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Cricket Players Association

OUTRIGHT

NZ CRICKET PLAYERS' ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER



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PENING UP

Welcome to the Spring edition of Outright.

It is an exciting time for the game as we build up to hosting the 2015 Cricket World Cup at the end of our season – one of the world's biggest sporting events. We hope that this tournament will be a fantastic showpiece for the game and will leave a lasting impression on supporters and fans.

The Blackcaps have a busy summer of cricket as they build up to this event playing South Africa at home, Pakistan in Dubai and incoming tours by Pakistan and Sri Lanka. With a full programme of domestic cricket and additional warm up matches for the World Cup, there is no doubt this will be the busiest the summer of cricket ever seen in New Zealand. It truly is a great season of opportunity for our current members to be involved with directly and for our past playing members to simply to enjoy.

As this exciting summer unfolds the NZCPA will be organising our usual calendar of events including the Hooked on Cricket community programme (with special thanks to the Queen Street Cricket Club), the Masters Series of

matches, the Masters Tournament, The Cricketers' Hardship Trust golf day and other past player events.

I hope you enjoy reading this edition of Outright and more importantly look forward to seeing you all at cricket grounds throughout the summer.

Best Wishes
Heath Mills



Above: Kane Williamson in the nets at Yorkshire CCC.

Cover Photo

Daniel Vettori and Sachin Tendulkar playing for the MCC against the World XI to celebrate the MCC Bicentenary Celebration Match at Lords.

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Players better together

Macca travels full circle By Margot Butcher



How to start colouring in that big blank canvas when you stop playing? Newly appointed Blackcaps batting coach Craig McMillan admits it was a big challenge for him when he hung up his Blackcaps kit in 2007. Here's how he reinvented himself.

"What on earth to do after cricket is something we all start thinking about sooner or later, with that unease of uncertainty growing towards the end of our careers. One of the great things about the CPA's work is that I see guys are now thinking about it positively at a younger age. There are great jobs and opportunities after cricket, so the Career and Personal Development Plan is a very healthy process to go through for the future.

"My own experience was that I didn't have much of an idea at all of what I wanted to do, when I finished playing. I remember saying I didn't really want to go

into media, and I had no desire to coach! So I guess if I were to offer a piece of advice, the first thing is never say never. You don't know where you are going to end up until you go out and try some things — that turned out to be crucial to me.

"When you've been in the cricket bubble for a number of years, I think it's also natural to want to try life away from cricket, without the suitcase and gear bag in constant state of being packed and unpacked— and plenty of players do move into other areas very successfully, whether it's real estate or business or whatever fits. In my case, I thought I would want that change of lifestyle, too, after a fairly long playing career.

"A good tip, if you are unsure, is not to rush into the first thing that gets offered up, but that uncertainty about the future can consume you. Like I said, ideally you

need to take some time to work out your direction, and to try some different things. I sat down and had some good chats working with Sanj's predecessor, Aidan Hobson [who knew a thing or two about career makeovers, as a former chief analyst with the Labour Department, and a PhD in Education from Auckland University], about the opportunities out there for ex-players, and he helped me logically sift and think through what I wanted to try. And — surprisingly, the one constant turned out to be cricket.

"It was only then that I realised cricket wasn't just my sport, it was my passion. It's a fair comment that I always relished the competitiveness of it and I remember saying to a few people when I was playing that if you weren't a player, the commentary box is close to the best seat in the house — still a large part of the game, without the added pressure

of having to produce runs or wickets. I was then lucky enough to be given the opportunity by SKY to try a bit of commentary, and discovered I really enjoyed it. Again, to my surprise, it actually ticked a lot of the boxes that I had been looking for.

