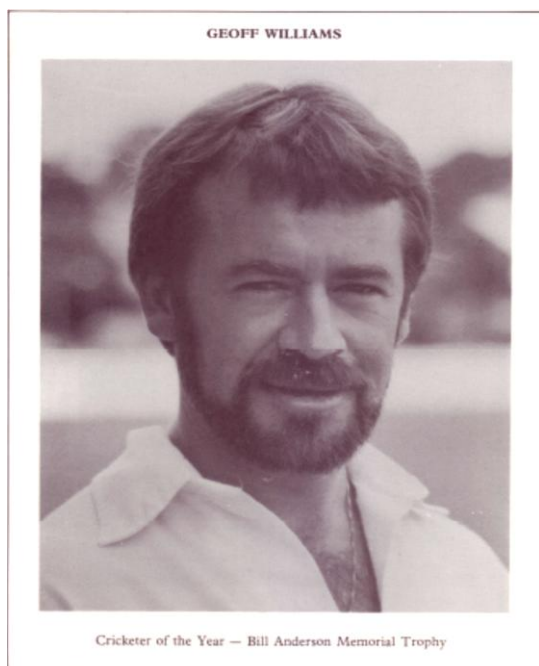


## Geoffrey 'Furry' Williams – A Crafty Slow Bowler



As a junior player for the Baulkham Hills club Geoff first appeared for Central Cumberland in the 1963/64 A.W. Green Shield team, but it was not until the **1966/67** season that he joined the club's senior ranks. Debuting in Fourth grade and closing his initial season in Third grade. He was '*an instant success*' capturing **54 wickets @ 12.63** (40 in 4ths and 14 in 3rds).

Like a lot of slow bowlers Geoff approached his cricket with an air of eccentricity, but he was a highly competitive player who simply loved to bowl, he thrived on plenty of work, and he was a marvellous fieldsman – 'off his own bowling'. Slight in stature and of average height 'Furry' bowled his left-arm orthodox spinners cleverly, relying on accuracy and tight control to create pressure on batsmen. Not a big turner of the ball he utilized change of pace and a good arm-ball to

add variety to his bowling Generally he liked to toil away and 'winkle' batsmen out.

He held no pretensions to being a batsman only mustering **740 runs @ 9.06** (H.S. 39) in his entire grade career.

Geoff loved bowling and talking about bowling, he practiced his craft diligently and bowled long spells in the nets to refine his skills.

His career span with the Parramatta club stretched from **1966/67** to **1983/84** during which time he proved to be copious wicket-taker, amongst the most successful lower grade spinners to turn out for the club. In all grades he captured **540 wickets @ 16.66** and held a total of **90 catches**.

Despite his promising early career performances Geoff bounced up-and-down the grades a bit until consolidating a 2nd grade spot from 1975/76 onwards. During the late 1960s and early 1970s the club was very well served with spin bowling depth. Prior to establishing himself in the higher grades he performed with distinction in the Third and Fourth elevens. In his two seasons in the Fourths (1966/67 and 1973/74) he claimed 78 wickets @ a meagre 9.13, showcased by a brilliant performance that brought victory in the 1973/74 4th grade **Final** against Sutherland to Cumberland. Geoff snared **10 wickets for 30 runs (2/9 & 8/21)** and made his highest score of 39 – during that season he also claimed **5/9** and **5/30** v. Bankstown. Between 1966/67 and 1974/75 he featured a fair bit in Third grade honing his craft and continued to take useful hauls of wickets – 100 wickets @ 13.73 – best figures **6/58, 5/43, 5/25, 5/6**.

The bulk of Geoff's cricket with Cumberland occurred in Second grade, and he was a very reliable and important component of that team's attack over a prolonged period. His appearances in this grade ranged across seasons spread between 1968/69 and 1983/84 (apart

from his various First grade stints). Second grade was the podium for many of his greatest deeds with the club, in all he accumulated **246 wickets @ 16.07** at this level, headlined by excellent performances in 1968/69: 36 wickets @ 16.64 (best – **6/37, 7/31**), 1980/81 **40 wickets @ 15.23** (best – **6/83, 5/70, 5/80**), and 1981/82 **44 wickets @ 12.70** (best – **7/44** [Grand Final], **5/43, 5/56** which earned him the club’s most prestigious trophy the ‘**Bill Anderson Memorial Trophy**’- **Cricketer of the Year Award**).

Geoff debuted in First grade in 1970/71 claiming a solid 17 wickets @ 22.88 but wasn’t back in the top grade on a regular basis until 1976/77, where he held his place, due to some steady bowling performances, until the close of the 1978/79 season after which he dropped back to Second grade. But on the back of three admirable seasons’ bowling performances in the Seconds he won promotion back into First grade in 1982/83.

His total **First grade** record ended with **116 wickets @ 25.50** and 169 runs @ 7.68 – his top season’s bowling haul was 26 wickets @ 21.88 – his best individual First grade efforts with the ball were **6/61** v. St. George (1976/77) and **6/17** v. Manly (1977/78). Geoff served several years on the Management Committee and was Club Treasurer in 1978/79.

#### **Geoff Williams – Parramatta District Cricket Club – Statistics**

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Runs</b>	<b>H.S.</b>	<b>Average</b>	<b>Catches</b>	<b>Runs</b>	<b>Wickets</b>	<b>Average</b>
AWG	9	7	2.25	-	9	1	9.00
P.Gs	10	7	5.00	2	111	9	12.33
4 <sup>th</sup> Grade	169	39	12.07	12	712	78	9.13
3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade	81	19	7.36	19	1,373	100	13.73
2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade	321	25	9.17	34	3,953	246	16.07
<b>1<sup>st</sup> Grade</b>	<b>169</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>7.68</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>2,958</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>25.50</b>
<b>Total Grade</b>	740	39	9.02	90	8996	540	16.66
Total Club	759	39	8.63	92	9,116	550	16.57

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