



UNSW
CRICKET CLUB

University of NSW Cricket Club Life Member Profile

Paul Serov



Player



Official

Roles and Honours

Senior Vice President	2014-18
Honorary Secretary	2003-10
NSWCA and SCA Delegate	2007-18
Team Captain	6th Grade 2001-02, 2002-03, 2003-04, 2004-05
UNSW Sports Recognition Award	2008
Barr-Turn Trophy	2008-09
Peter D Richardson Clubman of the Year	2003-04

Individual Profile

Where were you born and where did you grow up?

I was born in Sydney and grew up in Frenchs Forest on the north side of town (nestled between the North Shore and the Northern Beaches). Went to the local public schools finishing Year 12 in 1989. In addition to cricket I played just about every sport available to me ... rugby league, rugby union, golf, water polo, surfing, etc.

Where did you play your junior/local cricket or become interested in cricket?

Cricket was a staple of life from an early age. My dad was a talented cricketer (he grew up in Temora just up the road from Wagga) and was playing A Grade park cricket for North Sydney Leagues Club when I was little. From the moment I could walk I was playing backyard cricket with my dad and older brother. Big break came when I got selected in the Wakehurst Primary School junior cricket team whilst still in 4th grade. Got to field at long stop and have the occasional bowl. Went on to be the opening bowler in the senior team a couple of years later. I joined Beacon Hill Youth Cricket Club when I was about 10. Remember my first game at Newport Reserve. Got a 4-fa and a 2-fa, then hardly got a bowl for the rest of the season! I had a textbook forward defence with the bat so became an opening batsman with a Chris Tavaré-esque strike rate. The lack of bowling was a common theme for the next 4-5 seasons ... captains and coaches never thought much of my bowling (not fast enough), even though I always took wickets on the rare occasions I was given the ball. When I was about 15 years old, spending time surfing (and hanging at the beach with friends) and golfing (for which I had a little more talent than cricket) seemed far better ways to spend the weekend. So I gave cricket away.

When and why did you become involved with UNSWCC?

In my early 20's I started playing a bit of park cricket on the Northern Beaches with some mates. Nothing serious but scored a few runs and took a few wickets which made it fun. Afterwards I got a job at UNSW and the husband of one of my colleagues was Mark Dorge (UNSWCC lower grade keeper-bat in the mid-late 1990s). I played a few social games with Mark and he encouraged me to come down to pre-season training one season (98-99 I think). Working at UNSW and living up the road from the VG it made perfect sense. My forward defence was working nicely during the pre-season and I got graded in 5th grade as a batsman! I was in my late 20's, and recently married, so a somewhat strange time in my life to be making my Grade cricket debut!

What did you like about UNSW Cricket?

When I first started playing with UNSWCC I saw it as an opportunity to test my cricketing ability in an environment where everyone is striving to play to the highest level possible. I loved the opportunity to train twice a week with actual coaches, and to play on some great cricket grounds (not something you get playing park cricket).

Once I got to know the club I just loved the inclusive nature of the club and the mix of backgrounds that all the players brought to the club. Henry's old adage that it was a club "where Test players are treated like 5th graders, and 5th graders are treated like Test players" was very true. It was a true club, not just six separate teams under the umbrella of one club. I made great friends not just with guys who played in my teams, but guys who played in the higher grades, and guys who had retired but were still around the club.

What is your Club nickname (Explain who gave it to you and why – if not obvious "Sneaky")

I've got Dan Christian and David Carson to thank for this. Working at the Uni enabled me to get to training early most weeks. As a lower-grade bowler I loved nothing more than an opportunity to bowl to the first grade bats in the nets when given the opportunity (and claim a few "poles"), which was often early in the sessions when only a few players had arrived. For those that don't know my bowling, calling it "medium-slow" might be over-stating it ... the ball generally had just enough pace to get from one of the pitch to the other. Very, very innocuous, especially to a first grader. But I could get the ball to hoop around.

One week I was bowling to Dan on some very bowler-friendly decks in the VG nets. Dan had just made his debut for NSW around this time. I was getting plenty of movement in the air and some off the deck as well. With Carso watching on, one delivery had Dan play a solid forward defence only to see him lose his off stump (Got him!). Next delivery, same forward defence, same result as he lost his off stump. From then on, Dan and Carso started calling me "Sneaky" and it quickly spread around the rest of the club.

The Table above outlines some of your Club achievements, roles, and honours. Can you give us an insight into how you saw your contribution to UNSW Cricket, which do you consider the most important?

