

## Doug Kennedy – A Staunch Clubman

Doug Kennedy was a noteworthy, successful and popular player, and a committed volunteer Official with the Parramatta (Central Cumberland) District Cricket Club over a long expanse of time.

As an administrator he performed a range of valuable roles during his involvement with the club. He sat on the **Management Committee** from **1940/41** to **1948/49** assisting the club during the taxing World War II days; he was a regular member of the club's Selection panels for a number of years, indeed both management and selection committee meetings were often held at his home on the Western Highway or at his business premises (the old Parramatta icon - Aylward & Kennedy Hardware Store on the corner of Church Street and Victoria Road); he represented Cumberland as a **delegate to the NSWCA** for **17** consecutive years between 1957/58 and 1972/73; served as a delegate to the **Parramatta District Junior Cricket Association** from 1957/58 to 1959/60; and fund-raising was another of his fortes that aided the club's welfare. Doug was awarded **Life Membership** of Central Cumberland as a reward for his outstanding playing and administration career.

As a cricketer he completed a distinguished career with the club which included a very profitable 1st grade segment, followed by a most productive and durable stint in the lower grades, where he utilised his all-round playing skills very successfully, and his cricketing experience as a captain and mentor to guide many young up-and-coming players to higher honours.



Doug was a genuine all-rounder, originally a deceptive fast-medium new-ball bowler (with age he cut back on pace), he possessed the ability to move the ball and combined that with accuracy and stamina to become a prolific wicket-taker (club's 5th highest) and added to this he was an enterprising and capable '*wielder of the willow*'.

In **all grades** for the Parramatta based club he achieved the wonderful all-round career statistics of – **6,003 runs @ 17.81 (H.S – 120)** and **653 wickets @ 19.57 (B.B. 9/54)** – after making his debut in the Shires team in 1935/36 he went on to play **28** seasons of grade cricket before retiring in 1962/63.

Between 1938/39 and 1950/51 he played in 117 1st grade matches taking **230 wickets @ 21.35** and notching up **1,616 runs @ 14.18**. He enjoyed a real golden patch when partnering former Test paceman Morrie Sievers with the new-ball in 1942/43, in tandem the wily pace duo devastated opposition batsmen with Kennedy grabbing **58 wickets @ 15.60** and Sievers **57 wickets @ 15.20**. The highlight for Kennedy was a spectacular **9/54** v. Balmain and **7/33** v. Northern Districts. Interestingly his 58 wickets are the most taken by a Cumberland bowler in 1st grade but is not recognised as the official club record, because of the unique style of matches played during the Second World War years. 1943/44 saw him collect another big haul of wickets – **47 @ 22.17**. He was always a useful player with the bat down-the-list and bobbed up with several half-centuries

(highest 69) amongst his **1,616 runs @ 14.18** in the premier grade. A nice little sidelight was that the 1st grade team often practiced on the backyard pitch in his family home – Doug's brother Ron also played for the club.

Despite his impressive 1st grade career, it can be argued that his greatest benefits to the Central Cumberland club came via his input into the lower grades. 2nd grade was his forum, and he played a large degree of cricket in that team over a 20 year span. In 2nd grade he remained a prolific wicket-claimer ending with **371 wickets @ 18.25** and was also much more suited to this level with the bat scoring **3,748 runs @ 20.26**. His two best seasons were 1953/54 where his all-round talents were at their height he made 338 runs @ 30.73 (including a maiden **120 \* v. Mosman**, sharing a **211** run partnership in 125 minutes with Ray Rowe), and took 34 wickets @ 19.26 (best – **6/14 v. Gordon**); and 1956/57 his season's return read 400 runs @ 36.36 (**101 v. Randwick**) and 38 wickets @ 15.89 (best – **5/32 v. Waverley**); and he grabbed a **hat-trick** whilst taking 4/16 v. Waverley in 1951/52.

Doug captained the 2nd grade team for **8** consecutive seasons (1954/55 to 1961/62) and had the honour of leading Cumberland to win the **Premiership** in **1958/59** for the first time in the club's history. Doug developed into a canny skipper over the years and many a rising player benefitted from his ability to impart his great experience on them, he also captained the Poidevin-Gray Shield team in 1939/40 and after his playing days, he remained strongly involved in club activities often acting as a benefactor assisting players such as Doug Walters in their early days with Cumberland.

The contributions of people like Doug Kenedy are vital to the sustainability of all NSW Premier Cricket Clubs.

**[By Tom Wood – Parramatta District Cricket Club Historian]**