CCNSW VINTAGE MATCH REPORTS 2025-2026 SEASON

WEEK ONE: SUNDAY 28 SEPTEMBER 2025

VINTAGE ROUND 1 v SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS AT CAMPERDOWN OVAL, CAMPERDOWN ON SUNDAY 28 SEPTEMBER 2025: REPORT BY STUART RIDGE

A tough assignment first up against a Southern Highlands side which while losing a few players to the new Greater Illawarra team, still contained a number of State and National O60s representatives.

The opposition won the toss and had no hesitation in batting first on a wicket that had yielded 500 runs the day before. Stuart Ridge and Andrew Davis took the new ball and Stuart struck early when opener Whitaker dragged a wide in-swinger back onto his stumps. Opening partner Murphy and Highlands captain Bradburn were watchful early against some tight bowling from both ends until a great return from Peter Rolls in the deep ran out Bradburn attempting a second run to leave them 2-28 in the 7th over.

Murphy, who had put the England attack to the sword on a number of occasions in recent Grey Ashes series, then found his range to the short leg side boundary to close out a brisk 30 in the 10th over with the total moving to 53.

With 2 new batters at the crease, the captain turned to spin from both ends with David Craig and Garry James. Despite having to protect the short boundary, Garry liked the look of the repaired patch of turf on a good length and had immediate success turning one back through the gate. The spin twins then took us through to drinks only conceding 27 more runs through to drinks at 3-80.

After drinks Garry closed out a tight spell of 1-18 as Southern Highlands started to up the tempo. Ed Cross took over from Garry and did another great job of taking the short leg side boundary out of play. After the next 2 Highlanders had put on close to 50 for the fourth wicket they both retired giving fresh batters to bowl at and Joe Scarcella made the breakthrough winning an lbw decision.

With wickets in hand though and men in the bank, the bats started to swing. Stuart returned to pick up a return catch and Ed picked up 2 in 2 both bowled. This was a mixed blessing as it brought back opener Murphy who despite some creative field settings and bowling plans raced to his 50, Highlands putting on 30 off the last 3 overs to set us a target of 189.

Southern Highlands opening attack were both members of the NSW 60s National Championship winning side and hit good lines straight away.With scoreboard pressure from the start, Ed Cross, Ash Perrot and Gerry O'Shea were all bowled playing attacking shots. Peter Rolls also departed quickly to leave us reeling at 4-19 after 10 overs.

Andrew Davis supported Greg Brooks putting on 32 for the next wicket as runs started to come more freely against the change bowlers but was caught behind in the 15th over. Greg and then Garry James fell just before the drinks break to leave us at 7-71.

Sittampalam Ragavan ("Raga"), Joe Scarcella and then David Craig after Raga's retirement were able to add some respectability to the total putting on 60 without further loss before Joe fell caught for 19. David continued a typically entertaining knock and showed his disdain for red ink being stumped off the last ball for 27 with the final total at 149.

A decent bowling and fielding effort but a couple of loose overs and a punishing innings from Murphy left us conceding 20 or 30 too many. The loss of early wickets then took the sting out of our reply. A lower order fight back showed what might have been with more wickets in hand against the change bowlers.

The Team was (playing 12): - Ed Cross 2, Gerard O'Shea 7, Ash Perrott 2, Greg Brooks 24, Peter Rolls 1, Andrew Davis 4, Sittampalam Ragavan 30*, Garry James 4, Joe Scarcella 19 , David Craig 27, Stuart Ridge (c) 3*, John Finucane (w) dnb

The Result was: -

Southern Highlands CC: - 7-188 (40 Overs)

Defeated

C.C.N.S.W.: - 9-149 (40 Overs) (S. Ragavan 30*)

By 39 runs

FoW: - 1-2 (E. Cross); 2-9 (A. Perrott); 3-16 (G. O'Shea); 4-17 (P. Rolls); 5-49 (A. Davis); 6-65 (G. Brooks); 7-69 (G. James); 8-137 (J. Scarcella); 9-149 (D. Craig).

The Bowling was: - S. Ridge 7-0-30-2; A. Davis 50-28-0; D. Craig 7-0-36-0; G. James 7-3-18-1; J. Scarcella 4-0-17-1; E. Cross 7-0-26-2; S. Ragavan 3-0-22-0

The Fielding was: -

Stumpings: - Nil

Catches: - One to S. Ridge

Run outs: - One to P. Rolls

Player points (awarded by captain): - 3 -S. Ragavan; 2- D. Craig 1 – G. James

Scorecard: **https://www.playhq.com/cricket-australia/org/sydney-masters-cricket-association/sydney-masters-cricket-season-202526-summer-202526/vintage/game-centre/0d714935**

WEEK FOUR: SATURDAY 18-SUNDAY 19 OCTOBER 2025

VINTAGE ROUND 2 v SRI LANKA LIONS AT WOODBURY RESERVE, GLOSSODIA, BLUE MOUNTAINS ON SUNDAY 19 OCTOBER 2025: REPORT BY DAVID CRAIG

In the steps of Blaxland, Wentworth and Lawson 1813

Twelve hardy souls from CCNSW survived the overland trek to Glossodia on a warm, sunny springtime day in October 2025. While the combined fuel bill was enough to finance the annual budget of a smallish nation, it was money well spent in pursuit of righteous aims. We were there to do battle with the Sri Lankan Lions team, who, in the corresponding fixture last season, took the wind out of our "three-peat" sails with a combination of miserly bowling and clean hitting. Today was a day for retribution. Or it was just another puerile game of cricket between some old blokes who should know better by now – both viewpoints could be equally valid AFAIK. (Ed Note: to the uninitiated "***A**s **F**ar **A**s **I K**now*")

On a hot day, with a decent batting pitch and a lightning fast outfield, Captain Stuart Ridge performed the important duty of winning the toss and batting. Gerard O'Shea and Peter Rolls got us underway. With a combination of watchful defence, willing and judicious running, and the odd angry shot, they navigated a path through the opening bowlers. After ten overs, 29 runs was perhaps a few less than we craved, but the zero in the wickets column gave us a slight edge. The first change bowlers proved a little easier to get after, and

O'Shea was soon back in the sheds, having moved from 12* to 30* in a dozen balls. Sensing the moment, Ridge sent the aggressive Ash Perrott in at three and he immediately took to the wily left-arm spin of Gowri, greeting him with a four and a six. Boundaries were beginning to flow from both ends, and Rolls soon reached his 30*. Andy Davis came and went, victim of an arm-ball that thudded into his pads; Greg Brooks and Perrott saw us to the drinks break at a healthy 1-90.

The second session proved the value of a couple of things: wickets in hand, and not chasing a lot of leather in the heat! With the Sri Lankan fielding faltering, and a regular supply of big overs, we were able to accelerate the run-rate to nearly seven runs per over in the back half. Soon after the break Perrott reached his 30*, bringing David Craig to the crease to join 'the Prez'. Brooks was at his best, resolutely defending the good balls and brutalizing anything loose. At the other end Craig was swinging hard in a variety of directions with only partial success, eventually feathering one to the 'keeper at 2-133. The retirement of Brooks saw first Dr. Sittampalam Ragavan ("Raga"), and then Garry James to the crease, aiming to ratchet up the pressure on the bowlers. Raga looked in fine touch and was quickly back in the hut (30*), followed a little later by James (30*). Shout out to James for running his first three in a decade!. With six (count 'em, six!) retirees, there was not a lot of defence going on out there. Dan Pellen whacked a few good blows before running himself out, and although David Glen and Stuart Ridge failed to trouble the scorers, they did so very quickly, allowing the retiring batters to get back out with just enough time to do some damage. The coup de grace was delivered by Perrott, who came back with just 3 balls to go, and promptly belted them all to the boundary! This sent us to the tea break with an imposing total of 6-228, and our upbeat mood was no doubt mirrored by our opponents' disgruntlement.

