 1956 to 1979."

"That included five First XI premiers and two in the Second XI and one in the Fifth XI."

"He was the inaugural Jim Perry Trophy recipient in 1966/67 and twice more in later seasons."

"As an administrator, he served 17 years on the committee, three as president, three as secretary nine as vice-president and another two years on the general committee."

"He was also Chairman of Selectors for three years."

An outstanding contribution by every measure but in the accepted selfless way, the elevation to patron as recognition of it was not expected.

"It was a very pleasant surprise," Paul Anderson told the Tribune."

"My family are equally thrilled."

Paul's wife Sue and son Tim have also had roles at the club.

Paul Anderson also paid tribute to the man he replaces.

"David Shaw was an inspiration to me," he said.

"I came to the club knowing nobody. The first person I met was Flaker and from there he helped me right through."

"As a lonely person wandering down to Queens Park, he was terrific to me in settling me down and helped me in my own personal life."

"We had many pleasant memories together."

Neville Crane, after paying his tribute to David Shaw, spoke to the appointment of Graeme Chisholm, who as well as being a champion on the hard wickets, served for 17 years on the committee, three as secretary, where his flawless, copybook writing immaculately recorded the minutes, and six as vice-president.

That immaculate penmanship has also graced the scorebook while Graeme's efforts have also helped balance those other important books - the club's accounts.

"For 53 years, Graeme has been the most significant person in the club's history in raising the funds to keep the club being able to provide the facilities that it has," Neville said.

"The club owes Graeme a huge debt."

"The least it can do is to bestow this honour on him."

"Like Paul Anderson, Graeme is a reputable, high-profile person who adds to the credibility and integrity of the Newtown and Chilwell Cricket Club."

"He is being recognised for his outstanding contributions to our club in giving his time, his

efforts, his contacts, his influence, his ideas, his inspiration and his own money to progress the club's activities."

Graeme, who generally declines to talk about himself, told the Tribune he was humbled by the appointment.

Those readings this around Burdoo Road might be surprised to find those three words in the one place – humble, Graeme and Chisholm.

But at Newtown and Chilwell Cricket, people are aware of the true, True Two Blue in fact, G. Chisholm, the one for whom the happiness day in his half

century and more in the club was playing with the other G. Chisholm, and George's twin brother, Tom.

Graeme was the ultimate hard wicket warrior. As Neville noted, he scored 3822 runs, mostly behind square leg.

He also took 701 wickets, the 700th in yet another of his premierships wins, when batting at 11 and just recovered from a hip operation, he was the major contributor to a match-winning partnership of 23. That it was against Grovedale only added to the moment.

David Barnes has, as he always does, provided the

playing record of both Paul Anderson and Graeme Chisholm, stats which show in black and white the achievements off both men, but also in the way of stats, not the excitement and colour, and occasional colourful language in the case of one of the new patrons, to the game.

The Newtown and Chilwell Cricket Club is blessed to have people of the character and service of Paul Anderson OBE and Graeme Chisholm as its new patrons.

Congratulations Paul and Graeme.

Paul ANDERSON BEM

	1STS	2NDS	3RDS	4THS	5THS	6THS	7THS	BW1sts	BW2nds	TOTAL
8 July 2024										
GAMES PLAYED	187	59	19	6	13					284
PREMIERSHIPS	5	2	-	-	1					8
INNINGS	155									
NOT OUTS	34									
HIGHEST SCORE	67no	128			116					128
AGGREGATE RUNS	2028	1296	568	88	619					4599
AVERAGE	16.76	?	?	?	?					
DUCKS										
CENTURIES		2			2					4
50s										
CATCHES	160	62	13	4	11					250
STUMPINGS	97	2	15	12						126
OVERS BOWLED	18.5									18.5
MAIDENS										
WICKETS	3									3
RUNS	68									68
AVERAGE	22.67									22.67
5 wickets/innings										
BEST BOWLING										
BALLS PER WICKET	37.00									37.00
RUNS PER OVER	3.68									3.68

