

Parramatta D.C.C. - Alan 'Big Al' Cramond A Lower Grade Legion

(By Tom Wood – Club Historian)

Alan Cramond was a towering figure, both physically and in accomplishment, in the story of the Parramatta (Cumberland) District Cricket club lower grade teams. Like 'Old Man River' Big AL just kept rolling along underpinning the club's lower grades in a career that stretched between **1946/47** and **1968/69**, and he also played a role off the field as a long time Management Committee member and club selector. On the 20th May 2022 he turned 100 years of age.



During his time with Parramatta Alan played plenty of 2nd grade, but it was in the 3rd grade arena that he left a legacy both as a captain and player.

He never got to represent Parramatta in 1st grade, but before World War II he ventured out of NSW Country cricket as an 18-year-old tearaway fast bowler and played with the Western Suburbs club. However, after returning from military service, injuries sustained from the New Guinea jungle campaign curtailed his pace bowling days. He then reinvented himself as an off-spinning all-rounder and threw his lot in with the 'Cumbos' in 1946.

The powerfully built giant of a man – 'who loved to bowl' – was a bountiful wicket-taker with his crafty off-spin, and he was a capable hard-hitting batsman who made his share of runs. In all grades for the club, he claimed **612 wickets @ 18.13** and scored

4,691 runs @ 16.58 (H.S. - 94).

Alan won great kudos as a shrewd and resourceful captain of the Cumberland 3rd grade team between 1952/53 and 1968/69 (including **Premiership** victories in 1959/60 and 1964/65). He was a popular and well-respected skipper and did a great job of educating young players in the nuances of grade cricket, many of these youngsters going on to impressive 1st grade careers. [He was my captain in my first season of grade cricket in 1964/65 and gave me a great grounding in the game with his sage advice – T.J.W.].

In 3rd grade he remains the club's most successful all-rounder: **3,197 runs @ 18.27** and **425 wickets @ 17.05**. His best season with the bat was in 1953/54 when he compiled 439 runs @ 27.44 (H.S. 64), and as a bowler his most prolific years were 1949/50 – **47 wickets @ 14.34**, 1964/65 – **42 wickets @ 13.19** and 1967/68 – **42 wickets @ 13.95**. He was unable to score a century but got close with **94** v. Glebe in 1960/61 he also bagged **5/50** in the same match. In all grades he managed 16 half-centuries, and his off-spin provided him with 28 hauls of 5 or more wickets in an innings (best – **7/31** v. Waverley in 3rds 1952/53).

His statistics in the other grades were 2nd grade 1,081 runs @ 13.02 (best – 66) and 124 wickets @ 22.13 – 4th grade 413 runs @ 16.52 and 63 wickets @ 17.54, in all grades he held 61 catches.

Alan Cramond holds the rare distinction of being elected a **Life Member** of two Sydney grade clubs, firstly the Parramatta District Cricket Club, and later the Sutherland District Cricket Club where he was a long-term club, President. He also was honoured with the Australian Medal in 2000 and was a recipient of the Contribution to War Service Medal.