

SPRING 2025 | No. 060



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Cricket Players Association

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OUTRIGHT

THE PLAYERS' MAGAZINE



COLE BRIGGS
FROM ACES TO ANGLERS

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OPENING THOUGHTS



Summer Cricket at Kena Kena Park Kapiti Coast, Wellington.

When the calendar ticks over to October, there's a sense that summer is stirring—it's a time with daylight-saving-induced long evenings, backyard gatherings, and a glimpse of warmer days ahead. For cricket fans, of course, it means something else entirely: the season has begun.

The Blackcaps kicked things off in style with a rain affected T20 series against Australia on the 1st day of October. There's no time to catch a breath as England arrive hot on their heels for three T20s and three ODIs, before the West Indies touch down for a bumper tour stretching into December with five T20s, three ODIs, and three Tests. The new year takes the team to India for eight white-ball games in January before they return home to face South Africa in March for another blockbuster five-match T20 series.

Meanwhile, the White Ferns are right in the thick of the ICC Women's World Cup as this edition of Outright lands,

competing on the global stage in front of passionate Indian fans. February and March will showcase the White Ferns on home soil, with series against Zimbabwe and South Africa with a smattering of double-headers alongside the Blackcaps adding even more excitement to the calendar, but for now, their World Cup campaign is centre stage.

Closer to home, the domestic competitions will showcase the next wave of talent, with 24 new players earning their first professional contracts and participating in the 2025 Player Induction Forum as they embark on their cricketing journeys. Outright caught up with them at the Induction Forum, which was recently held in Auckland.

Inside this edition of Outright, we catch up with Katie Perkins, who has moved from the cricket field into a leadership role as Board Chair of Just Speak, and hear how it is to guide the launch of a major new fundraising campaign. We feature Otago Sparks duo Harriett

Cuttance and Chloe Deerness, who are following a pathway in nursing alongside their cricket. We look back to a fascinating backstory with former Wellington leg-spinner Toivo Vaikvee, and we hear from Cole Briggs on his work as a Fish & Game officer in Otago. The Central Stags share insights into their experience at the Global Super League in Guyana over winter, while Paul Ford's Insider highlights the quirks and history of the Plunket Shield as it celebrates 100 years.

Wherever you find yourself this summer—whether at the ground, watching from home, or sneaking a score update during work—you'll be part of another season that promises its share of drama, achievement, and memorable moments.

We hope you enjoy this edition of Outright.

Ngā mihi nui,

NZCPA

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Players better together



BOWLED BY HOPE

THE TOIVO VAIKVEE STORY

BY TREVOR AUGER

Left to Right: Dermot Payton, Paul Hobbs, Joe Smelle, Stephen Hotter, Toivo Vaikvee, Bruce Edgar

THE STORY GOES THAT WHEN WELLINGTON TOOK THE FIELD AT EDEN PARK IN THEIR PLUNKET SHIELD MATCH AGAINST AUCKLAND IN JANUARY 1974, COMMENTATOR ALAN RICHARDS, CONFUSED BY THE UNUSUAL NAME IN THE VISITORS' LINE-UP, SCANNED THE FIELD FOR A POLYNESIAN FACE. HE SOON DISCOVERED THAT WELLINGTON'S NEW WRIST-SPINNER HAD A THICK HEAD OF BLOND HAIR, AND THAT TOIVO VAIKVEE HAILED NOT FROM THE SOUTH PACIFIC BUT FROM EASTERN EUROPE.

Today, Toivo lives in retirement in Otaki, enjoying keeping up with sport and relishing opportunities to catch up with former team-mates and also with New Zealand's Estonian community. It's a lifestyle which belies his precarious origins.

His mother had fled Estonia after her husband and baby boy had been killed by Russian bombing of the capital, Tallinn. His father, a soldier, was wounded in battle and escaped the country after being invalidated out of the army.

Fate brought them together in the same Displaced Persons Camp in Esbjerg, in

Denmark, and in 1947 they had a baby who they called Toivo, the same name as his mother's lost son. Fittingly, the name means 'hope'.

Toivo stayed in the camp until he was four, when he and his parents moved to New Zealand, initially sharing a three-bedroom house in Palmerston North with two other Estonian families.

By the time secondary school beckoned, he was a keen young sportsman and Palmerston North Boys High cricket coach John Boldt singled him out at the third form trials. The young leg-spinner, who also opened the batting, spent a year in the top third form side before graduating to the 1st XI, which he captained in his last two years.

He also played fullback in the school's champion 1st XV rugby team, coached by former Test wicket-keeper Ian Colquhoun – Toivo recently attended their 60-year reunion.

It had been Colquhoun whose glove work helped Toivo to his first wicket for the school in the local men's senior grade competition. He finished with 5/51 on debut, an eye-catching start for the frustrated medium pacer who had taught

himself to bowl leg-spin from a series of photos in Pix magazine of Richie Benaud, his schooldays hero.

By the time he was sixteen, Toivo was already representing Manawatu. He helped them through a spell of nine successful Hawke Cup defenses, part of a formidable spin attack in company with Test players Victor Pollard and Bryan Yuile, fellow products of Boys High.

There were plenty of highlights, but Toivo particularly recalls fielding in the covers with Pollard as Bert Sutcliffe, playing for Waikato in the twilight of his career, stroked his way to 88. "I said to Vic, 'We haven't fielded a ball yet' – Bert just kept guiding it between us."

Then there was the match against Fiji, when the aggressive batters hit Yuile and Pollard out of the attack. With the test players struggling, Toivo had the Fijians' measure, taking 3/26 and 4/52.

When Yuile and Pollard were unavailable because of international duty, or their preference not to play on Sundays, another young spinner, left-arm David O'Sullivan, joined Toivo in the Manawatu side. The two paired up again when they were in England doing their OE.

They played together for the very successful Finchley Cricket Club in North London, and when O'Sullivan was spotted by Hampshire and joined their Second XI to play his way through his qualifying year, he was instrumental in getting Toivo a couple of matches.

After he took 6/57 against Sussex, following another 5-wicket haul against Middlesex, he wasn't asked to play again. He jokes that O'Sullivan was worried that his mate might play him out of a job.

The pair flatted together at one stage and even set up a furniture removal business. Toivo had earlier been a barman and worked as a courier driver in central London, making deliveries to Buckingham Palace amongst other distinguished addresses.

Returning to New Zealand in the early 1970s, Toivo settled in Wellington and joined Karori, where he soon became captain. An early on-field duel with Bruce Taylor earned him the New Zealand all-rounder's respect, and his Wellington debut came under Taylor's captaincy.

In that first season he made an unbeaten 41 against Central Districts in his initial appearance, sharing an 85-run ninth

wicket partnership with Richard Collinge, and he took 4/41 and 3/99 against Northern Districts.