TOTAL GAMES PLAYED 284

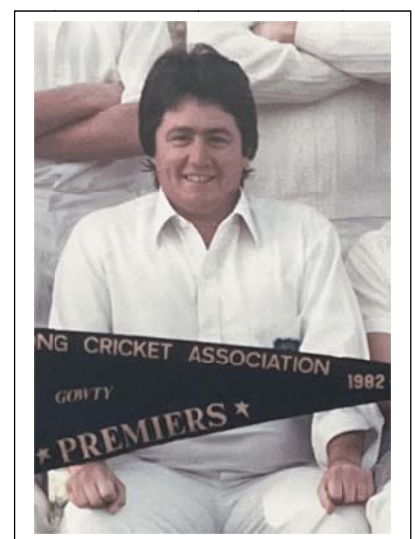
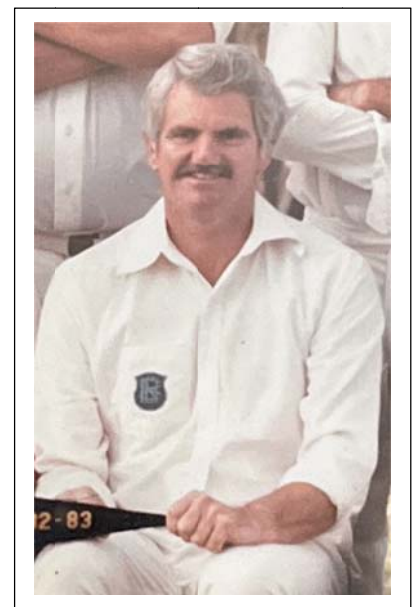
TOTAL PLAYING DAYS 562

Graeme CHISHOLM

	1STS	2NDS	3RDS	4THS	5THS	6THS	7THS	BW1sts	BW2nds	TOTAL
5 July 2024										
GAMES PLAYED		1	1	72	116	130	1			321
PREMIERSHIPS	-	-	-	1	6	3	-			10
INNINGS		1		60	100	101	1			263
NOT OUTS				17	20	18				55
HIGHEST SCORE	-	0	-	84	104	114	16			114
AGGREGATE RUNS		0		400	1626	1780	16			3822
AVERAGE		0.00		9.30	20.33	21.45	16.00			18.38
DUCKS		1		2	2	7				12
CENTURIES					2	1				3
50s				1	2	7				10
CATCHES				13	38	38				89
STUMPINGS						1				1
OVERS BOWLED		16	0	610.5	1259.67	1389.33				3275.5
MAIDENS		5	0	81	305	304				695
WICKETS		2	2	125	265	309				701
RUNS		29	36	1566	3548	3606				8785
AVERAGE		?	18.00	12.53	13.39	11.67				12.53
5 wickets/innings				6	19	22				47
BEST BOWLING	-	0/29	2/36	6/42	7/44	7/23				7/23
BALLS PER WICKET		?	0.00	29.30	28.52	26.98				28.04
RUNS PER OVER		1.81	?	2.57	2.82	2.60				2.68

TOTAL GAMES PLAYED 321

TOTAL PLAYING DAYS 608





N&CCC office bearers season 2024/25

PATRONS: A. Paul ANDERSON BEM
Graeme L. CHISHOLM

PRESIDENT: David NORMAN 0400 193 612

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT: Ben MITCHELL 0419 850 212

VICE PRESIDENTS: no appointments

SECRETARY: Russell MITCHELL 0407 102 300

TREASURER: Mark AINSWORTH 0418 546 240

GENERAL COMMITTEE: Ian DALRYMPLE
Ian HASTIE (Women's Director of Cricket)
Sam MITCHELL (Social)
Rachel NORMAN (Social)
Dev ROYCE (Advertising/Marketing/Sponsorships)
Andrew SADOWY (Junior Coordinator)
Zac STOKES (Membership Officer)

MEN's DIRECTOR of CRICKET: Ian DALRYMPLE

MEN's COACH: Chris WILLIAMS

CHAIRMAN of SELECTORS: Ian DALRYMPLE

CAPTAINS: First XI: Dylan HODGE
Second XI: Josh NORMAN
Third XI: Andrew KNOTT
Fourth XI: Jordan WHITE
Fifth XI: Matt SUVOLTOS
Sixth XI: Steve ABRAM

WOMEN'S DIRECTOR of CRICKET: Ian HASTIE 0497 540 089
WOMEN'S TEAM COACH: Phil TWADDLE 0431 382 691

FIRST XI MANAGER: Mark TURNLEY
FIRST XI SCORER: Mark TURNLEY
SECOND XI SCORER: DON ROYCE OAM

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JUNIOR GIRLS COORDINATOR: Bec WRIGHT
BLASTERS COORDINATOR: Andrew SADOWY

