



Ian Callen – 1978

Ian played his first game for Heathmont Cricket Club in the 1964/65 season in the Junior 2 team when he was nine years old. In the 1965/66 season, he played five games again for the Junior 2.

In 1966/67, the RDCA created the under 14 Competition and Heathmont won the Premiership with Ian (now aged 11) as Captain and Chris Healy as coach. This was Ian's second premiership as a captain, the other being the Croydon State School team.

In the 1967/68 season, Ian won the Batting Average in the Under 14s with an average of 33.9 and a highest score of 81. He won the bowling taking 46 wickets at an average of 5.26. He also won the Ken Beavis Shield.

In 1969/70, Heathmont won the Junior 2 Premiership, Ian having a batting average of 34.6 and a bowling average of 3.7. The latter also won for him the RDCA Junior 2 Bowling award.

By 1970/71, Ian was a regular member of Heathmont's Junior 1 team which finished with a premiership. He won the batting and bowling trophies with a batting average of 67.75 and bowling with 29 wickets at an average of 4.38. He represented the RDCA as Captain of the Junior 1 and both he and his brother Russell won the RDCA Junior Bowling awards for their respective grades.

In 1971/72, Ian was playing A Grade. He won the bowling award with 21 wickets at an average of 10.09. The highlight of the season for the Callen family was Ian, his father Lloyd and brother Russell all representing the RDCA in their respective grades. Ian represented the RDCA in the Under 21 competition played over three days at Christmas. He was 15.

Season 1972/73 was the year of opportunity for Ian. After playing the first half of the season with Heathmont, he was selected by the Victorian Junior Cricket Union to train with a squad from which a Victorian Under 21 team was to be selected.

His father (a past player of the Carlton Cricket Club) sought the permission of Carlton for Ian to train on their turf wicket before these trials. He was immediately signed by Carlton and selected to play for the 3rd Eleven in the next round of the District competition. He went on to represent Victoria in that Under 21 side and as a result of his performances, he received the honour of being named in an Under 21 Australian side.

In his career at Heathmont, Ian finished playing in the same eleven as his father, winning the A Grade bowling average with 15 wickets at 17.07.

District Cricket

At Carlton, Ian finished the 1972/73 season with the 3rds and the following year won the Bowling Trophy with an average of 7.96 which included a nine-wicket haul for fifty runs against Waverley.

In 1975/76, Ian made his debut in District Firsts. He went on to play 116 games with Carlton, Northcote, Ringwood and Waverley, retiring in 1990. He also represented the Victorian Colts in the Victorian Colts competition. He made a total of 1,342 runs during his district career, the highest score being 102 at Northcote. He took 262 wickets at an average of 19.1 with his best figures being 6/11. He was a member of three Premiership teams at Carlton and one at Northcote.

Sheffield Shield

Ian's first-class career commenced in 1976, In 1977/78 he took 11 wickets in a match against NSW (6/49 and 5/59).

He was a member of two winning Sheffield Shield sides and represented Victoria thirteen times in Limited Over matches.

He commenced playing English County Cricket in 1977 and continued for the next ten years.

Australia

Ian played in his only test match against India in Adelaide in February 1978 at the age of 23 years. Ian's test selection was greeted with great acclaim by the RDCA. 'It was with a great deal of pleasure and pride that the Association heard of one of its past junior players, Ian Callen, who had through dedication and skill, attained the ultimate in cricket, to represent his country as a player. Ian's first game of cricket was played in this association and he has set the example to all our juniors — he has shown it is not an impossible dream.' said then President Bill Dean.

Jeff Thompson broke down in this match and Ian had to take on extra work performing creditably by taking six wickets for 91 and making 26 not out He represented Australia in the West Indies playing only in international games.

He also represented Australia on the tour of Pakistan in 1982/83 but again only played in minor games.

South Africa

Ian played for the South African Cricket Union for two seasons but continuous back problems forced his retirement in 1986.

Life-Member

Ian was made a life member of the RDCA in 1978.

NOTE : The above article has been reproduced from the book "from Paddocks to Parks" written by RDCA Life Member the late Phil McCallum OAM. The book can be found on the RDCA website and the above article can be found on pages 140-142.