"Commentary, to be honest, can be quite daunting. It's not as easy as I think some people believe, especially at first. It looks like you get a microphone and set of headphones and you're away — but I found it very daunting, initially. Like sport itself, everything is live so if you make a mistake, everyone sees it. You can't expect to be the finished product as soon as you start — Smitty had a big head start on me, so straight away you feel under pressure. It really took me out of my comfort zone and I soon realised

it was important to keep things pretty simple at first. But I looked to improve each season and, as I kicked on, like a lot of jobs I found the more I did, the more comfortable I felt over four and a half years in that role.

"I also realised I still felt driven to make a difference, to help people get better and realise their full potential — so with the confidence I had gained in myself through that process, I became interested in the idea of getting into coaching. I started my coaching with Canterbury, with young kids, before moving up to the first-class side. It was an interesting challenge as I began to appreciate how people develop at different speeds.

"Now I look at this Blackcaps side and see absolutely wonderful potential. The

stars are aligning; this team should be together for the next few years and with the experience they already have at this age, I'm pretty hopeful they will be the most productive years in New Zealand Cricket's history. I really wanted to be part of that, so when the opportunity came up to contribute as batting coach, it was too good to turn down. When you're performing at the height of your powers in international cricket, it's the reason you play — a special feeling and a very strong, enjoyable time. My goals now are about seeing today's Blackcaps experience that, and I'll be truly happy to see it vicariously, every time."

Blackcaps versus The World By Margot Butcher



The 2014 winter proved once again that New Zealand's cricket stocks are sharply on the rise.

Better regarded over the previous decade for One-Day depth and T20 winnability, the Blackcaps' glittering Test form is now bringing wide smiles to Kiwi cricket fans. If captain Brendon McCullum's unforgettable triple hundred at the Basin last season — the innings that stopped a nation — wasn't symbolic enough of the renaissance, the squad has since added a precious Test away series win in the West Indies this winter.

Such a feat eluded even the street-fighting, beige-wearing 1980s sides that relished their clashes with their Caribbean contemporaries and the 2-1 scorecard sealed at Bridgetown put the icing on a sweet seven months for Blackcaps Test cricket.

The deciding third Test was not without a mass of mental pressure, the players hurting after they had let their guard down the previous week — when the Windies bounced back from their opening Kingston defeat to clean the Blackcaps out in Port-of-Spain. But the final 53-run third Test margin at Bridgetown, a fightback secured by a four-wicket spree from Neil Wagner and Kane Williamson's Test best 161*, ensured Kensington Oval will hold particular affection for this generation

of Blackcaps — as it was also the site of the Blackcaps' groundbreaking and only other Caribbean series victory, in 2002. Statistically it was also significant as New Zealand's first away series win against a top-eight Test side in the intervening years.

Man of the Series Williamson scored 413 runs at 82.6, before helping Yorkshire to a County title and underpinning the Northern Knights' first-up Champions Trophy T20 win with his assured footwork and classic strokes. Roll in the explosive attacking swing of Trent Boult and Tim Southee, the most dependable keeper-batsman in world cricket in BJ Watling and the hit-the-ground-running emergence of the likes of Tom Latham, Mark Craig and Jimmy Neesham and Mike Hesson, his captain and crew have every right to be very proud.

"I love these boys and we've achieved some special things over the last little while," says McCullum. "We're starting to head in some decent places, but that series in particular was groundbreaking for this group."

The average age of that group was a fresh 26 and the growing success train of the past two years means a rookie like Ish Sodhi, the youngest of the team, has been on a fast track to 'learning how to win' at the highest level. The 21-year-

old leggie heads into this season having personally soaked up a 4-1 winning Test record, together with three draws after he debuted in Bangladesh just a year ago. That's a win percentage to rival the All Blacks, whose all-time percentage is in the league of 75 per cent!

Past players know how special it is to achieve any test victory, so the likes of Sodhi having wandered out to the wicket to sing Black And White with all his heart five times in a year is a clear signpost of special times brewing. As the young talent said in the West Indies, "I wouldn't trade these memories for anything" — now he's even more fired up to work to be part of this side for a long time to come.

