

**Purpose:** To provide a brief on the journey of Veterans Cricket NZ to being registered as VCNZ Charitable Trust in 2019.

This briefing also includes what has occurred here in New Zealand with over-50s, over-60s and over-70s cricket.

### **1. Brief Update on Vintage Cricket in Wellington**

Vintage and Golden Oldies cricket started in Wellington in 1988 when Tawa Turtles (representing what was then Tawa Cricket Club) and Onslow Oldies (representing Onslow CC) started attending Air NZ Golden Oldies (over-40) tournaments and then, in 2006, Vintage tournaments (over-35s) around the world.

Tawa Turtles have attended tournaments in Canada (2), South Africa (2), Sri Lanka, England (2), Barbados, Queensland (2), Western Australia, NSW, Argentina and New Zealand (4).

In 2012 the Tawa Turtles spearheaded the 6<sup>th</sup> International Vintage tournament, which was held in Wellington with 32 teams from around the world attending the week-long carnival. Six Wellington teams participated in the planning and played in this tournament. As a result of this tournament, older cricketers expressed a desire to continue to participate in vintage cricket.

### **2. Growth in Over-60s and Vintage cricket**

From 2012 there was a steady growth in participation of vintage cricketers, and especially those aged 50-plus. Cricket Wellington started a twice-a-month Sunday grade for vintage cricketers, which started with six teams and peaked at 14 teams in 2017. This competition is now the main playing competition for veterans cricket in Wellington. The general opinion is that playing twice a month gives sufficient opportunity for players to indulge their love for the game.

In 2013 the touring Australian Over-60s side played the Tawa Turtles and, the next day, played a Wellington 55-plus team at Karori Park. As a result of discussions with some of their players who are involved at senior level with either their state or Australian Cricket associations, Wellington was invited to send an over-60s side to the 9<sup>th</sup> Australian State Championship (ASC) Over-60s tournament in Melbourne in November of 2014. Instead, a full New Zealand side was selected to attend along with the other 32 teams from the various Australian states. This started our approach of sending a NZ side to this tournament each year.

By 2015 Vintage Cricket NZ, run by Peter McDermott who had been organising the Over-60s team to Australia, decided that it was time for a different approach. He suggested that a provincial tournament should be held to select future teams to the ASC Over-60s. This provincial tournament would ensure that the strongest team possible would represent NZ in the ASC, provide a base for future games against touring sides, and eventually be a catalyst for over-70s cricket.

### **3. The National Over-60s Provincial Championships.**

A small group from Wellington (Grant Baker, Ewen Chatfield and Dave Harle, with strong support from Cricket Wellington) established the inaugural NZ National Provincial Over-60s

tournament. With contacts in each of the provinces, they convened the first tournament along the same lines as the Australian tournament.

The first tournament took place in Petone in February 2016 with four Major Associations present: Auckland, Northern Districts, Central Districts and Wellington. From this tournament a squad was selected to attend the ASC in Perth in November of 2016. New Zealand was placed in Division 3 and won two of its games, ending up 4<sup>th</sup> in the division.

In February 2017 all six Major Associations attended the Provincial Tournament and two teams were selected to attend the 2017 ASC in Canberra. “NZ1” was in Division 2 and “NZ2” was in Division 3. Both teams were stronger than the previous year and ended up in the middle of their divisions.

By 2018 the word had got out to other cricketers in the 55-plus age group that there was a pathway to provincial and NZ representation in cricket. This had the effect of strengthening provincial teams and raising the possibility of an over-50s team and eventually having enough players to field an over-70s side.

The NZ Over-60s squad that was selected after the 2018 tournament was significantly stronger and more balanced than previous squads sent to the ASC. NZ1 won all of its games in Division 2, including a close final against Queensland. NZ2 also got through to its final in Division 3 but were outplayed by NSW in the final.

The 2019 National tournament was again played at Petone, with all six Major Associations sending strong teams. The squad selected to go to Adelaide for the 2019 ASC tournament in November was particularly strong, with many players from previous NZ teams not being selected as a result of the growing strength of the NZ tournament. The NZ1 team will be playing in the top division at the 2019 ASC, with the NZ2 team in Division 3.

In March of 2019, Australia sent its national Over-60s squad for a series of games against New Zealand and New Zealand selection teams. New Zealand won the series 2-1, which would have been a shock to the visitors but demonstrated the increasing strength of the New Zealand selections. In 2020 The Over 60s will participate in the first World Cup of Cricket for Over 60s in Queensland against 7 other countries.

#### **4. Veterans Cricket New Zealand**

The Wellington Committee, along with Cricket Wellington, has run the National Provincial tournament for its first four years and it was considered timely to set up Veterans Cricket NZ to run this tournament and veterans cricket in general.

The first thoughts about VCNZ started at the 2018 National Tournament, where a meeting of coordinators from each of the provinces met and agreed to form VCNZ, establish a board of trustees and set up a formal bank account. At the 2019 National Tournament, the Trust Deed to establish VCNZ Charitable Trust was agreed and provincial coordinators were voted on as the trustees of the Trust.

VCNZ has been registered with the Charities Commission as a Charitable Trust. VCNZ has now become the official entity for over-50s, over-60s and over-70s cricket in NZ.

## **5. Over-50s Cricket**

While Australia's over-50s cricket history is more than a decade old, the first Australian national side toured England in Wales in 2017, by which stage Australian Manager Stirling Hamman and Jim Morrison (New Zealand) had already discussed the possibility of an Over-50s World Cup. Hamman started making plans to host the World Cup in Sydney in November/ December of 2018.