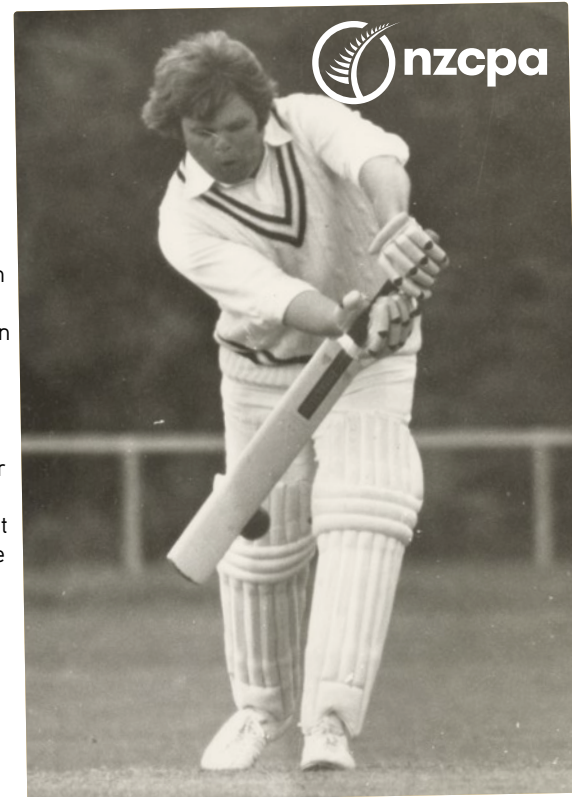
He enjoyed Taylor's captaincy. "We both liked to play attacking cricket. Often when a wicket fell, Bruce would bring me on and say, 'Have three overs at the new man and see if you can get him.'"

The next two seasons, with Taylor no longer in charge, he saw less game time, and then in 1976 he suffered a serious car accident which put him in hospital for six weeks and limited his ability to stretch out and sprint. His first-class days were done after 11 matches, which brought him 14 wickets at 34 and 157 runs at 17.5.

However, he kept playing for Karori until hanging up his boots in the mid-1980s.

On his return from England he had taken up a position with Rothmans "even though I didn't smoke", and he followed that with a move into the insurance industry. However, career ambitions ultimately took second place to the responsibility of becoming a solo father to his son and daughter.

Toivo is a regular attendee at the Cricket Players Association Past Players events in Wellington, and he maintains a very



active interest in cricket and in rugby, the other sport at which he excelled. But in a candid moment, New Zealand's Estonian wrist-spinner, will tell you that there is nothing quite like sitting on the bank at the Basin in the sunshine with a cold beer in his hand and his mates alongside.



1975-76 Wellington Cricket Team – Toivo far right front row



KATIE PERKINS' JOURNEY OF LANGUAGE, LEADERSHIP AND LEGACY

BY AIDEN MCLAUGHLIN

Katie with Tā Kim Workman

KATIE PERKINS LOVES A NEW OPPORTUNITY AND SINCE RETIRING FROM CRICKET, SHE'S GRABBED PLENTY OF THEM WITH BOTH HANDS.

When speaking to Outright, Perkins is about to fly back from Fiji, where she was commentating on the ICC Women's T20 World Cup East Asia-Pacific Qualifier in Suva. It's not her first commentary assignment, having held the mic in the men's version in Samoa in September 2024. But as much as she'd like to do more of it, commentary is far from being the only string to her bow.

Perkins appeared in 73 ODIs and 55 T20Is for the White Ferns between 2012 and 2020, and for almost all of that time, she was a police officer in Counties Manukau, her favourite role being a Youth Engagement Officer in Māngere.

In 2023, Perkins took a year's leave without pay to study te reo Māori full time, eventually making the decision not to return to the police at all. It was immediately after her exit interview that she received the tohu (sign) that she'd made the right decision based on the first email waiting in her inbox.

The email was from 'JustSpeak', whose aim is to work towards the vision for a

thriving Aotearoa with a fair and equitable justice system. How would she like to join their board and assist their work?

Perkins was well aware of the organisation but knew she couldn't really have had a position on their board whilst she was still a police officer, as the two roles wouldn't have aligned. But her decade of experience in the Police, engaging with the criminal justice system firsthand, meant she was highly aware of the systemic issues that exist and extremely passionate about the work that JustSpeak does.

The JustSpeak kaupapa relies heavily on volunteers, but currently they have three part-time staff (the equivalent of just one full-time staff member) who are doing amazing mahi.

The staff are key to sustaining the momentum and the voice in the community and fundraising is key to ensure they keep working through their objectives. As a result, JustSpeak have recently launched a Givealittle page to ensure their operations can continue in 2026 and beyond.

One of the other hats Perkins wears is her role as Manutaki Mātauranga (Academic Lead) at Te Wānanga Ihorangi. She continued her te reo Māori journey there in 2024, as part of the Te Reo Maruata Level 6 class.

Halfway through the year she emailed the principals to say she would be looking for a new job after studying and she'd love to give back to this kaupapa if they thought there was a role for her that she could fulfil.

"I was happy to be just a dogsbody and help with whatever they needed, but it turned out that the operations manager at the time was going to go on maternity leave, so I was offered the role during that period," Perkins says.

"I didn't know if I could do it, but they backed me. Then, about three months in, I was offered a permanent position under our academic principal as the academic lead. Although I prefer to say 'te ringa matau (the right hand) o Anameka Paenga'. It's been a steep learning curve but I'm very fortunate to have had the backing and support of the principals. I feel very fortunate every day to be in that space alongside such awesome people."

Aligned to her role at Te Wānanga Ihorangi, Perkins is working with New Zealand athletes across a number of sports to promote the use of te reo Māori. At the Paris Olympics last year, pole vaulter Eliza McCartney did the mihi on behalf of the New Zealand athletics team upon their arrival at the Games. The New Zealand Olympic Committee captured this moment and the video went viral, celebrating her use of te reo Māori.

"I KNOW MY LOVE LANGUAGE IS ACTS OF SERVICE AND QUALITY TIME, SO IT PROBABLY SHOWS THAT WHERE I PUT MY ENERGY, TIME AND SERVICE IS IN THE THINGS I LOVE AND I'M PASSIONATE ABOUT."
- KATIE PERKINS

"I saw the video and was so impressed by her reo, but also internally conflicted seeing how celebrated another Pākehā was for speaking te reo Māori, when I know the challenges and racism that exists for te iwi Māori and their language," says Perkins.

"It triggered a thought in my mind and I wondered if she'd be interested in creating something together as a way to support other New Zealand athletes who are learning te reo Māori."

As fate would have it, Perkins saw McCartney the following month at Eden Park, as they were both present at the world record attempt for the largest haka. Among the 6,531 participants, Perkins thought their encounter was meant to be and introduced herself to McCartney. They caught up for coffee

and discussed what they could do to further promote te reo Māori. Now, every week a small number of current and former international athletes catch up online to kōrero Māori and learn together.

"We're always happy for more athletes to join," says Perkins.