With New Zealand about to host a Cricket World Cup for the first time in 22 summers, the coalescence of skill, execution and success couldn't be better-timed. The Blackcaps open the World Cup in Christchurch against Sri Lanka on Valentine's Day; before then they have South Africa (ODIs at home, October 21-17), Pakistan (Test, T20 and ODI series in UAE, November-December) and, from Boxing Day until the cusp of the World Cup, Sri Lanka and Pakistan at home steeling themselves to take them on. Chances are that Valentine's Day match is going to be the start of an even bigger love affair with this Blackcaps team.

Upcoming Events

Player Induction Forum

22nd/23rd September

Hooked on Cricket

19th September	Linden Park, Tawa
24th September	Edgar Centre, Dunedin
25th September	Papatoetoe Recreation Ground, Auckland
16th October	Nelson Park, Napier
13th March	Hagley Park, Christchurch
16th March	Rotorua Lakeside Reserve, Rotorua

Domestic team meetings

5th/6th October	Canterbury
8th October	Northern Districts
8th/9th October	Auckland
9th/10th October	Wellington
15th October	Central Districts
16th/17th October	Otago

Choice Hotels Masters Series

14 December	NZCPA Masters v Northern Maori, Rotorua
1 February 2015	NZCPA Masters v NZ Croatia, Auckland

Accredited Agent Conference

February/March 2015 (dates TBC)

The Players' Golf Day

2nd April 2015

The Players' Cap Presentation

2nd April 2015

Masters Weekend

3rd/7th April 2015 – dates currently under review

Annual Player Conference

April 2015



Cachopa not leaving his future to chance



The vulnerability of domestic cricketers became a reality for Brad Cachopa at the end of last summer. Cachopa would normally welcome the end of the New Zealand season as a chance to pursue cricket by playing league cricket in the UK, but last year the harsh reality of injury put paid to those plans when the Canterbury wicket keeper was told his shoulder injury required surgery.

With an eye to the process of rehabilitation and the uncertainty of being off contract until the next domestic contracts begin in October, Cachopa took control of his situation.

“I decided to stay home this winter [after electing] not take up an opportunity to play in the UK.

“The injury made me realise that at any stage you may have to walk away from the game when the choice is not yours” said a reflective Cachopa.

Gaining work experience is becoming increasingly difficult task for cricketers, with the importance of decisions players make during their career having a direct effect on a players employment prospects beyond their playing career. It is now common for cricketers to enter the professional cricket environment straight out of school, where success will leave players vulnerable to myriad insecurities and challenges 10 to 15 years later.

The CPDP programme promotes a healthy balance of cricket and non-cricket activity and it is through this programme that Cachopa was able to fulfil his goals for

developing his career skills. The former Canterbury player is returning to Auckland this season and in doing so has been able to accept an opportunity for part time work placement at the Whitcoulls’ Queen Street branch.

Cachopa recognises “the fact that I am now 26 and my CV was very lean. I have just completed my Accountancy degree, and I decided to take [this opportunity to gain] some work experience during winter

to place myself in a better position to transition into the workforce when that time comes”.

“One of my goals is to build a working profile that will allow me to step away from cricket, whether on my terms or not, and allow me to be employable at a level that can support a family” stated Cachopa.

Modern players face a range of confronting situations that await those who are ill prepared for life after cricket. Cachopa is a great example of a player who is well positioned to earn a long and successful cricket career, but like all players, it will conclude with no guarantee of post career success. The CPD programme challenges players to accept the reality that cricket will end one day and it is encouraging that more players are beginning to recognise the importance of planning their career outside of cricket.

“When we start out these are factors that we don’t often consider, as they are not upon us at the beginning of our careers. I believe you can throw yourself at the game and give everything you have, but

still have the time to study or work.” said Cachopa.

Cachopa aims to build his skills beyond his accounting degree and the work with Whitcoulls was a deliberate act to gaining work experience that will help him to clarify the career path he takes later in life.

