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NZ CRICKET PLAYERS' ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

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Welcome...

We have just concluded the contracting process for the 2011/2012 season. Congratulations to all members who received contract offers at New Zealand Cricket (NZC) or Major Association level. This period of time is always the most anxious for all players and unfortunately there are often a number of deserving NZCPA members who do not receive a contract through this process. Fortunately we have a player payment system where a significant part of the overall earning opportunity for players is apportioned to Match Fees, meaning those players who are not afforded contracts (and therefore do not receive retainer payments) can still be rewarded for their efforts if they get selected in an NZC or Major Association team during the season.

Having said that, the current situation where we have only 92 contracted players across the country (20 NZC contracts and 12 contracts per Major Association) is far from ideal if we are truly committed to developing a world class high performance programme. In addition to BLACKCAPS players, recent history indicates that most domestic teams will use 20 or more players during each season. The reality is that those non-contracted players are all trying to complete a full time schedule of preparation and training for cricket without the compensation to make it work effectively. It is very hard on these players to commit to this work schedule when they also have to pay the bills at home and therefore need to complete a second job to do so. It is vital we work hard with NZC in the years ahead to increase the overall number of players contracted on an annual basis, thereby enabling a greater number the opportunity to improve their cricket, as well as providing greater depth and capacity to the high

performance programme.

We were pleased to recently conclude negotiations with NZC and Auckland Cricket Association around the participation of the Aces in this year's Champions League T20 (CLT20) competition in India. These negotiations took a bit longer than expected with the main sticking points being around certainty of payment for the event and getting the Stags paid the prize money they were still owed for last year's CLT20 event! Tim May and FICA completed a good job on behalf of all players in working through the payment terms with CLT20 directly and confirming a process for security checks – it is disappointing that it is necessary to withhold players' participation in an event to make sure players from the previous event get paid. However, due to FICA's and the players' efforts, we also now have more certainty around payments for players moving forward, which gives everyone a lot more comfort. The Aces head off in September to participate in the qualifying tournament for this year's event and hopefully on to the main event immediately following. We wish them all the best.

It was great to see the International Cricket Council (ICC) confirm the 2012-2018 Future Tours Programme (FTP) at its recent Board meeting. The FTP is critical for the game in countries like New Zealand which are heavily reliant on revenue from the international game to fund the sport. Importantly, the BLACKCAPS now have a confirmed playing programme for the next eight year period, and more specifically NZC has an annual events calendar to build a broadcasting and sponsorship programme around. However, it was disappointing the ICC could not build an annual Test Championship into the FTP, as we believe this would have enhanced the Test format

CONTINUED INSIDE



Welcome...

of the game considerably.

It could have easily been achieved if the big four countries were more prepared to work with a programme that may have resulted in fewer opportunities to play each other in additional series but would have provided an international championship that would have benefited everyone.

A number of you will be aware of the recent challenges faced by Cricket and specifically the Financial Model contained within the Master Agreement agreed between NZC, the six Major Associations and the NZCPA. The appreciating New Zealand dollar, poor gate receipts last season and the lack of an ICC event in the next financial year have combined to put significant financial pressure on the Master Agreement and have resulted in significant cost cuts from the Player Payment Pool, NZC Commercial Programme and the Professional Cricketing Environment for the next financial year. The partnership the players now have with the administration is an important component of the Master Agreement and one we want to see work for the benefit of all parties in the years ahead. Accordingly, when times are tough we must work closely with NZC to ensure we get through it together and maintain a strong base to continue to grow the game when the opportunity arises. We are currently working with NZC closely to assist them in exploring new revenue opportunities and to explore more cost effective ways of managing the Professional Cricketing Environment.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge the recent retirement of Scott Styris from International Cricket. Whilst Scott will still turn out for Northern Districts and other T20 teams around the world for the next year or so, he has stood down from international cricket after an excellent career with the BLACKCAPS. We would like to congratulate him on his international career and wish him all the best as he ever so slowly makes the transition into life after cricket. We also acknowledge the retirement of White Ferns captain Aimee Watkins following the recent tour to the UK. Aimee has been an outstanding player for the White Ferns over a long period and was a key figure in establishing the Memorandum of Understanding between NZC and the NZCPA that governs the White Ferns environment. We wish Aimee the very best post-cricket as she looks to focus on her teaching career.

