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ITALIAN CRICKET ACADEMY, MELBOURNE

Set up by the Federazione Cricket Italiana in conjunction with Fila Australia's dynamic manager, Silvano Merlatti, under the auspices of the International Cricket Council Development Program Europe and Cricket Australia, the Italian cricket Academy in Australia has now reached its 3rd year of activity having moved from Hobart to Melbourne.

Originally an idea of Peter Di Venuto, former Italian international and older brother of Tasmania and Derbyshire's Michael, the Academy was launched in November 2002 when Edoardo GALLO, Gabriele PASSARETTI and Ivan SARNELLI spent three months in Hobart playing for Kingsborough. Edoardo and Gabriele went on to represent Italy in the ECC European Championships (ICC WCQS) last July, with the former taking 5/17 vs Gibraltar and the latter being voted Player of the Tournament on the strength of his 19 victims behind the stumps.

Last year, it was the turn of Daniele CONSOLI, Luca MORETTI and Francesco PAMPALONA to go through the Tasmanian routine playing with Glenorchy under the coaching of Glenn Hughes, brother of former Australian skipper Kim.

The move to Melbourne was a natural consequence of the increased demand by young Italians to savour the Australian experience. On the wave of Italy's triumphant Belgian campaign, two of the young indigenous players in the national squad, Kelum PERERA and Francesco SCARPONI, were sent "down under" to prepare the forthcoming ICC WCQS Division 2 tournament which shall take place in Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia) from February 21 to 27. They were joined by 3 other promising young Azzurri, William CHEYNE, Jacopo MARTINO DE' CARLES and Francesco MELCHIORRI.

The boys are involved in a full immersion into all the aspects of the game under the supervision of Ross Turner and Anna

Ryan of Cricket Australia and Riccardo Tenuta, Chairman of Rosebank Cricket Club. Playing over the weekend with either Rosebank the JIKA League or Haig Amateur, the club of Italian international Nicola Puccio, in the MMVCA League, the boys also take part in the mid-week Crusader program under the scrutiny of the one and only Swan Richards.

The ultimate goal of the Italian Academy is to build the cricket awareness of Italian youths who, talented as they may be, play cricket at home in an environment completely alien to the game. In this respect the cultural growth is much more important than the technical one, bearing in mind the future of Italian cricket.

Ross Turner with the Academy members

**CRICKET SCOTLAND ACADEMY, BRISBANE**

With the assistance of the EDP Annual Support Programme, Cricket Scotland have sent three of their young players to Brisbane for the winter. The players, Fraser Watts, Dewald Nel and Simon Swift will be playing for three clubs in Queensland over the winter period as well as joining in Academy training.

Peter Drinnen, Cricket Scotland's Technical Director comments: Through High Performance funding, we were able to assist with 3 players travelling abroad to attend an Academy in Australia. I explored several options, South Africa, New Zealand and India and felt through knowing the coaching staff and the environ-

ment, Australia was a sound choice for what is a pilot scheme. I have requested that the players feed back as much information as possible to ensure that we are getting the type of results that are desired. It was a deliberate measure to send 3 players who even at their young age have a good deal of experience under their belt. They will be able to assess the program and outline the real benefits and any areas of concern. As a considerable amount of money is being channelled into this venture, results are very important.

The players will undergo a series of fitness testing along

with a comprehensive programme of skill development and match play. All will be aligned with clubs that will provide regular competition for them, both on the field and with the selection process. They will have to earn their position in each side they play for and their aim will be to finish in First grade by the end of the season. All in all it is a very exciting 6 months for all involved and we hope to see the results in performance next season to ensure this initiative continues for years to come.

A regular diary of their experience can be found at the Cricket Scotland website:



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MCC TOUR TO ITALY BY ROB TURNER

Our tour (23 September - 3 October) started in Grosseto, north of Rome. Our first match was against Maremma CC. The MCC batted first and amassed 275 - 2 from 40 overs and then bowling them out for 114. Wicketkeeper Kurukulasuriya also looked a good batter.

Our next two matches were at the same ground against Italy U23's. Italy won the toss and batted, scoring 172-5 in their allotted 50 overs their innings held together by Kariyawan with an unbeaten 68. He then proceeded to get us into all sorts of trouble with his leg spinners, taking 4-27. We managed to scrape home 9 wickets down in the 49th over. The second game was a very different affair. MCC won the toss and batted, compiling a massive 309, the foundations laid by an opening partnership of 122 between Chinmay Gupte (107) and Matt Eyles (55). At 20-4, Italy were never getting back into the game.

