

WINTER 2025 | No. 059

# **OUTRIGHT**

THE PLAYERS' MAGAZINE



**AJAZ PATEL**  
**TRADING PLACES**



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# OPENING THOUGHTS



Left to Right: Henry Cooper, Robbie O'Donnell, Judy Clement (PDM) and Jessica Watkin

As each season draws to a close it's a natural time for reflection on the experiences and moments that have shaped the year. Amid the end of season flurry the players are involved in a range of feedback avenues which the CPA collate and communicate within the various high-performance environments.

Following on from team meetings in each of the 14 teams and the annual Player Survey, the Players' Conference provided a chance for players to consider, debate and consolidate the collective feedback from players. Held in Auckland in April, the conference brought together close to 30 players, with leading players representing each domestic and international team across the two days. The conference saw players dissect the survey results from team, Major Association and national team perspective, with honest conversation about the key themes, future opportunities, and identified areas for improvement.

One consistent topic that is prevalent within the playing group is the acceleration of franchise cricket opportunities that are being presented

to more and more players, as the global cricketing landscape changes in front of them. Tom Moffat, CEO of the World Cricketers' Association, talked about the recently released WCA Global Game Structure Report during the conference, which led to vibrant discussion about the topic. Throughout the conference players collaborated and shared their experiences within the men's and women's environments and reaffirmed their commitment to the work WCA and CPA are doing to ensure that every player feels informed, empowered, and connected to the future of their sport.

As the landscape of cricket continues to evolve, so too does the lives of our players. In this edition of Outright, we're proud to highlight some of the exceptional stories that extend beyond the white picket fence.

We begin with Wellington Blaze's Sam Mackinder, who has taken her Bachelor of Molecular Cell Biology into the world of animal health, producing vaccines at Merck Sharp & Dohme. Her journey is a compelling example of how players' lives are developing meaningfully alongside their cricket.

We hear directly from Ajaz Patel in our feature article as he reflects on the time spent with the recent NZ Trade delegation visit to India, and his perspective on that experience on the efforts to advance business and diplomatic ties with India.

We also reflect on the professional careers of three former players, Will Somerville, George Worker, and Mark Richardson, who have each stepped into roles in finance and investment. Their individual path into the industry is as varied as their cricketing careers and we get a snapshot of how they are enjoying this exciting time in their new profession.

The end of season also draws an end to the playing careers of some. Our Pulling Stumps article acknowledges those players who are turning to a new chapter in their lives as we recognise their on-field contributions.

We hope you enjoy the stories in this edition of Outright, and that they leave you feeling as inspired as we are by the people who make our game what it is.

Ngā mihi nui,

**NZCPA**

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Players better together





**SAM MACKINDER**

# CRICKET AT A CELLULAR LEVEL

BY MARGOT BUTCHER

**NOT MANY CRICKETERS SPEND THEIR DAYS GETTING UP CLOSE WITH BACTERIA ON PURPOSE BUT, FOR SAM MACKINDER, IT'S ENDLESSLY INTRIGUING.**

Mackinder's a Dream11 Super Smash champion with Wellington Blaze, and a molecular cell biology graduate working full-time for Merck, Sharp & Dohme's animal health division.

It makes for a busy schedule, for sure, but being organised and motivated — as well as knowing when to switch off, is enabling the 22-year-old to manage the pressure points to get a good head start on life.

Born in Lower Hutt, Mackinder was a Wellington age-group rep growing up (she played to Wellington U21 level) before heading to Palmerston North Girls' High and then Massey University. Work has now seen her come full circle back to the Hutt Valley, living close to her job in Silverstream (Upper Hutt).

Her Palmy years saw her play cricket for Manawātū and Central Districts, as well, including her 2023 domestic debut for the Hinds in the Hallyburton Johnstone Shield — before migrating back to the capital towards the end of Uni, reconnecting with cricket friends she'd grown up with in Wellington pathway teams.

The three-year degree course in molecular cell biology is a fairly specialised field within the sciences department at Massey and her location at the time was perfectly married to her professional interests.

"There weren't many in that Uni class, but I was always much more of a science girl at school than, say, an English or history person," she says. "English was always my worst subject! PE was the fun stuff. So sciences and PE, that was me. Always.

"I liked chemistry and bio especially, because I really liked understanding how things work and how interactions happen all the time in your body. I'm genuinely interested in things like Krebs and TCA cycles."

If you need to look that up, it's how our cells get energy. Mackinder graduated last year and appreciates how fortunate she is to have been able to walk straight into a secure job, given the current employment environment.

At Uni and of Te Whānau-ā-Apanui descent, she'd been able to access summer internships through the Pūhoro science programme that promotes STEMM (Science, technology, engineering, mathematics, and medicine) careers to Māori. She's also repped NZC Aotearoa Māori schoolgirls, NZ Māori Wāhine and domestic wāhine teams in cricket.

The Pūhoro work placements strengthened her off-field CV. "Merck, Sharp & Dohme was my first interview after graduating, so it all happened very quickly. Moving down to Wellington permanently last year was a bit of a blur - it's been a wild ride, but a heap of fun and of course nice to have that steady income."

The nitty gritty of her job is making animal vaccines. "My role is in the fermentation team. That means we'll receive media for a type of harmful bacteria, say, tetani or salmonella. We grow that media, adding carbohydrates and keeping it warm so the bacteria multiplies and thrives. Once it hits a certain range, we add a chemical to harvest the bacteria. That turns it from a toxin to a toxoid, which means the harmful properties of the bacteria are deactivated but it keeps the structure. The structure is what you want for a vaccine — injected into animals, their bodies can recognise it [as foreign] and create an appropriate immune response."

She started in October and her employer makes it possible to stay on track in her cricket career — the Cricket Wellington training hub is a fair commute from Upper Hutt, and they understand what she's trying to achieve. "I've been really lucky, it's all working very well."

But Mackinder doesn't just have cricket talent in her veins. In fact at school, it would have been fair to say it wasn't even her number one sport. She has stacks of medals and ribbons from athletics and was also in the top netball and volleyball teams. As a heptathlete, she's an athletics allrounder — they're not common. She was taking home age-group medals from the national athletics championships at 16 and "I was definitely more interested in athletics back then and really put my time and energy into it. I saw some really good results and had been planning to go to uni in the USA [with the possibility of an athletics scholarship]."

Then COVID hit, throwing those dreams into disarray. Going to the States was no longer an option. It was cricket's win because previously, every Sunday had been spent at the athletics track.

"I would spend five hours at the track, go to New World to get my lunch and then go back to the track for more. When there was no longer a reason to do that, it was quite a big change for me, but I could spend more time on my cricket and get more serious about it. I started playing better and getting better results in my cricket in Manawātū."