Before that, Australia planned to tour New Zealand and play three Over-50s Internationals ("O50Is"). Because New Zealand had no over-50s structure at all – let alone a provincial tournament – Morrison sought nominations from across the country. The New Zealand Over-50s (the "Greycaps") assembled in Nelson in February of 2018 and the two sides shared the series 1-1 (one match was rained out).

New Zealand then selected a side (featuring 9 ex-first class players) to compete in the Over-50s World Cup, alongside hosts Australia, England, Wales, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, South Africa and Canada. The Greycaps acquitted themselves well and were beaten in the semi-final by the eventual winners Australia. Following the increased enthusiasm in over-50s cricket generated by the World Cup, an Inter-Provincial Tournament (IPT) is being arranged for late October of 2019, in Christchurch. Following the IPT, a 16-man squad will be selected for the next World Cup, to be held in Cape Town, South Africa, in March of 2020.

A North Island vs. South Island match was held in Nelson in March of 2019 and in October a quadrangle tournament will be held in Christchurch to select the next NZ Over 50s side to attend the World Cup in Capetown, South Africa in March 2020.

For more information on over-50s cricket, please visit [www.over50scricket.com](http://www.over50scricket.com), the official website for over-50s cricket. The World Cup's Facebook page is [www.facebook.com/o50scricketworldcup](https://www.facebook.com/o50scricketworldcup) and the NZ Over-50s page is [www.facebook.com/nz050s](https://www.facebook.com/nz050s); the over-50s Twitter account is @over50sc.

## **6. Over-70s Cricket**

As a result of the strong showings of our Over-60s teams at recent ASC tournaments, Australia invited New Zealand to take an Over-70s team to the ASC Over-70s tournament in Albury/Wodonga in November this year. The National Tournament committee ran an Over-70s trial at the recent National Provincial Over-60s tournament and, as a result, the first NZ Over-70s squad has been selected to go to Australia in November.

This now means that there is a pathway for older cricketers from over-50s to the over-60s and then on to the over-70s.

## **7. Support from New Zealand Cricket and Major Associations**

Cricket Wellington has taken the lead with over-60s cricket since the 2012 International Vintage Tournament was held there. They were also instrumental in assisting in the set-up of first four National Provincial Over-60s tournaments from 2016–2019. In 2015, prior to the first Provincial Tournament, Cricket Wellington briefed the chief executives of the provincial associations and gained strong support from each for the over-60s teams.

New Zealand Cricket provided a letter of support to Over-60s for the National Tournament to help us seek sponsorship and grants for the NZ squad to Australia. NZC also gave permission to the over-60s (now VCNZ) to use the NZ Cricket symbol on our playing shirts, caps and

uniform. Playing shirts and caps were provided free of charge by NZC for the first two years; however, after that the amount of playing gear available declined and VCNZ has funded via its players all of the uniform since 2017.

NZC has also provided visible support through its website with media releases at the end of each National Over-60s tournament, results of matches in Australia and, more recently, with reports on each of the tests against the Over-60s Australian team.

## HISTORY OF AUSTRALIAN Over-60s CRICKET

The first game of over-60s cricket in the world was played at Hurlington Park, Brighton, Victoria in January 2003. In England Veterans cricket for players aged over 50 years has been played in several counties since the mid 1980s. Over-60s cricket is now played in 14 countries and is predicted to be played in over 20 countries by 2012. The inaugural Australian interstate over-60s carnival was held in Canberra in November 2006.

From this modest beginning 9 teams contested the first official National Championship held in Melbourne in November 2007. As a prelude to the 2008 Championships, also held in Melbourne, an 'Australian eleven' was selected to play a 'test' against a touring England over 60 team at Hogden-Meckiff Oval in Mentone. Former Test Bowler, Geoff Dymock, captained the Australian team with former test fast bowler, Ian Meckiff tossing the coin to start the game.

With the rapid growth of Over-60s cricket a working group was set up to negotiate the affiliation of over-60s cricket with Cricket Australia. It is expected that a formal affiliation will be soon be announced. Following the Canberra Championships held in November 2010, the first Official Australian over-60s team was selected to tour the UK in August 2011 and play a series of games against County over 60 teams as well as 2 'test matches' against the England over-60s team and a 'test' against the Welsh National team. The touring team was sanctioned by Cricket Australia who also provided caps and shirts.

In November 2011, an England team touring team played two 'test matches' against an Australian Eleven at Manly Oval in Sydney. A 'test' match was also played during the rest day at the Australian Championships in Armidale. In July 2012 an Australian over-60s team toured the UK and played a series of matches against County teams and 4 test matches. In January 2013 an Australian team visited NZ and played 18 games including two internationals against NZ Over 60 teams. In March 2019 an Australian Over-60s team toured New Zealand playing six games and three one day tests.

### **Over-70s Test Cricket – Australia v England July/Aug 2013**

England may have retained the Ashes but another set of cricketers will be aiming to repeat the feat this summer when the England over-70s side do battle with Australia.

Hugh Milner has been appointed as captain and manager of England for the first series for the over-70s on these shores, following the success of the 10-match series (2009 to 2012) between the over-60 teams.

The three match series has been supported by the England and Wales Cricket Board with Chief Executive David Collier saying: "This summer will be a wonderful celebration of cricket with the New Zealand and Ashes tours in addition to the Champions Trophy.

"The ECB are happy to help establish the 70+ series versus Australia – good luck and bring back those Ashes."