On to Rome and Gallicano CC. MCC managed to bowl out Gallicano for 131. Andy Stew-

ard 4- 34 and Jonathan Newell 4-48. Clive Offer kept wicket with a great performance taking 3 catches and a stumping. We knocked them off, 2 wickets down.

Our day off was an extravaganza of sight-seeing before moving on to our final ground, Capannelle CC, which is situated in the middle of Rome's main racehorse venue. The MCC amassed 244 from 50 overs with contributions from Chinmay Gupte (57), myself (42*) and Nick Archer (30*). Jim Love compiled an innings of 42 and we bowled the opposition out for 177 with Jim's off-spin picking up 4-29 from 9 overs.

It was at this stage we got down to the business end of the tour - two back to back 1-dayers against the full Italian side. We lost the toss and fielded first. Italy got off to a steady start but things livened up with a spate of boundaries from Jayasena (69) who looked a quality player. Joe Scuderi, the ex-Lancashire County cricketer, was trapped LBW to Will

Hodson for just 11 but a partnership of 65 from Ketipe (49) and Alaud (35) for the 5th wicket put Italy back on track. MCC limited Italy to 241-7 from 50 overs. The MCC reply started well until the in-form Matt Eyles was run out in a ridiculous mix-up. Clive Offer played well for his 46 and Jim Love (34). At 8 an over I was stumped for 37 off the promising off-spinner, Scarponi (who took 4-44). We fell away and ended up 58 runs short.

Our final full day of the trip gave MCC an opportunity to level this two match series. Batting first in a shortened game the MCC compiled a massive 287 from 45 overs. Matt Eyles scored a classy 109 and Jim Love a forceful 76. Italy were behind the clock from the beginning and always under pressure. Jayasena and Giordano both scored good half centuries but Jim Love's off-spin accounted for 4 Italian wickets and they ended up being bowled out 37 runs short.

It was a satisfying way to end what had been an extremely enjoyable tour both on and off the field.

www.ecc-cricket.com



MCC and Capannelle CC teams



Training at the Rock



John Emburey



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MCC TOUR TO GIBRALTAR BY TOM FINLAYSON

The MCC tour to Gibraltar on 9th & 10th October proved a great success with two closely fought matches, the Gibraltar XI winning the Saturday fixture and MCC gaining revenge in the day/nighter played at the Victoria Stadium on the Sunday. On the Friday, the Minister for Sport, the Honourable Clive Beltran hosted a lunch-time reception for the visitors and presented the tour manager John Emburey, ex England and Middlesex spinner, with a Rock Model. On the Saturday evening the GCA in turn hosted a dinner and presented the MCC with a suitably engraved Gibraltar Crystal vase.

Heavy overnight rain delayed the start to 12 noon and reduced the game to a forty overs per side game instead of the originally scheduled fifty overs. MCC won the toss, batted, and suffered an early blow as Cooper was caught in the slips. Hicks and Yates then put on 44 runs for the second wicket before the visitors were in some trouble on 76/4 after 21 overs. Clarke batted well and with the help of the middle order managed to push the score along to 144, but Young then took three

wickets in as many overs and McCoubrey finally dismissed Clarke just after he had reached his half century, and MCC were all out for 156 in 39.2 overs. Rocca and Young opened for the Gibraltar XI with a stand of 99, scored in 21 overs, and an easy victory then seemed a mere formality. However, when Young gave Emburey a return catch just after reaching his half century and Rocca fell 25 runs later, also just having reached his fifty, the run-rate slowed right down. Gonzalez, however, was standing firm and it was he who hit the winning runs off the last ball of the 29th over.

Play stated on time at 4.30pm. The GCA Chairman's XI won the toss and chose to bat first in natural daylight, Rocca and Young started well with 37 runs in the opening seven overs. However, 3 batsmen were then dismissed and the local side then suffered a severe blow when Rocca, on 39 and looking dangerous, was run out to a direct throw at the stumps, and at 85/4 things seemed to be going MCC's way. Bacarese and Buzaglo then fought back with a fifth wicket stand of 36 before Fellows-Smith struck

two quick blows to account for Buzaglo and Balban, and although Bacarese went on to make 32, the whole side was dismissed for 143 in 38.1 overs.