Greg Codyre was coaching the Manawātū women's team at the time and had built a good environment. "I started gaining a lot more confidence in my cricket and that brought me better results. Wellington has a good energy too, and I don't feel as isolated — which I guess I did a bit in the districts set-up, inevitably, because



Sam with partner Bayley Latter.

**“ I REALLY LOVE THE TRAINING ENVIRONMENT HERE AND I FEEL LIKE THINGS ARE CLICKING NOW. I’VE BEEN VERY FORTUNATE AND JUST WANT TO KEEP PUSHING IT FORWARD. ”**

there is a massive structural difference between city and districts teams."

The interests vying for her time and attention don't stop there. She did her PADI in Wellington so she can go scuba-diving. "I love going fishing. The family has a boat, so we do all that kind of stuff. And I love arts and crafts. I'm really into painting and sewing, and I love reading

fantasy literature. Reading's one of my things I do every day, normally before bed with a nice cup of tea. It's a great way to switch off after training. Very calming."

The exact opposite, then, to her first experience of a Super Smash final which went down to the wire against the Otago Sparks at the Basin this year. "Definitely a very nerve-wracking game of cricket! A low-scoring game and a close one in the field until the power plays started coming our way. But nothing beats that kind of contest, it was really exciting and a big highlight of my crickering career to date. And the celebrations went on for quite a while!"

Now she'd like to get some more results on the park in her own game as a third season looms. "I really love the training environment here and I feel like things are clicking now. I've been very fortunate and just want to keep pushing it forward."



Sam with parents Andrew and Chelsea.







*Cricket retirements are often not the screeching halts they used to be, more a series of waves rolling in. As we draw a line in the sand for another 12 months to mark fond farewells, it's with provisos: hanging up this cap, that cap—or all caps?*

*The jet-setting routines may not even slow too much, depending on franchise or overseas opportunities, but for the core New Zealand fanbase, family, teammates and friends, that last salute always resonates.*

**HAYLEY JENSEN** left the domestic door open when she announced her White Ferns retirement in May. At 32, the pace allrounder's packed so much cricket into her career that it made sense to take stock of her reserves.

Commuting from Australia to Dunedin to play for the high-flying Otago Sparks added to the commitment, but it's been a journey she wouldn't have missed for the world — and may continue — with a phenomenal 144 List A and 204 T20 career matches behind her.

As a senior player and T20 captain, Jensen's been a big part of the Sparks' recent success story on and off field, since joining from Canterbury in 2019 — bringing with her rich experience from gigs with the Melbourne Stars and Renegades, Hobart Hurricanes, Victoria, ACT, Perth Scorchers and the Trinbago Knight Riders.

Her “Sparkies” defended their one-day crown this summer, made the Super Smash grand final, and are churning out

new Ferns. Jensen won her own maiden New Zealand selection in 2014, with ODI and T20i debuts coming against the Windies before hurtling into her first World Cup in Bangladesh. It was something she'd wanted to do since she was a sport-loving Christchurch 10-year-old.

She made her Canterbury debut in the lofty environs of Redwood Park. Cricket, with swings and see-saws. Maybe that's not the worst metaphor for a cricket career. Jensen's had her fair share of ups, downs and frustrating injuries. Earning a second innings in her White Ferns career — in 2017/18, after three years out of the frame — is right up there in the mental highlights reel, and led to a life-changing NZC contract.

“Ever since I came home from my first cricket tournament as a girl, I knew I wanted to be a White Fern,” Jensen says. “The chance to live that dream is something I'll always treasure — filled with challenges, growth, unforgettable experiences, and the best group of people I could've hoped to share it with.

“It's never easy to move on from something that's meant this much, but I know in my heart it's time.”

**MARTIN GUPTILL's** formal Blackcaps retirement came in January, 27 months after his last international game. Now 38, he's been both a captivating star and a remarkable stayer with a packed resumé of international and franchise cricket around the globe.

The announcement led to a last twirl and NZC presentation on the outfield of Eden

Park, during an ODI innings break. He's been candid about his disappointment over the way his career at that level ended. Not being selected for the 2023 World Cup was understandably difficult, and what followed would have felt like a period of being on the periphery. It's not the farewell usually afforded to players of his stature.

Guptill's New Zealand career as an elegant, top order powerhouse and brilliant fielder spanned 14 amazing years, 47 Tests (2,586 runs), 198 ODIs (7,346 runs) and 122 T20is (3,531 runs).

His white-ball prowess shines through the record books. The highest ODI score for the Blackcaps is his 237 not out off 163 rocks against the Windies at the Cake Tin in the 2015 World Cup quarterfinal, still the second highest ODI score globally. He has three of the top four entries on the Blackcaps list, with 189 not out in England in 2013 and 180 not out in Hamilton against the Proteas as well. He won the 2011/12 Sir Richard Hadlee Medal, and sits in the top trio of all-time Blackcaps one-day run-scorers — 18 centuries, with two T20i and three Test centuries.

“Gup” sprung from Suburbs New Lynn CC, making Auckland age-group teams from when he was 13. He debuted for the Aces on 7 January 2006 and, despite rarer appearances in recent seasons, still owns the Aces' records for most one-day tons (10); best T20 score (120 not out off 60 balls, in Rangiora, 2012) and most T20 runs (a phenomenal 2,598 — only Hamish Rutherford and Neil Broom made more T20 runs than that for a men's team in New Zealand).

He's been loyal, and feels “incredibly lucky and proud to have played 367 games for my country. I will forever cherish the memories made wearing the silver fern, alongside a great group of guys.”

**TIM SOUTHEE's** career arc runs parallel to a great era for the Blackcaps. He burst on the scene in February 2008 at just 19. Sir Richard Hadlee was the head selector, and saw the future dividends in Southee's rhythm and swing. Just weeks later, Southee was opening the Test bowling attack with Chris Martin against England in Napier, taking 5/55 on debut and slapping 77 not out off 40 balls.

He retires as one of the elite handful of Blackcaps to have got near Sir Richard's 431 Test wickets, once the world record, with 391 Test victims from 107 Test appearances.

Like Hadlee had Ewen Chatfield, Southee had Trent Boult as a career-long running mate. With Neil Wagner at first change, New Zealand had a brilliant attack.

Test cricket felt like the pinnacle of the game to Southee personally. It ended full-circle against England in December last year, and included the massive highlight of winning the inaugural World Test Championship mace at Lord's, as well as captaining his country in the last couple of years.

You can't squeeze an 18-year career of this magnitude into a few paras and do it justice, but 221 ODI wickets; a Blackcaps ODI record 7/33; the Blackcaps' record for most T20i caps (126); a national T20i record haul of 5/18; the 2022 Sir Richard Hadlee Medal award, and this year's King's Birthday ONZM honour speak volumes.

