

For New Zealanders Ross and Donald Jackson, playing cricket has been a family obsession through the generations which has opened doors to grow their NZ firm.

Famous sporting dynasties such as the Hadlees and Crowes are central to New Zealand's competitive place in world cricket.

But lesser-known cricket siblings also contribute to the grand old game in a country more famed for rugby. Two such siblings are chartered accountants Ross and Donald Jackson.

More bowler than batsman, Ross (54) played cricket until May 2017, including the past two World Masters tournaments in Cape Town and Barbados. He is also secretary of the Southland Amateur Sports Trust. And batsman Donald (48), a past president of the Queenstown Cricket Club, played in Leeds in the UK.

Sporting pedigrees aside, cricket is proving to be good for business for these two CAs.

A long record

The Jacksons are both senior partners at McCulloch + Partners, a South Island firm with a history reaching back to 1874, three years before the birth of international cricket. The firm has offices in Invercargill and Queenstown and employs a staff of 60.

Invercargill-based Ross is a Fellow of Chartered Accountants ANZ who has chaired the Practice Review Board, served on the Executive Board, and was elected in 2011 as president of NZICA. He is actively involved with many groups and associations.

Fellow partner Donald is based at the McCulloch's practice in Queenstown. He is an independent board member of the Otago Country Cricket Association, a past junior representative coach, and played grade cricket at Leeds in the UK. He jokes that he scored a century for the Southland club "one more than Ross ever did."

Ross's reply: "I still hold the ninth-wicket batting record for the Metropolitan Club in Southland." He adds: "I thought I was predominantly a fast bowler – but Donald will say I was never fast."

Cricket lessons for accountants

The two grew up in an Invercargill cricketing family. Donald recalls that Southland Cricket Association's Queens Park ground "was a bit like a second home in the summer." He fondly recalls running the scoreboard along with third brother Stephen and some friends.

That scoreboard experience, Donald suspects, "might have encouraged my appreciation for numbers." He also sees links between leading a cricket team and managing an accounting firm. "I strive to create a strong team culture," he says. "The partner might be the captain, but you need everyone to do their bit to provide the service clients need. On a Friday night, I double up well as the twelfth man for staff drinks."

In cricket or accounting, the Jacksons advocate giving back to the community. "Ever since my son Bradley started playing cricket, I've tried to give back and help the young kids come through, and it's the same with the accounting profession" says Ross. "I like to give back wherever I can, to encourage the future of our profession."

Ross believes his chartered accounting expertise has assisted associations and groups with which he has collaborated over the past 20 years. "Administratively, I have given back to the Southland Cricket Association and served as a representative of the New Zealand district panel. Some of your business acumen helps when you're running a sport" he says.

Love of the game

There is a belief that New Zealand's sporting obsession with rugby union is mauling other sports such as cricket. The brothers dispute this. "Cricket is not dying in New Zealand, and there has been strong growth in junior playing numbers following the 2015 World Cup co-hosted by New Zealand and Australia" says Donald Jackson. "There is a real desire by NZ Cricket to invest in its grassroots, which has been neglected for some years."

Ross Jackson is adamant that cricket will continue to have a place in New Zealand's sporting landscape. And he encourages staff towards community service of any type. "In a professional setting, you need a broad network and to become involved in the community if you want to achieve in your career. You need a well-balanced outlook."

BY ANTHONY O'BRIEN - View full article at www.acuitymag.com/people/ca-brothers-score-runs-in-cricket-and-business

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