Aside from her commentary work, Perkins is still involved with cricket in her role as President of Cornwall Cricket Club. Their first female President, Perkins has used her term as an opportunity to support the club in their understanding of how they could honour Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

"I made sure I worked closely with the Board to ensure they felt part of the journey and 'in the waka'. They were really keen to support a strategy for the club and absolutely supportive of me driving it. They recognised that it was a great thing for the club and that's been my focus as President."

In August this year, Cornwall hosted a free workshop which was open to all members, friends and family of the club. Facilitated by 'Tangata Tiriti - Treaty People', the workshop covered the history of the Treaty, how we can connect to it in today's society, and what our next steps are in honouring it going forward.

Ngāti Whātua Ōrākei will also be back to open the new season with a whakatau

(blessing), as had been done for the first time in Cornwall history last season. This year Cornwall will sit alongside mana whenua as a symbol of the development of the relationship between club and iwi.

The NZCPA have helped Perkins along the way when it comes to her participation on Not-For-Profit boards. Joining those can be daunting at first, but training is available and doors have been opened.

"That's been really useful. It's those sorts of things where I know I can call my PDM Ginny Fail and she finds opportunities for me."

It's a busy, sometimes crazy existence being Katie Perkins, but her passion to work hard and help others shines through whatever role she is working on at a particular time.

"I know my love language is acts of service and quality time, so it probably shows that where I put my energy, time and service is in the things I love and I'm passionate about. I see my role as using my time to the best of my ability and supporting kaupapa."

You can make a valuable donation to help the ongoing mahi of the JustSpeak organisation via their Givealittle page:

givealittle.co.nz/cause/help-us-keep-fighting-for-a-fair-and-just-aotearoa



2024 Graduation from Te Wānanga Ihorangi. Te Reo Maruata Level 6.



Athlete Rōpū, Left to Right: Māhera Maihi, Lucy Matehaere, Katie Perkins, Eliza McCartney.



HELLO GUYANA!

Left to Right: Will Young, Jayden Lennox and Blair Tickner out and about in Guyana.

IN JULY, SUPER SMASH WINNERS THE CENTRAL STAGS MADE HISTORY AS THE FIRST NZ DOMESTIC TEAM TO PLAY IN SOUTH AMERICA, INVITED TO THE SECOND EDITION OF THE GUYANA-BASED GLOBAL SUPER LEAGUE. REBOUNDED FROM INITIAL JET LAG AND CULTURE SHOCK, THE TEAM SCORED ITS FIRST OVERSEAS T20 WIN AGAINST BBL WINNER THE HOBART HURRICANES, AND BROUGHT HOME CRICKETING EXPERIENCES THAT WERE A WORLD AWAY FROM THE TYPICAL FARE AT MCLEAN PARK OR SAXTON OVAL. GET A TASTER OF THE TRIP FROM CURTIS HEAPHY AND JAYDEN LENNOX'S EXCLUSIVE TOUR DIARY.

In the middle of winter, getting to Guyana involved a lot of different travel arrangements. About half the players were coming from New Zealand, others like myself (Curtis), Ticks (Blair Tickner) and Will Clark were flying in from Heathrow. Our UK group ended up stuck on the runway for 3.5 hours, missing our connecting flight to Guyana, and spending that night and the whole next day in Miami for a bonus lookaround.

Dane and Youngy meanwhile had flown over from New Zealand half a week early to do a tourism promo that involved flying over the Amazon, but unfortunately it got canned due to weather. The first thing that hits you in Guyana is the heat and humidity when you get off the plane — and we'd got in around midnight. Then walking into an airport that was just absolutely chocker, and kind of chaotic. We managed to find our liaison guy and he whipped us down the side of the customs so all of a sudden we were through! But it was still another hour and a half driving to the hotel and 3am by the time we got in.



Dane Cleaver Whipping the bails off v Hobart Hurricanes. Photo GSL via Getty Images

We played at Providence and trained at Everest CC, a club founded in 1914 that counts Shivnarine Chanderpaul among its current members. It had been an official practice venue for the 2024 Men's T20 World Cup, in theory only 10 minutes' drive from the hotel. But we were quickly discovering that everything in Guyana takes time — a combination of Island Time, busy roads, and prolific amounts of roadworks. The team bus had a police escort to games and there was so much traffic, especially for night games, that once we ended up hissing up the wrong side of the road for 3-4km to get past all the traffic, with the police just clearing cars off to the side, out of the way! It would still take 40 minutes.

Training was a chance to get out in the sunshine and get used to our new personnel — Craig McMillan as coach, and Windies rep Matthew Forde who brought a lot of invaluable local knowledge from the CPL. For some of us, it was our first time meeting Macca and he was very good for the environment. Fordey was meanwhile a big personality who brought a smile to everyone's face from the moment we met him in the hotel. He'd be the guy singing in the back of the bus. He'd get his phone on the music or just lie down in the middle of the bus floor chilling out all the way to the game. We thoroughly enjoyed having him around, and he had great buy-in for what we were trying to do. Having played with or against a lot of our opponents, he knew where their zones were, where they liked to hit. He had some good moments himself and it was incredible seeing the franchise guys that you watch on TV doing their thing. How far some of those West Indians hit it is ridiculous!

Day three was media day but Lenno still hadn't arrived by this point, as his wife Cass had only recently had their first baby. He ended up arriving at 4am. Lenno, Clarkie, Foxy and myself had all been on the New Zealand A tour to Bangladesh which proved ideal as the pitches were quite similar, really low and slow, with the holdingness of the surface. You have to play quite straight because of the variable bounce. It was a head-start for us in conditions we don't get to experience in New Zealand.

But as a group, we were rusty in our first game — a loss to the Dubai Capitals. It was sad that it took us a couple of games to work out how to go about it over there because with only four rounds, by then it was way too late. But beating Hobart in Game 3 was awesome, with that rivalry between New Zealand and Australia. We definitely picked up on that big brother, little brother thing from them and I think they were stunned. They'd already had a win, but we ended up above them.

By then we'd thankfully worked out how to take it deep in the batting over there. Tom (with the GSL's equal fastest 50) and Fordey went crazy at the end, which got us up to the top total at the tournament, at the time. We don't normally get that much spin coming at us in a T20, so that was hard to get used to. Teams would bowl 12, 14, 16 overs of spin, and we were probably going to face quite a bit of spin in the powerplay as well. The spin is basically the main factor of those games, but we had Lenno, Ajaz, Gus and Foxy in our squad and they played a big part throughout. Lenno was incredible, every time he touches anything, he is seriously impressive. The spinners were a big factor that helped us win that Hobart game. And we had to leave Dougie [Doug Bracewell] out to fit some extra spinners in, basically, and leaving someone like that out for three games is pretty crazy.

We had played the very first game of the 2025 GSL and also played the last game before the Final, where we were all over the Rangpur Riders before the rain bucketed down and that was that. We finished third of the five teams.