After the tea break, Ridge and Davis opened the attack, and although both were wicketless on the day, they did keep a lid on the scoring against a couple of fairly aggressive characters. It was that man Ashley Perrott who provided the initial breakthrough, when a loose delivery was spooned into the safe hands of David Glen at mid-on, 1-23 in the ninth over. At the other end, the venerable off-spinner Garry James relieved Davis, and in his first over he removed the dangerous Shanti Kumar, caught behind for an enterprising 20 off 11 balls. I assume this was a decent snare by wicketkeeper John Finucane, as I clearly heard the nick from my position on the boundary! A handy partnership between the opening bat Preethi and wicketkeeper Bede saw the Sri Lankans reach a competitive 2-70 after 16 overs (by comparison, we were 0-68). But this was as good as it was going to get for the home team, as the escalating scoreboard pressure combined with tight bowling and good fielding to bring about a steady succession of wickets. At 2-74, Preethi chipped a Perrott delivery to Andy Davis (out for 29). In the following over the Sri Lankan captain Richie de Silva played an ill-advised sweep against a full straight one from James (4-75). Then a calling mix-up saw our old team-mate Wasantha Hettiarachchi "("Wasa") run out by a smart piece of work from Davis and O'Shea, leaving Sri Lanka in deep trouble at 5-91 at drinks.

After the break, the leg-spin of Craig replaced Perrott, and was immediately successful in getting Bede to chop one on (6-95). At the other end, James picked up two wickets in successive balls, with Dan Pellen taking an excellent catch on the boundary, followed by a big-spinning off-break that rattled the pegs (8-96). This was an excellent spell from James, who finished with 4-21, replaced by Raga. There was a brief flurry as the minth wicket partnership put on 24, but Raga snuffed out this contest courtesy of a smart stumping executed by John Finucane standing up to the medium pacer. Next over it was all done and dusted as Dan Pellen took another fine outfield catch off a Craig long-hop to end the innings at 123.

All in all, this was a dominant performance from CCNSW, with a great batting display complemented by some good bowling and excellent fielding. Hopefully we can back it up for the rest of the season!

The Team was: - Gerard O'Shea 30, Peter Rolls 32*, Ash Perrott 42*, Andrew Davis 0, Greg Brooks 30* ret not out, David Craig 12, Sittampalam Ragavan 30* ret not out, Garry James 30* ret not out, Daniel Pellen 17, David Glen 0, Stuart Ridge (c) 0, John Finucane (w) dnb

The Result was: -

C.C.N.S.W.: 6-228 (40 Overs) (A. Perrott 42*; P. Rolls 32*; G Brooks* ret not out; G. James* ret not out; S. Ragavan* ret not out)

Defeated

Sri Lanka Lions: 10-123 (28.3 overs) (G. James 4-21)

By 105 runs.

FoW: - 1-82 (A. Davis); 2-133 (D. Craig); 3-213 (D. Pellen) 4-214 (D. Glen); 5-215 (G. O'Shea); 6-215 (S. Ridge)

The Bowling was: - S. Ridge 4-1-11-0; A. Davis 5-0-20-0; A. Perrott 6-1-38-2; G. James 7-1-21-4; D. Craig 4.3-0-15-2; S. Ragavan 2-0-11-0

The Fielding was: -

Stumpings: - One to J. Finucane

Catches: - Two to D. Pellen; One to J. Finucane (w) and one to D. Glen

Run outs: - Two: -One to A. Davis and one to G. O'Shea

CCNSW Player points: - 3 points to G. James; 2 points to A. Perrott; one point to S. Ragavan

Scorecard: https://www.playhq.com/cricket-australia/org/sydney-masters-cricket-association/sydney-masters-cricket-season-202526-summer-202526/vintage/game-centre/1f897465

WEEK SIX: SUNDAY 2 NOVEMBER 2025

VINTAGE ROUND 3 v ASHFIELD DE LAS SALLE OLD BOYS AT CAMPERDOWN OVAL, CAMPERDOWN ON SUNDAY 2 NOVEMBER 2025: REPORT BY DAN PELLEN

The Returns of the Native

A Sunday afternoon in November was approaching the time of noon, and the vast tract of enclosed land known as Camperdown Park embrowned itself moment by moment. But not brown enough.

Skipper Stuart Ridge had everyone scratching their heads as he won the toss and bowled on greenish top. But our canny captain knew that the bonus points system favours setting big scores not chasing little ones, the little ones being De La Salle Old Boys usual fare, especially with only ten men.

Gerry *"Smoko*" O'Shea and Peter "*Watermelon"* Rolls opened up, a little nervy, with the pitch giving some movement and uneven bounce. Nevertheless, the score progressed nicely at four an over with both openers starting to hit freely and find the boundary. A cracking straight drive from Gerry was too straight, and fellow net man Geoff Orme (possibly the only decent fielder other than the substitutes we were lending them) took a smart return catch. 1-36 in the eighth over. A creditable 19, but our leading run scorer from last season won't be happy with that. Rolls responded with a boundary; then Vintage season debutant Ash "*wham, bam, thank you mam"* Perrott started his innings with 1-6-4 and at the end of the ninth over we were 1-51. Superb!

Unfortunately, there followed the biggest procession since Charles and Camilla got hitched. Fours overs later we were 6-55! Remember the uneven bounce and movement?

- Rolls lbw 14
- Perrott caught 11
- Greg Brooks lbw 1
- Andrew Davis bowled 0
- David Glen bowled 0

Now the focus was on batting out the remaining 27 overs. Ridge finished his umpteenth lap of the oval and settled down to do some scoring, perhaps wondering if he'd made the right call after winning the toss?

Now, Dan Pellen (1*) was joined by Joe Scarcella, the man who was last heard saying "*Wait"* when it was his round at the SCG members bar. After a few tense non-calls an apoplectic 'Prez', Greg Brooks, took time out from square leg umpiring to deal out some fundamentals of calling. We got you Prez. Thereafter Dan and Joe took the score nicely along without hair loss to the skipper or Prez. Joe even emulated Garry James' feat from last week and ran a three. With a couple of boundaries and a six over mid-wicket Dan was looking set to be banked when he went back instead of forward and the low bounce did him. Bowled. The Prez shook his head and the Skipper at the scoring table gave that smiling but slightly disappointed look and said, "Twenty-seven".

Still, those four overs had yielded 27 runs, and the very best was just to come.

David *"DC*" Craig joined Joe (1*). A native of Camperdown, born a mere Greg Brooks maximum away at the old King George V maternity hospital, DC was in a mood. Just what sort of mood would become clear over the next few hours.

7-82 with 23 overs to bat out and DLSOB were cock a hoop. But (spoiler alert) in those 23 overs, we made 2-145, with Joe Scarcella and David Craig contributing all but 13 of the runs off the bat.

Joe and DC had two contrasting partnerships, one before they each retired and one when they returned. Each yielded about 60 runs. The first was more cautious, plenty of quickish singles and the odd smote to the boundary. No running concerns. Got to bat out those overs. With intelligent cricket they put on 5 an over and took us to about 7-140 after 29 overs, Joe retiring not out shortly after DC. A brief entertaining intermission was provided by Dr Sittampalam Ragavan ("Raga") (7) and John "*new knee*" Finucane(6), so that when Joe returned to join DC the score was 9-164 after 33 overs.

The mathematicians amongst you will have worked out that the pair scored 63 off those last 9 overs, the majority from an imperious DC, who finished on 78* from 73 balls, with 11 boundaries. Mike Weaver (not playing) confirmed this is the highest ever individual Vintage score for CCNSW. Joe was overshadowed but looked in his best batting form for a few seasons, falling agonisingly short of his half-century. The man whose hearing has been questioned from a few metres away, clearly heard "You're on 48, Joe". Alas, the two runs eluded him. Nevertheless, job well done Joe!

But for DC the job was only half done.

Chasing 227 was never going to be easy, but skipper Stuart Ridge (*Bat first? Of course*!) wanted more. He wanted to make a statement (and get more bonus points).

In shades of last season, Stu bowled superbly, without luck. There was no varnish left on the stumps after he finished his spell. His one "wicket" came by surprise when after some bad calling and a good return throw, and the rest of the team shouting at him, Stu (strolling back to his mark) realised he had the ball in hand, was near the wicket, and Geoff Orme was behind him desperately trying to make his ground! Immediately his instinct clicked in and off came the bails. Run out. 1-9 in the seventh over. That was the zenith of their partnerships.

The next two wickets came at the other end, to Dr Sittampalam Ragavan ("Raga"). A sharp chance to John Finucane standing up at the wicket and an overhead mark by Stuart Ridge at mid-off. 3-17 after 12 overs. The two openers bowled their overs out and supported by good fielding the Old Boys only managed to reach 3-21 after 14. Ridge 7-4-6-0 (!) and Raga the rather expensive 7-2-11-2.