CURATOR: Ian SIMPSON

STATISTICIAN: David BARNES

FEEDBACK/RESOLUTIONS OFFICER: Ian DALRYMPLE

MEDIA MANAGER: Warwick HADFIELD OAM

TRIBUNE EDITOR: David BARNES

AUDITOR: Olsen & Carter (Horsham)

SOCIAL CONTACT: social@two-blues.com.au

HOME GROUNDS: 1sts & 2nds KFC Oval, Queen's Park
3rds & 4ths Shaw Oval, Queen's Park
5ths & 6ths Eastern Park no 3
Women's KFC Oval, Queen's Park
Shaw Oval, Queen's Park
Juniors above plus Belmont Common

Blast from the Past...



Pic courtesy of Marty 'Yabbie' Dillon

Circa 1987 and two future Two Blues life members are showing their talent with Geelong West in the VFA. Tony Jefferies and Russell Mitchell seen above amongst some local footy luminaries donning the red & white at the time. Can you name some?

Cricket Media's Fine Balance

A tense moment at the breakfast buffet, a last dance with Matthew Hayden and the stories that don't get told, by Peter Lalor*



"When I'm at my lowest and someone is kicking me, I look up and it is always you," Michael Clarke said during one of the bigger blow ups I've ever had with a player. A player who, in this case, was one of the best batters of his era and also the Australian captain.

It is fair to say we were at loggerheads that particular day and things had come to a head. He was furious and I was not backing down. It is also fair to say that we were never close, but I rated Clarke as a cricketer and had not, despite his allegation, been one of the pack who'd ridden him hard over issues of character. There is much I admired about him.

I told him that. Suggesting that if he lay out every positive article I'd ever written about him they would stretch from my home in the Inner West to his in Bondi. The one I'd written was pretty incendiary, but it was right.

From memory he admitted that, on reflection, that bit about the positive articles was probably true. I knew he didn't rate me over a few things and respected that. Later, to my great shame, I really screwed up breaking the story (the excellent Ben Horne and I broke it at the same time after hearing it from different sources) the day he resigned, but I apologised profusely. He seemed to forgive me, but I reckon Shane Warne held it against me for years. In person Michael was always polite, usually friendly and somebody I found hard to dislike. There was, however, a consistent buzz about matters I did not witness.

Players and administrators often don't realise how much gets alleged but goes unreported. Usually because it is tawdry, or trivial and more trouble than it is worth. Balancing relationships with players is one of the most difficult things a cricket writer has to do.

You can do the job without any.

Many, if not most, do. They stand back and work from a distance, but if you want to be a news breaker and want to attempt to understand character better you get closer. And who would not want to get inside the heads of such extraordinarily talented people; especially when they are the subject of your daily musing?

The fearless among us go hard, consequences be damned. The more cautious found a balance. The gutless pretended they didn't know. Sorry to say I was probably more toward the middle/latter end of this spectrum.

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If it could be helped I would not write anything about families and as little as possible about anything that didn't directly effect the sport. If something came up about a player having an affair (something - you will probably not believe this - I have to say I rarely came across) or some tawdry scandal I would set land speed records as I set off in the opposite direction.

I remember priding myself on not ever having written the name of Clarke's then fiancé even though the social pages were obsessed with her. I never wanted to be that sort of journalist. I remember stalling my departure for a tour of New Zealand as a story played out about troubles in their relationship that caused him to briefly go home.

I also remember being a little disappointed that he brought it up in the first press conference I attended on arriving for the series. There was no avoiding it after that, but I gave it a once over and moved on to matters at hand.

Clarke scored 168 in the first innings of the Test and won the player of the match award. He also threw the (cheap) medal in the bin. A staffer fished it out and gave it to me to give to my son.

You have to pick your fights in a sport that exists in such a confined space.

I probably shouldn't tell this story, but I remember a photographer who worked for a different paper getting a call from the tabloids who wanted to her to pap a picture of the fiance who was staying at the same hotel as us. They were going to do some hatchet job or other. The office was told they had not seen her and didn't know where she was.

She was at the breakfast bar 10 metres from the table when the call was made.

Was it wrong? In the eyes of the office it would definitely have been considered a

crime, but the situation was a good example of the delicate balance involved in being on the road and staying in the same hotel as the teams.