The standing ovation after his last act for the Blackcaps fittingly came on home turf in Hamilton, having represented Northern Districts throughout — one of Northland's greatest contributions to New Zealand sport. An extensive T20 franchise career has since continued as a sought-after senior statesman of the art of swing bowling.

Northern Brave keeper-batter **BERNADINE BEZUIDENHOUT** brought down her international curtain just three days after last year's Outright 'retirements edition', after representing both South Africa (2014 to 2015) and the White Ferns (from 2018).

Bezuidenhout has continued on domestically, while also founding a non-profit social enterprise, The EPIC Sports Project Charitable Trust, and raising awareness of RED-S (Relative Energy Deficiency in Sport), which derailed her health and career for two years in the middle of her New Zealand chapter.

The 31-year-old said finding the right balance after her heartfelt pivot to her off-field projects was at the forefront of a difficult decision to retire, after 49 international appearances in all.

Central Hinds stalwart **MIKAELA FRANKS** (née Greig) can meanwhile look back on a sole White Ferns cap, and it's a special memory even though she got run out for a duck by her partner.

Franks debuted for Central fresh from Levin's Waiopahu College, and gave 12 seasons of service before calling time at the end of March. Captain in both formats for the Hinds in her final season, she was on fire with the bat and had her best

summer in 2023/24, winning NZ A as well as White Ferns selections for the first time. Making the previous summer's Super Smash Grand Final and winning the HBJ in 2019 are other proud highlights from a gritty career conducted from the backblocks of Shannon.

Another Central stalwart officially now in life-after-cricket mode is **BEN SMITH**. Now 34, he started his career from Whanganui, representing the Stags from 2010/11 until the end of 2023 in 71 one-day, 71 first-class and 42 T20 matches.

The top order nugget's record includes 3,506 Plunket Shield runs at a 30+ average and six first-class hundreds — including a knock of 244 which is the Stags' fourth highest of all time, from a summer in which he scored three first-class centuries.

“Smudge” could be just as immutable in one-day cricket, producing an unbeaten 149\* at Saxton Oval in 2019/20, and 145 in Hamilton two years ago in a 252-run partnership with Brad Schmulian. He averages over 30 in that format as well, holding the Stags' second-wicket List A record of 224 from that Nelson exhibition with George Worker.

**NEIL WAGNER** will never regret deciding to play one more Domestic season after his last game for the Blackcaps. “Wags” had been trying to win the Plunket Shield, first with Otago and latterly with ND, for 17 years. He succeeded in his final game in New Zealand this summer, with a match-winning bag to boot.

Fairytale endings don't get better than that, and there were more than a few songs sung in his honour in Dunedin

*Continues overleaf...*







JESSE PRASAD



LOUIS DELPORT

## PULLING STUMPS

**LOUIS DELPORT's** Auckland teammates are going to really feel it when preseason training kicks off this year. No one brought more energy or a broader smile to the sheds than Delport who will be remembered for a lot more than his celebratory backflips.

Now 37, the left-arm spinner was a late bloomer in Domestic cricket but, from playing on postage stamps in front of a herd of cows at national club champs to entertaining the Super Smash

crowds, he took it all in his stride. He'd made his first-class and T20 debuts in South Africa when he was in his late 20s, then emigrated and got his first Auckland call-up in 2017/18.

Even then, it took Delport another couple of seasons to get a white-ball cap, but he retires with 35 T20 wickets at just 22.17, and 51 List A wickets with a best of 4/16 — all for the Aces. He had the massive pleasure of bowling his arm off to Tom Bruce on Auckland's outer oval during the Plunket Shield this past summer (Bruce scored 345), but his 7/88 and 7/78 in consecutive seasons a few years ago probably ranks higher among his favourite memories. All up, Delport snaffled 97 first-class wickets, and his fearless lower order batting was nothing but entertaining.

Wellington will also head into the new summer without some much loved faces.

**IAIN McPEAKE** put the full stop on his long, loyal Firebirds career with one last wicket to end the last Plunket Shield match at the Basin this season.

It was the Lower Hutt-born paceman's 154th first-class wicket. "Big John" took five first-class bags and a best of 5/21, and one match haul of 10/51 in the format in which he first debuted, at the same ground, in March 2016. He also has a 5/40 List A best.

"For a long time I just wanted to get one game — so to have had the privilege to play for so many years, and be a part of many incredible matches, is something I'll cherish forever," he said, now turning his attention to finishing his building apprenticeship.

**DEANNA DOUGHTY** played her last match for Wellington Blaze in early 2023, and has now also officially hung up the boots.

Like McPeake, Wellington was her lifelong Association. Her career and contributions — almost exclusively with the ball, began as a teen in 2011 and took in a golden era for Wellington women's cricket. The leg-spinner took 109 one-day wickets in the gold, including two bags and a 5/26 PB. She is one of only four players to have taken 100 List A wickets for the team, and you can add 68 T20 victims, with a best of 4/13 from 155 overall appearances.

The team at NZCPA wishes all our retiring players much success and enjoyment in their next endeavours as we stay connected on the other side of the boundary.



ANURAG VERMA



IAIN McPEAKE



DEANNA DOUGHTY

as Northern celebrated their drought-breaking title as well as their champion bowler's inspirational career.

Wagner intends to continue on to Durham for one last County stint this winter, body permitting. His 849 first-class wickets is a phenomenal tally that ranks him behind only four other New Zealand players over the last century.

With a career away from cricket, **JESSE PRASAD** is retiring at just 26, after four seasons with the Auckland Hearts followed by two with Northern Districts, tallying 77 Domestic appearances overall.

Last summer delivered her maiden bag (5/40) with her right-arm pace in the HBJ. Cricket's loss will be everyone else's gain as she fully focuses now on her rewarding career as a Health Coach, a degree and post-graduate diploma in Health Sciences behind her.

ND also officially farewells **ANURAG VERMA**, one of their brainy cluster of cricketing mechanical engineers. "Rags" got his BE with first-class honours and at 34, is now an associate director of Beca in Singapore, for whom he was previously a senior engineer in New Zealand.

A sharp young paceman at the 2008 Under-19 World Cup, Verma debuted for ND a few years later in 2011. He also spent three years mid-career with Wellington, but serious back injuries led to frustratingly long periods out of the game. His final game for ND was in early 2022, finishing with 177 wickets overall across the three formats, including a first-class 7/82; 5/44 in The Ford Trophy and a Super Smash best of 4/27.



## AN HISTORIC FOURTH CONSECUTIVE CPA PLAYERS' AWARD FOR AMELIA KERR

Amelia Kerr receives her CPA Players' Award from Former NZCPA Board Member Helen Watson.