The native returned and with a loose ball turned for 2 the visitors moved to 3-23 and maybe entertained the notion that 8 an over was doable. This guy can't possibly bowl as well as bat can he?

Suffice to say the other season debutant Andy "*more wickets than runs*" Davis who returned the figures of 3-3-0-2 (!!) from the other end (and took a low diving catch at square leg to start DC off) could, like Joe before him, be forgiven for feeling under recognised.

Whether good ball or bad, on the stumps or off, DC could do no wrong. Two bowled and an lbw later it was all over. Most of us in the field felt like spectators. Final figures? 3.2-1-4-4, if you please.

With only 10 batters, the DLS Old Boys managed to lose the remaining 6 wickets for 6 runs, in just more than 6 overs. Two balls after what would have been drinks the game was over. Even if they'd have had twenty men, another few over from the native would have done them in. Remarkable.

MoM? DC could do no wrong. He also fielded for DLSOB for 10 overs.

As numbers man Stuart Ridge pointed out afterwards, David Craig and Joe Scarcella made 0-126, the other 19 of us made 18-128. One to tell the grandchildren. Especially for DC.

The Team was (playing 12): - Gerard O'Shea 19, Peter Rolls 14, Ash Perrott 11, Greg Brooks 1, Dan Pellen 27, Andrew Davis 0, David Glen 0, Joe Scarcella 48*, David Craig 78*, Sittampalam Ragavan 7, John Finucane (w) 6, and Stuart Ridge (c) dnb

The Result was: -

CCNSW: - 9-228 (40 Overs) (D. Craig 78*; J. Scarcella 48*)

Defeated

Ashfield De La Salle Old Boys: -all out* 27 (20.2 Overs) (D. Craig 4-4)

*** ADLSOBs only had ten players**

By 201 runs.

FoW: - 1-36 (G. O'Shea); 2-51 (P. Rolls); 3-52 (A. Perrott); 4-52 (G. Brooks); 5-53 (A. Davis); 6-55 (D. Glen); 7-82 (D. Pellen); 8-152 (S. Ragavan); 9-165 (J. Finucane).

The Bowling was: - S. Ridge 7-4-6-0; S. Ragavan 7-2-11-2; D. Craig 3.2-1-4-4; A. Davis 3-3-0-2

The Fielding was: -

Stumpings: - Nil

Catches: - One to each of J. Finucane (w) A. Davis and S. Ridge

Run outs: - Two: -one to P. Rolls and one to S. Ridge

CCNSW Player points: - 3 points to D. Craig; 2 points to J. Scarcella; one point to S. Ragavan

Scorecard: https://www.playhq.com/cricket-australia/org/sydney-masters-cricket-association/sydney-masters-cricket-season-202526-summer-202526/vintage/game-centre/d281fadb

WEEK EIGHT: SUNDAY 16 NOVEMBER 2025

VINTAGE ROUND 4 v GREATER ILLAWARA AT KEIRA OVAL, MOUNT KEIRA ON SUNDAY 16 NOVEMBER 2025: REPORT BYSTUART RIDGE

Another road trip for Vintage this week, heading south this time to the picturesque Keira Oval with the dramatic backdrop of Mount Keira overlooking the ground. Hosts, new side Greater Illawarra were a bit of an unknown quantity with a few players familiar from recent state and regional championships but uncertain depth in the supporting cast.

The strip was hard and looked full of runs on a warm afternoon so skipper Stuart Ridge was disappointed to call wrongly and take the field first.

Ridge and Andrew Davies took the new ball with the Illawarra openers both backing up from representation in this week's Over 60 National Championships. Stuart hit good areas straight away but Andy struggled to find rhythm in the strong cross wind.

With not much assistance in the wicket and anticipating a long afternoon in the field, the skipper opted for a double change after just 6 overs with the score at 0—18 bringing on Joe Scarcella and Garry James. The next six overs did not go at all to plan with the Illawarra pair looking to attack Garry's off spin and Joe getting the yips, resulting in 50 runs and both openers 'in the bank', retired 30*.

This at least gave us the opportunity to reset with 2 new batters at the crease. Garry immediately made the first breakthrough and started to reverse the momentum, conceding only a further 4 from his last 4 overs, well supported by the returning Andy Davies, who found a change of ends more to his liking. This took us through to drinks with Illawarra still set for a decent total at 1-87.

David Craig and Ash Perrott resumed after the interval and continued to apply the brakes, supported by a great fielding effort, and 18 runs were added for one further wicket to David, through to the 30th over - 2-109. Recent Over 60 Australian representative, Muggleton, eventually retired but was contained well as Ash and David completed their spells. Skipper Stuart returned to tie up one end, conceding just 9 from his 7 overs, supported by a cameo from Gerry O'Shea, both picking up late wickets as Illawarra closed at 4-143.

With set batters and wickets in hand including three to recycle, I am not sure that Illawarra paced their innings as well as they could have, but credit must go to an excellent bowling and fielding effort to turn things around after a shaky start.

Our response got off briskly with a couple of early boundaries to Gerry O'Shea before Peter Rolls was adjudged lbw in the 4th over at 18-1. Dan Pellen joined Gerry and hard running, aided by some generous fielding, kept the momentum going to bring up our 50 in the 12th over with Dan completing a tidy 30 in good time. Ash Perrott was keen to deal in his usual boundaries but it was becoming harder to get the ball away with a lack of pace in the bowling and the wicket and after surviving one life, he holed out for 11 just before drinks.

Greg Brooks joined Gerry O'Shea who fell just short of his retirement, stumped for 27 and Frank Baliotis followed shortly after to leave us 4-89 after 23 overs. 'The President' added a couple of lusty blows to bring up our 100 in the 26th before being well caught in the deep going for another. David Craig's recent purple patch came to an ignominious end with a tame reverse dab to first slip and the nerves were starting to jangle a little with 6 down and 39 still required.

Garry James and Joe Scarcella ticked off 15 of those before both falling, bowled in the same over to increase the jitters. The equation was now 23 required off 8 overs and 2 wickets in hand with the new batters Andrew Davies and John Finucane. But Andy patiently picked off the loose balls when they came and John gave nothing away in support to close things out without further drama in the 37th over.

Not the most convincing of wins but highlighted again the depth in the squad with different players standing up when needed. A good bowling and fielding effort to turn the game around after their openers got away from us, then Dan Pellen got our innings off to great start and Andy Davies kept a cool head after missing out in the last couple of games.

The Team was (playing 12): - Gerard O'Shea 27, Peter Rolls 2, Daniel Pellen 30* ret not out, Ash Perrott 11, Greg Brooks 21, Frank Baliotis 1, Joe Scarcella 14, David Craig 0, Garry James 5, Andrew Davis 22*, John Finucane (w) 2*, Stuart Ridge (c) dnb

The Result was: -

Greater Illawara CC: - 4-143 (40 Overs)

Lost to

C.C.N.S.W.: - 8-144 (36.4 Overs) (D Pellen 30* ret not out)

By 2 wickets.

FoW: - 1-18 (P. Rolls); 2-76 (A. Perrott); 3-86 (G. O'Shea); 4-89 (F. Baliotis); 5-104 (G. Brooks); 6-105 (D. Craig); 7-120 (G. James); 8-121 (J. Scarcella).

The Bowling was: - S. Ridge 7-1-9-1; A. Davis 7-0-29-0; G. James 7-0-22-1; D. Craig 7-1-15-1; J. Scarcella 3-0-30-0; A. Perrott 7-0-22-0; G. O'Shea 2-0-8-1.

The Fielding was: -

Stumpings: - Nil

Catches: - Nil

Run outs: - Nil

CCNSW Player points: - 3 points to D. Pellen; 2 points to A. Davis; one point to S. Ridge

Scorecard: https://www.playhq.com/cricket-australia/org/sydney-masters-cricket-association/sydney-masters-cricket-season-202526-summer-202526/vintage/game-centre/e288a477

WEEK TEN: WEDNESDAY 26 - SUNDAY 30 NOVEMBER 2025

VINTAGE ROUND 5 v BALMAIN-SOUTH SYDNEY AT CAMPERDOWN OVAL, CAMPERDOWN ON SUNDAY 30 NOVEMBER 2025: REPORT BYSTUART RIDGE

The Vintage squad is starting to show its age with Ed Cross recovering from knee surgery, President Greg Brooks in for a second new hip this week and Mick McCormick and Joe Scarcella also on the waiting list for hip and knee replacements.

