

CITY CRICKET CLUB LEGENDS

Maia Anne Mereana Lewis ('Lou')

When Maia Lewis became the first Māori woman to commentate an international men's cricket Test match, it was hardly the first time she had pushed the boundaries.

From Ngāti Whātua and Maniapoto, Maia Ann Mereana Lewis had built a distinguished career representing and captaining the White Ferns from a young age — she made her White Ferns debut against England in the 1991/92 season at just 21. She is also a triple international representative, having played for New Zealand in outdoor cricket, indoor cricket, and hockey.

She would ultimately put on the New Zealand cap in three (outdoor) World Cups and become the only Māori woman to be inducted as an Honorary Member of the MCC cricket club at Lord's in England, only the second Māori cricketer to be accorded the honour after Black Cap Adam Parore.

That should give you a good idea as to Maia's stature in the women's international game — but it wasn't just her all-round game, tactical ability and renowned fielding that saw her rise to the top. Superb leadership qualities made a significant impact on and off the field, captaining the White Ferns on one of the two increasingly rare occasions that they got to play a Test match in the modern era that is now almost exclusively dominated by the white ball in the women's international arena.

Despite a major mid-career injury, Maia's impressive international career spanned close to 15 years, including nine Tests in all (including two Test half centuries) and 78 One-Day Internationals that saw her produce 1,372 runs at an average 22.49 with her career best a score of 105 not out against Pakistan at Hagley Oval in 1996/97.

But Maia was never one of those players who concerned herself only with the top echelons of the game. Personally, she enjoyed a long and successful involvement with women's cricket, which remained amateur, with no routine player contracts even at international level in her day. The young leader was also responsible for the development of several young cricketers on the international scene, and it's not often that you will hear someone talk about Maia's cricket before her outstanding leadership qualities are mentioned. Always a giver, she has gone on to coach many teams, including the Auckland Hearts and Samoa women's international team, assisted with White Ferns coaching and video analysis, and most recently coached the New Zealand Blind Caps at the T20 World Cup in India.

Maia played for the City Cricket Club in the senior men's reserve grade competition during the 2000/2001 season on the way back to representing her country. Despite busy commitments, she would help the club by coaching juniors whenever possible. Maia also helped with coaching in schools during her time here in Northland, and her son, Elijah, was later part of our club's Junior programme, playing for one of the City Cricket Club teams in 2017/18. Maia also contributed as a Northland Cricket Association Board Member that season.

Maia had led the White Ferns through the 1997 Women's World Cup in India, a team that featured some all-time leading lights of the New Zealand game, but had to step down from the role in its aftermath as she required a knee reconstruction. With the word quitter never having been part of her vocabulary, Maia fought her way back from that major career setback and would be reappointed captain in 2003, ahead of another tour of India and a home and away series against archrivals Australia, coming back after a four-season absence.

Maia would go on to be the leading runscorer for New Zealand at the 2005 Women's World Cup with 189 runs at an average of 31.50.

Needless to say, the expansive right-hander was also one of the leading domestic players of her time, representing North Island, Southern Districts, Canterbury, the then Auckland women's association of North Harbour, and becoming strongly associated with Wellington, which became known as State Wellington Blaze after the introduction of the State League in 1998-99.

More than once, Maia was the leading run-scorer for the Blaze and accumulated 1,578 runs at an average of 41.52. She was awarded New Zealand Cricket's prestigious Ruth Martin Cup for the best batsman of the 2002/03 New Zealand season.

After retiring from the game in 2005, Maia's life in sport, character and achievements were honoured with a Queens Birthday Honour, becoming a Member of the New Zealand Order of Merit for her services to cricket. City Cricket Club remains very proud of having played its part in Maia's legacy as she continues to build new paths for so many others to follow in her footsteps recognising Maia Anne Mereana Lewis as a *City Cricket Club Legend*.



New Zealand (White Ferns)									
Batting & Fielding									
	Matches	Innings	N.O.	Runs	Ave.	Best	100s	50s	Ct
Tests	9	12	-	252	21.00	65	-	2	6
ODIs	78	73	12	1,372	22.49	74	1	4	30
T20Is	1	1	-	23	25.00	25	-	-	-

All Other Teams									
Batting & Fielding									
	Matches	Innings	N.O.	Runs	Ave.	Best	100s	50s	Ct
Canterbury Women	8	7	1	181	30.17	59*	-	1	-
New Zealand A Women	4	4	-	31	7.75	14	-	-	-
North Harbour Women	7	6	2	351	87.75	97*	-	3	-
North Island Women	5	5	-	157	31.40	102	1	-	1
Sthn. Districts Women	9	9	-	57	6.33	31	-	-	2
Wellington Women	81	75	13	2,243	36.18	100*	1	14	30

Notable Achievements

- Appointed Blind Sport NZ Board Director 2013 - Current
- Awarded Member of New Zealand Order of Merit (MNZM) for services to Women's Cricket 2006
- New Zealand Level 3 Cricket Coaching Certificate 2001
- University Blue (Cricket) 1992
- Maori Sportswoman of the Year Finalist 1992

Cricket:

- White Ferns Video Analyst (Various tours and World Cups) 2009-12
- Samoan National Women's Cricket Coach 2009-12
- Auckland Women's Hearts Coach 2008-11
- White Ferns Team (Captain 1997 and 2005 World Cups) – 1991-97, 2001-05
- Wellington Women's Blaze Team (Captain 1997-98, 2002-05) – 1994-97, 2001-05
- Canterbury Women's Team 1987-92
- Ruth Martin Cup (New Zealand Women's Batter of the Year) 2003
- Wellington Women's Cricketer of the Year 2003/04
- Wellington Women's Batter of the Year 2003/04

Indoor Cricket:

- New Zealand Women's Team (Captain – 2002) – 1988-91, 2001/02
- Auckland Women's Team (Captain) – 2001
- Canterbury Women's Team – 1987-92

Hockey:

- New Zealand Women's Team (Non-travelling reserve - Barcelona Olympics) - 1992
- New Zealand Women's Team (Series vs USA and Korea) - 1991
- Canterbury Women's Team 1987-92



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