Regards

Heath Mills
Chief Executive



Corporate life a change from cricket

After playing cricket all year round continuously for several years, I decided to take the winter off and spend some time back at home amongst family and friends. This was a much needed rest and I have felt this time away from the game has done me good. Having graduated earlier in the year as an accountant, I approached Aidan Hobson (NZCPA) with regard to possible employment in the business world and discussed some options that would best suit me. A month later I had signed up with RSM International, the sixth largest international accounting firm. All it took was one meeting with Aidan and one interview with the company. There was nothing complex or any special requirements, just me being proactive and using the business network of the NZCPA.

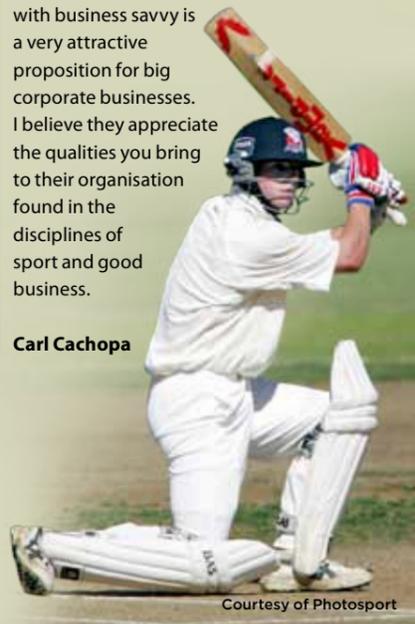
Since then I have been very well looked after by Lyle Irwin, Lloyd Kirby and the other partners who have given me some tough challenges as well as invaluable advice in their mentoring roles. Number crunching is a small part of my work which I have enjoyed; other aspects such as meeting with clients and helping them improve their business operations have also proven to be very stimulating.

Reflecting on the links with cricket I think the mental aspect of the game has provided me with confidence and composure which is extremely useful when dealing with large clients. It has also hardened my character and given me confidence to deal with the everyday challenges in the corporate world. Along with these challenges come parallel rewards such as the recognition and respect of your peers and managers, the passion to deliver as part of a team and the need to create quality results.

Since playing cricket I have found it hard trying to study and play cricket professionally, but this experience has certainly opened up doors for me. Although cricket is my passion I am aware that it is not forever. Players these days are busy playing all year round and can't commit to an employer; however I believe a break from the game or a prolonged injury where you might have a few months off is an opportunity to gain some direction and relevant work experience, which I am convinced will open doors in the future on and off the field.

Finally, I have found that being able to market yourself as a sportsman with business savvy is a very attractive proposition for big corporate businesses. I believe they appreciate the qualities you bring to their organisation found in the disciplines of sport and good business.

Carl Cachopa



Courtesy of Photosport

FICA assist Champion League players

Our recent work in relation to the Champions League (CLT20) has highlighted the importance of player representation and particularly the work of FICA as the world representative body for players.

The nature of cricket is changing and there is likely to be more club and franchise-based competitions which engage players from all over the world. Players will not be solely contracted to their home Board (or Major Association) but will increasingly contract with overseas teams and competitions. This presents challenges as those players will be subject to the laws of the jurisdiction in which the team or competition is located. Working across jurisdictions presents many challenges and uncertainties and can make it difficult for players (particularly those from outside the jurisdiction) to enforce their rights. There are also cultural and social challenges which can present further challenges.

Accordingly, it is important for players to have strong international representation to ensure

their welfare and rights are protected. The CPA does a fantastic job working with NZC and the Major Associations to protect and promote the interests of its players but it cannot expect to have the same relationship with all governing Boards in all cricketing countries. This is where the role of FICA is crucial for players worldwide. FICA does a tremendous job ensuring that player terms and conditions are fair and reasonable, in particular in relation to certainty around payments, use of player property and matters relating to player safety and security.