With the squad stretched, a couple of Saturday withdrawals from the usually reliable group left us scrambling to get 12 on the park for this week's round against Balmain. Not sure who was living more dangerously with Frank Baliotis wielding a Stanley knife on top of a ladder and nearly removing a finger doing roof repairs or Sittampalam Ragavan ("Raga") being reminded by his wife of a Sunday wedding engagement when shopping for afternoon tea the day before.

An appeal for gear went out as the skipper's house guest, Phil Knight, out from England for some Ashes cricket was co-opted for a run and a guilty Raga offered to drop by for a brief mid-afternoon cameo between social engagements.

Stuart Ridge put the pre-match dramas behind him to call correctly and give CCNSW first use of the one of the freshly grassed new strips on the Camperdown square. Gerry O'Shea and Dan Pellen opened up, Dan looking dangerous with four well struck boundaries before being caught behind. Joe Scarcella joined Gerry and kept things moving as the total passed 50 in the 11th over.

After the loss of Gerry for 19, first Joe Scarcella, then Greg Brooks and Andy Davis all cashed in on the erratic change bowlers with run a ball thirties. David Craig and David Glen both went down blazing as we entered the last 10 overs with 3 in the bank. Garry James then teed off with 30 off 15 balls supported by John Finucane with another run a ball 30 to add 50 odd off the next 7 overs before Phil Knight, late arrival Raga and Stuart Ridge all fell, swinging in the last over.

Raga had arrived straight from wedding duties resplendent in traditional dress and after a quick change and short knock warmed up to open the bowling with skipper Stuart Ridge.

The Balmain openers seemed content to just survive until an early change brought David Craig into the attack. A couple of looseners yielded boundaries before a chip to Raga provided the first breakthrough. The dangerous looking first drop was then finding the fence regularly until missing a wider one from Raga to be stumped smartly by John Finucane.

Raga then returned to his social engagements after a tidy spell and was replaced by Garry James. Both Garry and David were extracting turn and bounce providing John with a catch behind and a second stumping to leave Balmain 4-54 at drinks.

With the game over as a contest, the goal was to take all ten wickets to maximise bonus points. With Joe Scarcella and Andy Davis carrying injuries, our bowling depth was shown with David Glen thrown the ball for his first spell of the season. Straight away he broke the stubborn fifth wicket partnership with John Finucane taking another catch standing up.

Garry James then crowned a typically testing spell nipping the ball back past the inside edge twice for a bowled and then an lbw and David Glen picked up another couple in the next over, hitting the stumps and then giving John his fifth dismissal with another catch up to the wicket.

The final wicket was proving elusive but the skipper warming up for a return spell while Gerry O'Shea teased out a false shot for a well taken catch by Andy Davis.

A strong win despite injuries and absences, getting good value with bonus points for runs and wickets. A host of good batting and bowling performances but the highlight of the day was John Finucane's 5 dismissals, all standing up to the wicket on a track with variable bounce, as well as no sundries conceded - an inspiration for those awaiting surgical interventions after recovering from his own off-season knee surgery.

The Team was: - Gerard O'Shea 17; Daniel Pellen 18**,** Joseph Scarcella 33*, Andrew Davis 32* ret not out, Greg Brooks 33* ret not out, John Finucane (w) 31* ret not out, David Craig 8, David Glen 4, Garry James 30* ret not out, Philip Knight 4, Sittampalam Ragavan 1, Stuart Ridge (c) 1

The Result was: -

C.C.N.S.W.: - 7-236 (40 Overs) (G. Brooks 33* ret not out; J. Scarcella 33*; A. Davis 32* ret not out; J. Finucane (w) 31* ret not out; G. James 30* ret not out)

Defeated

Balmain-South-Sydney CC: 10-107 (33.5 Overs)

By 136 runs.

FoW: - 1-20 (D. Pellen); 2-55 (G. O'Shea); 3-163 (D. Craig); 4-178 (D. Glen); 5-234 (P. Knight); 6-235 (S. Ragavan); 7-236 (S. Ridge).

The Bowling was: - S. Ridge 4-2-5-0; S. Ragavan 7-0-25-1; D. Craig 7-1-27-2; G. James 7-1-16-3; D. Glen 6-0-24-3; G. O'Shea 2.5-0-9-1

The Fielding was: -

Stumpings: - 3 to J. Finucane

Catches: - 2 to J. Finucane (w); One to each of A. Davis and S. Ragavan

Run outs: - Nil

CCNSW Player points: - CCNSW Player points (awarded by captain): - 3 points to J. Finucane; 2 points to G. James; one point to D. Glen

Scorecard: https://www.playhq.com/cricket-australia/org/sydney-masters-cricket-association/sydney-masters-cricket-season-202526-summer-202526/vintage/game-centre/a1cd7486

WEEK TWELVE: SATURDAY 13 - SUNDAY 14 DECEMBER 2025

VINTAGE ROUND 6 v LINDFIELD AT ACRON OVAL, ST IVES ON SUNDAY 14 DECEMBER 2025: REPORT BYSTUART RIDGE

One of the pleasures of playing masters cricket has been regular access to generally good quality turf wickets and usually we would have little hesitation batting first on winning the toss. However, the Acron strip had been used for Shires cricket the day before and a junior game prior to our game. While there were no issues from the overnight rain, we discovered the pitch used for the morning game was offset by a metre from the previous day's game resulting in bowlers footholds being right on a length at one end in addition to it being generally patchy, dry and crumbly. As a result the skipper was happy to call correctly and see what the home team made of it.

Stuart Ridge and Sittampalam Ragavan ("Raga") opened up and with his first ball Raga jagged one back through the opener's defences for the early breakthrough but despite the variable bounce the next pair negotiated the next 10 overs to reach 1-27.

Garry James was an early replacement for Stuart Ridge and with the ball spitting and jumping runs were increasingly tough to come by. Raga's persistence was rewarded with a second wicket after the other opener skied one to Stuart at mid-off trying to up the run rate. Garry then picked up a similar dismissal with a well judged catch from Andy Davis as Lindfield tried again to break the shackles.

The next Lindfield pair then dug in until drinks at 3-41. David Craig and Andy Davis continued the stranglehold after the break with only 2 runs off the next 4 overs and after a couple of unsuccessful lbw appeals David finally convincing the umpire he had his man. Andy continued to tie up the other end hitting awkward lengths

and was rewarded with a couple of wickets with a slip catch to Gerry O'Shea and one through the gate to bowl their skipper while David picked up his second with a stumping from keeper John Finucane.

With Lindfield looking to hit out in the closing overs, Stuart returned to pick up a wicket from a drive to David Craig at mid-off and Gerry finished things off inducing a skied catch to Garry James and a fortuitous stumping ricocheting off John's pads with the final man stranded.

In our reply Gerry O'Shea and Peter Rolls knew what was required and combined watchfulness with putting away the scoring opportunities that came as Lindfield was not able to sustain the required pressure. With 43 on the board after fifteen overs, the main question was whether we could score some valuable extra points for an early finish (5 points inside 20 overs, 4 points inside 24).

A ten ball over with a couple of free hits yielded 22 runs to bring the twenty over finish into play. With Peter falling on 29 and Gerry closing out his 30 to retire, it was left to Dan Pellen and Ash Perrot to get 16 off the twentieth over for the extra point. After an air swing on the penultimate ball with 5 needed, Ash went for the 6 required with the ball agonisingly five metres short so we had to be content with closing out the 9 wicket win with the first ball of the 21st over.

With other favourable results, five straight wins after our first round loss leaves us second on the ladder but with a tough schedule against a number of other contenders after the Xmas break.

The Team was (playing 12): - Gerard O'Shea 33* ret not out, Peter Rolls 29, Daniel Pellen 8*, Ash Perrott 10*, David Glen dnb, Frank Baliotis dnb, Andrew Davis dnb, John Finucane (w) dnb, David Craig dnb, Garry James dnb, Sittampalam Ragavan dnb, Stuart Ridge (c) dnb.

The Result was: -

Lindfield CC: - 10-91(37.4 Overs)

Lost to

C.C.N.S.W.: - 1-92 (20.1 Overs) (G. O'Shea 33*)

By 9 wickets.

FoW: - 1-71 (P. Rolls).