My biggest contribution was probably my time as Secretary (a role that was literally a 12 months a year job). I took over from Matty Sanders, which were huge shoes to fill. Every season presented challenges that had to be managed. I don't recall there ever being a "routine season". I remember my first season as Secretary, both grounds at David Phillips Field needed drainage work so the University closed them for the first two months of the cricket season! My first task as Secretary was pleading with other clubs to borrow two grounds each weekend.

That being said, the toughest gig at the Club is 6th grade captain. Just ask Jonesy and Chai (who have both also done multiple seasons in this role). When you drop someone, they are not going down a grade, they're not playing cricket that weekend. When players in the higher grades withdraw at the last moment, captains just pilfer a player from the grade below. The 6th grade captain doesn't have a team below, so has to go to the train on squad (which can be remarkably limited at 10pm on a Friday night before a game). My wife just got use to not planning any social activities on a Friday night before a game, because she knew I'd spend most of it on the phone looking for players.

What did it mean to you to be awarded life membership?

I was very humbled to be awarded life membership. I look through the list of life members and I see so many great cricketers and wonder how I came to be on that list as well. My cricketing credentials are not even close to being on par with my fellow life members. But I see being awarded life membership as recognition that a cricket club (or any sporting club for that matter) relies so much on what has to be done off the field so that the players can perform on the field. All this off-field work, especially at UNSW, is done by individuals volunteering their time because they want to see the club succeed. I very much appreciate that being recognised.

What is your greatest memory or memories of UNSW Cricket?

So many I don't know where to start.

Playing finals cricket has to be a highlight, both in 6th grade. First time I was captain, and we narrowly lost our semi-final to Sydney University by 3 runs. Second time was a couple of seasons later (with Jonesy at the helm). Both very fun seasons.

When I was captain, selection meetings could even be fun (back in the days when captains picked the teams). One season we had Carso, Hayers, Disco, Jebby, Starky and myself as captains. Five great guys and cricketers (and me), so meeting at the Labor Club over beers and a schnitzel to pick teams was a great way to spend a Tuesday night. Some great banter! The 2004/05 first grade season when they took home the limited overs trophy and so nearly won the main title (an epic Grand Final against a Test-star studded Sydney Uni team) was also a highlight. It was my second season as Secretary and we were without the Village Green for the first half of the season as it was being re-turfed. That was such a great first grade team who played some unbelievable cricket. It was just a pleasure to be a part of it, if only from the sidelines.

In what profession or area of work are/were you mainly involved? What are your main interests outside cricket?

I've worked for UNSW for over 25 years in a number of roles. Back in the early 2000s I went back to study and undertook a law degree and became admitted as a lawyer. For the last 10 years I've worked as part of the in-house legal team, with a focus on managing the University's legislative compliance obligations. I'm also the University's Privacy Officer.

Outside of cricket I've developed a love for cycling after my son Zachary got involved in the sport about 10 years ago (he hated cricket). Most Saturday afternoons you'll find me down at Heffron Park competing in the criterium races that are held there. I still play golf when I can though not as much as I'd like.

Where are you now?

Still very much up the road. I live in Maroubra and time permitting I love to get down to wherever the club is playing and watch a few overs (and more often that not drink Roachy's beers).

Anything else you would like to add

Joining the UNSWCC has been a huge influence in my life. The Cricket Club gave me an opportunity to play high-level cricket, something which I thought I would never have the opportunity to do. Like the University itself, the Cricket Club has exposed me to a cast of individuals from a wide variety of backgrounds, with many diverse viewpoints and opinions about the world at large. The only common denominator being a love of cricket. My life could only be enriched by being in such an environment.

Playing Record

Paul Serov									
Years Played			Grade			1999-2006			
			Shires			N/A			
BATTING									
Grade	Games	Inn.	NO	Total	Ave.	Highest	Caught	50's	100's
5	7	8	0	22	2.8	11	3		
6	72	69	9	471	7.9	34	18		
Totals	79	77	9	493	7.3	106	21		
BOWLING									
Grade	Games	Overs	Maidens	Wickets	Runs	Average	5WI	Best	
5	7	29	8	2	113	56.5		1 for 26	
6	72	450.2	91	71	1548	21.8	2	5 for 39	
Totals		479.2	99	73	1661	22.8	2		



Back: Tim Hood, Adam Winder, Andrew Jones, Mark Lucas, Simon Spears

Front: Matt Garland, Peter Harris, Paul Serov ©, Bob Kirby, Steve Hacilas