It is easy for players to become excited by overseas opportunities (and rightly so). Sometimes that excitement can distract a player from the need for diligence around the contractual terms of the opportunity. It is important for players to take steps to ensure their rights and entitlements are protected through the certainty of a legally enforceable contract.

Brendon McCullum and Stephen Fleming represented CriqHq on the day - Courtesy of Photosport



Rain doesn't always stop play

The 2011 NZCPA Golf Day recently took place at the Grange Golf Club in Papatoetoe, Auckland. NZCPA Operations and Events Manager Kerry Walmsley had been keeping a firm eye on the weather forecast from a week out and it didn't look good. Unfortunately whether you're a Jim Hickey or a Toni Marsh fan the day dawned as both had forecast..... wet.

Despite the outlook the NZCPA team forged ahead and only light rain was falling upon arrival by the eighteen groups that attended the day. The NZCPA Annual Golf Day is a key vehicle for the organisation to raise awareness and funds for the Player Hardship Fund which assists cricketers that have fallen on hard times. The field was welcomed at registration, introduced to their playing partners and enjoyed some brunch. Everyone was keen to get out on the course and readied themselves for an enjoyable eighteen holes of golf and hospitality in the hope the weather would hold off.

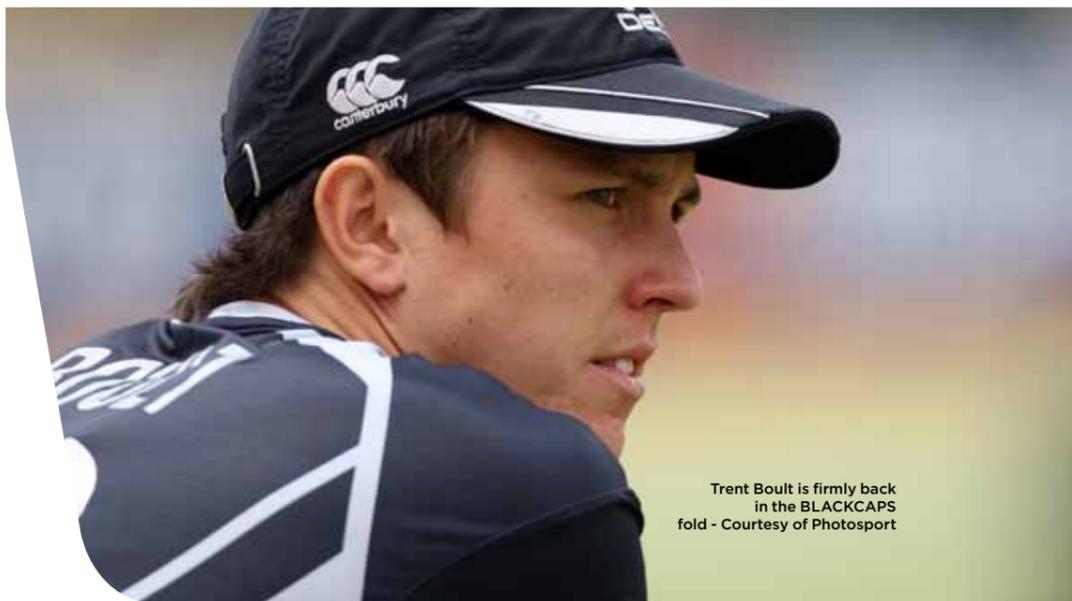
After an hour and half the field had made their way through six holes and the rain was manageable. The portion of the field that came through the Georges Michel wine tasting hole enjoyed some great vino from the Marlborough area. This was also an opportunity to have a punt on backing your abilities with a wedge or nine iron, as you were offered odds on various options onto the green. There was plenty of banter and good fun for those that came through the fourth hole but the "house" was the winner on the day.