The Bowling was: - S. Ridge 6-1-16-1, S. Ragavan 7-3-17-2, G. James 7-2-7-1, A. Perrott 3-0-9-0, D. Craig 7-2-21-2, A. Davis 7-4-15-2, G. O'Shea 0.4-0-0-2

The Fielding was: -

Stumpings: - 2 to J. Finucane

Catches: - One to each of D. Craig, A. Davis, G. James, G. O'Shea, and S. Ridge

Run outs: - Nil

CCNSW Player points: - 3 points to G. O'Shea; 2 points to P. Rolls; one point to G. James.

Scorecard: **https://www.playhq.com/cricket-australia/org/sydney-masters-cricket-association/sydney-masters-cricket-season-202526-summer-202526/vintage/game-centre/62c64c1a**

WEEK SIXTEEN: SUNDAY 11 JANUARY 2026

VINTAGE ROUND 7 v PENRITH CC AT CAMPERDOWN OVAL, CAMPERDOWN ON SUNDAY 11 JANUARY 2025: REPORT BY PETER ROLLS

A thriller in the rain!

It is hard to recall the last time I had to play in the rain. Possibly in England in my 20's!

Credit to the umpire Robin Smith who asked the two Captains (Stuart Ridge and Ken Hall) if they wanted to continue after tea and of course both did as it was a top of the table must win clash.

To start the game at 12.15pm it was overcast and 22°C – a 20 degree drop from the previous day (where all cricket in Sydney metro was called off). The pitch was green and longer than the 10mm seen on Boxing Day for The Ashes. But the curator John Lee assured us it would play well with the new square this season of Tahoma grass that had been used successfully for Sydney University wickets the season before for the first time.

However, understandably both Captains where keen for a bowl first and this was afforded to Penrith Captain Ken Hall who won the flip of the coin. Also rain was forecast for later in the day which normally favours the batting side.

Gerry O'Shea and Dan Pellen got us off to a better than expected start with an early boundary each and the ball seemed to be coming onto the bat nicely. 0-10 off 2 overs. But then the Penrith attack found their length and started hitting the seam and O'Shea was caught behind off a rising, seaming delivery and the following over Pellen was trapped lbw from a ball cutting back in. 2-22 off 8 overs.

Ash Perrott and Peter Rolls took advantage of the pace onto the bat dispatching anything short or full of a length. However, Ash got a "jaffa" that tickled his off bail from Hugh McKay. 3-33 off 10 overs.

Joe Scarcella struck the loose ball well and looked in good touch until a mix up with Peter where Penrith's best fielder Hugh McKay cleanly stopped with his left hand a cut shot from Peter behind point. Joe fully committed himself to a run which saw both batsmen at the same strikers end and so Joe was the casualty of good fielding and Peter not calling "NOOO"! 4-59 off 13 overs.

Andrew Davis also enjoyed the ball coming onto the bat and dispatched two quick boundaries before holing out to a good length ball to mid-on. 5-71 off 16 overs.

David Glen and Peter Rolls worked together strategically to keep out '*Wile E. Coyote'*…Ken Hall who at 73 is still as dangerous as a runaway bus on a freeway! Especially on a deck doing a bit and bowling a mixture of medium pace and spin. We were able to keep the scoreboard ticking along from the opposite end with a couple boundaries each and quick singles over this tense period. We saw off Ken who remained wicketless from his 7 overs and the next over Peter retired at 30*. With one in the shed and only 7 overs left, David Glen decided it was time to throw the bat but one slipped through him to be bowled. 6-114 off 33 overs.

Enter David Craig and Garry James who bashed and ran like their lives depended on it, James sucking in more deep breathes than a pearl diver. The intermittent light rain from 30 overs on was starting to get persistent. We on the sideline were asked to get the covers ready and we feared that this could be the end of the day's play. However, it didn't get any heavier and luckily the umpire allowed us to continue. David Craig bludgeoned seven 4s to retire in quick time for 32*. Playing sensibly in the V while we on the sideline were

hoping he would not attempt his trademark reverse sweep as the oppositions knowledge of him already had fielders in that position. David retired at 6-155 with three overs to go and a respectable total looming.

James and Sittampalam Ragavan ("Raga") with hit and run tactics scrambled many ones and twos to the crowd's delight to complete our 40 overs with a great score of 6-177, considering we were 5 wickets down after 16 overs. (Average 4.425 runs per over in testing conditions).

Tea was taken while the light rain was becoming more consistent but the show must go on as both Captains agreed. Most of us took out to the field a hand towel like we were going to a sauna.

No Duckworth Lewis rules applied but a minimum of 15 overs is needed to be played to constitute a game. If after 15 overs, rain stops play for the remainder of the day then the team with the best run rate per over wins.

The Penrith openers started strongly with 14 off the first four overs but in the fifth over another cheeky single turned to disaster when David Craig at mid-off pounced on a ground ball like it was a lost $10 note and threw over the stumps to Stuart Ridge smartly behind the stumps at his bowling end to get our first wicket with a very exciting run out. 1-16 off 5 overs.

Enter Hugh McKay who last season gave us a tonking. The very next over after the run out was Raga's third, Hugh whacked his second ball faced just over O'Shea's out-stretched hand at mid-on that hits the fence harder than a drunk exiting a pub. Same over and Hugh tried to also smash Raga's 5th ball that was just short of a length and cut it hard but went straight to Andrew Davis at backward point who took a very sharp catch. Elation and relief for Raga as Hugh was a key wicket. 2-20 off 6 overs.

Two overs later a scintillating piece of fielding from Perrott at cover threw down the stumps at the bowlers end to claim another run out. Euphoric cheers rang out around the ground. 3-32 off 8 overs.

By this stage the crowd was buzzing and our supporters on the sideline were more vocal than Pauline Hanson in the form of Frank Baliotis, an injury recovering Ed Cross, C&S captain Jamie Murtha, Classics Mick Weaver and Prez/new hip man Greg Brooks (who probably got into trouble as he had to ring Bron to say he could not get home earlier as planned due to the suspense of this match).

Enter Ken Hall who is harder to get out than a splinter. Ken and Richard Warren played sensibly, especially against Andrew Davis who replaced Stuart Ridge and who was making the ball hoop and seam in the drizzle. Andrew was clever to reduce his run up to a couple of steps to a slippery long turf crease to ensure an impeccable length that was rewarded him with a fine caught behind by keeper John Finucane to dismiss opener Richard for a well composed 20. An important breakthrough. But at this point it was still touch and go if we would get in the 15 overs as the clouds looked heavier, ready to burst to bring torrential rain. 4-47 off 13 overs.

Garry James replaced Raga with immediate effect in his first over bowling Penrith's number 6. More cheers from our supporters and Garry called for a stick to scrap off the mud accumulating on his boots. A result was now guaranteed reaching 15 overs. 5-59 off 16 overs (and Penrith close to the targeted run rate).

Difficult conditions for both bowlers and batsmen. But we played on, assisted by hand towels being used more than at a 5 year old's birthday party at McDonald's.

Ken was joined by number 7 Peter Heslop, a ring in from Western Wildfires (Bathurst) who just turned 60. Together they played exceptionally well with more patience than a parent at a 5 year old birthday party at McDonald's. Some brilliant ground fielding by Dan at cover saved many runs and kept the pressure on tight

bowling from James, Craig and Perrott. Still 5 down but 118 off 30 overs. 60 required off 10 overs and Penrith still in the hunt.

Both Ken Hall and Peter Heslop reached their 30s retired not outs in consecutive overs and so came our chance to starve the tail enders. David Glen also very good on the far mid-wicket boundary saving some fours and reducing twos to singless in the dim light. Penrith 5-139 off 35 overs. 39 required off 5 overs seemed out of reach for Penrith but they had 5 wickets in hand.

O'Shea came on to replace Craig to bowl the final overs at one end. He too, off a reduced run up, bowled smartly, just short of a length outside off stump and was rewarded with the first ball of his fourth and second last over with bowling their number 9. Then three balls later he caught and bowled the dangerous Tony Brown (number 8) who had made 24 in lusty blows. Then the next ball their number 11 with his first ball faced cut the ball behind point looking for two runs. Peter Rolls had to run around from deep point to gather and was able to whip in a bounced throw next to the stumps with a skillful pickup by keeper John Finucane who whipped off the bails to see their number 11 short by a metre. Three wickets in one over from Gerry O'Shea. The CCNSW supporters went berserk but this brought back retiree Ken Hall and the crowd was not moving from their spots. 8-152 off 38 overs.