There has to be some respect for private space even when it is a public space. If you know what I mean. One new player manager wanted journos banned from team hotels. It would have set up an interesting dynamic. Overseas tours and the hotel was (few organisations can afford to put their people in the same hotels as the cricketers these days) the place where you got to know the players. Where you could both let your guard down, have a drink or hang out by the pool. It was a place you developed their trust.

And got stories.

Once I was in a cold hotel pool after an exercise session when a player got in to do the same. Normally I would run, embarrassed by my stick insect physique, this time I stayed because I knew that something as brewing and I wanted to get more of a sense of it. I reckon I had hypothermia (thanks to Tony Taylor below for pointing out that hyperthermia was not the right word here) by the time the player acknowledged that there was truth to what I was hearing.

A few Tests later *homeworkgate* happened. I was shocked but not blindsided. It was part of a bigger picture confirmed in the swimming pool.

The night the players got suspended I remember filing my last yarn and debriefing at the bar with coach and team manager, putting away little nuggets of information. I became somewhat alarmed by what I was hearing from these two but I at least understood where they were coming from.

(Thank god they never followed through with the idea of producing a handbook on team principles for new members of the Test side. Maybe that was the drink talking.)

It is always important to clear the air with someone you have taken to task and critical when touring with them. Breakfasts were an agony some days. You could literally look up from your cereal and see a player reading the story where you go on at great length about how woeful their form is, how grim their future and how much better their potential replacement, at a nearby table.

To make matters worse, they would often be surrounded by team-mates who'd console them by mouthing ugly things about the person who had typed this tripe.

Coaches and team mates always back the struggling publicly (but quietly they are thinking exactly what you are).

In such circumstances it is critical to front the person and give them their right of replay face to face. Waiting for the toast. With people lining up either side of you. Team-mates hissing from the table. "Did you think what I wrote was unfair?" Rarely do they aim up

Everything is about relationships for a beat reporter. As I said, you can survive by only ever talking to a player in press conferences (or ripping the quotes off someone who has), you can even thrive if you have a brilliant turn of phrase and a keen eye for an eye catching angle, but if you can be the person that people take aside when things are brewing, or a moment is at hand, then you have a significant advantage.

Can you be too close?

Absolutely. I examine my conscience on this often and recognise times when I've pulled my punch. Me and Dave Warner get on very well. Gideon, rather impolitely, calls me the other half of his brain. It's a relationship that has given media managers and staff nervous sores and one that causes people to roll their eyes, but in my defence I will point out I was the idiot who went on television and said his Test career was over (only for him to score a double century in the next match).

I sided completely with the players during the MOU dispute, but that is because I thought they were in the right and the administration was in the wrong. It didn't help that the administration had made a monumental blunder by taking a vow of silence. Maybe because they knew they were in the wrong. It was an ugly time and complaints were made to The Australian by Cricket Australia about my reporting, but I was confident I was right and the stories I wrote were also. I also had the experience of covering a Rio Tinto industrial dispute in an earlier life and recognised a similar template of tactics from the former alumni of that mining outfit who were now on the payroll at Cricket Australia.

It must be great to cover a sport like, say, the AFL. There are so many teams, so many players, coaches, administrators. You can set fire to three quarters of the league and still have people who'll drink with you, give you a snippet here or there. Cricket is a much smaller boat.

Relationships are everything.

The story about Usman Khawaja's human rights protest on his shoes ran exclusively on the front page of The Australian because we had got to know each other over the years and so he had come over just to say hello at training. I spotted the shoes, asked him about them, told him I'd have to write something and warned him it was going to cause a big stink. He said he didn't mind (but scampered off when I tried to photograph them with my phone; the photo of the shoes that ran everywhere was taken the day before and nobody had looked closely enough to see the message).

That can't happen if you aren't at training and haven't made an effort to get to know the players. Khawaja was always wary of the press and remains so, but he'd relaxed somewhat. Players tend to do that as they get older.

The story about Steve Smith being keen to open broke because somebody close to him approached me on the field one morning and said he was keen. To that point nobody had seriously considered it.

It might not be the best idea in the world, but it was a good story and that's all I cared about.

When Alex Carey appeared affected by the scandal surrounding his actions at Lord's I knew something of him and his character from a time in a Perth pub the summer or two previous. Covid had lifted, the side had just won in Perth and had retired to the pub next to the stadium for a beer. It was great to see them out in public and it probably said something about how confined they had been that they chose a place so full of cricket fans.