Not long after the ninety-minute mark, the rain began to fall harder and really swept across the course. This resulted in water settling in larger pools on the usually slick greens and it was decided to call the field in. The decision was justified, as the NZCPA staff were greeted by drenched golfers happy for the opportunity to dry off, get warm and head upstairs for the rest of the festivities. Time was required for the scores to be collated from the six holes played which enabled all in attendance to mix with others in the room. After a few beverages supplied by our sponsors on the day, Dominion Breweries, and some hot canapés, NZCPA Patron Barry Sinclair addressed the room. Barry spoke about his involvement with the NZCPA and thanked all the sponsors, business partners and key suppliers. The NZCPA are indeed grateful to have such an excellent relationship with many great organisations and companies. There were some fantastic prizes up for grabs and the six holes played meant they would go to deserving recipients.

Earlier in the day the field was split into three divisions, two corporate divisions and a cricketers' division. In the top handicap corporate division, NZCPA Past Player member and Puma representative Mike Wright came in third, winning an excellent piece of Daniel Vettori memorabilia. In second place taking home a framed signed BLACKCAP ODI shirt, was Paul Baker, and Tony Adcock from Harbourside Restaurant took the top prize of a framed signed BLACKCAP Test Playing shirt. In the hotly contested cricketers' division Ross Taylor came third, guest speaker Greg Ritchie came second and former Otago and Auckland representative Craig Pryor took the top prize. The team prize for best combined stableford points went to the Giltrap Prestige group made up of Craig Pryor, Greg Ritchie, Tony Adcock and David Meagher.

Newly appointed NZC Director of Cricket John Buchanan attended the day - Courtesy of Photosport





Trent Boult is firmly back in the BLACKCAPS fold - Courtesy of Photosport

The 2011/12 Domestic Selection ▶▶▶▶

Contracts 2011/12

BY DEAN WEDLAKE

Central ▶

A new-look New Zealand Cricket 20-man central contract list was unveiled in early July as the national side braces for a busy 2011/12 season both home and away.

A shake-up from last year's list sees four newcomers added to the list – Canterbury duo Reece Young and Rob Nicol, Northern Districts left-arm swing bowler Trent Boult and Wellington left-arm spinner Luke Woodcock.

All four impressed in domestic action last season while Young and Woodcock both made strong BLACKCAPS debuts to push their case for contracts.

Young, a vastly experienced wicket-keeper who shifted from Auckland to Canterbury in 2010/11 to further his international aspirations, made his Test debut against Pakistan in January and impressed with both bat and with the gloves.

Another domestic stalwart, Woodcock got his initial chance in the Twenty20 domain and also made the World Cup squad. With Daniel Vettori unavailable for ODI and Twenty20 cricket this summer, the 29-year-old's opportunities in the limited-over formats have grown.

Nicol has also appeared in BLACKCAPS colours, in a pair of T20 matches against Sri Lanka in the USA, and his outstanding 2010/11 domestic season suggests more to come.

The 28-year-old is another who, like Young, has made hay since a move south from the City of Sails. He was a shining light in the HRV Cup and One-day competitions, leading all-runners in both competitions, and the added off-spinning string to his bow saw him win

the overall domestic MVP award.

Boult, who has just turned 22, is the only contracted player yet to represent his country – although he was part of the New Zealand one-day squad to Australia in 2008/09.

The national selectors may well have big plans for a left-arm paceman whose ability to swing the ball, mixed with speeds of 140km plus, makes him a tasty prospect.

There is also a return to the paid ranks for batsmen Daniel Flynn and Neil Broom. Their inclusion proves a constant weight of runs in domestic cricket cannot be ignored, as both averaged around 50 in the Plunket Shield last summer, including double centuries, and showcased expanded games in the limited-overs arena.

"It's been a difficult year performance-wise, so there was always going to be some change," national selection manager Mark Greatbatch said at the announcement of the contract list. "We've got to get better than we are, we've got to look further ahead."

As with everything in life, there is disappointment mixed in with delight. That emotion is felt by seven players from the 2010/11 who missed out a year later.

The absentees are Brent Arnel, Daryl Tuffey, Jeetan Patel, Gareth Hopkins, Tim McIntosh and Grant Elliott, while Scott Styris has retired. James Franklin and Jamie How also received elevated contracts early in 2011 but have not had them renewed the following season.

However, this far from rules them out of selection for a hectic international summer.



