

## Parramatta District Cricket Club

### James 'Jim' Stone – A Second Grade Legend

Jim Stone enjoyed a long fruitful wicket snaffling career with the Parramatta District Cricket Club (then known as Central Cumberland), commencing with the Club's Shires team in 1927/28 and finishing in Second grade in 1947/48.

Second grade was his playground, and he harvested a bumper crop of wickets at that level, over a prolonged period he was outstandingly consistent and prolific. The crafty leg-spinner and handy lower-order batsman set bowling records in Second grade for Parramatta that have stood the test of time. The most career wickets in 2<sup>nd</sup> grade **565 wickets @ 14.75**, the best bowling average in a season **8.73**, claimed **50+** wickets in a season on five occasions, and captured **ten** wickets in a match four times.

Stone's bowling success was attributed to his ability to deliver his leg-spin with great command of line and length, backed by unyielding stamina and reliability – he was adept at keeping the opposing batsmen quiet and building pressure.

The excellence of his bowling season by season is well illustrated by reference to some of his most spectacular deeds:

#### 1. – **50+ Wickets in a season** –

- **65 wickets @ 12.90** – 1943/44.
- **58 wickets @ 11.15** – 1933/34. [these wickets were taken in just **7 matches**].
- **53 wickets @ 8.73** – 1942/43.
- **50 wickets @ 13.78** – 1944/45.
- **50 wickets @ 12.60** – 1946/47.

(Other prominent performances were – **43 wickets @ 15.72** [1935/36], **41 wickets @ 21.65** [1941/42], **40 wickets @ 14.20** [1947/48]).

#### 2. – **10 Wickets in a match** –

- **1933/34** – 7/29 & 7/80 v. North Sydney; and 8/82 & 7/55 v. Manly.
- **1937/38** – 6/14 & 4/29 v. North Sydney.
- **1946/47** – 7/35 & 4/31 v. Wests.
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#### 3. – **7 wickets in an innings** –

- **8/60** v. University (1933/34), **8/82** v. Manly and **7/29** v. North Sydney (1933/34), **7/35** v. Wests (1946/47), **7/55** v. Manly (1933/34), **7/95** v. Randwick (1935/36).

In all grades Jim's wiles captured a grand total of **675 wickets @ 15.62** to sit in fourth place on the list of the clubs greatest ever career wicket-takers [Bobby Aitken (970), Arthur Howell (706) and Daniel Jackson (694)] and his batting yielded **3,509 runs @ 13.98** (H.S. 88).

Despite his amazing 2nd grade achievements season on season, he played relatively little **1st grade** – between 1933/34 and 1943/44 he collected **74 wickets @ 20.57**, the bulk of which were taken in 1941/42 when he grabbed **41 wickets @ 21.65** (including **5/65** v. Wests, **5/64** v. Balmain, **6/82** v. Gordon – he also claimed **5/24** v. North Sydney in 1943/44). It is indeed

intriguing that such an accurate and penetrative leg-spinner was so sparsely used in 1st grade by Cumberland, more so that when he did play in the top grade he performed very well.

Perhaps it was simply that he played in an era when Cumberland was endowed with a range of quality First grade spinners - (W.H. Howell (NSW off-spinner), Norm Howell (off-spinner), leg-spinner Jack Govan (who in 1934 captured 10/71 in an innings for NSW Colts v. Queensland, and 7/93 v. Victoria for the NSW 2nds), leg-spinner Lou Benaud (prolific wicket-taker).

Sam Stone, Jim's father, was a monumental figure in the club as a player and Administrator, an accomplished all-rounder (right-hand batsman and off-spinner) who in all grades scored **5,086** runs including 10 centuries (best – **227, 210, 175, 157**) and captured **165** wickets, and served as club **Secretary** from **1930/31** to **1947/48** – punctuated by a stint as President in 1934/35 – he was also elected a **Life Member** of both **Parramatta** (Cumberland) and the **NSW Cricket Association**. Jim's brother Arthur also played for the club in the lower grades.

[By Tom Wood – Parramatta District Cricket Club Historian]