



**UNSW  
CRICKET CLUB**

**University of NSW Cricket Club Life Member Profiles.**

## ***Geoff Lawson***



**1976**



**2007**

## ***Roles and Honours***

<b>Medal of the Order of Australia</b>	1990
<b>Australian Sports Medal</b>	2000
<b>Australian Representative - Test</b>	1980-89
<b>Australian Representative - One Day</b>	1980-89
<b>First Class Representative</b>	NSW 1977-92
<b>International Coach</b>	1995-98 NSW, 2007-08 Pakistan

NSW Cricket Hall of Fame	2013-14
NSW Cricket Life membership	2002-03
NSWCA and SCA Delegate	2002-07
Blues Committee	1989-2010
Team Captain	1st Grade 1986-87, 1987-88, 1988-89, 1989-90, 1990-91, 1991-92, 1992-93,
Premiership Teams	1st Grade 1976-77, 1980-81, PG 1976-77
Combined Universities	1976-77
UNSW Sporting Blue	1979
UNSW Sporting Hall of Fame	2003
UNSW Sports Recognition Award	Life Member
Peter D Richardson Clubman of the Year	1997-98

## *Individual Profile*

Where were you born and where did you grow up?

**Wagga Wagga born and raised. A great place to grow up with multiple sports to play and some great teachers, coaches, facilities and mentors.**

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

**Started at Wagga Wagga (Gurwood Street) Public School, age 9. The ground where I played my first ever game of competitive cricket is now named after me – which is kind of nice. It was a glazed concrete pitch but is now a turf one.**

**School cricket was big in Wagga with every primary school fielding at least two teams every Saturday morning. We played two games of cricket in the playground - before school and at lunch time every day in the summer months – it was very competitive. In winter it was touch football. My brother Greg and I were also very competitive in the back yard and my best mate Steve Kiddle was a representative opening batsman who I bowled thousands of deliveries to at the nets which were only 50 metres from home.**

When and why did you become involved with UNSWCC?

**Enrolled in Optometry in 1976 and actually travelled up from Wagga with Jacky Jourdain (who was known then as Peter or Jordy ) Our coach, school teacher and mentor in Wagga was Derek Rogers, younger brother of the then UNSWCC 1<sup>st</sup> Grade Captain John and the club was told in advance of our arrival. At Jacky and my first ever visit to the Cracknell to meet Club Secretary Geoff Mullins I was give the epithet “Henry“ by JG Robson – the rest is history. I played a 4<sup>th</sup> grade ‘Redraw’ later that month as I was still playing the finals in Wagga. So my first game was in the ‘75-76 season – only bowled a few overs as it rained but got a couple of wickets and was elevated to Seconds under Terry Buddin for the last game of the season but it was completely washed out. Then played the winter with the Rugby Club in A Grade Colts. Next season was picked in First Grade and we won the Premiership and the Poidevin-Gray title – happy days!**

What did you like about UNSW Cricket?

**When I started, we had a lot of country guys across all the grades which made the transition from the bush very comfortable. We had like-minded people who studied a range of courses from Medicine and Law to Social Work and Surveying but revelled in the Cricket Club’s broad church – some players slept little and drank heavily on Friday nights which I couldn’t quite understand but it seemed to enhance rather than detract from their Saturday forays. An egalitarian club that had a multi-cultural thread before that notion became formal, it was wonderful environment to learn about life and cricket – what to do and quite often what not to do. People are not afraid to voice contrary opinions, and neither are they afraid to receive them.**

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

**My very first visit to the Sam Cracknell Pavilion was on wet and windy autumn afternoon in March 1976 – the start of the academic year. Training had been cancelled but Jacky Jourdain and I had an appointment with the Club Secretary Geoff "Spider" Mullins, himself epitheted after the mercurial Canberra Raiders winger. Even though it was Thursday there still lingered the odour of sweat, stale pizza and spilled Tooths KB. An odour to that permeated the Cracknell parquetry for years to come. As Spider introduced himself and outlined the tough physical and mental parameters that were needed to survive Friday nights at the Union Bar, a lean and lanky figure strode across the wicket square from the direction of Shalom College flexing his hamstrings and shaking his calves. We were about to be introduced to one of the young veterans of the club who had matched and eclipsed the Friday night torture test outlined by the Sec'. On my introduction of "Hello, I'm Geoff Lawson", his very first words to me were, "Oh, Henry Lawson" - and that was that. Successive Prime Ministers call me Henry, my wife has only ever known me as "Henry", my autobiography is titled "Henry". People often ask is the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century prose writer named after me! Thanks Jungle.**

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?