Young Canterbury quick Matt Henry is one of eleven players contracted for the first time - Courtesy of Photosport

Irresistible domestic form will always catch the selectors' eye and an injury or two can shift a player's mindset from being out of the loop to being back in business.

The whites are dusted off in December with a two-Test tour to face trans-Tasman foe Australia, a tasty start to any summer.

That's followed by the hosting of Zimbabwe for one Test, 3 ODIs and a pair of Twenty20 internationals and building up to a crescendo as South Africa rolls into town.

No doubt keen for revenge after the BLACKCAPS knocked the Proteas out at the quarter-final stage of the 2011 World Cup, there are a meaty set of three Tests, ODIs and Twenty20s for the New Zealand public to sink their teeth into.

BLACKCAPS contract list: Hamish Bennett, Trent Boult, Neil Broom, Daniel Flynn, Martin Guptill, Chris Martin, Brendon McCullum, Nathan McCullum, Andy McKay, Kyle Mills, Rob Nicol, Jacob Oram, Jesse Ryder, Tim Southee, Ross Taylor, Daniel Vettori, BJ Watling, Kane Williamson, Luke Woodcock, Reece Young.

Domestic ▶

Following the announcement of New Zealand's 20-man national contract list, another sixty four have had their cricketing employment locked in for another season with the first round of domestic contracts revealed.

A new two-round contracting process, aimed at ensuring the best 92 cricketers in the country at international and domestic are signed up, is in its second year of use. Each Major Association was able to offer nine to eleven contracts in the initial round, with the remainder being confirmed on August 9.

Four of the six provinces secured all but one of their berths, while Wellington and Canterbury took 10 and may look to grab two other talents from the rest of the country to fill the necessary voids.

There are a few new faces, a couple of notable omissions and also the reappearance of BLACKCAPS in the various lists due to their demotions from international contracts.

Auckland Aces

Michael Bates
Andrew De Boorder
Colin De Grandhomme
Gareth Hopkins
Anaru Kitchen
Bruce Martin
Tim McIntosh
Colin Munro
Jeet Raval
Bhupinder Singh
Daryl Tuffey

Central Stags

Doug Bracewell
Jamie How
Peter Ingram
Michael Mason
Adam Milne
Kieran Noema-Barnett
Tarun Nethula
Mathew Sinclair
Bevan Small
Kruger van Wyk
Ben Wheeler

Canterbury Wizards

Todd Astle
Dean Brownlie
Andrew Ellis
Peter Fulton
Matt Henry
Tom Latham
Ryan McCone
Richard Sherlock
Shanan Stewart
George Worker

Northern Knights

Graeme Aldridge
Brent Arnel
James Baker
Anton Devcich
Brook Hatwell
James Marshall
Peter McGlashan
Daryl Mitchell
Anurag Verma
Brad Wilson
Joseph Yovich

Otago Volts

Nick Beard
Michael Bracewell
Darren Broom
Ian Butler
Craig Cumming
Derek De Boorder
Warren McSkimming
Aaron Redmond
Bradley Scott
Neil Wagner
Sam Wells

Wellington Firebirds

Joe Austin-Smellie
Harry Boam
Josh Brodie
Grant Elliott
James Franklin
Mark Gillespie
Stephen Murdoch
Iain O'Brien
Michael Papps
Jeetan Patel
Stewart Rhodes

Contracted for the first time are Colin Munro (Auckland), Adam Milne, Ben Wheeler and Bevan Small (Central Districts), Matt Henry, Tom Latham and Ryan McCone (Canterbury), James Baker, Daryl Mitchell and Brook Hatwell (Northern Districts) along with Michael Bracewell (Otago).

All but 20-year-old Mitchell have already earned first-class honours. Mitchell is a batting all rounder and the son of former All Black coach John. He returns home from Perth to chase a dream of representing New Zealand.

Of the remaining names, only Hatwell (28) has blown out the candles on his 25th birthday cake. The rest are a supremely-talented bunch of up-and-comers who made their mark in the 2010/11 season, most notably 19-year-old fast bowler Milne whose ability to clock up speeds of 150km/h saw him debut for the BLACKCAPS in the Boxing Day Twenty20 international against Pakistan.

