

# Parramatta District C.C. – Colin Barr ‘An Old Cumbo’



The Club received notice on 23/7/2025 that **Colin ‘Col’ Barr**, former First grade allrounder from the flourishing 1950s era, sadly passed away this week at 94 years of age.

Colin Barr was a gifted, enthusiastic cricketer whose skills complemented those of the more illustrious players (Richie Benaud, Jack Treanor, Ron James, Wilf Ewens and Wally Cornock) in the Cumberland teams of the 1950s. His principal forte was accurate and determined right-handed medium paced bowling that skidded deceptively off the pitch, which he backed up with forceful, clean hitting lower-order batting and sharp fielding.

He grew up with Richie Benaud, playing both junior cricket and soccer together for the Rangers Club and they remained life-long friends, as were other ‘Cumbo’ teammates

Wilf Ewens and Bruce Ritchie. Post his playing days Colin enjoyed a rewarding business career that involved extensive world travel, loved sport in general and became a dedicated and skilful golfer boasting an impressive 6 handicap.

Like so many other teenage cricketers of his era that came from Parramatta High School, Colin Barr commenced his grade cricket induction in traditional fashion via the A.W. Green Shield team in 1944/45 and 1945/46 – notable teammates being Richie Benaud, Bruce Ritchie and Harold Goodwin.

He launched his grade career in **Fourth** grade in the 1948/49 season and created a strong impression as a highly promising pace bowler by snaring **32 wickets @ 8.25** – including **6/20** v. Sydney University and **6/25** v. Wests – his form also earned him a spot in the club’s Poidevin-Gray Shield team. The Fourth grade captain Bill Irwin had this to say about Colin in the annual report – *“The find of the season – everything a cricketer must have – ability, temperament, enthusiasm, a thirst for knowledge and keen to practice.”*

The following season Colin consolidated his ranking as ‘one to watch’ by grabbing healthy **48 wickets @ 15.71** in **Third** grade – featuring rich wicket hauls of **6/31, 4/57, 5/38, 5/41** and **4/11** – this performance propelled him into the higher grades in the 1950/51, a season that saw his debut in **First grade**.

The 1950s was one of the Parramatta (Cumberland) greatest decades – the club was First grade runners-up in 1952/53, 1953/54 and 1955/56 – there was a wealth of fine bowlers (e.g. Benaud, Treanor, Keith Wall, Ron James and Wally Cornock) competing for First grade places and Colin Barr featured successfully across both First and Second grade through to his retirement in 1957/58.

His **First grade** career yielded **603 runs @ 13.40** (H.S. – 50) and **72 wickets @ 25.82** (B.B. – **5/40**) – it was recorded that he always played with passion whether, batting, bowling or fielding. Possibly the highlight of his First grade stint was a fine all round performance in the **1955/56 Final** v. Petersham staged at the S.C.G. – in a tense low scoring match Colin second top-scored with a determined 32 and bowled strongly to collect 4/32. Playing contemporary Wilf Ewens stated that if Colin had played for the club in another period, without the rich array bowlers Cumberland had in the 1950s and had he been given the opportunity to lead the attack, he had the ability to be a contender for first-class honours.

In Second grade he had more opportunity to parade his wares as an allrounder, through heavier bowling workloads and batting a bit higher in the order. Best illustrated by his splendid bowling performance in **1952/53** when he snaffled up **46 wickets @ 12.52**, featuring rich returns of **6/40, 4/32** twice, and a career best **7/16** to destroy Northern District ; and the **1953/54** season gave witness to his allrounder capabilities when he compiled **276 runs @ 23.00** (highlighted by a dashing **126** against Waverley made in just 73 minutes) and captured **32 wickets @ 18.88** (B.B. – 4/32).

Overall Col Barr's career with Parramatta (Central Cumberland) District Cricket Club stretched from **1948/49** through to **1957/58**.

### Playing Statistics

Grade	Runs	High Score	Average	Catches	Wickets	Average	Best Bowled
<b>1<sup>st</sup> Grade</b>	<b>603</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>13.40</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>25.82</b>	<b>5/40</b>
2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade	695	<b>126</b>	17.38	19	109	15.99	<b>7/16</b>
3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade	408	71	19.43	21	78	13.96	7/40
4 <sup>th</sup> Grade	151	69	12.58	3	35	8.71	6/25
Poidevin-Gray	147	36*	13.36	7	21	19.90	4/26
A.W. Green Shield	194	54*	14.92	8	13	24.31	-
<b>Total Club</b>	<b>2,198</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>15.81</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>328</b>		



Richie Benaud [middle row - 2<sup>nd</sup> from left], Wilf Ewens [front row – 1<sup>st</sup> left], Bruce Ritchie © [front row – centre], and Colin Barr [front row – far right].

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