Management and five of the players including myself (Jayden) went to a sold-out Providence to watch the final between the Riders and Guyana Amazon Warriors the next evening. We were in the hospitality area with the other team owners and management, staff and a few players. The rain had bugged off by then,

and it turned out to be an awesome night to go along and be part of the culture, music and festivities of the tournament, with fully catered Caribbean food and a few rum and coconut waters to wash it down. It was an unbelievable atmosphere — the Guyanese are incredibly patriotic when it comes to the Warriors, who went on to win. They are absolute heroes there and Imran Tahir is a god to the locals, his energy and celebrations were incredibly well received. The Warriors were far too strong on the night — their experience and superstars was far, far out of reach for Rangpur, and it really was fitting that the Warriors ran away with the spoils and came out triumphant for the first time.

Beyond the cricket, we spend a lot of time at the hotel since we weren't allowed to go out anywhere unescorted. We all had our own rooms, and the hotel was unbelievable. Probably the nicest hotel I've stayed in (Curtis). Breakfast was amazing, but the rest of the time we ordered in the local version of Uber Eats because it was \$US120 for a steak at the hotel. So we ate a lot of chicken and rice, a lot of stir-fry takeouts! The food at the ground was good, too — a lot of chicken and curries.

We had a really good liaison guy, Trevon Garraway who tried to do as much as he possibly could for us to get us out in the minivan and show us around. He took some of the boys on a little tour to the zoo, we fed a manatee and had a look at a few sights like the Georgetown Sea Wall

and museum. We got local Egg Ball — like a Scotch Egg in cassava flour — for lunch, and fresh coconut and coconut water.

And the rest of the time was just really good bonding time! When I (Curtis) first heard we were going to the Caribbean, I was probably expecting rums on the beach to be honest, but the reality was playing a lot of Mario Kart in our rooms, and Nintendo Golf competitions at the hotel. But I didn't find it frustrating at all. Stags just enjoy being together, so it was an awesome experience for us and I really hope we get another opportunity so that we can put into practice all the things we learned.

All up, we had two weeks on the ground and our departure day went true to form: a drive to the airport came to an abrupt halt when we struck stand-still traffic in all directions — because heavy machinery had been left parked half on the road, and on the alternate route, locals were having a street party! Panic set in when Google Maps said it was going to take three hours to get to the airport. However, after about 45 minutes at a complete standstill, the seas miraculously parted, and we were on our way.

Central Districts Cricket celebrates 75 years this summer. Visit www.cdcricket.co.nz or email alumni@cdcricket.co.nz to book tickets for the 75th Jubilee Long Lunch on 23 January in Hawke's Bay, MC'd by Ben Hurley with guest speakers and luxury auction.



Angus Schaw celebrates with teammates after getting the wicket of Bhanuka Rajapaksa of Hobart Hurricanes. Photo GSL via Getty Images

FROM ACES TO ANGLERS

COLE BRIGGS HOOKS HIS DREAM JOB

BY MARGOT BUTCHER

ONE MINUTE YOU'RE SCORING A CENTURY ON FORD TROPHY DEBUT IN A RECORD PARTNERSHIP (WITH A 99 NEXT GAME). THE NEXT – CONTRACT NOT RENEWED.



COLE BRIGGS, PACKED THE HIGHS AND LOWS OF PROFESSIONAL CRICKET INTO FOUR SUMMERS WITH THE AUCKLAND ACES, AND THE 28-YEAR-OLD KEEPER-BATTER WAS IN THE PERFECT POSITION TO LAND ON HIS FEET WHEN IT SUDDENLY CAME TO A HALT. NOW YOU'LL FIND HIM DAILY IN THE MIDST OF SOME OF NEW ZEALAND'S MOST STUNNING SCENERY, AFTER LANDING A DREAM JOB WITH OTAGO FISH & GAME. FROM WICKETKEEPING PADS TO WADERS, A GAME OF ANGLES TO AN ANGLER'S GAME, HERE'S HOW IT PLAYED OUT.

Cole, your interest in wildlife and conservation goes way back. Tell us how it started.

Cole Briggs: I was born in South Africa, and my grandparents and cousin were a major influence. My grandparents were camp managers, which is a crucial part of the conservation movement over there. They'd look after the rangers and provide safari accommodation. The Kruger National Park was very close to where I was born and lived – in Nelspruit (now Mbombela) in the northeast.

My family came to New Zealand when I was four, and I went back for a visit when I was about 10, and that brought back early memories and really ignited my interest in wildlife. My grandad and cousin were also both falconers. There's a large bird of prey centre called Falcon Ridge where they were involved. I'm interested in birds of prey as well. There are only about four or five different birds of prey in New Zealand, and I've been able to work closely with two of them so far, so we're getting there!

You'll be happy with the Kārearea New Zealand falcon winning Bird of the Year then?

Super stoked! It got my vote.

Did you go straight from school to university to study environmental science?

No, I took one gap year and went to the UK to play cricket, and when I came back, I did my three years at Auckland Uni. A Bachelor of Science, majoring in biology and environmental science. A month out of Uni, I got my first job in an environmental consultancy; however, within six months I was playing professional cricket and basically had to quit my job. I was a contracted cricketer with Auckland for the next three and a half years, and in between seasons and going overseas in winters to play in Europe and UK, I was able to

do some environmental research for the Environmental Innovation Centre, which grew out of Unitec in Auckland. Professor Dr Terri-Ann Berry leads it, and she was really helpful in being flexible around me doing part-time work or just fitting in hours here and there. So, I've been able to be involved in a few projects including researching the effects of polystyrene in waterways. Constantly ticking research projects over helped for continuity in my field of work outside of professional cricket.

How did the end of your time at Auckland Cricket play out?

It was pretty uncertain times heading into that winter, as there had been a complete change of staff. I was playing in the UK when, in July, I found out that I wouldn't be contracted for 2024/25. My wife, who's an optometrist, had come over to the UK with me. Fortunately, she then got a job in Wānaka, so we moved down in January. Then I applied for and got the job with Fish & Game down here.

So a slight upgrade in location. I read that your first week on the job included the opening of duck-hunting season, throwing you in the deep end?

Yeah, it was exciting, and fortunately I've now done all my training to be a ranger. Doing things like licence checks is only a small portion of my job, with a wide variety of work ranging from spawning surveys, wetland restoration and trout



Cole inspects a rainbow trout brood stock at the Macraes Flat Hatchery run at the OceanaGold mine. Photo: Otago Fish and Game

hatchery operations. Fishing season is a busy time, not only with that kind of work but with fish starting to spawn, which is a crucial period for us. They're mainly brown trout, rainbow trout, and we also have a landlocked population of Chinook salmon down here.

Fly-fishing is actually another family passion. My gran and grandpa followed us over from South Africa and ended up in Tūrangi, right alongside the Tongariro River. Most holidays or long weekends, me or Dad or the family would go down and fly-fish the Tongariro River which was super cool. I was really fortunate having that access to it, because fly-fishing is a particular skill, and you need the time and knowledge of where to go and how to do it. That's now a big part of my work – building people's knowledge base, and the awareness that, hey, you can actually go and do this, and here's how. It's a super cool part of the job, for me.