A vital part of the CPDP programme is the network of people and businesses who accept the challenges our players face, and have recognised that professional cricketers have a range of transferable skills that can help them in their work. Sanj Silva will follow up with Cachopa to ensure that he is able to analyse and reflect upon his experiences and the skills he has learned, plus provide access to a range of mentors or providers that will help Brad to make the best career decisions he can.

Whitcoulls Queen Street Manager Amita Weerakoon understands that there are mutual benefits when employing cricketers. Weerakoon noted “Brad integrated seamlessly in to a very diverse team, and I believe that Brad found the

integration easy due to his high quality interpersonal skills and also due the team ethics that he has learned from his sporting background”.

“Brad was appointed to our online team as a Supervisor to develop business avenues and follow up on key accounts. Brad did an extremely effective job in meeting his KPI’s through his highly effective communication skills, organisational skills, vision and follow ups.

“Brad is a very intelligent young person who has great personal and team values”

Weerakoon summarised the value he sees when stating “I believe that through business and workplace ethics, young athletes will learn better organisational skills, more effective communication skills and best practice, and will be able to enhance their emotional intelligence. It also creates opportunity for them to connect with others and build their networks”.

Quality Support. Building Resilience. Sustaining High Performance.

Instep Limited and the NZ Cricket Players Association recognise that we all face issues that are hard to deal with from time to time. These issues affect our ability to do our normal job and if left unresolved can cause unhappiness and hardship for us all – mistakes made, irritability, absenteeism, loss of confidence.

Instep Limited is an independent behavioural healthcare company employed by the NZ Cricket Player’s Association to provide a confidential Member Assistance Programme (MAP) and trauma support to all members and their immediate families.

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Big changes in Domestic Teams

Player movements, or transfers, are common in professional sports around the world, but this year there was much more activity in the lead up to the first domestic player contract round. This is surely a sign of the depth developing at domestic level and also proves that the contracting process is robust.

Auckland were the beneficiary of the Cachopa brothers, Brad and Carl, and Tarun Nethula all confirming their move north. The Aces will have a decidedly different look this summer with Craig Cachopa opting to domicile as a UK local, Gareth Hopkins' retirement at the end of last summer and Aces stalwarts Tim McIntosh and Bruce Martin missing a contract.

Upon learning he would not be offered a contract Martin decided to close the curtain on his 14 year first class career. It was not that long ago that Martin was seemingly at the peak of his game with solid performances in his 5 Test appearances for the Blackcaps, but the Auckland selectors were unable to find space for Martin in their contract list, effectively signalling their intention to use other players. Martin secured 355 wickets and 2626 runs during his 131 first class matches for Northern Districts and Auckland. No doubt Eden Park No.2 will feel a little different this summer.

Cameron Fletcher has benefited from Brad Cachopa's move to Auckland and looks likely to assume position behind the stumps for Canterbury this summer. Neil Broom moves back to his Canterbury after a long stint with the Volts, but Canterbury's gain is offset by George Worker's move back to the Central Stags.

Northern Districts have a good squad of players and number of current Blackcaps, but it is the opportunity to bat at the top of the order that attracted Dean Brownlie to the Knights this summer. Brownlie was a member of the NZ A side that toured the UK this winter and many will be watching his progress as he settles in to this new environment and role.

Tipene Friday has opted to join the Volts as he seeks more regular game time.

New Zealand Cricket Player Contracts

New Zealand Cricket named their list of twenty contracted players. Both the Blackcaps and White Ferns player contracts are for the period from the 1st August 2014 through until 31st July 2015.