Of all the absentees from a year previous, none would feel as aggrieved as the Parlane siblings.

Michael, he of 7329 first-class runs since 1992/93, and younger brother Neal, with 5335

to his name, both missed out on the initial list with Northern Districts and Wellington respectively.

There is the possibility of being secured with the final picks of their provinces or at other destinations, but also a looming reality that match payments may be the only way to put bread on the table cricket-wise.

At the time of writing this, others not in the initial list of contracts in 2011/12 are Roneel Hira, Jimmy Neesham, Greg Todd, Lance Shaw, Dusan Hakaraia and Gareth Shaw (Auckland), Mitchell McClenaghan and Brad Patton (CD), Jono Boulton (ND), Dwayne Bowden, Cameron Merchant, Ili Tugaga and Leighton Burt (Wellington), Corey Anderson and Carl Frauenstein (Canterbury) along with Anthony Bullock and Shaun Haig (Otago).

Whilst their case may not have been helped by indifferent seasons form-wise, and in some cases injury, a few of the above names can also point to relegated national contracted players as the reason for their absence.

Commercial Space



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Offer2

1 bedroom lake view apartment for 7 nights and ski hire for 4 days \$415 per night (based on 2 people)

Offer3

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Offer4

2 bedroom lake view apartment 7 nights and ski hire for 4 days \$635 per night (based on 4 people)

To book: reservations@highviewapartments.co.nz; 03 450 2142; www.highviewapartments.co.nz

Choice Hotels

Choice Hotels are the official hotel partner of the NZCPA and they are committed to ensuring our members can plan a winter or Spring get-away with ease. Whether you're seeking city-life, the tranquility of a small town or a scenic nature getaway, it's always a great time to discover and experience your holiday with Choice Hotels.

NZCPA members can be assured of comfort and great value with Choice Hotels, whether you are travelling for business or pleasure. A selection of New Zealand hotels has put together a range of hotel packages which are available exclusively through www.choicehotels.co.nz.

Be sure to check out the 'Special Offers' for current offers and information, book online through the NZCPA Members Area, follow the booking procedure, and get access to the exclusive Business Club offer available to all NZCPA members.

International Money Transfer

Members who have been playing cricket overseas this winter will now be turning their thoughts to a return to New Zealand. Reconnecting with family and friends is always exciting but we remind you to maximise your overseas earnings through efficient foreign currency conversion.

NZCPA members are able to access two companies that offer preferential rates

- TransGlobal Payment Solutions – a NZ-owned business based in London.
- National Bank NZ

Please check the secure 'Members Area' for details or contact Glen Sulzberger for more information.

CricSCORE^{2.1}

Scoring has never been this easy!

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CricHQ News

NZCPA partners CricHQ have further developed their product range over the winter months as well as presently developing an Android version of CricScore, and have released an upgrade to the i-phone application for the coming season.

CricScore has been officially adopted by the PCA and ECB and there are a host of countries using and endorsing the CricHQ products. The ICC will be using CricScore as the scoring application at affiliate country tournaments being held during August.

Product development continues with CricCoach and CricLIVE planned to be ready for the New Zealand summer.

We encourage all NZCPA members to find out more about the products at www.crichq.com and to encourage your club, schools and local association to look at how they can benefit from them this summer. If you have any questions or want to find out more then contact Glen Sulzberger for more information.

Member Benefits

The NZCPA encourages all past first class player to join what is 'your' association as annual or life members. We are constantly looking for methods to support and assist our past playing members through our events, activities and services. The best way we can do that is for you to stay involved and engage with the fellow members and NZCPA staff.

Registering for membership is simple – just fill out the Members Registration form on the NZCPA website (www.procricket.co.nz).

Already a member? Why not introduce one of your playing mates to the NZCPA. Simply contact us through the website or email Kerry Walmsley directly on kerry.walmsley@nzcpa.co.nz

NZCPA Members Area

Inside the secure Members Area is information that is important to you as a member of the NZCPA, as well as a full list of products and services with exclusive preferential rates that are available through the NZCPA Business Club.