Central Otago is huge and a dramatic landscape, right, so you must spend a bit of time on the road getting to these amazing spots.

Yeah, and you never get tired of it, that's for sure. Initially my wife and I got a place in Wānaka, where properties are going up everywhere at the moment and there are plans for new shops, new Woolworths and New World and all this stuff. It's going a bit crazy there. Then a month ago, after six months in Wānaka, we relocated to Lake Hawea, a 10-minute drive down the road, to a place that allows us to have a puppy.

The Fish & Game Central Otago field base is in Cromwell, which is a

40-minute drive each morning and back. There's three of us who work out of there and we just go in together and come back together each day. The funny thing is, I played at Molyneux Park for the Aces, and we had to stay in Cromwell and drive into Alexandra for that. Almost one year to the exact day, I started work there, and I was looking around thinking, 'I'm sure I know this place, I've definitely been here before!'

I don't think I'll ever tire of it – even the daily commute is truly spectacular. The opportunity to work in such a stunning environment down here has been just amazing, and the biggest thing for me now is to encourage people to get out here in the Central Otago region, to hunt and fish in nature, and to advocate for our anglers and our hunters.

Besides cricket and wildlife, I know you have a third string to your bow in music. Are you still drumming?

Yes, I started drumming when I was seven, and played in all sorts of bands – jazz, rock as I got older. I kept it up until cricket took over when I was about 18 and in COVID times, when I was flatting with friends in Auckland, I got a drum kit again – an electric drum kit so I can just play by myself with the headphones plugged in. It's travelled all the way down the country.



Cole and wife, Renate, at the top of Roy's Peak overlooking Lake Wānaka after a sunrise hike.

Do you still follow your old cricket world, or do you not really have time now?

I do a little bit, but to be honest, not as closely as I perhaps thought I would have. I am really grateful for my time and experiences in cricket, not only at Auckland but for the success we had at East Coast Bays, at club level. We were able to win all three Auckland Club titles – the one-day, two-day and T20 comps, over the space of my last two years. That was really special, to do that alongside cricketers whom I'd played with since school, and under our coach Nick White, who had been a big part of my cricket for so long – it will remain up there among my favourite memories.



CHLOE DEERNESS & HARRIETT CUTTANCE SPARKS IN SCRUBS

BY MARGOT BUTCHER

CHLOE DEERNESS



CHLOE DEERNESS IS WORKING ON CHANGING SOME THINGS IN HER ACTION. ANY BOWLER READING THESE WORDS WILL SHUDDER, MEMORIES OR VISIONS CONJURED OF TREACHEROUS ROAD CONES AND A LONELY LONG SLOG. IT'S BEEN "A TOUGH PRESEASON" SHE SAYS, "BUT GOOD." WITH SECOND YEAR NURSING EXAMS COMING UP – JUST A WEEK BEFORE THE START OF THE OTAGO SPARKS' SEASON, IT ACTUALLY COUNTS AS LIGHT RELIEF.

TWENTY-YEAR-OLD DEERNESS IS NOT ALONE. ALSO IN THE SQUAD INHABITING THESE NETS IS **HARRIETT CUTTANCE**, ALMOST 23, A QUALIFIED NURSE ALREADY, AND CONSIDERABLY TALLER. BOTH HAVE MADE USE OF DUNEDIN'S GLOBALLY RECOGNISED NURSING TRAINING, WITH DEGREE COURSES ON HAND AT BOTH THE LOCAL POLYTECHNIC AND THE UNIVERSITY THAT LENDS ITS NAME TO THE CRICKET OVAL AT THEIR BASE IN DUNEDIN.



Chloe (right) at a café with family.



HARRIETT CUTTANCE

I'D GO AS FAR TO SAY THAT NURSING HAS HELPED MY MENTAL GAME IN CRICKET A LOT.
– HARRIETT CUTTANCE

Harriett on Graduation Day with her Bachelor of Nursing.

Cuttance paved the way to nursing, making a decision to switch after initially doing a year at Uni in a different course, straight out of school. "But I wasn't really enjoying what I was studying, so I looked at different options, and applied for nursing at the Polytech.

"I was put on the waitlist as the course was already full, but I was lucky enough to be on an Otago Cricket scholarship and I think that put me to the top of the list – and then I was in. I ended up really loving it."

The intensive, three-year Bachelor of Nursing includes a variety of month-long placements. Deerness had imagined nursing might be a good fit as this involves working closely with people at all ages and stages of life.

She hails from 'a family full of teachers' – including dad Will Deerness, a coach developer for Otago Cricket. "But my nan was a nurse, so she's been sending me all her old nursing books like crazy, and loves to chat about it. I figured that I'm really close with my family, from lots of baby cousins to my grandparents, and I'd always found it easy to get along with both ends of the age spectrum. I applied for occupational therapy; thought about physiotherapy – I was always leaning to the health sector, and nursing ended up being the one that ticked those boxes."

Confirming her hunches, she 'really enjoyed' her rest home placement, and hopes she'll get a paediatric placement to give her more food for thought as to where she'd like to end up, after graduating. For Cuttance, that was working in a hospital setting, on post-operative wards.

Continues overleaf...





Chloe Deerness bowling in the nets for the Sparks.

IT CAN BE DRAINING. BUT THAT'S WHERE THERE IS CROSSOVER FROM SPORT AND TRAINING WITH THE MENTAL SKILL OF JUST SHOWING UP, AND BEING RESILIENT MENTALLY.
— CHLOE DEERNESS

SPARKS IN SCRUBS

a happy knack of being on the spot for the memorable big matchdays. She debuted in the 2021/22 'HBJ' Final in which the Sparks beat the Blaze by 138 runs — opener Rebecca Burns was a big maiden wicket.

Then last season, in Dunedin when the Hearts were in town for the big dance, she got an unexpected phone call from coach Shawn Hicks after Hayley Jensen went down with injury during the warm-ups.

"I was actually just walking into the ground to support the girls anyway, but what followed was a mad dash to the changing rooms while they were debating, for a good 10 minutes, if I was going to play. I ended up being 12th, which was probably for the best as I'd not prepared for it, but to be there in the group was special, just being a part of that day."

From Gore, which she calls "down South", Cuttance had made her representative cricket debut with the Southland Under-15 girls team, and last summer also proudly represented Aotearoa Māori at the Pacific Cup. Cricket isn't taking a back seat anytime soon, and conveniently Mercy — as a private hospital — actually closes for a few weeks over the summer holiday season.

"I've only been working for eight or nine months now, but I feel like I've grown so much in myself in that time," she says. "It can be a lot like cricket. Nursing is sometimes going to be obviously challenging on the mental side of things with what you're experiencing, and there were times at the start when I'd think, 'Oh my gosh, this is so stressful'. Then you realise that if you're stressed, you just stress everyone else out. Now I react and adapt to situations differently. You just take a breath and get on with it all."