Blackcaps

- Corey Anderson** | Northern Knights
- Trent Boult** | Northern Knights
- Mark Craig** | Otago Volts
- Martin Gupthill** | Auckland Aces
- Matt Henry** | Canterbury
- Tom Latham** | Canterbury
- Mitchell McClenaghan** | Auckland Aces
- Brendon McCullum** | Otago Volts
- Nathan McCullum** | Otago Volts
- Kyle Mills** | Auckland Aces
- Adam Milne** | Central Stags
- Colin Munro** | Auckland Aces
- Jimmy Neesham** | Otago Volts
- Luke Ronchi** | Wellington Firebirds
- Ish Sodhi** | Northern Knights
- Tim Southee** | Northern Knights
- Ross Taylor** | Central Stags
- Neil Wagner** | Otago Volts
- BJ Watling** | Northern Knights
- Kane Williamson** | Northern Knights

White Ferns

- Suzie Bates** | Otago Volts
- Samantha Curtis** | Auckland Hearts
- Sophie Devine** | Wellington Blaze
- Holly Huddleston** | Auckland Hearts
- Hayley Jensen** | Canterbury Magicians
- Felicity Leydon-Davis** | Northern Spirit
- Sara McGlashan** | Auckland Hearts
- Morna Nielsen** | Northern Spirit
- Katie Perkins** | Auckland Hearts
- Rachel Priest** | Wellington Blaze

Major Association Player Contracts

The six Major Associations named their respective list of contracted players. All the domestic contracts are for the period from the 1st October 2014 through until 15th April 2015.

Auckland Aces

- Dean Bartlett
- Warren Barnes
- Michael Bates
- Brad Cachopa
- Carl Cachopa
- Colin De Grandhomme
- Lockie Ferguson
- Michael Gupthill-Bunce
- Donovan Grobbelaar
- Anaru Kitchen
- Tarun Nethula
- Rob Nicol
- Robert O'Donnell
- Matt Quinn
- Jeet Raval

Canterbury

- Todd Astle
- Logan van Beek
- Hamish Bennett
- Neil Broom

Central Stags

- Brendon Diamanti
- Andrew Ellis
- Cameron Fletcher
- Peter Fulton
- Roneel Hira
- Kyle Jamieson
- Tim Johnston
- Cole McConchie
- Ryan McCone
- Henry Nicholls
- Edward Nuttall
- Doug Bracewell
- Greg Hay
- Jamie How
- Marty Kain
- Andrew Mathieson
- Kieran Noema-Barnett
- Ajaz Patel
- Seth Rance
- Dean Robinson
- Bevan Small
- Ben Smith
- Kruger Van Wyk

- Ben Wheeler
- George Worker
- Will Young

Northern Knights

- Graeme Aldridge
- James Baker
- Jonathan Boulton
- Dean Brownlie
- Joseph Carter
- Anton Devcich
- Daniel Flynn
- Tony Goodin
- Jonathan Hickey
- Scott Kugeleijn
- Daryl Mitchell
- Bharat Popli
- Mitchell Santner
- Anurag Verma
- Brad Wilson

Otago Volts

- Nick Beard
- Sam Blakely
- Michael Bracewell

- Derek de Boorder
- Jacob Duffy
- Ryan Duffy
- Tipene Friday
- James McMillan
- Aaron Redmond
- Iain Robertson
- Brad Rodden
- Hamish Rutherford
- Jesse Ryder
- Bradley Scott
- Sam Wells

Wellington Firebirds

- Brent Arnel
- Tom Blundell
- Grant Elliott
- James Franklin
- Mark Gillespie
- Dane Hutchinson
- Andrew McKay
- Stephen Murdoch
- Michael Papps
- Jeetan Patel
- Michael Pollard
- Matt Taylor
- Malaesili Tugaga
- Henry Walsh
- Luke Woodcock



QSCC support Hooked on Cricket



The first Hooked on Cricket Tournament will take place on Friday 19th September in Tawa, Wellington.

Hooked on Cricket is incredibly important to our members, which for many, represents the only opportunity they have to support the development of cricket.