Balban struck an early blow for the Chairman's XI, Morgan and Hicks then took the total along to 43 before being dismissed by Young and Cary. At the twenty overs half way stage the total had progressed to 66/3 with MCC requiring just under four runs an over for victory. Six overs after the break Cary struck again, bowling Jones with a perfect yorker, and the run rate dropped dramatically in the ensuing overs. The MCC total had slumped to 95/5 and the required run rate had risen to almost 5 ½ runs an over, and excitement mounted as Young bowled Yates six runs later. Runs continued to be in short supply and with just four overs remaining, MCC still required 28 runs for victory. The next two overs proved crucial as first Aswani conceded nine runs and then Young went for fourteen, and although the former bowled Lemmey in the 39th over, MCC were home and dry; Fletcher's 23 runs off 28 balls had turned the tide his side's way.

TWENTY/20 FOR SPANISH YOUTH

On an outstandingly successful and pleasant sunny day at the Columbus Oval, Albir, 24 keen young Members of Spain's official cricket association, the Asociacion Española De Cricket (AEC), played in the first of a series of Twenty/20 matches. These games are vitally important, firstly because the long-term future of Spanish cricket is dependant upon commitment to an effective youth policy and, secondly, the promotion of the Twenty/20 game is essential because it is the probable vehicle for re-establishing cricket as an Olympic sport. It was not surprising, therefore, that the enthusiasm and commitment shown by the young players reflected these crucial points.

A large crowd of parents and cricket-lovers was most appreciative of the skill and energy of the boys, which was apt reward

for the hard work they, and their AEC Coaches, are putting into their development. Amongst the crowd was Graham Howe, the current Spanish senior captain, who later presented autographed cricket balls to the player in each team considered to have exceeded their previous personal achievements by the greatest amount. Before the game, the two teams were presented with training tops by Mr. Roy Wickman, Managing Editor of The CB Friday and Destination Spain, who are important Sponsors of Spanish cricket.

In the game, each fielder bowled two overs, and not-out batsmen had to retire after scoring 20 or having batted for five overs.

Los Christianos batted first and got away to an excellent start with both Ishmael Garcia Mu-

ñoz and his captain, Christian Muñoz, achieving maximum scores. Other notable performances came from the not-out batsmen, Joe Wickman and Dan Toghar, each of whom scored 12. The innings closed on 66. The Blue Flames' innings started slowly, and Jake Sunderland's two double-wicket maidens broke the back of the batting. However, in a determined comeback, some aggressive stroke-making particularly by Joel Brooks and Tom Wilcox took the score to a creditable 51 by the close.

The autographed cricket balls for the most improved players were presented to Zac Waddington (Los Christianos) and Brad Harrison (Blue Flames).

The sheer exuberance of the young players was a joy to watch, and their ever-increasing skill levels promise an exciting future for Spanish cricket.

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Richard O'Sullivan with Gallicano U15's



Wayne Murray demonstrates

RICHARD O'SULLIVAN VISITS ITALY

The first week of October provided another exciting and varied week for ECC Coach Richard O'Sullivan in Italy.

Firstly he was able to conduct development meetings with many FCrl members who along with Richard were able to witness the national team play the MCC touring team twice over the weekend of 2nd and 3rd October in Rome. Capannelle Cricket Club with its new ingenious sight-screen system and at the end of a long Italian summer a relatively lush outfield hosted the teams who shared the spoils at one match each. A fair reflection on the performance of both sides and more evidence of the continued de-

velopment of the national side with a number of the younger Italian players making significant contributions.

The rest of that week was spent at the other end of the European development spectrum, with a second trip to Taranto in the heel of Italy to promote and work with local schools. The visit began with a press conference with local TV and newspapers along with fifteen interested schools. Many of these school Richard visited during the week which further extended the promotion of cricket in the area.

The 9 day trip concluded with even warmer weather than in

Taranto with 31degrees in Catania in Sicily for the finals of the FCrl U15 competition. Three teams: Murri from Sicily, Trentino from Trento and Gallicano from Rome had qualified from their groups earlier in their year. The last match of a six match tournament saw an excellent standard of cricket between Trentino who beat Gallicano to make it one match each, with both teams having beaten Murri twice the championship was decided on who had taken more wickets during the series and this left Gallicano the U15 champions.

The heartening thing for Italian cricket was to see a number of such promising cricketers for the future.

WICKETKEEPING CLINIC IN LEINSTER

Twenty-two young Leinster wicketkeepers, along with 8 LCU coaches, were put through their paces in a 2 ½ hour coaching clinic held at the new practice facilities at YMCA, Dublin last week. The clinic was run by South African wicketkeepers Wayne Murray (Eastern Province and YMCA) and Malcolm Stuurman (Boland and Pembroke CC) who demonstrated the latest techniques currently being used by the best glovemen in world cricket.