### AMELIA KERR HAS ETCHED HER NAME FURTHER INTO NEW ZEALAND CRICKET HISTORY, BEING HONOURED WITH THE 10TH CPA PLAYERS' AWARD FOR 2025, HER FOURTH CONSECUTIVE WIN AND A REMARKABLE RECOGNITION FROM HER WHITE FERNS TEAMMATES.

Kerr was recently honoured with the prestigious award in Auckland, capping off what has arguably been her most dominant season yet. The award, voted by fellow players and coaching staff, reflects her consistent excellence and unmatched influence on the international stage. It also sees her become the first player, male or female to win the award four times in a row.

In a year where the White Ferns claimed their maiden ICC Women's T20 World Cup title, Kerr was the heartbeat of the campaign. She was named Player of the Tournament, playing all six matches, taking 15 wickets, the most of any bowler and scoring 135 runs, finishing among the top 10 batters in the competition. Her all-round brilliance helped drive New Zealand to a historic triumph and further solidified her status as one of the premier players in world cricket. Subsequently, she was named ICC Women's Cricketer of the Year.

Reflecting on receiving the award for a fourth time, Kerr said, "It's such a special group to be part of, this White Ferns

team. I debuted in 2016, so with that time and experience—and as someone who thinks a lot about the game—leadership has naturally become more of a role for me. I've been really fortunate to have amazing leaders around me like Sophie (Devine) and Suzie (Bates), and Amy (Satterthwaite) back in the day as well.

Moving forward, I want to keep growing my game, but also help others who are in similar positions to where I was when I was younger. If I can support their careers, they can help mine too. It's about learning as much as I can, and I think that's the next step for me in terms of leadership—giving back to the team and trying to inspire more young players to reach the highest level. I've really enjoyed that."

Kerr's season was a testament to that relentless drive. In addition to her World Cup heroics, she was a standout performer across tours to England Australia and India, as well as the summer home series against Australia. Her all-round contributions were pivotal, whether through impactful spells with the ball or calm, composed innings under pressure.

Former White Fern and NZCPA Board Member Helen Watson presented the award and shared her admiration for Kerr's continued rise, "To see Amelia reach these heights year after year is incredibly special. What stands out is not just her skill — which is world-class — but her humility, leadership, and desire to keep learning. She's not content with just being great, she wants to elevate those around her. She's the type of player every team dreams of."

### THE CPA PLAYERS' AWARD LEADING VOTE RECIPIENTS PER FORMAT

ODI	Amelia Kerr
T20	Amelia Kerr

### CPA PLAYERS' AWARD RECIPIENTS

2025	Amelia Kerr
2024	Amelia Kerr
2023	Amelia Kerr
2022	Amelia Kerr
2021	Amy Satterthwaite
2020	Sophie Devine
2019	Sophie Devine
2018	Sophie Devine
2017	Amy Satterthwaite
2016	Suzie Bates

Former CPA Players' Award recipient and White Ferns legend Suzie Bates also praised Kerr's incredible run of performances and her growing presence as a leader within the team.

"It's interesting, when you're in that position, you don't always realise the influence you're having. As a senior player, I believed the best way to lead was by example, and that's exactly what Melie is doing now. She might not fully see it, but she's already having a big impact—not just on the current White Ferns, but also on future generations coming through. There are players who want to make the team, and then there are players like Melie, who want to be the best in the world. That ambition, drive, and work ethic is truly inspiring. She's naturally stepping into a leadership role—mentoring others, setting standards, and showing what it takes. She's a special player and will leave a real mark on the game."

The 2025 cap is the 10th edition of The CPA Players' Award, with the player-voted award highlighting the contributions made from many players across all formats.

Amelia Kerr led the player votes in the ODI format, just ahead of sister Jess Kerr and Georgia Plimmer (equal second). In T20 cricket, it was again Amelia Kerr whose performances through the year saw her take out the voting tally, with Brooke Halliday (2nd) and Eden Carson (3rd).





AJAZ PATEL

# TRADING PLACES: A NEW SPIN ON CRICKET

BY MARGOT BUTCHER

## AJAZ PATEL KNOWS HOW TO MAKE THE MOST OF AN OPPORTUNITY.

*Sparse Blackcaps selections — always abroad, primarily in Tests — have delivered stunning New Zealand cricket history. From a Test debut bag (2018), all 10 wickets in a Test innings (2021) to finishing off India again for the historic Test series win last November, his stats sparkle. He got there after having been the top Plunket Shield wicket-taker for three consecutive seasons, after a youthful switch from frustrated pace bowler to master of left-arm off-spin. Missing out on a Blackcaps contract and a painful injury in the last six months hasn't dimmed his desire, while away from the park he's grounded in faith and family.*

*Bowling through pain — few people knew that was going on in November when you took 11 wickets in the series-winning Test match in Mumbai. You were last sighted hobbling slowly up the steps at Bay Oval a few matches into the Plunket Shield, late last year. Tell us what happened.*

**AJAZ PATEL:** I did my knee injury first game in India, but played through that whole Test series. Came back and it felt okay, but by the end of three Plunket Shield games, I certainly knew it wasn't right, and really needed to get this looked at. Got the scans done and found out I had micro-fractures in my tibia. That led to seeing the surgeon regularly in a staged recovery plan, but the rehab turned out to be a lot longer than I anticipated. I was thinking it would be six to eight weeks, like a normal bone injury, not half a year. But you build mental resilience through cricket. It's part of professional sport. The resilience it takes for sportspeople to keep coming back from injuries and niggles is actually huge.

*How did you stay upbeat?*

I thought, okay, what's the good that's going to come out of it? One of the things was I had the opportunity to join the Prime Minister's trade delegation in India — which was amazing. It also gave me a time of reflection. A quiet mind, to look at what I still wanted to achieve and where my goals are over the next few years. So it was quite enlightening. Rewarding even, and if anything, the fire is burning more. It was also the first time in the last 4-5

years where I've been able to just be in one place for a decent amount of time and really connect with my family on a deeper level, at home every day. That helped, as those long days of rehab, strength and conditioning were testing. On your good days, you feel like you're almost there, but it's a constant battle between the good days and bad days. It's really exciting now to be back in full swing and have something to look forward to again, starting with the Global Super League in Guyana which means a lot to us as Stags.

*What moments do you most treasure from the Test Series win in India?*

Personally, it was being able to do it in front of family. Obviously I haven't had opportunities to play Tests in New Zealand, so my family here don't get to watch me play for New Zealand a lot which has always been quite tough for us. They're often sitting at home watching it, and I don't really get to appreciate the level of joy that they have in those moments.