Carey was drinking with Mitchell Starc and Travis Head, among others. They called me over, I said I had a rule against drinking with players (not really), but hung around and was alarmed to have Alex ask me why the side was so disliked. It wasn't, I attempted to explain. Much of the noise came from empty headed culture war warriors whose volume and relentlessness bore no relationship to this numbers.

Most Australians love their cricket team, I said, but I was interested that Carey would even care. It said something about his character and went some way to explaining why

Lord's had such an impact on him. He cares too much.

The relationship can become too comfortable. I've half jokingly told players that while it all might be good fun now I may have to do them over some day. Sometimes it happens. To give them their due, when you do go hard they mostly shrug and acknowledge you have a job to do. Most of them get it.

Being the first to turn on a player over form has never been my go. I'm soft on that topic, I've got too much respect for the latent talent of people and my left liberal values make me prone to give people another chance. Sometimes it is a fault.

I thought the great Malcolm Conn went too hard at times, but he was fearless, uncompromising and unapologetic. He also had the respect of most players because of that.

I note that the Ponting camp bristled at how critical Big Mal was in the last years of Punter's career, but when it was all over Ricky admitted that Mal was probably right. Sometimes its handy to have the media to blame because the alternative would be to acknowledge that the fault is yours (your lack of runs or wickets). I often say that we perform a public service on this front.

Trust is critical.

Somehow me and Matthew Hayden hit it off from the moment we met, but I hadn't had a lot to do with him at that time. Nonetheless, when Hayden did a trip out to the commission areas of Melbourne as part of a Christmas drive for a charity he was tied in with, he invited me and my daughter to come along. Grace was very young then and was with him so my Lucy tagged along too.

It was an interesting day. I remember Matty dancing with a toothless woman on the worn carpet of her shabby home, his baggy green planted on her head, her smile lighting the dim front room. We did a lot of driving that day and connected further.

When his career really started to hit the rocks he allowed me in, spoke to me about what was going on and it was a privilege to be up close in such a time. He didn't spill his guts, he was still in denial, but it was amazing to be close to someone so apparently indomitable at a time when they were so vulnerable.

It was telling that at the worst moment of their lives the players involved in the sandpaper scandal allowed the travelling Australian press pack to sit in their breakfast room/foyer and report away while the hordes who had flown in were confined to the

footpath outside. Steve Smith showed his character by crossing the floor to talk to us after learning his fate. You could see how awfully raw it was for him and while we had reported unflinchingly on the mistakes that had been made we were not without sympathy.

When it came time to write further we were able to take readers into the space. Give them a glimpse of what it looked and felt like. Cameron Bancroft was shadow batting in a corner, distracted and almost disassociated.

Touring journalists bring so much more to the table than the poor "content providers" who are stuck in a room ripping things off social media, endlessly recycling, tirelessly filling the void with shit someone said on the telly or Twitter. It is a credit to newspapers that they still keep sending people around as it is a very costly exercise. The

Australian was great to both Gideon and I on that front and the major publications still have someone on the road. Long gone, however, are the days when there would be five of us from the same paper harvesting every angle, draining every ounce from the day.

Beware the bottom feeders who do not have people on the road, beware the sensationalists screaming constantly _ often about matters so trivial they're barely worth acknowledging. The controversial Col Allan, recently of the New York Post and alarmingly said to be a sounding board for Donald Trump, said to me once that "if you've got a good story you don't need to shout about it". A good story does its own shouting.

It was good advice.

And so, as we slouch slowly toward the Border-Gavaskar, beware the cricket writer who has no cricket to write on. They're prone to indulgence.




















After leaving The Australian newspaper, where they were the nation's premiers cricket writers, Geelong's Gideon Haigh and Peter Lalor have set up CricketEtAl, a subscription service featuring their brilliant writings on sport and anything else that takes their fancy.