Murray went through the basic coaching points of the stance before demonstrating the three different methods used when standing up to the stumps. The 'Semi Circle' method is preferred by Murray, although time was also spent explaining the 'Parallel lines' and 'K' methods. Murray recommended the slip fielding stance when standing back, with the weight on the balls of the feet and taking the ball in line with your inside hip thus giving you extra room to take catches that come from

the outside edge of the bat.

The various roles of the wicket-keeper were discussed with the participants including the importance of the dress code for wicket keepers.

Overall, the clinic was one of the coaching highlights of the summer. Many new ideas and training drills were learnt by those that attended and it is planned to hold many more 'specialist' sessions such as these during the winter months.



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ICC European Development Program

The Europe Office
Lord's Cricket Ground
London NW8 8QN

T: +44 (0)20 7616 8635
F: +44 (0)20 7616 8634

European Development Manager

Richard Holdsworth
richard.holdsworth@icc-cricket.com
+44 (0)20 7616 8637

European Development Officer

Philip Hudson
philip.hudson@icc-cricket.com
+44 (0)20 7616 8636

Project Officer

Louise Kent
louise.kent@icc-cricket.com
+44 (0)20 7616 8638

Accounts & Project Officer

Denise Farrell-O'Neill
Denise.oneill@icc-cricket.com
+44 (0)20 7616 8639

Umpiring Consultant (P/T)

Graham Cooper
graham.cooper@icc-cricket.com
+44 (0)20 7616 8633



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ECC CHAMPIONSHIP DATES 2005

12-13 February	Indoor Championships	Denmark
21-27 February	ICC WCQS Division 2 (Italy)	Malaysia
19-21 July	ECC U17 1 st Division	Denmark
19-21 July	ECC U13 1 st Division	Ireland
25-31 July	ICC U19 WCQ	Scotland
26-28 July	ECC U15 1 st Division	Holland
29-31 July	ICC Intercontinental Cup – Holland v Scotland	Holland
8-12 August	ECC U15 2 nd Division	Israel (tbc)
9-11 August	ECC U23	Holland
13-15 August	ICC Intercontinental Cup – Scotland v Ireland	Scotland
13-18 August	ECC Women's European Championships	Wales
13-21 August	ECC Affiliates Championships	Belgium
23-25 August	ICC Intercontinental Cup – Ireland v Holland	Ireland

International Ice Cricket Tournaments in Estonia

Open to all comers
27-30 January and 10-13 March 2005
For further details contact:
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Tel: +372 6405871
Baltic Adventures
Tel: + 44 (0) 1582 462283

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LEINSTER CRICKET UNION ACADEMY

LCU Academy Philosophy – "To identify, select and develop the most talented cricketers in Leinster through excellent coaching and support services in the best facilities"

Over the summer months the selected 12 players who comprise this season's Academy squad have been kept busy with their twice weekly training routine. A variety of Dublin grounds have hosted the training sessions with many of the boys clearly progressing by practicing at a higher standard than they might normally be used to.

This year's Academy came about through the kind sponsorship of Hugh O'Brien and the 'English Language Institute' and has to date focused on the Technical, Tactical, Physical, Mental and Lifestyle Management aspects of the game. In the early weeks all the participants took part in a 6 hour 'Introduction to Coaching' course and many are now actively passing on these new coaching tips to youngsters within their own clubs.

Blackrock College JCT rugby coach Justin Vanstone has given the squad a greater understanding of the fitness levels required by the present day athlete, while

National Coach Adi Birrell has briefed the squad on what it takes to progress through the ranks to play cricket for Ireland at senior level. A variety of coaches including Chris Torissi, David Langford Smith, Thinus Fourie, Shaid Iqbal, Mike Smith, and Alan Lewis have all provided valuable tips while following the net practice sessions the squad on several occasions have been able to use the excellent facilities at the National Aquatic Centre at Abbotstown.

Academy Director Brian O'Rourke has been very pleased with running of this, the first Cricket Academy being run in Leinster. He realises that although the players have been put through some hard

training sessions the experience gained from the variety of coaches present will stand them well in years to come.

This years squad includes:

Daniel Campion (Merrion), Alan Caren (Rush), Eoghan Delaney (Clontarf), Ciarán Garry (North County), Conor Geraghty (Malahide), Ross Johnson (YMCA), Manu Kumar (Phoenix), Theo Lawson (Clontarf), Fintan McAllister (Rush), Niall McDarby (CYM), Kyle Tonetti (Merrion), Steven Walsh (YMCA)

Academy School Coaching Visit - St Brigid's National School, Castleknock, Dublin.