**I don't really see a contribution as a deliberate path - its more like turn up and do your best, whether that is playing, administering, coaching or socialising. The Club, and that really means the people, are an ingrained part of my life. Those people have helped shape me into who I am. It's nice when you meet up with someone years later who played 4<sup>th</sup> grade in 1987 and you can remember their bowling action, their batting style and how they ranked in the Barr-Turn. Starky, this could be you .**

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

**Life membership is quite a special honour especially in a club that shies away from individual recognition – which is not a bad thing, but my greatest joy is when Julie was also awarded the honour. She was always there to support me and the Club in so many ways. UNSWCC were the first club to have a female Club Secretary in Jill Ratcliffe and the first to have a husband and wife life members. Always a club ahead of the curve.**

What is your greatest memory or memories of UNSW Cricket?

**I got off to a flying start playing wise with a PG and First Grade titles in my debut season – that stuff is hard to beat. Chris Chapman’s boundary catch to complete the ‘76-77 final by a handful of runs is etched in my memory – if not in his. The 2005 team under Dave Carson were fabulous and their efforts in two finals - going within one wicket of the double and the summers when that team competed at the top were seriously memorable. The teams under Charlie Wakim that went to World College Games and played some super 20 over cricket on the international stage certainly made me proud. The recent Brandon McLean lead team winning titles in T20 are the current benchmark.**

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

**The life plan was to become an Optometrist and join a practice in Wagga (headed by my Lake Albert 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade captain Hedley Cole) but cricket got in the way. I worked for the Cornea and Contact Lens Research Unit when I wasn’t touring which was a world leading organisation and I worked in cutting edge design and clinical areas. Playing the game then lead me into the media with over 20 years on radio with the ABC and various television networks and production teams. I still write a column for the SMH during the summer. Golf is a major interest with a bunch of other UNSW and state cricketers at Bonnie Doon. Since I got two new hips in August 2020 my game has improved considerably!**

Where are you now?

**Been in the same place in Coogee for 37 years – still too close to Livo.**

Anything else you would like to add

**The constancy of the UNSWCC in my life makes for a regular and sobering reference point. Modern technology enables the past and present players to connect and re-connect every day and share whatever they need to share. John Rogers, the captain of ‘76-77, can connect with the current skipper Brandon McLean instantly – shared knowledge and folklore is important and the Bees have some unmatched folklore!**

## Playing Record

Geoff Lawson									
Years Played		Grade			1975-2002				
		Shires			N/A				
<b>BATTING</b>									
Grade	Games	Inn.	NO	Total	Ave.	Highest	Caught	50's	100's
1	99	81	11	1026	14.7	97*	36	1	
1LO	3	2	0	17	8.5	12			
2	3	3	0	43	14.3	41	1		
3	6	6	1	121	24.2	56	2	1	
4	5	4	0	60	15.0	36	2		
5	1	1	0	15	15.0	15	0		
CS	1								
PG	10	2	1	56	56.0	35	1		
<b>Totals</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>1338</b>	<b>15.6</b>	<b>97*</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>2</b>	
<b>BOWLING</b>									
Grade	Games	Overs	Maidens	Wickets	Runs	Average	5WI	Best	
1	99	1561	422	214	3730	17.4	7	8 for 38	
1LO	3	24	3	1	70	70.0			
2	3	34	8	5	87	17.4		5 for 23	
3	6	69.2	15	14	194	13.9	1	5 for 53	
4	5	68	18	12	162	13.5		4 for 47	
5	1	1.1	1	0	0				
CS	1	4	1	1	7	7.0		1 for 7	
PG	10	164.7	46	38	441	11.6	3	7 for 43	
<b>Totals</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>1926</b>	<b>514</b>	<b>285</b>	<b>4691</b>	<b>16.5</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>8 for 38</b>	



Bowling David Chardon in the 76-77 final



Dismissing Kerry McKay in the 80-81 final



UNIVERSITY N.S.W. C.C.  
FIRST GRADE PREMIERS—1976-1977



Standing (L to R) M. Ray, J. Robson, G. Lawson, G. Watson, S. Campbell, G. Livingstone.  
Sitting (L to R) P. Grattan-Smith, C. Chapman, J. Rogers (Capt.), J. O'Brien, M. Watt.

PG premiers 1976-77



Back: Nigel Perger, Neville Jansson, Dave Meagher, Greg Livingstone, Geoff Kirkwood,  
Mick Watt, John Carmichael  
Front: Peter Jourdain, Mick Bryce, Jim Robson (c), Geoff Lawson, Steve Howard





***Premiers 1980-81***

***Back: Asoka Wijeratne, Nigel Perger, Neville Jansson, Bruce Handley, Geoff Lawson, Steve Campbell, Terry Buddin, Peter Tout, David Lemon***

***Front: Greg Livingstone, Chris Chapman, Mark Ray, Jim Robson, Chris Hanger, Jim Dixon***