Thanks to the donation we have received from Queen Street Cricket Club we will once again be able to deliver the programme in 64 schools, across six regions throughout New Zealand. That's 384 kids participating in the 6 Hooked on Cricket Tournament days, and over 1,400 kids taking part in the pre-tournament coaching sessions.

Ewen Thompson is once again delivering the programme and we are pleased to have the full support of players who will be in attendance at each of the Tournament days (the dates are in the upcoming events section).

QSCC Chairman Brian Moss presented

a cheque for \$20,000 to NZCPA Chief Executive Heath Mills at a function that included members of both organisations. Trent Boulton, Nathan McCullum, Kyle Mills, and Tim Southee took an active part of the evening with a fun and informative Q&A session following the presentation of the cheque.

A number of past playing members took the opportunity to recognise this moment with the current players, notably NZCPA Patron Barry Sinclair, Chairman Ross Verry, Board Member Grant McKenzie, Peter McGlashan, James Marshall, John Sparling, and Martyn Sigley.

About QSCC

The QSCC club was formed in the 1980s by a group of eccentric and enthusiastic cricket fans, known these days as tragic's. Aside from gathering for functions and on one occasion fielding a team, the club has focussed on raising and distributing funds to disadvantaged children through providing facilities, equipment and coaching.

The club currently offers individual grants through the Peter Hooton Scholarship programme in addition to a funding programme for low decile schools for agreed purposes. The club is currently looking to actively engage with the NZCPA in identifying joint activities going forward.

"There are some great stories from mostly individuals working hard without resource to keep cricket going in a lot of schools" said club Chairman Brian Moss.

QSCC are a registered charity and raise funds by member donations in a fun and enthusiastic manner. We hope that CPA members may also take the opportunity to join QSCC and be part of this unique club.

You can find out more about QSCC at www.qscc.org.nz

White Ferns step toward parity



The White Ferns were on top of the world after a triumphant ICC World Cup victory in 2000.

The New Zealand team contained quality international players such as Emily Drumm, Rebecca Rolls, Haidee Tiffen and ICC Hall of Fame inductee Debbie Hockley to call upon and as a result the White Ferns were a team to beat on the world stage for a sustained period of time.

The players of the time were mostly amateur, forced to combine full time work with training and practice where possible. The system worked back then with the coaches mostly amateur as well and few support staff around the team. Critically, it was a level playing field for all participating teams.

However, at the turn of the decade the women's game was starting to change, and quickly.

The English Cricket Board was the first to act in 2008, offering eight players full time cricket contracts (five accepted with three electing part time contracts). In 2014 this has now ballooned to 18 full time, fully professional ECB contracts offered to women players.

ECB Head of England Women's Cricket, Clare Connor said "The pay increase for the contracted players is significant and

signals the dawning of a fully professional era in every sense for England women's cricket."

Paul Downton, Managing Director of the ECB, added "International women's cricket has developed at a fast pace over the last few years and is now a year-round operation. The new arrangements will allow the 18 contracted players to train as full-time professionals. This is a very natural next step forward for the women's game in this country, and we hope that the move will lead to England maintaining their position as one of the most successful women's teams in the world."

It's safe to assume that alongside this enhanced contract system for the players, the team will also be surrounded by a number of full time support staff covering every area of coaching, medical and sport science support.

The Australian's quickly followed suit and in 2013 implemented a range of player contracts that were a step toward fully professional players. These contracts would see Australia's top players earning \$80,000 per year and able to focus on the game full time.

The trend was set and the game changed. The ambitions of our current White Ferns to equal the cup winning feats of their predecessors was becoming harder and

harder, given the playing field was no longer level. The performances of the English and Australian teams were advancing quickly with the ability to train at optimal times, to focus solely on your development as a cricketer and assisted by a full complement of support staff. These teams are now operating in professional environments that clearly provide performance advantages.

It was clearly apparent with the changes in other countries, that the White Ferns environment here in New Zealand needed help if we are going to give the team a chance to compete with the best in the world.