To ensure you are able to access the suite of Business Club offers, just visit www.procricket.co.nz, go to the Members Login page and follow the simple steps to register. This Members Area is due to be updated so keep an eye out for details in the coming months.

Tower Insurance

The NZCPA is pleased to welcome Tower as a Business Club member. The NZCPA is delighted to offer group and individual insurance services to our members from one of the country's largest insurance companies. Cricketers are exposed to a wide range of risks, including health, crisis and life, any of which can affect your career in cricket and indeed in your life.

Making it easy for you to protect the things important to you is a priority for the NZCPA. To find out more please visit www.procricket.co.nz or contact any of the NZCPA staff.

The TOWER Group has now been helping New Zealanders protect and grow the things they value for over 140 years. Tower provides comprehensive and innovative insurance, KiwiSaver and investment products throughout New Zealand.

Kiwis on the County Scene

BY HAMISH MARSHALL

T20 2011 in county cricket has come and gone with a flood of NZ cricketers involved.

Scott Styris and Tim Southee were at Essex, Kane Williamson played with us at Gloucestershire, Andre Adams at Nottinghamshire, Martin Guptill at Derbyshire and Jeetan Patel at Warwickshire.

It's always a great time in the season with plenty of big crowds who provide plenty of banter adding to the electric atmosphere that T20 provides.

It's also an opportunity to catch up with fellow kiwis and find out what's been happening with them.

Scotty and Tim formed a formidable combination at Essex. Tim making his county debut this year has been a great signing for Essex. He has taken his best figures of 6-16 and his highest score in T20 of 74. Scotty, back again for Essex after a successful year with them last year has returned to star for them. He lead he averages at Essex at a very useful strike rate of 160. Despite their efforts they fell just short of reaching the quarterfinals.

Martin Guptill has been plying his trade for Derby at the top of the order and has proved to be their most successful batsman, scoring 450 runs at 33 in 14 innings. In spite of Guppy's efforts Derby were unable to make the Quarterfinals. Kane and I haven't seen Guppy yet but look forward to playing him in a 4 day game in mid August.

Jeetan Patel has returned to Warwickshire for another season and impressed once again. The T20 cricket is no honeymoon but for Jeets' it almost was after being recently married in New Zealand. He has been a steady performer for Warwickshire, who have not made much of a push in the competition this season and missed out on quarter finals. Jeetan had limited chances to swing the willow, but with the ball has provided stability with the ball through the middle of the innings. Jeets has taken 9 wickets with an impressive economy rate of 7.

Andre Adams at Nottinghamshire has been enjoying the most success with Nott's finishing top of their group and looking good as one of the favourites for the competition. Dre has played in only 5 games but has shown his value with 6 wickets and an economy rate of 6.95, the latter is exceptional in the T20 format.

He has been a consistent performer for Notts over the past few years and has become another Kiwi, after Richard Hadlee, Chris Cairns and Stephen Fleming, to make a great impression on the supporters.

After having stints at three other counties Lou Vincent has been playing for Sussex this season. Louie continues to display his tremendous talent and it's great to see him still playing aggressively at first class level. Lou has played in all matches for Sussex in the T20 competition and been a steady contributor. They are in the quarter finals after finishing second in their group.

Kane Williamson and I have been doing it tough with Gloucestershire during the T20 campaign. Playing some inconsistent cricket has left us near the bottom of our group. Kane has showed glimpses of his talent with the bat but has had mixed opportunities. With the ball however, he's often opened the bowling with his spin and with 8 wickets and an economy rate of 6.61 he's been a crucial part of our attack. I have been patchy. Scoring a 100 was a highlight but with very few victories to our name it has been disappointing. John Bracewell, as frustrated as he has every right to be, has been very patient with a youthful squad still learning and honing their cricket knowledge. It's a challenge which Braces has embraced and he certainly enjoys trying to develop young talent and bring it through.

We have had Muttiah Muralitharan playing here at Gloucester which has been a great experience. Having one of the greatest bowlers in the history of the game rubbing shoulders with us has been a bit surreal. His vast knowledge of the game and work ethic has shown us what it takes to be a great of the game, which many of our young lads are seeing and hopefully taking on board.

