



ZAKK PRATT bowling for New Zealand Northern against Queensland in Cricket Australia's Indoor Masters over-40s championship.

MASTER blaster Zakk Pratt unleashing one of his 11 sevens (sixes) throughout the tournament in Sydney.

CHRIS CLIFFE bowling during his outstanding spell for NZ Northern in the over-40s final against Queensland.

Cricketers return home with silver

BY COLIN THORSEN

Te Awamutu indoor cricketers Zakk Pratt and Chris Cliffe have returned home from Cricket Australia's (CA) Indoor Masters Championships with silver medals.

They were members of the well-performed New Zealand Northern over 40s team beaten by Queensland in the final, 154 runs to 82 at Silverwater in New South Wales.

Restricting the defending champions to 154 was a feat in itself, being the lowest score Queensland posted all tournament.

Pratt was the standout Kiwi, scoring 32 of a 36 run last

partnership for his team.

He only got to face nine of the 32 balls allocated to him and his partner, finishing with a remarkable personal strike rate of 320.

His 32 runs (including two maximum sevens) and strike rate were both superior to any other player on either team in the final.

Next best for NZ Northern was Michael Ranson with 12 runs at a strike rate of 80, while Daniel Lake was Queensland's best batsman in the final with 26 runs at 147.

Pratt finished the tournament as equal second batsman scoring the most sevens (over the five grades).

His 11 sevens had him on level

pegging with Justin Nelson, who represented New South Wales at outdoor cricket. Pratt had the distinction of scoring over 30 runs in both games he played against the all-conquering Queensland side.

In the 11 games Pratt featured in, he totalled 186 runs and claimed 17 wickets.

Cliffe was NZ Northern's most economical bowler in the final, claiming the outstanding figures of 2-5 from his two overs. He played in 10 games, finishing with 53 runs and 16 wickets.

NZ Northern earned the right to contest the final beating Victoria 131 to 74 (semi-final) and New South Wales Blues 60 to 44 (major semi-final).

In other matches, NZ Northern beat North Queensland 106-105, Western Australia 116-39, NSW Warratahs 105-40, Victoria 116-95, North Queensland 71-57, NSW Warratahs 132-74 and Victoria 146-117, while losing to Queensland 188-64 and NSW 124-84.

Queensland fielded teams in every age group, made the grand final in every division, and won four out of a possible five titles.

It was no mean feat, NZ Northern making the final — there are 83 indoor cricket centres in Queensland alone to pick their masters teams from.

Pratt says if one of the Queensland players was to miss a training, that's it... they are

automatically dropped from the side.

Indoor Cricket accounts for more than 165,000 participants across Australia with CA hosting Masters, Opens and Junior national carnivals annually.

Current stars such as Michael Clarke, Aaron Finch, Ryan Harris and Steve Smith began their careers with the indoor format of the game.

Pratt, with silver medals for the past two years, will be hoping to go one better, when New Zealand contests the 2016 Australian Masters tournament to be held in Mackay, Queensland. He is also interested in competing in next year's Masters World Cup in the UK.

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GRANT WILKS
Mob (0274) 948 672
gwilks@wilksbrooke.co.nz

RHETT MCKINNON
Mob (027) 292 9040
rhett.mckinnon@wilksbrooke.co.nz