Accordingly, this winter the NZCPA agreed a new White Ferns Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with NZC that included the provision for 10 part time playing contracts. It was ground breaking stuff here in New Zealand and a significant step forward for the women's game in this country. It certainly hasn't levelled the playing field with England and Australia, but it's a step in the right direction and towards parity.

A strong blend of youth and experience makes up the first contracted list of White Ferns players for the season between 1 August 2014 and 31 July 2015.

Senior players such as captain Suzie Bates, Sara McGlashan and Rachel Priest all received contracts, while also rewarding strong performances from last season's international newcomers Holly Huddlestone, Hayley Jensen and Felicity Leydon-Davis.

It will be the first occasion a group of New Zealand women's players have been retained on annual contracts for playing cricket under a collective agreement, having previously been only paid assembly fees when training and playing for the White Ferns.

The White Ferns have begun the new era with a tour to the West Indies during September and we wish the players a great season ahead as you aim for victory against England – we may be the underdogs, but we were back in 2000 as well.

Inside The CPL

The Neesh Unleashed In Rasta Lands By Margot Butcher



As he blew out 24 candles and settled back in front of the MySKY to watch the Knights in the Champions League, Jimmy Neesham could reflect on his biggest year yet of professional cricket. It might still have pained the young gamebreaker not to be back in India with the Volts for a third time, but just turning on the telly really brought back memories. "I feel that was where I really got my career running, a year ago. Since then, it's been a whirlwind — back in the Blackcaps again, making my Test debut, IPL, CPL. For me, a year crammed full of learning experiences."

Chief among them has been the art of learning to manage his body through the intensity of playing almost non-stop — being one of those guys who tends to burn off condition quickly when playing. "Yeah, I'm a quick gainer, and a quick loser, and it's a double-edged sword, if I don't keep on top of it."

"That's been part of the learning experience — realising that I can't slack off for long. I've had to be much more aware of when I am peaking, when strength is tailing off, whereas in the past I've always had a set calendar in front of me: you start training in August, peak for September, start playing, drop off during the season. Being more 'independent' has meant I've had to pick the tournaments I want to be in top shape for and talking to guys like Trent Boult and Shane Bond about loading has been very helpful."

Neesham's winter stint with the Guyana Amazon Warriors was an opportunity too good to miss, playing alongside a power-packed side (including Narine, Ramdin, Lendl Simmons, Pakistan's Mohammad Hafeez and our own Marty Guptill) that was tipped to take out the Final, before rain on the big day quashed their opportunity. "It was a very, very good team — our slower bowlers managed to hold things back pretty consistently

throughout the tournament, and as a fielding team I don't think many would argue with me saying we were the best in the CPL. So it was disappointing to lose the final that way [by 8 runs on Duckworth Lewis, after three rain recalculations]. If you play a full game and give it your best shot, you feel at least it was in your hands. Having it taken away by the weather was a bitter pill."

At least the Warriors were the coolest looking outfit in the Caribbean — they get to wear rasta colours for their playing strip, although Jimmy concedes the Kermit-green training kit "didn't suit me as much as some of the other fellas...!"

Main takeaways? "It was another great experience playing in very different conditions from home: that was the main reason I signed up, to further my apprenticeship playing spin bowling, especially, one of the main things I did get out of it. And it was a good challenge mentally, at the end of a long period away from home. Finding those ways to motivate myself to continue to train and try to get better, even when you have your eye on the plane home."

Having Kiwi company helped — and he relished watching productive Guppy top the averages after three century partnerships with Simmons. "And with Ross Taylor and Dan Vettori playing for other teams, there were always some familiar faces to go have dinner with. It made it feel less foreign, I didn't feel alone, which is a good thing."