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N&CCC fixture 2024/25 v. 20/08/2024 1sts & 3rds (2nds & 4ths reversed)

<p>Round 1 – one day Saturday, October 5, 2024</p>  <p>on KFC Oval</p>	<p>Round 2 – one day Saturday, October 12, 2024</p>  <p>on Walker Oval, Herne Hill</p>	<p>Round 3 – one day Saturday, October 19, 2024</p>  <p>at McDonald Reserve, Highton</p>	<p>Round 4 – one day Saturday, October 26, 2024</p>  <p>on KFC Oval</p>
<p>Round 5 – one day Saturday, November 2, 2024</p>  <p>at Winter Reserve</p>	<p>Round 6 – two day Saturdays, November 9 & 16, 2024</p>  <p>on Keith Barclay Oval</p>	<p>Round 7 – two day Saturdays, November 23 & 30, 2024</p>  <p>on KFC Oval</p>	<p>Round 8 – two day Saturdays, December 7 & 14, 2024</p>  <p>on KFC Oval</p>
<p>Round 9 – one day Saturday, December 21, 2024</p>  <p>on KFC Oval</p>	<p>Round 10 – one day Saturday, January 11, 2025</p>  <p>on Reynolds Oval, South Barwon</p>	<p>Round 11 – two day Saturdays, January 18 & 25, 2025</p>  <p>at Burdoo Reserve, Grovedale</p>	<p>Round 12 – two day Saturdays, February 1 & 8, 2025</p>  <p>on KFC Oval</p>
<p>Round 13 – two day Saturdays, February 15 & 22, 2025</p>  <p>on Zampatti Oval (St Josephs)</p>	<p>Round 14 – two day Saturdays, March 1 & 8, 2025</p>  <p>on KFC Oval</p>	<p>SEMI FINALS Saturday/Sunday March 15/16, 2025</p> <hr/> <p>PRELIMINARY FINALS Saturday/Sunday March 22/23, 2025</p>	<p>GRAND FINALS</p>  <p>GEELONG CRICKET ASSOCIATION</p> <p>Saturday/Sunday March 29/30, 2025</p>

N&CCC fixture 2024/25 - 5th XI in GCA1 5ths

<p>Round 1 Saturday, October 19, 2024</p>  <p>at Belmont High School</p>	<p>Round 2 Saturday, October 26, 2024</p>  <p>at Eastern Park no 3</p>	<p>Round 3 Saturday, November 2, 2024</p>  <p>at Belmont Common no 2</p>	<p>Round 4 Saturday, November 9, 2024</p>  <p>at Eastern Park no 3</p>
<p>Round 5 Saturday, November 16, 2024</p>  <p>at South Barwon no 3</p>	<p>Round 6 Saturday, November 23, 2024</p>  <p>at Windsor Park no 2</p>	<p>Round 7 Saturday, November 30, 2024</p>  <p>at Eastern Park no 3</p>	<p>Round 8 Saturday, December 7, 2024</p>  <p>at Eastern Park no 3</p>
<p>Round 9 Saturday, December 14, 2024</p>  <p>at Grovedale Reserve</p>	<p>Round 10 Saturday, January 11, 2025</p>  <p>at Eastern Park no 3</p>	<p>Round 11 Saturday, January 18, 2025</p>  <p>at O'Driscoll Oval, Noble Street</p>	<p>Round 12 Saturday, January 25, 2025</p>  <p>at Eastern Park no 3</p>
<p>Round 13 Saturday, February 1, 2025</p>  <p>at Eastern Park no 3</p>	<p>Round 14 Saturday, February 8, 2025</p>  <p>at Elderslie Reserve</p>	<p>Round 15 Saturday, February 15, 2025</p>  <p>at Belmont High School</p>	<p>Round 16 Saturday, February 22, 2025</p>  <p>at Eastern Park no 3</p>
<p>Round 17 Saturday, March 1, 2025</p>  <p>at Belmont Common no 2</p>	<p>Round 18 Saturday, March 8, 2025</p>  <p>at Eastern Park no 3</p>	<p>SEMI FINAL Saturday, March 15, 2023</p> <hr/> <p>PRELIMINARY FINAL Saturday, March 22, 2023</p>	<p>GRAND FINAL Saturday, March 29, 2023</p>  <p>GEELONG CRICKET ASSOCIATION</p>