When I got my 10-fer in 2021, I was gutted that it was in the middle of that COVID period so I wasn't able to share that moment with family. This time around, going back to Mumbai where I'm from,

and to be able to do what we did AND have family there and share that, that'll stay right up there in terms of both my cricketing achievement and memories. Being able to have my wife, daughter and parents there, and extended family. To look up and be able to see Mum and Dad in the stands at Wankhede Stadium and how happy they were when I was walking off. And then to have that moment with my wife and daughter when they got to come out on the field, to the middle of the wicket. The people who go on the highs and lows of the journey with you and sacrifice as much as you do — all that time when you're away. It's those quiet hours where my wife is alone with my young daughter, and it's no longer the two of us.

*How did you find going back and putting on a different hat in the trade delegation?*

I was a bit puzzled as to why they wanted me to begin with, when I got an email from the Prime Minister's office with a letter from the Prime Minister. I guess that was self-doubt — what am I really going to offer? But I found out that I could build bridges very quickly between New Zealand and Indian businesspeople, using cricket as the icebreaker to bring them together to

start to communicate. Cricket helps you relate to people very quickly, in India. It's funny, I walk past people sometimes here and you get this look — and as cricketers, we start to recognise that look — where people feel like they've recognised you, but they're not 100% sure. But in India, everyone is so ardent about sport and politics, and I was in a situation where they knew exactly who I was. I started to understand how sports can be such a valuable tool in diplomacy and building strong connections. I quickly found myself very busy on that trip, meeting and greeting and getting to know people.

That includes the amazing people and diaspora that was in the New Zealand delegation itself. I also have a new level of respect for politicians because I saw all the work that went in behind it, and I was seriously impressed. They were four full-on, jam-packed days, and it was an amazing opportunity for me to grow my own network. Ross [Taylor] was co-lead of the 'business delegation' and I was part of the 'community delegation' so we were often in different places, but it was cool to catch up with Ross there too, as I haven't seen him a lot since he

stopped playing. I felt he took a lot of heat off me, they certainly know who Ross Taylor is in India.

*In New Zealand, you're one of our highest profile Muslim sportspeople. How inclusive has the cricket environment been? I know you're able to take time to pray, and to do Ramadan on playing days. We also changed the way we did champagne spray photos, with a 'dry' team trophy photo first — New Zealand was the first country to do that, and emulated by England, so that the likes of yourself and Mo Abbas can relax and share in iconic team moments.*

It does feel a hell of a lot more inclusive because you don't feel like you have to step out of that moment, you know? And it is a moment that you treasure. I did used to have to step away to avoid the alcohol in the spray, but I knew it was never intentional — I understood that it's part of the celebration culture, and guys were just unaware that it could be a personal problem for me. Now — since 2020 I think — it just takes the worry out of the equation. I think it's pretty cool that the guys can still have their fun their way, and, that they also look out for me and my beliefs.

*Continues overleaf...*





## AJAZ PATEL TRADING PLACES: A NEW SPIN ON CRICKET

Ajaz with Members of the New Zealand trade delegation at Wankhede Stadium, Mumbai. Left to Right: NZ High Commissioner to India Patrick John Rata, Ross Taylor, Mitchell Santner, Hon Mark Mitchell, Rt Hon Christopher Luxon, Bevon Jacob, Trent Bolt, Ajaz Patel.

### *How do you manage the month of Ramadan fasting alongside cricket?*

It obviously coincides with Plunket Shield where you can be bowling a lot of overs on a hot day.

The first two or three days of Ramadan are the most difficult, but it's mind over matter. The purpose is to be grateful. Living in the modern world, we don't always appreciate that we have clean drinking water and food to eat ready whenever we want. It's a month to really check in again and be grateful for and appreciative of all the luxuries that we have in life, and, empathy for people who don't have clean drinking water, who struggle to get one meal a day. It's also a time when you feel a cool unity with everyone else around the Muslim world experiencing the same things spiritually, so although personally I could choose to postpone my Ramadan fast as a 'traveller' when I'm 'travelling away' for a game, I choose not to.

At the same time, I'm not saying it is easy! It certainly has its challenges when it's late in a long bowling day. You can feel quite parched and dry, so that first sip of water after sunset is quite nice. But your body is amazing in what it's able to do and get through. When I do start getting fatigued, I take it one ball at a time, and deal with it that way. The coaches and players around me are also

really understanding. I'm grateful that they understand. They might put me in positions where I won't have to run around as much or, if we're batting, I get the opportunity to just go into the sheds and have a break or have a little snooze. My Ramadan routine on playing days is wake up before dawn, have a bowl of oats with a scoop of protein, some fruits in there, and a litre bottle of water, and that'll be it. Then a date to break the fast at the end of the day [tradition], then onloading as much water as I can. A 10-15 minute break, then have a nice, full meal. The most important part for me is getting the hydration/electrolyte balance at the right level because obviously your body will say 'enough!' at some point and then that can defeat the purpose!

### *Another thing I learned recently is that physios now run vegan jelly snakes over the rest of the season.*

Yeah, the 'normal' ones contain gelatine that isn't halal. So all of those little things are pretty cool. It just means I can not worry about it and do what I need to do.

### *Your competitive fires are clearly still burning at 36. You're on 85 Test wickets. I'm old enough to remember Blackcaps Test cricketers still winning matches at 40 — and as pace bowlers. How do you see your future, next few years and beyond?*

One thing the delegation trip to India really gave me was opportunities to look outside

of the game as well, and to understand that there are a lot of opportunities for me outside of the game post-cricket, whenever that comes. I have a marketing and management degree from before my cricket career, but I guess I was really uncertain what future avenues there might be for me. Now, I feel a little more confident and connected, which has been good for me overall, mentally.

But yeah, it is tough mentally and emotionally, to be in and out of the Blackcaps team, with the Test series few and far between — it can be a personal rollercoaster in that regard. Come off a real high, come back and can't help but feel on the outer again. That's when mental resilience is important, again, as it was with the injury. It's huge. Have that real clear understanding of why you're doing what you're doing.

I've always been passionate about wanting to play cricket for New Zealand and that doesn't change. That was my dream growing up, and to have realised that dream, it doesn't quite stop there. The dream's evolved to wanting to achieve more. I've been very, very fortunate in my short career so far, and I have to be grateful to God as well, for me to have had those moments with so few opportunities. It's been pretty amazing. I'll be thankful for whatever the future holds for me.

# THE PLAYER'S CONFERENCE 2025

Left to Right: Otago Sparks Bella James, Molly Loe, NZCPA Head of Player Services Brad Rodden, Otago Volts Max Chu, Luke Georgeson.

The annual Players' Conference held in Auckland on 15th and 16th April is a cornerstone of the NZCPA's connectivity, engagement and inclusion for our members. The conference provides a platform for players to reflect on the way the high-performance system is operating in their own environment and across the country, to share experiences and insights which will help influence and shape the future of cricket environments in New Zealand.

The two-day conference saw 27 players converge from across the country, representing each of the men's and women's domestic and international teams. The workshop-style conference created space for open discussion on key issues, group collaboration, and direct conversation with personnel from NZC and the Major Associations.