Neesham also took his social media prowess a step higher by breaking the incredible story of Lendl Simmons's bat being drilled full of holes by customs agents — looking for drugs. "Anyone who's had a bit to do with Lendl will know he's reasonably fiery, so it's fair to say he didn't stay calm when he pulled it out of his case." Perhaps it was karma when Simmons went on to win the man of the tournament prize — a \$US400K piece of land in St Kitts. "One of the better prizes I've come across. And I see he's hitting it quite well in the Champions League, so I guess he got a couple of new bats sent over!"

The Insider The BYC Podcast By Paul Ford

Each week a trio of intrepid cricket aficionados meet in Wellington warehouse to talk cricket and other miscellany for the Beige Brigade's long-running podcast, The BYC.

What is The BYC podcast all about?

It is New Zealand's first and longest running cricket podcast — and it has been emerging off and on the web since 2006. It's basically 30 minutes of three blokes yarning about the week's weird and wonderful cricketing goings-on, with a Kiwi bias of course.

Why would you bother doing it?

It's good practice for talking absolute rubbish about cricket all year round. Everyone involved loves the game, but nobody takes it too seriously. There's so much ridiculous stuff that happens in and around cricket, and The BYC focuses in on the weirdest bits. Cricinfo have picked up the podcast so it's found an audience of people with their tongues firmly in their cheeks, and who appreciate a bit of retro cricket chat.

Who came up with the idea — isn't podcasting a bit old tech these days?

Kevin Sinnott is the guy who had the idea, and after a couple of beers at Leuven with the Beige Brigade crew, kicking it off as a joint effort was a no-brainer. Podcasting and audio online are quite niche but there's a sharp audience out there, gagging for not-too-life-and-death chat about cricket.

Never heard of it. How do I get my ears on it?

It is on Cricinfo in its 'The Cordon' blog, as well as on the the Beige Brigade website and in iTunes. There have been some long hiatuses over the years but the lads have now clocked up 180 episodes and counting.

What does BYC stand for?

It is an acronym for whatever: Back Yard Cricket, Boys Yak Crap, Beige Yarn Club... whatever works best for you really.



Left Photo: BYC podcast originator and Steve Parr-esque compere Kevin Sinnott on the mic



Right Photo: Paul, Jason and Blair screaming and yelling through another episode

Who is involved in this nonsense?

The line-up is a bit like Lashings CC in Maidstone — it comes and goes over time. At the moment it is Kevin Sinnott (a ginger who used to work as a sports journalist), Jason 'Off White Thunder' Willis (a former car salesman from Wanganui) and Paul 'The Godfather' Ford (a Beige Brigade veteran from Hamilton).

There are also regular contributions from the likes of an accountant cricket tragic who writes in most weeks and has been dubbed The Regular Correspondent, and former NZ cricketer and shrewd observer of the game Tony Blain who inks occasional epistles from the village of Cleckheaton in the UK.

Have there been other podcasters involved in The BYC in the past?

Yes — there was an in-house minstrel called Blair Sayer for a few years and he used to sing a song most weeks based on current cricketing activity. These days a feature is a song from the wonderfully mad Irish cricket pop band The Duckworth Lewis Method.

For a while there was another line-up for The BYC with star power and actual cricket knowledge — Mike Lane, Jeremy Wells and Dylan Cleaver used to erratically (not erotically) meet in Auckland until they got too important and started wagging podcast class.

Is there much editing and censorship that needs to go on?

The truth is that the crew doesn't have the patience or technical skills to do too much of this — swearing and defamation and all that sort of things would mean strife with Cricinfo so effort is made to keep things on the rails. If someone turns up with a sample of their favourite tippie things can get a bit loose though, no question.

Do you get actual cricketers involved?

No, but it'd be great to incorporate domestic cricketers — preferably the ones who don't take themselves too seriously. One idea is to ask a player to answer a serious question and a preposterous question — they would leave their responses on an answerphone and these would be dissected in the podcast each week. If you're up for it email The BYC with your nomination: BYC@beigebrigade.co.nz



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