26 needed off 2 overs for Penrith to win. Rain getting heavier and the sky darker, making it difficult for even the crowd to see the ball. Captain Stuart Ridge bowled the second last over (replacing a tidy Ash Perrott). Stuart's first ball was a leg bye to Ken. His second ball saw their number 10 sweeping off middle stump to square leg high in the sky with Peter Rolls at deep square leg only picking up the flight once the ball got over the huge dark fig trees on the opposite side of the field. Catch taken and ecstasy in front of the pavilion. Then "Oh Shit" the realisation that this brings their 60 year old second retiree back in with Ken for 10 balls and 25 runs needed with only one wicket in hand. With Penrith throwing the bat, Stuart's over only goes for 8 runs. 9-160 off 39 overs. 18 required to win off the last over.

Last over is bowled by Gerry O'Shea. Rain still falling and poor light. First ball to Ken and a single taken. Second ball to Peter Heslop who hits straight and deep between mid-on and mid-off but the ball is cut off and he gets two. Third ball he slog sweeps to cow corner for four. Ash Perott now comes around from deep mid-on to just inside the fence at cow corner. Fourth ball. slog sweeps again but this time high to mid-wicket with the ball bouncing one metre before the fence and just missing an overhanging branch from the fig tree which would have been judged a six if it had hit the branch. So another four. 7 required off 2 balls. Gerry with veins of steel like Superman stays upright at the slippery crease to deliver another good length ball outside of stump that is slog swept again but retrieved by Ash for two. Last ball and a six will win the match or a four will tie. Another good length ball by O'Shea and again Heslop slog sweeps and the ball goes rocketing along the ground straight to Ash at cow corner who stops it a metre from the boundary and then throws to Gerry's end with Ken struggling to run back for the second run. O'shea is next to the stumps and the ball bounces just in front of him and skids sharply from the wet surface with Gerry unable to take it cleanly to run out Ken but able to stop it to prevent any over throws. We win by two runs!!!!

Smiles everywhere as the game was played with such skill and good spirit in poor conditions that we all felt like both teams had won.

Torrential rain fell 15 minutes after we left the field. We were very fortunate to get a game here today. John Lee was right considering how wet the wicket got.

The after game speeches were as motivating as they were entertaining. Stuart gave the Man of the Match for us to Dan Pellen which is very unusual to give to a fielder but his diving and exuberance in the field was fully justified and I think throwing away his now brown 'Whites' would also be justified! Stuart gave their MOM to

Peter Heslop for his 51*. Ken gave his MOM to David Craig for his quick fire 32* at the end of our innings to propel us to a competitive total and for trying to bowl leg spin with a cake of soap!

The Team was (playing 12): - Gerard O'Shea 7, Daniel Pellen 8, Peter Rolls 30* ret not out, Ash Perrott 11, Joseph Scarcella 15, Andrew Davis 12, David Glen 18, David Craig 32* ret not out, Garry James 27*, Sittampalam Ragavan 7*, John Finucane (w) dnb, Stuart Ridge (c) dnb

The Result was: -

C.C.N.S.W.: - 6-177 (40 Overs)

Defeated

Penrith CC: - 9-175 (40 Overs)

By 2 runs.

FoW: - 1-16 (G. O'Shea); 2-16 (D. Pellen); 3-33 (A. Perrott); 4-59 (J. Scarcella); 5-71 (A. Davis); 6-113 (D. Glen).

The Bowling was: - S. Ridge 7-1-28-1; S. Ragavan 7-0-22-1; A. Davis 5-0-20-1; G. James 7-1-26-1; D. Craig 4-0-20-0; A. Perrott 5-0-17-0; G. O'Shea 5-0-33-2.

The Fielding was: -

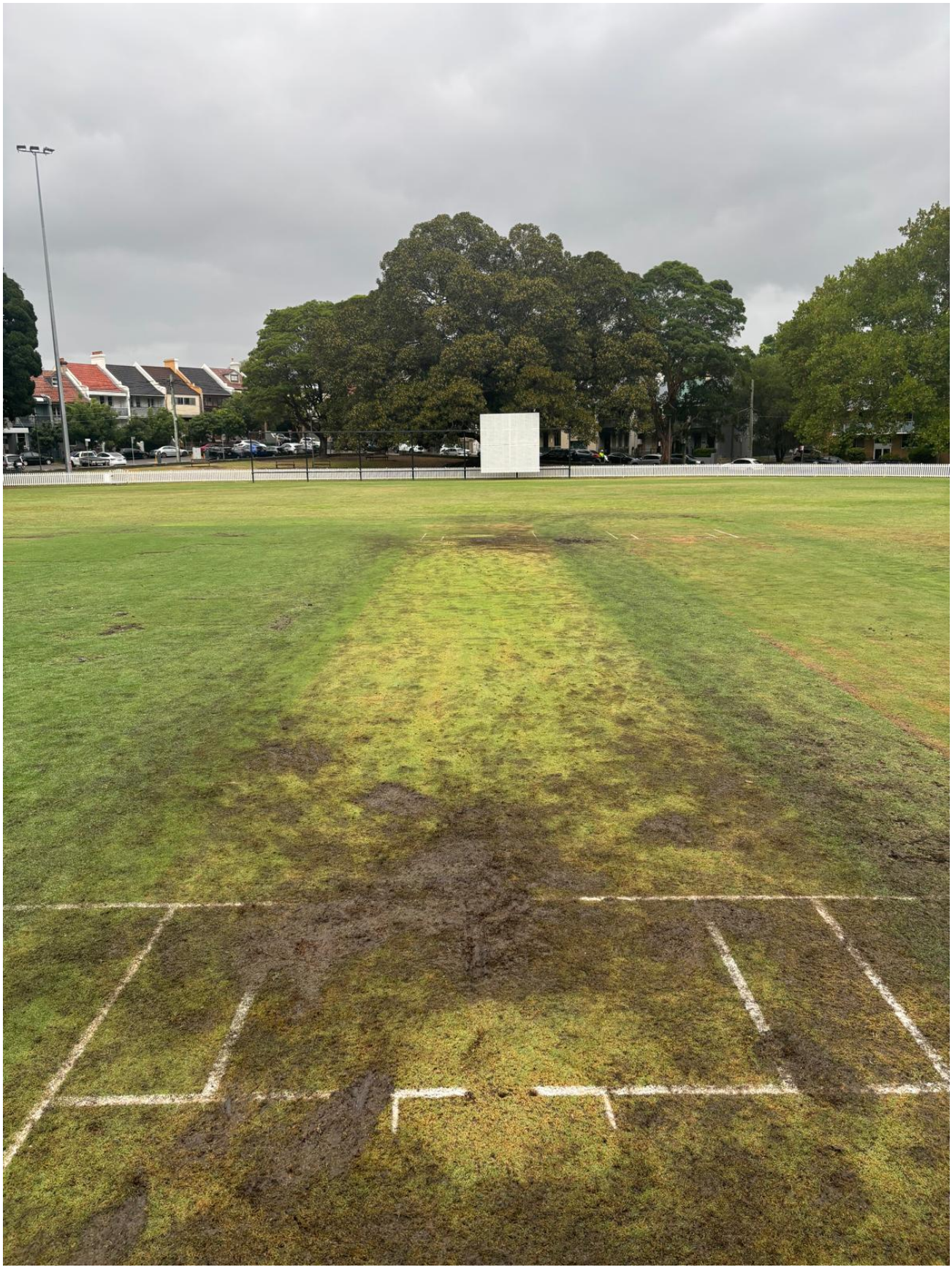
Stumpings: - Nil

Catches: - One to each of A. Davis, G. O'Shea and P. Rolls

Run outs: - Three: - One to each of D. Craig, G. O'Shea and A. Perrott

CCNSW Player points: - 3 points to D. Pellen; 2 points to D. Craig; one point to P. Rolls

Scorecard: - https://www.playhq.com/cricket-australia/org/sydney-masters-cricket-association/sydney-masters-cricket-season-202526-summer-202526/vintage/game-centre/f9e28a14



The pitch at Camperdown after the game-I remarkably good condition

The Team was (playing 12): - Gerard O'Shea 7, Daniel Pellen 8, Peter Rolls 30* ret not out, Ash Perrott 11, Joseph Scarcella 15, Andrew Davis 12, David Glen 18, David Craig 32* ret not out, Garry James 27*, Sittampalam Ragavan 7*, John Finucane (w) dnb, Stuart Ridge (c) dnb

The Result was: -

C.C.N.S.W.: - 6-177 (40 Overs)

Defeated

Penrith CC: - 9-175 (40 Overs)

By 2 runs.

