

## Parramatta DCC – Charlie Leabeater an all-round sportsman

(By Tom Wood – club historian)

The Parramatta District Cricket Club has had many accomplished sportsmen pass through its ranks over the course of time, but the multitalented **Charlie Leabeater** – elder sibling of former State batsman Len Leabeater – takes a bit of beating.



He was adept at a wide range of sports as illustrated:

- As a cricketer he played for Central Cumberland from **1918/19 to 1944/45**, this included three years in retirement, but as a veteran he answered call to overcome player shortages during World War II.
- During the 1920s he was a highly rated 1<sup>st</sup> grade full-back for the famous Granville Magpies Soccer Club and played for **Australia in Internationals** against such countries as New Zealand, South Africa, China, and Czechoslovakia.
- Between 1923 and 1925 he took a summer break from cricket to become a well-known swimmer for the Sydney club competing against Frank Doyle and other champions of that era – Water Polo also featured in this phase of his career.
- As a Billiard player he was always in the top bracket of competitors in the well regarded Parramatta School of Arts competitions.
- He played A grade competition Tennis, and in Golf he played off a handicap of 10.
- In his middle-age years Charlie became a leading Pennants Bowls player representing NSW on several occasions.

Always in the peak of physical condition, as a cricketer the sturdily built Charlie was the classic hard-working, never say die all-rounder, a right-arm medium-paced stock bowler with the ability to seam the ball and was willing to bowl all day, whilst with the bat he was an orthodox forceful lower middle-order batsman. **In all grades** for Central Cumberland, he captured **347 wickets @ 22.79** and struck **4,268 runs @ 18.71**. His **1<sup>st</sup> Grade** statistics read – matches played 142, runs scored **2,800 @ 18.54** (H.S. – 87\*) – 10 half-centuries, **213 wickets @ 26.79** (B.B. – 5/40) – 5 wickets in an innings 7 times. He was a regular member of the Club's **1932/33 1<sup>st</sup> Grade Premiership winning team**, captained 1<sup>st</sup> Grade in the 1930/31 season, and off the field he served an extended stint on the Club's Management Committee.