Brad Rodden, Head of Player Services, led the conference and emphasised the importance of open and honest discussion, feedback and conversation. "The conference is one of the key times we get a good range of players with experience, passion and fresh thinking in the same room — and when we do, the conversations are powerful and constructive.

"It's about what's working, what needs attention, and how we as a collective can drive progress. The insights and solutions that come out of this space have real impact, what we do from here is critical," said Rodden.

## MAJOR CONFERENCE FOCUS AREAS

- Reflecting on insights from the annual Player Survey and exploring and discussing emerging themes.
- Evaluating the international and domestic high-performance environments and domestic competitions, with players sharing the group perspectives directly with NZC and Major Association representatives.
- Feedback on the Personal Development Programme and the BetterForm initiative. Coach Leadership Development Programme, and operations of The Cricketers' Trust.
- Tom Moffat, WCA CEO, updated players on the work of WCA, highlighted key findings from the 'WCA Global Game Structure Report' and other matters impacting players in the global cricketing landscape.

Matt Henry spoke to the importance of the event in getting the playing group together, "With the nature of cricket these days, it's pretty rare to get so many players together in one room — from international and the domestic teams, men and women. To be able to talk about how things are going, look at the survey results, and see where there's consistency — that's really valuable.

This conference gives us the chance to voice what's working, where we're struggling, and what needs improvement. The CPA plays a massive role in that. They help relay those messages to New Zealand Cricket, and that relationship is so important. At the end of the day, we all want the same thing — a great product, players being looked after, and to grow the game. Something like this helps make that happen through honest, constructive conversations."

A key part of the conference was the discussion on the annual NZCPA Player Survey. Players examined high-level findings across the men's and women's groups, before breaking into their own Major Association groups to analyse results specific to their own environments. This enabled players to identify shared themes and tailor insights to their own MA experiences.

The format of the conference encouraged cross-team connection and collaborative thinking. Players were grouped to reflect on the current state of domestic competitions and the wider high-performance environment. On day two, each group presented their ideas back to the conference and relayed the key thoughts on major matters to NZC and MA representatives who attended the

*Continues overleaf...*



# THE PLAYER'S CONFERENCE 2025



Auckland Aces Louis Delport.

morning session. The feedback included players' thoughts on what is working well, what needs improvement, and how to align on next steps to lift the professional cricket experience for all players.

Georgia Plimmer highlighted the value of connecting across the wider player group, "It's been really cool to be in the same space as players from all the Major Associations even just chatting with guys from the Firebirds, comparing notes with the Blaze, seeing where things are similar or different.

As players, we're the ones living and breathing these environments, so it's important that we get to share what's going well and where things can improve

— whether that's competitions, facilities, or support structures. These conversations help us think about how we can make things better not just for next season, but for the game long term. It's about creating better environments and making sure more players feel welcomed, supported, and excited to be part of cricket."

Another important focus was the NZCPA's Personal Development Programme. Led by Lesley Elvidge and the Personal Development team, the session facilitated discussion on the new BetterForm health and wellbeing members programme, the Coach and Leadership Development Programme, and the exceptional work The Cricketers'

Trust is doing helping past players who have fallen on hard times. Players were encouraged to think beyond the game, with a view to sustainable careers and personal wellbeing both during and after their playing journeys.

Tom Moffat, CEO of the World Cricketers' Association (WCA) attended via an online link to outline key developments in the 'WCA Global Game Structure Report' and discussed major issues affecting the international player landscape, including scheduling pressures, global league trends, and the future direction of the game. His update helped connect the experiences of New Zealand players with the broader global context, reinforcing the importance of collective player representation in the rapidly changing global environment.

Overall, the 2025 Players' Conference was a massive success - once again showcasing the strength of player collective views. Through shared experiences, robust conversation, and connection across teams and environments, everyone left with a better sense of where we are now, what needs to improve or evolve, and what steps are involved in getting there.

It will be a busy period before the next home summer as we carry these conversations forward with the various stakeholders within wider cricket environment and seek to continue improvements to the game in New Zealand.



Left to Right: NZCPA CEO Heath Mills with Henry Shipley, Ken McClure, Jack Boyle



Former International Kyle Mills with a birdie putt.

# THE PLAYERS' GOLF DAY

Always an enjoyable day out, the Players' Golf Day provided the full field of players and guests with the perfect environment to relax and enjoy an action-packed day. Windross Farm was in magnificent condition, and the weather on the day could well have been the best in what was a long and hot summer.

Raising funds for The Cricketers' Trust is the purpose of the day, and we were delighted to have an excellent turnout, with 25 teams participating in the golf and activities for the charity that gives back so much to previous players in need.

Guests and players were welcomed with a short video about the Cricketers' Trust, its amazing work, and heard directly from Brian Barrett, who eloquently shared his appreciation at the Trust dinner hosted the week prior.

The Cricketers' Trust trustee Will Young has done an amazing job in driving awareness of the essential need among Blackcaps players, and it was a delight to see so many current and past players in attendance to support this important fundraising day.

The team Ambrose format facilitates a great energy between the players and their guests, with the chance to share stories, experiences and laughs throughout the day. The format allows the chance for good golf to shine, but equally to ensure that everyone can enter the clubhouse with a sense of satisfaction of a great overall team score.

As is always the case with this format, there can be a few sideways glances as the results and winners are announced. But this year it was Team Jarden taking out the overall team prize, proudly hosted by recent retiree, Will Somerville.

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

Overall, the day was a wonderful experience and showed why the Players' Golf Day is held in such high regard by those in attendance. We are delighted to have raised in excess of \$15,000 for the

Cricketers' Trust this year and thank the Blackcaps players for their commitment to this event and this charity which is so important to our playing group.

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

We look forward to having everyone back again next year.



THE CRICKETERS' TRUST



Current International Michael Bracewell hosts Team nib.





# FROM THE PITCH TO PORTFOLIOS

## A NEW INNINGS IN FINANCE

BY AIDEN MCLAUGHLIN

**AT FIRST THOUGHT, BECOMING A FINANCIAL ADVISER MIGHT NOT BE THE MOST OBVIOUS CAREER TRANSITION FOR A CRICKETER, BUT WHEN YOU LOOK BENEATH THE SURFACE, THERE ARE PLENTY OF COMMON SKILLS.**

Three former players are all now plying their trade in this field, but all three have had very different journeys to get there.

**WILL SOMERVILLE'S** path was almost interrupted by his cricket career. He's now a Wealth Management Adviser at Jarden (now JBWere), having previously been a chartered accountant.