FoW: - 1-16 (G. O'Shea); 2-16 (D. Pellen); 3-33 (A. Perrott); 4-59 (J. Scarcella); 5-71 (A. Davis); 6-113 (D. Glen).

The Bowling was: - S. Ridge 7-1-28-1; S. Ragavan 7-0-22-1; A. Davis 5-0-20-1; G. James 7-1-26-1; D. Craig 4-0-20-0; A. Perrott 5-0-17-0; G. O'Shea 5-0-33-2.

The Fielding was: -

Stumpings: - Nil

Catches: - One to each of A. Davis, G. O'Shea and P. Rolls

Run outs: - Three: - One to each of D. Craig, G. O'Shea and A. Perrott

CCNSW Player points: - 3 points to D. Pellen; 2 points to D. Craig; one point to P. Rolls

Scorecard: - https://www.playhq.com/cricket-australia/org/sydney-masters-cricket-association/sydney-masters-cricket-season-202526-summer-202526/vintage/game-centre/f9e28a14

WEEK TWENTY: SUNDAY 8 FEBRUARY 2026

VINTAGE ROUND 8 v INGLEBURN RSL CC AT MEMORIAL PARK, CAMPBELLTOWN ON SUNDAY 8 FEBRUARY 2026.

Cancelled by rain

WEEK TWENTY TWO : SUNDAY 22 FEBRUARY 2026

VINTAGE ROUND 9 v GEORGES RIVER AT CAMPERDOWN OVAL, CAMPERDOWN ON SUNDAY 22 FEBRUARY 2026: REPORT BY STUART RIDGE

Back row: Garry James, Stuart Ridge (c), Gerard O'Shea, Ed Cross, Ash Perrot, Daniel Pellen, Joe Scarcella

Front Row: David Craig, Peter Rolls, Frank Baliotis, Andrew Davis, John Finucane (w)

(NB The black arm bands are for John Jewis, Chair of Cricket NSW Masters and who played for Central Coast Cyclones in the Vintage (over 60s) competition)

At the start of the day three rounds remained with CCNSW sat in a close second spot on the ladder and fixtures against last season's Vintage champions, Georges River (currently 5th), Central Coast (1st) and Hunter (3rd) to come. With other sides having an easier finishing draw, only a win would do to keep us in the chase for a third Vintage title in four years.

Last year's corresponding fixture was a wash out so a humbling defeat at Bexley 2 years ago was our most recent point of reference.

The Georges River skipper called correctly and with threat of afternoon storms, asked us to bat first on a hot and humid day at Camperdown.

Gerry O'Shea and Dan Pellen opened up against a steady attack. Both made starts but Gerry steered one to backward square to be caught for 7 and Dan was trapped in front for 13 leaving us 2-25 in the 11th over.

Ash Perrot started to pick up the tempo of the innings with some well struck boundaries but Peter Rolls was bowled for 7 as we reached the half way point at 3-60 still with work to do to reach a competitive total. Ash retired for a run a ball 30* but Joe Scarcella ,after opening his account with a fine extra cover drive for 4, miscued one to mid-on - 4-84 in the 25th.

Ed Cross and David Craig started to go through the gears cashing in especially on Georges Rivers 5th and 6th bowlers and with Ed's retirement at the beginning of the 32nd over the platform was set for the lower order to hit out. Garry James and Andy Davis had a go but fell cheaply before Frank Baliotis joined David Craig rotating the strike and running hard. David retired for another busy run a ball 30*, John Finucane added 7 from 6 before falling on his sword allowing Ash to return and take 13 off the last over to set a competitive total of 183, 69 coming from the last 10 overs.

With a short boundary to the Camperdown pavilion and two Australian Over 60 representatives in the George's River batting line up, we knew we still had work to do.

Captain, Stuart Ridge and Ed Cross took the new ball and kept things tight against Australian Over 60 opening bat Darren Smith. An early change brought Garry James into the attack in the 7th over, keeping up the pressure with a couple of maidens while Andrew Davis replaced Ed at the other end.

With only 23 off 10, Georges River looked to pick up the run rate and after giving a life to opener Hodgson, he skied another off Andy to give us the first breakthrough at 1-39 in the 12th over. Smith retired shortly afterwards to give us 2 new batters and the skipper changed things up again replacing Garry's off spin with the leg breaks of David Craig who made an immediate breakthrough aided by a stunning diving catch by Peter Rolls at short mid-wicket.

This brought the big hitting John Adamson to the crease, architect of the aforementioned loss at Bexley, with a brutal fifty on his last outing against us. On that occasion he had taken to the skipper's seamers, so the plan was to take the pace off and Garry James was immediately brought back swapping ends for a twin spin attack.

Adamson immediately targeted the short leg side boundary off David's bowling connecting for a 6 and 4 either side of a fortunate miscue falling just short of the fielder at deep mid-wicket. Reaching 16 off 8 balls and the score 2-71, the momentum was with George's River, so the skipper returned, aiming to bowl wide and away from the short boundary.

I would like to say it was a brilliant plan well executed but sometimes the cricketing gods are in your favour and the first ball was driven on the up straight to Gerry O'Shea at cover for a sharp catch and huge sigh of relief from all at a massive turning point in the game. David Craig then returned to finish his spell only conceding a further 9 and picking up a second wicket to a catch by Ash Perrott in his remaining 5 overs while Garry james tied up the other end.

Gerry O'Shea took over from Garry and kept the brakes on, rewarded with a feather behind to Ash (giving John Finucane a break from wicket keeping duties in the heat), Georges River now 5-91 in the 28th over and the required run rate climbing to 7 an over.

However, there was no room for complacency with the next pair digging in and adding 30 from the next 5 overs. In another shift in momentum though, Gerry O'Shea removed both in consecutive overs leaving Stuart ridge and Ed Cross to defend 58 off the remaining 6 overs.

With the dangerous Smith to return the priority was to contain rather than take wickets. Both immediately hit the right lines and picked up a wicket each as the tail went down swinging. However, by the time Smith returned, 48 was required from the last 2 overs and George's River closed on 9-143.

On paper a comfortable margin, but a hard fought game with a number of momentum shifts and turning points. A slow start batting but wickets in hand and men in the bank laid the platform for a deep batting order to cash in, backed up by another great all-round bowling and fielding effort.

The Team was (playing 12): - Gerard O'Shea 9, Daniel Pellen 13, Peter Rolls 7, Ash Perrott 44*, Ed Cross 30* ret not out, Joe Scarcella 5, David Craig 30* ret not out, Garry James 3, Andrew Davis 4, Frank Baliotis 14*, John Finucane (w) 7 and Stuart Ridge (c) dnb

The Result was: -

C.C.N.S.W.: - 7-183 (40 Overs) (A. Perrott 44*; D. Craig 30* ret not out; E. Cross 30* ret not out)

Defeated

Georges River: - 9-143 (40 Overs)

By 40 runs.

FoW: - 1-16 (G. O'Shea); 2-25 (D. Pellen); 3-55 (P. Rolls); 4-84 (J. Scarcella); 5-133 (G. James); 6-139 (A. Davis); 7-164 (J. Finucane).

The Bowling was: - S. Ridge 7-2-10-2; E. Cross 7-0-23-1; G. James 7-2-28-0; A. Davis 3-0-14-1; D. Craig 7-0-22-2; G. O'Shea 7-0-27-3; A. Perrott 2-0-13-0

The Fielding was: -

Stumpings: - Nil

Catches: - One to J. Finucane (w) and one to each of G. O'Shea, D. Pellen, A. Perrott, P. Rolls, S. Ridge

Run outs: - Nil

CCNSW Player points: - 3 points to A. Perrott; 2 points to D. Craig; one point to E. Cross.

Scorecard: **https://www.playhq.com/cricket-australia/org/sydney-masters-cricket-association/sydney-masters-cricket-season-202526-summer-202526/vintage/game-centre/030dc700**

WEEK TWENTY THREE : SUNDAY 1 MARCH 2026

VINTAGE ROUND 10 v CENTRAL COAST CYCLONES AT ROGERS PARK, WOY WOY ON SUNDAY 1 MARCH 2026: REPORT BY STUART RIDGE

Lying in second spot on the ladder with 2 rounds to go and games against 1st and 3rd this was effectively a must win 'semi-final' to set up a last round play-off for the title.