Deerness also has her "emotionally challenging" days, mainly when she's on an unfamiliar placement: "It can be draining. But that's where there is crossover from sport and training with the mental skill of just showing up, and being resilient mentally."

Cuttance: "I'd go as far to say that nursing has helped my mental game in cricket a lot. You realise that if things are going wrong in cricket, it's really not that big of a deal — compared to some of the things I've experienced with a patient the day before."

Cuttance: "I've been working at Mercy, the private hospital in Dunedin, in the post-operative ward where I also did a placement. You see someone come straight out of surgery, then you're looking after them the whole way until they're ready to go home. It's quite an important phase, and you watch them grow in confidence, and help them with education as they go. I just love working with people and I really do enjoy watching someone get better, and being able to send them home with confidence."

Inevitably, at times it's also stressful — inviting comparisons to sport, and the ability to think and adapt under pressure. Both Cuttance and Deerness have played other sports besides cricket. For Cuttance it was tennis and netball — the latter at rep level, but it dropped by the wayside when juggling cricket and nursing studies seemed enough of a busy life. Deerness still plays club hockey in the winter. Both pay tribute to their Otago Cricket coaching staff, past and present, who have always made it low-stress for them to fit in cricket training time and so forth, around the non-negotiable studies, placements, and work.

It's exactly the way female Domestic contracts are supposed to work, but IRL players are also acutely mindful that a semi-professional contract doesn't mean you want to look like a semi-professional cricketer when you step on the field in front of a whole bunch of people and television cameras beaming you to the world.

"Most of the girls in the team study," says Deerness, "and school comes first. If they don't study, they're working, so our

trainings are normally, you know, before nine in the morning or in the evening... Coaches just find a way to make it work for us; it's never been like you had to pick one or the other, but you do need to love what you're doing."

Deerness started playing Have-a-Go cricket as a wee five-year-old in The Glen — coincidentally alongside newly contracted Spark, Isy Parry. She counts herself lucky to have gone to St Hilda's Collegiate — alma mater of half the Sparks, where legendary cricket coach Neil Rosenberg was a big influence.

When she was just 13, 'Rosie' got her a dispensation to play in the Nationals one year when the team was a player down, but the writing was eventually on the wall that, with her petite stature, she needed to change from pace to spin to keep making her way in the game. "I'm so lucky I've got Eden [Carson, White Ferns spinner] down here with us because she helps me so much."

A contracted player, Deerness has tallied 17 one-dayers since her 2021/22 Sparks debut, and was in the playing XI for last summer's Hallyburton Johnstone Shield Final in which the Sparks pipped the Auckland Hearts to sensationally back up their national title. The Sparks have won the Hallyburton Johnstone Shield three times in the last four seasons. She wants to keep working hard on the pathway to more, and only has to look at a teammate like Polly Inglis to know all the hard work can pay off — even if it takes a few years.

A right-arm swing bowler, Cuttance is newly contracted this season, and has only played two one-dayers and one T20 for the Sparks so far — but it's included



THE CRICKETERS' ENTERTAINMENT NETWORK

There's something exciting on the horizon for cricket fans, as the NZCPA and our members introduce The Cricketers' Network — a brand-new weekly video podcast that celebrates Kiwi cricketers and connects them with fans from all around the world. With an increasing number of players, coaches, commentators and administrators plying their trade throughout the world, the time is right to create a platform for them to stay connected to their fans at home, and across the globe.

Aimed at New Zealand cricket and sports fans, and the global cricket fans, The Cricketers' Network offers a chance to build a connection between players and fans like never before.

Guiding the show is Ben Hurley, comedian, broadcaster, and lifelong cricket enthusiast. Many of you will know Ben for his work in entertainment, but he's also a passionate supporter of cricket in New Zealand and the work of the NZCPA. With his trademark humour, insight, and energy, Ben will bring players together to share stories, reflect on careers, and chat about the game from a genuinely player-focused perspective.

The purpose of the show is to create an entertaining, player-centric platform that highlights the cricketing exploits, humility, and passions of New Zealand's finest — inspiring fans and connecting the global cricket community. The show aims to be the leading cricket network for cricketers in New Zealand.

Each episode will feature a rotating cast of current and former players, giving fans a front-row seat to the experiences, passions, and personalities that define Kiwi cricket. Filmed in a dedicated suite at Eden Park, with occasional episodes shot on location, the show will deliver a dynamic and polished viewing experience for fans around the world.

The Cricketers' Network provides a platform for players' stories to be told, wherever they are playing, coaching, or contributing globally. With New Zealand cricketers now competing across franchise competitions worldwide, the podcast offers fans at home and abroad a unique chance to connect with them, hear their insights, and celebrate their achievements both on and off the field.

The purpose is clear: to create an entertaining, player-led platform that

highlights the cricketing exploits, humility, and passions of New Zealand's finest — inspiring fans and connecting the global cricket community. The vision is ambitious: to be the leading cricket entertainment show for Kiwi cricketers, by Kiwi cricketers.

With the first episode set to air in early October, The Cricketers' Network promises laughs, stories, and insights from across generations of players. For those who live and breathe cricket, this is your new destination to experience the game from the perspective of the people who play it.

Download the latest episode now on your favourite podcast platform, make sure you follow us on socials [@thecricketersnetwork](https://www.instagram.com/thecricketersnetwork)



2025 PLAYER INDUCTION FORUM



The 13th annual Player Induction Forum was held on September 24th and 25th, 2025, in Auckland, where 24 newly contracted men and women from across the six Major Associations gathered for their first official step into the professional cricketing environment. Over two days, players were introduced to the NZCPA as their organisation, and the opportunities, expectations, and responsibilities that come with their playing contracts, while also learning about the wide range of services and lifelong support available to them through the NZCPA.

Head of Player Services, Brad Rodden, said the forum plays a vital role in setting the tone for players' careers. "For many,

this is the first step into a completely new environment. The induction forum is about equipping them with the tools to succeed both on and off the field, and importantly, letting them know that the NZCPA is their club for life. It's a chance to connect early, build relationships, and show players that they're not on this journey alone."

The programme included a mix of sessions and conversations designed to provide a strong foundation of knowledge and confidence. Past players Mikaela Franks (née Greig) and George Worker joined the group on day one for a Q&A hosted by Paul Hobbs, sharing honest reflections on the highs, lows, and unpredictability of professional cricket.

Their experiences highlighted that no two careers are the same, but the skills and support networks available can help players manage the challenges as well as the successes.

Interactive discussion were a feature of the forum, with Lesley Elvidge introducing the Personal Development Programme on day one, while day two saw further education sessions on bullying and harassment led by Ainsley Benefield, and an engaging session on social media awareness. Players also heard from SuperLife's Ivy Valderrama and Hilary Van Lent on how they can setup and engage with the Cricketers' Retirement Fund, from Gema Hill at InsureYou on ACC and group insurances, and from NZC's Liz Green and Marty Croy on the NZC and Major Association High Performance Programmes.