N&CCC fixture 2024/25 - 6th XI in GCA1 6ths

<p>Round 1 Saturday, October 19, 2024</p>  <p>at Eastern Park no 3</p>	<p>Round 2 Saturday, October 26, 2024</p>  <p>at Grovedale Reserve</p>	<p>Round 3 Saturday, November 2, 2024</p>  <p>at Eastern Park no 3</p>	<p>Round 4 Saturday, November 9, 2024</p>  <p>at O'Driscoll Oval, Noble Street</p>
<p>Round 5 Saturday, November 16, 2024</p>  <p>at Eastern Park no 3</p>	<p>Round 6 Saturday, November 23, 2024</p>  <p>at Eastern Park no 3</p>	<p>Round 7 Saturday, November 30, 2024</p>  <p>at tbc</p>	<p>Round 8 Saturday, December 7, 2024</p>  <p>at Belmont High School</p>
<p>Round 9 Saturday, December 14, 2024</p>  <p>at Eastern Park no 3</p>	<p>Round 10 Saturday, January 11, 2025</p>  <p>at Belmont Common no 2</p>	<p>Round 11 Saturday, January 18, 2025</p>  <p>at Eastern Park no 3</p>	<p>Round 12 Saturday, January 25, 2025</p>  <p>at South Barwon no 3</p>
<p>Round 13 Saturday, February 1, 2025</p>  <p>at tbc</p>	<p>Round 14 Saturday, February 8, 2025</p>  <p>at Eastern Park no 3</p>	<p>Round 15 Saturday, February 15, 2025</p>  <p>at Eastern Park no 3</p>	<p>Round 16 Saturday, February 22, 2025</p>  <p>at Grovedale Reserve</p>
<p>Round 18 Saturday, March 1, 2025</p>  <p>at Eastern Park no 3</p>	<p>Round 18 Saturday, March 8, 2025</p>  <p>at O'Driscoll Oval, Noble Street</p>	<p>SEMI FINAL Saturday, March 15, 2023</p> <hr/> <p>PRELIMINARY FINAL Saturday, March 22, 2023</p>	<p>GRAND FINAL Saturday, March 29, 2023</p>  <p>GEELONG CRICKET ASSOCIATION</p>

Dan Lawrence back in the England test team

Two Blues Merriman Medallist Dan Lawrence has finally been returned to the England Test team, opening the batting against Sri Lanka.

Shunned in recent times for the team proper, he has been on the cusp of a return as a permanent squad member, unlucky to miss a game in the Ashes series when Moheen Ali managed to convince team officials he could bat at number three.

Despite his success here in Australia in club cricket, and with the England Lions, he was also strangely overlooked for a Test during England's last Ashes tour of Australia.

Lawrence came to Newtown and Chilwell while playing for Essex as part of the Gooch/Insole Scholarship Scheme for the 2014/15 season.

He has since moved to the other side of London with Surrey.

Former England captain, Michael Vaughan was critical of the selection of Lawrence as an opener, but our Dan was having nothing of that.

"It is not necessarily a career move," said Lawrence, who has opened just seven times in first-class cricket, including an unbeaten 53 from 34 balls for Surrey this season.

"But I have said before that if I get the chance to play for England again, I'd bat at number 11 if I had to.



Dan Lawrence



"So, I'm just going to enjoy these few weeks and hopefully score some runs and put my name in the hat for future selection."

There was a special moment for Two Blues players in the English county system earlier this year when Lawrence and Jordan Clark, another Merriman Medallist winner, batted together at The Oval.

Clark was playing for Lancashire when he joined Newtown and Chilwell, but moved to Surrey when coach Michael di Venuto recognised his value as an all-forms cricketer.

NCCC's John Shaw shone on a "hot and futile day" at the MCG

The English cricket writer Michael Davie described is a hot and futile day, and for many an Englishman out in the midday sun, it was.

But not for Newtown and Chilwell Cricket Club's John Shaw.



John Shaw

The nephew of Lindsay Hassett, brother of much-revered former Patron David Shaw, and a premiership player for the Two Blues, John Shaw played 55 first-class games for Victoria.

That included this game against the MCC in January 1959, and on January 19th, one of the hottest days in the pre-climate change history of Victorian weather.

As Melbourne's streets turned to putty, the temperature managed what John Shaw didn't quite do, getting past the century in the old measure, officially up to 108.5F.

Or perhaps even hotter. Lindsay Hassett, the former Australian captain turned commentator, amused the English cricket correspondents by reckon ingit might be 109 degrees, that temperature adjudged by his novel measuring system.

If he drank – with his hat on - two cold beers and was still thirsty, it must be 109 degrees.

John Shaw top-scored in the Victorian first innings of 286 with 94, batting at number four behind the openers, Bill Lawry and Allen Aylett who went on to become a champion player and administrator with North Melbourne in the VFL and eventually the head of that organisation.

Shaw did score a century for Victoria, 167 against New South Wales in a Sheffield Shield match, and also toured New Zealand with an Australian team.

But despite his innings in the boiling midday sun in January, 1959, the mad dogs and Englishmen won the game by nine wickets.



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