Born in Wellington, Somerville has spent half his life in Australia, including attending high school there. When he couldn't enrol for Commerce at the University of New South Wales due to his marks not being good enough, he instead studied science for 18 months before making use of his Kiwi passport to go back to his first choice and study it in Dunedin. From there, the offspinner played for Otago, starting in 2004–05. But after four years in the deep south, Somerville moved to Sydney in September 2009, where he would spend

the next nine years, first studying to become, and then working as, a chartered accountant until early 2015 when cricket became his priority.

Somerville represented New South Wales, but after 12 games in four seasons, he found himself behind Nathan Lyon in the domestic pecking order and it was time to move back to New Zealand, joining Auckland in 2018.

Then, at the end of that year, came the finest moment in his career, as he was called up by the Blackcaps for their Test series against Pakistan in Abu Dhabi.

"My Test debut, getting the hat, that was a boyhood dream and I'll never forget that for sure. I'll hold on to that for the rest of my life," Somerville says.

He would go on to play a total of six Tests, which included a return to Sydney to face a number of former New South Wales teammates against Australia in January 2020. But the previous winter, Somerville had an encounter which would help forge his future outside of the game.

"I was always interested in investments and did my own investing. It's something I'm quite passionate about and interested in and I was trying to do something that I was keen to do after cricket and so I

managed to do some study and I met up with the Jarden team in the winter of 2019. I'd spoken at the Queen Street Cricket Club, which is the charity that I'm now treasurer of, and then Jarden invited me to shadow them in the office over winter to see what they do and see if I had an interest in working there when I wasn't playing cricket," Somerville says.

Somerville worked at Jarden for a couple of off-seasons, undertaking the necessary study to become a qualified adviser. Then, in 2023, he retired from the game, moving to Jarden on a full-time basis.

"It's been really great. I was excited about finishing cricket and going into something I was really excited about doing and that was the beauty of it. You never stop learning in this job, every day is different. It's a really cool environment to be in," Somerville says.

"You can't get to the top of sport without being quite disciplined and being driven and setting goals and making steps every day towards achieving that, and that's very similar to this discipline."

Somerville wasn't alone during some of his most recent studies, having a valued Auckland teammate alongside him, working together to pass their papers.

**GEORGE WORKER** had 17 seasons of professional cricket and is now an investment adviser at Forsyth Barr. He started playing first-class cricket when he was 18, signing a contract straight out of school and, understandably, university studies went on the backburner. After four seasons at Central Districts, Worker moved down to Canterbury to continue his cricket career and that's when he discovered shares and took a passion for them. Worker completed a Business Management degree and continued with his cricket. But fast forward to COVID, and Worker used the extra time on his hands to listen to podcasts and watch YouTube and found a passion for macroeconomics.

"In the last five years of my cricket career I was always thinking in the back of my head, this is not going to last forever. I also wanted to do something outside of cricket completely. I didn't want to go into coaching, I wanted to step outside and go into a completely new environment and challenge myself that way. I really enjoy helping people and I think that crosses over to the financial services role where you're talking with

new people all the time and you're dealing with new or existing clients and forming that relationship with them, which I find really great," Worker says.

A couple of years later, Worker had a coffee catch-up with someone he knew that worked at Forsyth Barr and from there, he ended up with a job interview.

Worker joined the firm as an adviser assistant for two winters while he was still playing for Auckland, but when the third winter came along, he was offered a full-time role as an associate adviser. He weighed things up and decided it was the right time to finish cricket.

"When I was in my twenties, there was that nervousness about what I was going to do after cricket and was I going to enjoy it as much as my cricket career because then you're in the thick of it. So when I did get offered this role, it just took away all that pressure and it was a no-brainer for me. To leave on my own terms and go into an industry that I'm really passionate about and to work for a great company like Forsyth Barr, I've been bloody lucky," Worker says.

Worker was always able to call upon the NZCPA's Personal Development Managers for guidance in need, including former PDM Sanjeeva Silva, and more recently, Paul Hobbs.

"A lot of people don't know what they want to do, but also they don't know what's out there and that's where the players association has been great, having those chats with Sanj and Paul."

Worker is still involved in the game, having joined the board of directors for Auckland Cricket earlier in 2025, which not only gives him the opportunity to give back, but also allows him to learn more about the governance side of the sport.

"For me it's a great learning opportunity to be on a board and still have a foot in cricket."

Alongside Worker at Forsyth Barr is another investment adviser who has

*Continues overleaf...*





FROM THE PITCH TO PORTFOLIOS

recently transitioned to the industry, but it's not the only thing he's done post-cricket.

After retiring from cricket, **MARK RICHARDSON** had a successful career in radio and television broadcasting for many years and is still a key member of TVNZ's cricket coverage. But he recognised that industry was changing and had a chat with Paul Hobbs, who had also worked in the media.

"Paul was fantastic to talk to because he understood. It's an industry where you do get moved on quite a lot and it's tough and he understood. He was good to talk to and have a few coffees with and that helped out greatly," Richardson says.

After their discussions, Richardson, who had originally studied for three years at the University of Waikato for his Bachelor of Management Studies before finishing his degree down in Otago, headed off to a Human Resources company to work out what occupations might be suitable. A contact at Forsyth Barr felt that Richardson would fit in well there given that he had the skill set and basic knowledge to build from, so he asked him if he'd like to pursue a career there.

"I've been sacked from so many broadcast jobs, but there was always another there, but as those jobs dried up, it became apparent that I needed to get out. I think I've always had a sense of timing. I finished cricket when my stocks were high and with broadcasting



I decided to make that move while I was still seen as a good broadcaster," Richardson says.

Despite almost two decades in broadcasting, Richardson says his new role is more in tune with his cricket career.

"Investment advice is more closely related to playing sport than it is broadcasting. You need a solid base, you need to understand the basics before you can branch out. You need to understand risk and reward. You chew on your losses and it's an emotional rollercoaster and it's not even your money. But if you get an eight-and-a-half percent return and you're beating the market, you feel on top of the world. It's about helping others. I love what I do now. I don't think I've ever been happier."

Somerville and Worker are also quick to articulate the characteristics that their sporting careers have in common with their new ventures.

"You can't get to the top of sport without being quite disciplined and being driven and setting goals and making steps every day towards achieving that, and that's very similar to this discipline," Somerville says.

The last word goes to Worker.

"It's high pressure, you're dealing with people's wealth, and that's always a pretty sticky subject. Playing cricket at the highest level, you learn to deal with those pressures as well, so I think there's a similarity in that regard. I look back at cricket and I had a great time and it gave me so many opportunities."