For new Auckland Aces player Siddhesh Dixit, the experience was both exciting and reassuring. "Hearing from past players and learning about the support systems in place has given me a lot of confidence. It's clear that cricket is about more than just what happens on the field — it's about preparing yourself for everything that comes with being a professional."

Central Districts player Jess Ogden was struck by the emphasis on balance. "The sessions really highlighted how important it is to look after yourself as a person as well as a player. Understanding things like well-being, financial planning, and having

an identity outside of cricket are just as valuable as the training we do every day."

By the close of the forum, the newly contracted players left with a greater sense of what lies ahead in their professional cricketing lives, and the

reassurance that they are part of a community committed to supporting them every step of the way. For this new group, the NZCPA is not only an organisation that advocates for them now, but also a club they will belong to for life.

2025 NEWLY CONTRACTED PLAYERS

MEN

Auckland: Siddhesh Dixit, Rohit Gulati, Harrish Kanan, Samrath Singh, Lachlan Stackpole

Canterbury: Jesse Frew, Scott Janett

Northern Districts: Xavier Bell

Otago: Mason Clarke

Wellington: Oscar Jackson, Samuel Morgan, Amogh Paranjpe

WOMEN

Auckland: Taila Hurley, Ayaan Lambat, Eve Meachen, Jess Smith, Anika Tauwhare

Canterbury: Darcy Prasad

Central Districts: Jess Ogden

Northern Districts: Skye Bowden

Otago: Hannah O'Connor

Wellington: Sam Mackinder, Isla McKenzie, Hannah Ryan



PDM Paul Hobbs with past players George Worker and Mikaela Franks (née Greig)

UPCOMING EVENTS

PAST PLAYER EVENTS

3 December – Hagley Oval, Christchurch
Blackcaps v West Indies 1st Test

10 December – Basin Reserve, Wellington
Blackcaps v West Indies 2nd Test (men)*

17 or 18 January 2026 – University Oval, Dunedin
Otago v ND Super Smash

4 April 2026 – Basin Reserve, Wellington
White Ferns v South Africa (women)*

Date and Venue (TBC) – Auckland
Bowls

*Wellington events are held in conjunction with the Wanderers Cricket Club and due to venue constraints one is for women and one is for men.



Former White Ferns Betty Watt and Wendy Coe.

T20 BLACK CLASH

17 January 2026 – Bay Oval, Mount Maunganui

HOOKED ON CRICKET

March 2026 – 6 Locations (dates TBC)

PLAYER'S GOLF DAY

19 March 2026 – Windross Farm Golf Course

PRINCIPAL PARTNER



PREMIER PARTNERS



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THE INSIDER PLUNKET SHIELD RAISES THE BAT

2025 Plunket Shield Champions Northern Districts.

Cricket stats guru Francis Payne has confirmed that 2025/26 is the 100th season of New Zealand's men's first-class cricket competition, and I won't be fact-checking that. Whatever Francis says on cricket miscellany, I believe.

The Plunket Shield has been through a few costume changes over the past 99 seasons of course, officially kicking off in 1921/22 after more than a decade of operating challenge-by-challenge among the provinces, Ranfurly Shield style.

The silverware itself was first awarded by William Lee Plunket, aka Lord Plunket, aka the Governor of New Zealand, in 1906. Initially contested by Auckland, Wellington, Canterbury and Otago, CD was added in 1950/51, then ND in 1956/57.

Cricketophiles will be salivating at the thought of NZC's promised 'all-time Plunket Shield XI' being named this season. I won't be revealing mine today, but it would be hard to beat the soft spot I have for the 1992 Northern Districts Shell Trophy team.

But what I will be digging into is some of the nerdy little cul-de-sacs that veer off the Plunket Shield state highway, with a couple of sensible ones in there too.

First up, a couple of team milestones to highlight as we recognise the longest Plunket Shield innings in which **zero maidens** were bowled: a mighty 48.5 overs from two Patels, Dudding, Tickner and Worker extracted 7 wickets but no maidens out of Auckland at McLean Park in 2017.

The glory of the **most extras** conceded in a Plunket Shield is jointly owned by Northern Districts and Otago. The two (international) wicketkeepers in that March 2007 fixture shall remain nameless, but the teams combined for an outrageous 57 leg byes, 33 no-balls, 24 wides and 20 byes.

One of the great 'pub cred records' is walloping the **most sixes** in a Plunket Shield knock, owned by Colin Munro's pulverising 23 sixes in his rollicking 281

(167 balls) at Nelson Park against Central Districts in 2015. It remains the second-highest six count in a first-class knock in the entire history of cricket, just three behind the world record of 26.

Appropriately, the **oldest Plunket Shield centurion** was almost 100 years ago, when Aussie-born Bert Kortlang headed out into the Basin Reserve in 1926 and plundered a Shield-winning unbeaten 214 just shy of 46 years old. He was a mythical figure, and nobody could work out how he managed to fund playing cricket in Australia, New Zealand, Chile, Argentina, Singapore, Bermuda, Barbados, West Indies, Canada, USA, Britain, South Africa, India, Fiji, Ceylon and China over a 40-year career.

The **youngest centurion** took a bit of digging: I reckon it was an 18-year-old (and 136 days) Craig McMillan against Auckland at the Eden Park Outer Oval in 1995. Ian Rutherford was only a couple of months older when he compiled his century opening the batting with Glenn Turner for Otago against CD at Cooks Gardens in Wanganui in 1975/76. And one Kane Williamson was a month or two

older than that when he hit back-to-back tons against Auckland and Wellington in 2009, after a 98 earlier in the season.

On a more formal note, the **highest run scorer** in the Plunket Shield's long history is Michael Papps - by miles - with 11,463 runs across 163 matches, complemented by Shield records of 32 tons and 152 catches. He is more than 2,600 runs ahead of Katherine's finest, Mathew Sinclair.

I also like the diverse brilliance of the list of **highest scores in each batting position**. Note the eye-catching 8 from Toby Hart at number 12, a niche inclusion after Andrew Hazeldine was concussed by a Neil Wagner delivery, and Ben Lockrose was injected into the order mid-match.

HIGHEST SCORE IN EACH BATTING POSITION

1	B SUTCLIFFE	385	OTAGO V CTY	LANCASTER PARK	1952/53
2	D BROWNLIE	334	ND V CD	PUKEKURA PARK	2014/15
3	R BLUNT	338*	OTAGO V CTY	LANCASTER PARK	1931/32
4	T BRUCE	345	CD V AKL	EDEN PARK OUTER OVAL	2024/25
5	S STEWART	227*	CTY V CD	PUKEKURA PARK	2009/10
6	C MUNRO	269*	AKL V WLG	EDEN PARK OUTER OVAL	2012/13
7	V SCOTT	198	AKL V CTY	EDEN PARK, AUCKLAND	1939/40
8	G ANDREW	180*	CTY V AKL	EDEN PARK OUTER OVAL	2012/13
9	F BADCOCK	155	WLG V CTY	LANCASTER PARK	1926/27
10	I LEGGAT	142*	CD V OTAGO	CARISBROOK	1952/53
11	W WISNESKI	89*	CTY V ND	DUDLEY PARK	1997/98
12	T HART	8	OTAGO V ND	UNIVERSITY OVAL	2024/25

Atop the list of the **most wickets** in the history of the Shield is Otago and Kiwi cricket legend Stephen Boock, with 492 at 19.82, whirling more than 4,800 overs down around the provinces of Aotearoa.