Car pools set off up the freeway to the Central Coast in high spirits but were greeted by a waterlogged ground requiring the game to be relocated to the adjacent synthetic pitch. Not ideal, but both sides were keen to play with third place Hunter breathing down our necks.

We lost the toss and were asked to bat. The artificial wicket was of decent quality but the heavy outfield was still damp giving poor value for shots. This led to a steady but slow start followed by a succession of wickets falling to attacking shots in an attempt to pick up the run rate, leaving us at 4-55 at the half way stage with plenty of work to do.

Two more wickets in a similar vein left us reeling at 6-74 after 24 overs with only number 3 bat Andrew Davis providing any stability. He was then joined by guest fill-in Ross Greenwood and they were able steady the ship with a partnership of 30 in 8 overs before Andy fell just short of retirement for 28. Ross and Garry James continued with Ross retiring for a busy 30 and Garry adding a valuable 17 before being run out chasing late runs as we closed at 9-142 to give the bowlers something to work with.

Stuart Ridge and Ross Greenwood took the new ball and an early wicket to Stuart from a diving return catch with some tight early overs raised hopes. With the Central Coasts bats getting their eye in, however, runs started to come more freely.

A change to spin saw Garry James make a breakthrough is his first over, Ed Cross joined the attack at the other end but we were still unable to build the needed pressure, not helped by a couple of missed chances and with the attacking Cyclones opener retiring, the next pair eased to 2-84 at drinks.

With a second retirement, the run rate slowed. David Craig started well and looked to be out of luck before a double breakthrough at 105 in the 25th over. Stuart retuned to try and apply more pressure at the other end and David picked up a 3rd but with the required run rate now at barely 2 an over the deep Cyclones batting line up could afford to be patient and pick off the loose ball. Sittampalam Ragavan grabbed a late wicket but Central Coast was able to cruise home for a comfortable 4 wicket win in the 34th over.

A disappointing end to an unbeaten run of seven wins since Round one leaving us with another road trip next round to contest second place with Hunter.

The Team was (playing 12): - Ed Cross14, Gerard O'Shea 10, Andrew Davis 28, Ash Perrott 2, Joseph Scarcella 4, Sittampalam Ragavan 11, David Craig 4, Ross Greenwood 32*, Garry James 17, John Finucane 0, David Glen 4*, Stuart Ridge (c) dnb

The Result was: -

C.C.N.S.W.: - 9-142 (40 Overs) (R. Greenwood 32*)

Lost to

Central Coast: - 6-146 (33.5 Overs) (D. Craig 3-22)

By 4 wickets.

FoW: - 1-25 (E. Cross); 2-28 (G. O'Shea); 3-37 (A. Perrott); 4-48 (J. Scarcella); 5-67 (S. Ragavan); 6-74 (D. Craig); 7-104 (A. Davis); 8-132 (J. Finucane); 9-138 (G. James).

The Bowling was: - S. Ridge 7-2-26-1; R. Greenwood 4-0-16-0; E. Cross 7-0-28-0; G. James 7-0-38-1; D. Craig 7-0-22-3; S. Ragavan 1.5-0-13-1

The Fielding was: -

Stumpings: - Nil

Catches: - Two to R. Greenwood; One to each of G. O'Shea and S. Ridge

Run outs: - Nil

CCNSW Player points: - 3 points to D. Craig; 2 points to R. Greenwood; one point to A. Davis

Scorecard: **https://www.playhq.com/cricket-australia/org/sydney-masters-cricket-association/sydney-masters-cricket-season-202526-summer-202526/vintage/game-centre/9f824ea6**

WEEK TWENTY FOUR : SUNDAY 8 MARCH 2026

VINTAGE ROUND 11 v HUNTER DISTRICT AT WATERBOARD OVAL, WOY WOY ON SUNDAY 15 MARCH 2026: REPORT BY STUART RIDGE

Whilst the last round defeat to Central Coast effectively ended our bid for the Vintage title there was still plenty to play for in another trip up the coast to play the second placed Hunter - a side who still harboured slim hopes of topping the table if results went their way.

Waterboard Oval presented a hard patchy wicket with a well grassed outfield and very short boundaries.

Captain Stuart Ridge called correctly and chose to bat, feeling 180 plus would be needed against a strong Hunter batting line up.

Gerry O'Shea and Ed Cross got us off to a good start and were going along nicely at 5 an over before Ed was bowled on 21 by one that nipped back and Dan Pellen was trapped in front in the next over. A tight spell from Hunter's opening bowlers slowed the scoring a little and Gerry fell for 20 in the twelfth over before Ash Perrot and Peter Rolls got us through to drinks at 3-84.

Ash retired in the 21st clearing the ropes to bring up his 30* but we then struggled to accelerate against Hunter's slow bowlers. Peter Rolls started to find the boundary but was the third batter to fall in the 20s when he was bowled for 28 leaving us 4-124 with 10 overs to go. Sittampalam Ragavan ("Raga") and David Craig added 35 in the next 5 overs but when they both fell we failed to capitalise on wickets in hand and a man in the bank, only adding another 24 in the last 5 to close on 8-179.

With Hunter opening up with the big hitting Greg Thrift, the competition's leading run scorer, we knew what to expect. Despite defensive field settings and an early bowling change to vary the pace, the ground was definitely too small for him and he raced to 30* retired not out in just 16 balls. The next pair tried to continue in the same vein but when they both fell to wickets from Ed Cross and Raga at 2-76 after 13 we were able to start pegging back the scoring. Raga in particular bowled a very tidy spell supported by Ed with a second wicket and Garry James to restrict them to only 31 in the second 10 overs. With Hunter 3-90 at drinks we were definitely back in the game.

Raga struck again in the first over after the break to complete a spell of 2-17. With a dominant player to recycle, taking wickets can be a double edged sword but with Hunter again looking to attack, Stuart Ridge returned for a second spell. Consecutive wicket maidens were followed by a sharp run out of the next man by Frank Baliotis. Frank then took a stinging catch of Gerry O'Shea for a collapse of 4-15 to leave them at 8-133 in the 31st over.

The next pair added 20 before Gerry O'Shea and Frank Baliotis combined again - Hunter 9 down, 26 needed off 28 balls and danger man Thrift back at the crease. Stuart Ridge, returning for a 3rd spell and Gerry conceded 6 each off the next 2 overs and Thrift was dropped off a sharp half chance to leave 12 required off 12 balls. Hunter got Thrift back on strike and there was little margin for error as he was able to clear the boundary off a short ball from the skipper to bring victory in sight which they were able to close out with an over to spare.

Despite our total being competitive, we probably left a few runs out there with 4 batters falling in the 20s as well as failing to take advantage of the one we did get in the bank. A great effort to stick at it in the field after

the early onslaught and we could easily have won it but ultimately beaten by Thrift's outstanding innings of 43* from 28 balls.

The Team was: - Ed Cross 21, Gerard O'Shea 20, Daniel Pellen 0, Ash Perrott (w) 32* ret not out, Peter Rolls 22, Andrew Davis 8, Sittampalam Ragavan 14, David Craig 24, Frank Baliotis 7, Garry James 5*, Stuart Ridge (c) 0*

The Result was: -

C.C.N.S.W.: - 8-179 (40 Overs) (A. Perrott 32* ret not out)

Lost to

Hunter District: - 9-182 (39 Overs)

By one wicket.

FoW: - 1-41 Ed Cross, 2-44 Daniel Pellen, 3-57 Gerard O'Shea, 4-122 Peter Rolls, 5-124 Andrew Davis, 6-152 Sittampalam Ragavan, 7-167 David Craig, 8-174 Frank Baliotis

The Bowling was: - S. Ridge 7-2-29-2; E. Cross 7-0-41-2; D. Craig 6-0-43-0; S. Ragavan 7-1-17-2; G. James 7-0-26-0; G. O'Shea 5-0-20-2

The Fielding was: -

Stumpings: - Nil

Catches: - One to A. Perrott (w); two to both F. Baliotis and A. Davis

Run outs: - One to F. Baliotis

CCNSW Player points: - 3 points to S. Ragavan; 2 points to A. Perrott; one point to G. O'Shea

Scorecard: **https://www.playhq.com/cricket-australia/org/sydney-masters-cricket-association/sydney-masters-cricket-season-202526-summer-202526/vintage/game-centre/76c20eab**