With so many T20 competitions being set up around the globe, this offers the chance for Kiwi cricketers to show their talents and improve their skills. This year's county T20 has proved a success for a number of our players and hopefully continues to improve the awareness of counties considering the talent on offer from back home.

On tour with the White Ferns

BY SUZIE BATES

First and foremost I would like to acknowledge the Tahuu whanau, and on behalf of the team I would like to express our sadness for the loss of Lea's father.

We have competed over the last three weeks with the top four ranked teams in the World in both Twenty/20 and 50 over round robin tournaments and we are left bitterly disappointed with one match to play. We will finish the tour against the Indians playing off for 3rd and 4th in the One Day Internationals after underachieving in the Twenty/20 campaign where we finished 4th.

Performances have been disappointing to say the least and many things on and off the field have not gone our way. It has been a rude awakening for the team and management staff, and exposed a number of areas that we have fallen behind in. This has highlighted the amount of work required to move forward and consistently beat and compete with Australia and England, who are currently the top ranked teams in the world. It could not have been a timelier reminder, with the Twenty/20 World Cup in Sri Lanka in September 2012 and the 50 over World Cup in India in March 2013 looming ahead for the White Ferns. There is an understanding that a lot of work needs to be done between now and then on fitness and all aspects of cricket skills so

individuals can develop further as cricket players and achieve our goals of becoming number one in the world. Since being involved in the White Ferns team since 2006 I have not missed a final of a major tournament and this has been the most disappointing tour I have been involved in to date. After hitting rock bottom at the end of a tough and unsuccessful season as a group it has been a beneficial tour in spite of the performances. It forced a lengthy discussion from all involved to identify the areas we need to make improvements, and forced individuals to reflect and look internally to work out what changes need to be made to be successful in the future.

Although it sounds all doom and gloom, it has been the most productive tour and debrief in regards to moving forward. It often takes hitting rock bottom to make changes and get back up to produce something special, and with this group there is the understanding that it will take hard work to get us to where we believe we should be.

Leading up to the tour, girls worked hard at their games at home, and we had a team camp at Lincoln and we believed we had the ability to win both formats. Obviously the work was not enough and we will now plan as a group for the next 12 months to prepare ourselves the best we can.

The team and management always work hard on tour and the fitness trainings is a

highlight when our trainer Jase busts our guts in the gym and the park. But it is the work we do on our own outside of touring we have let ourselves down, suffering a number of muscular injuries on tour. This has made selecting the team a breeze, without a full squad to select from. The tour has been jam packed with games and travel and aside from the results it has been an enjoyable tour, including television games before mens'

Twenty/20 matches and trips to London, Bristol, Derby, Oxford and Sussex. Many kilometres have been travelled on the bus with opposition teams. This makes for an interesting dynamic especially given our poor performances. However plenty of Gossip Girl

and Grey's Anatomy episodes were screened to fill in the time!

Aimee Watkins competed in her 100th International game, which only a handful of New Zealanders have achieved, and Sara McGlashan is sitting on her 99th game before our last match of the tour. This is an outstanding achievement for both Aimee and Sara and they have made outstanding contributions to the White Ferns. At the end of the tour we will farewell our skipper for good as she

has made the decision to retire from all formats of cricket at the end of the tour.

The girls and management staff will sorely miss Aimee and I am sure we will give her a memorable send off in spite of the results on the pitch.

Now for a small break and then we will look forward to putting in the hard yards to ensure we move onwards and upwards from here.



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NZCPA CONTACTS

Chief Executive Heath Mills 021 289 0092 heath.mills@nzcpa.co.nz	Operations & Events Manager Kerry Walmsley 021 948 344 kerry.walmsley@nzcpa.co.nz	Career & Personal Development Manager Aidan Curzon-Hobson 021 455 677 aidan.hobson@nzcpa.co.nz	Business Development Manager Glen Sulzberger 021 762 787 glen.sulzberger@nzcpa.co.nz	Tim Lythe 021 190 1634 tim.lythe@nzcpa.co.nz
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