UPCOMING EVENTS

PLAYER INDUCTION FORUM

24 & 25 September – Remuera Golf Club, Auckland

PRINCIPAL PARTNER



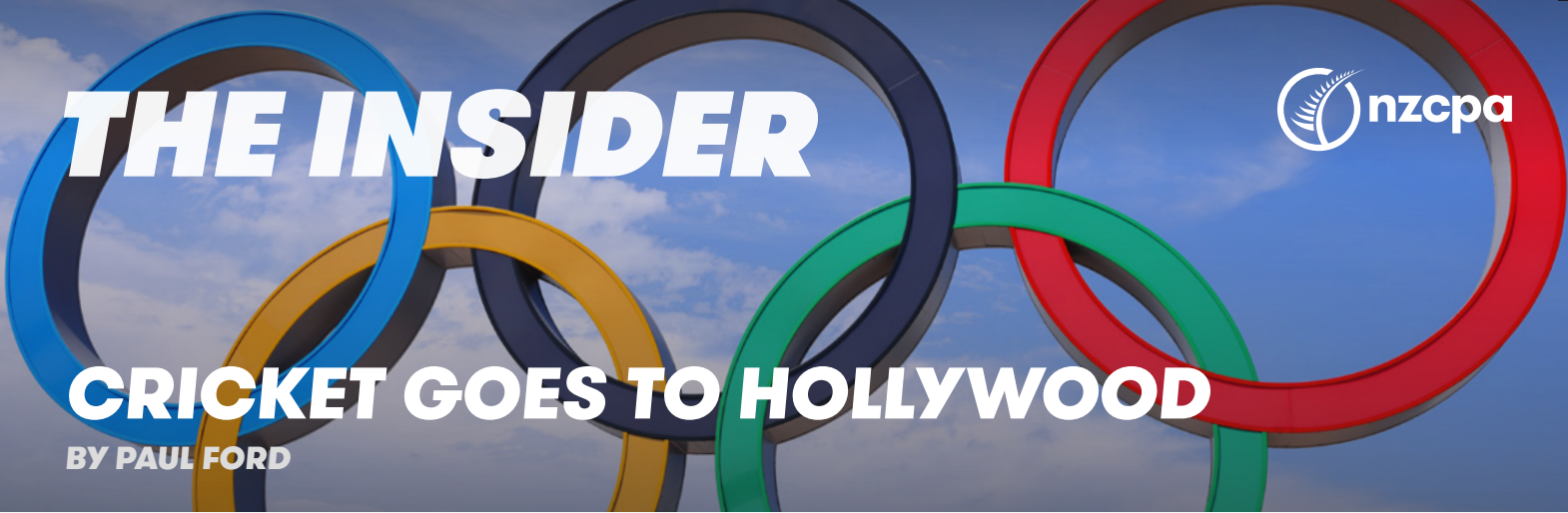
PREMIER PARTNERS



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In recent dispatches around the appointment of the new Blackcaps coach the enticing proposition of attending the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics was included in the coach's 'demanding' upcoming schedule.

It piqued my interest: I'd clean forgotten this was on the cards, and had no idea how our cricket teams were going to make it to the City of Angels in three years.

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In 2028, cricket will be played at the Olympics for the first time since 1900 - men and women are set to play six-team contests in the wham bam thank you ma'am 20-over format. It will be competing for coolness with the other 'new' Olympic sports: baseball/softball, flag football, lacrosse and squash.

There is much speculation about how the 12 teams will be chosen, and specifically around whether the home team should have a spot reserved - a problematic demand given the occasional giant killing USA men's team is #17 and their women's team is #24 in the ICC rankings.

The ICC's associate member delegate from Botswana (T20 ranking: circa #50) is on the record as saying it'd be unrealistic to have a minnow in the mix. "Cricket is coming back into the Olympics after 128 years. We need to make a strong impression so that people will say: OK, we don't want them to go back and beg before every Olympics."

Sanjay Govil, the Canadian-born, Indian-American businessman who owns the Washington Freedom MLC team also supports a best of the best process. "It should be based on merit, because we also want to make sure that it's competitive, right? I think we should have the six best because otherwise it

would be unfair to leave out a team to accommodate the USA as host."

So it all sounds easy, but there are wrinkles in need of an iron for this plan too: for example England (and Wales) is not a team at the Olympics as it competes as part of Great Britain. So recently the England and Wales Cricket Board and Cricket Scotland announced they will join forces for the sport's long-awaited return, and a tripartite hook-up with Cricket Ireland is in train.

And what of the West Indies as a cricket-specific artifice? The Olympics doesn't factor in a composite team of players from a mosaic of 15 countries that attend as individual nations which do not have country-specific ICC rankings. Perhaps there will be a pan-Caribbean qualifying tournament for the right to represent the 'West Indies' at the Games?

The lobbying for a fair and transparent pathway is under way from the West Indies Cricket Board: "We must ensure that our cricketers are not shut out of history. We are ready to collaborate. We are ready to compete. But above all, we are asking for fairness."

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The qualification route is one thing to navigate: the commerciality of the Olympic Games movement is another.

As NZCPA boss Heath Mills wrote in The Bounce Substack newsletter last year. "As it's climbed to the multibillion-dollar event we see today, many people have made a lot of money including broadcasters, commercial sponsors, event service providers, property developers, construction firms, catering companies and betting agencies, but not the athletes.

"Cricket's inclusion will generate hundreds of millions of dollars in

additional broadcast and commercial revenue for the IOC."

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But what of this 128-year hiatus: why was cricket in the Olympics in 1900, and why was this a solitary appearance?

It was in Paris and there were just two miserable teams representing 'Great Britain' and 'France' after Belgium and the Netherlands were late withdrawals. Weirdly the British team was comprised of players from the Devon and Somerset Wanderers, a touring side from Castle Cary Cricket Club and pupils from Blundell School.

The Wanderers were already heading to Paris for a three-match tour and accidentally wandered into a 12-a-side fixture against the hosts who were almost all British blokes working at the British Embassy in Paris. "It was effectively a team of English expats against a team of Devonians and men from Somerset," Wisden reports. "To say they were playing for an Olympic gold medal was almost a misnomer: it was essentially an accidental match that became an Olympic play-off." Ridiculousness!

Great Britain scored 117, then bowled the French Embassy out for 78. In their second innings GBR declared at 145/5, bowling the French out for 26 to win the match by 158 runs. Brilliantly France had scored 10 runs for the loss of 11 wickets in the run chase and then 'played for time', only for their 11th and final wicket to succumb five minutes before stumps.

Hardly a great advertisement for the game - confirmed when cricket was invited to be in the 1904 Olympic Games in St Louis, Missouri, but not enough teams entered for it to go ahead. And so it has been for over a century.

Paul Ford is the co-founder of the Beige Brigade and part of The Alternative Commentary Collective. He is not very good at baseball, softball, flag football, lacrosse, squash, or cricket.



A woman with blonde hair in a ponytail and tattoos on her arms is stretching her leg on a grassy field. A man is sitting next to her, also stretching. The background is a soft-focus sunset with trees.

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