But in terms of the greatest ever Plunket Shield **bowling performances**, Boock's best of 15/104 is eclipsed by Alex Tait who claimed 16/130 and man of the match, but still ended up on the wrong side against Auckland at Seddon Park in 1996/97. ND were dismantled for a head-shaking Plunket Shield **record low of 32** in the fourth innings as Chris Drum, Justin Vaughan, and Danny Morrison went to work. The scorecard notes they literally combined forces at one point: "Morrison accidentally struck the umpire Steve Dunne while bowling and twisted his wrist, Vaughan completed the over."



I also sought out the surprisingly long list of bowlers taking a **wicket on their first ball** of Plunket Shield cricket, with all but one of the nine involving Wellington.

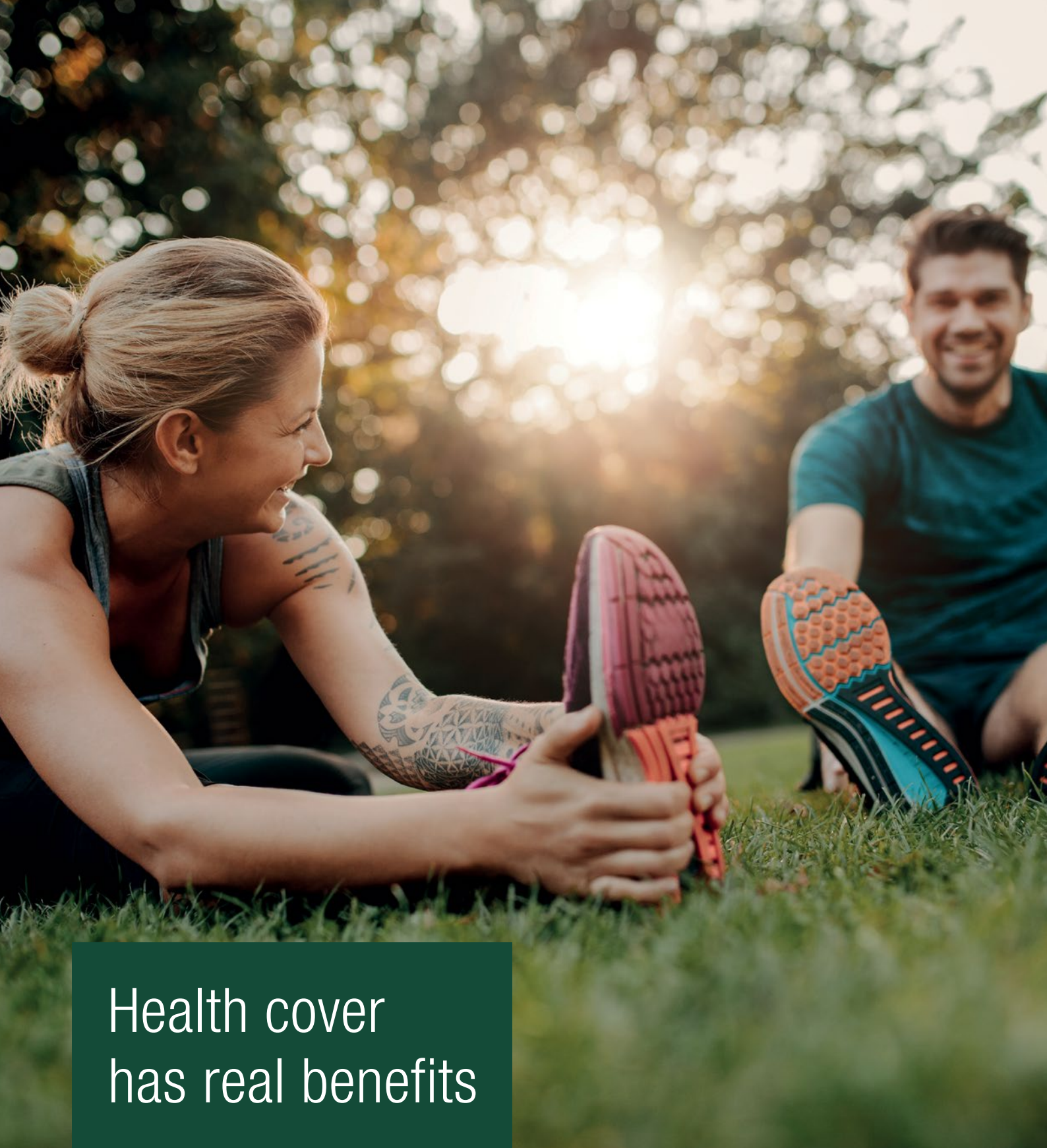
In 2009, ND wicketkeeper Pete McGlashan became the first player in the world to take **12 catches in a first-class game**, taking six of the best in each innings against CD at Cobham Oval as Trent Boult, Graeme Aldridge and Bradley Scott went about their work.

And it is wicketkeeping that I will leave you with, and a record begging to be broken. Shamefully, no **wicketkeeper has removed the pads** and taken more than 4 wickets in Kiwi domestic cricket since Edwin Fowler's mindblowing pre-Plunket Shield 7/66 at the South Dunedin Recreation Ground in 1869. Over to the glovemen to put that right, I reckon.

TAKING A WICKET WITH FIRST BALL IN PLUNKET SHIELD

BOWLER	BATTER	TEAMS	VENUE	SEASON
S HOTTER	K RUTHERFORD	WLG V OTAGO	CARISBROOK	1988/89
A BARNES	M LANE	AKL V CD	FITZHERBERT PARK	1993/94
R JONES	G BRADBURN	WLG V ND	BASIN RESERVE	2000/01
L WOODCOCK	C CUMMING	WLG V OTAGO	BASIN RESERVE	2001/02
B CACHOPA	C CACHOPA	AKL V WLG	COLIN MAIDEN PARK	2011/12
O NEWTON	M GUPTILL	WLG V AKL	BASIN RESERVE	2017/18
F ALLEN	H RUTHERFORD	WLG V OTAGO	BASIN RESERVE	2020/21
KDC CLARKE	J GIBSON	ND V WLG	COBHAM OVAL	2021/22

Paul Ford is the co-founder of the Beige Brigade and part of The Alternative Commentary Collective. He first attended a Shell Trophy match at the Tauranga Domain to escape attendance at his sister's ballet recital.

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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