

## CRICKET

THE HEBOU PNG U19 Garamuts have been grouped with cricketing powerhouses India and Australia at the upcoming 2018 ICC Under 19 Cricket World Cup (CWC) in New Zealand from January 13 to February 3.

India has been one of the stronger teams through the history of ICC U-19 Cricket World Cups, with three titles and two runner-up finishes.

They were also the only unbeaten team going into the final of the 2016 edition in Bangladesh, but a strong bowling performance by the Windies denied them a fourth title.

India is a strong side this time too with seven of their players having the experience of first-class cricket.

Opener Prithvi Shaw, who once made 546 in an international match in Mumbai in

2013 and has already knocked up five first-class centuries, is their high-profile captain.

Australia did not participate in the previous edition in Bangladesh because of security concerns, but, like India, is one of the high-profile teams.

They have also won the title three times and were triumphant on both the occasions when the tournament was held in New Zealand in 2002 and 2010.

Ryan Harris-coached Australia's preparations for the upcoming tournament included a five-match one-day series against Sri Lanka at home, which they won 4-1 in April.

Austin Waugh, the son of Steve Waugh, is one of the players to have garnered a lot of attention. The team also includes Will Sutherland, the son of James Sutherland – the

chief executive of Cricket Australia. Jason Sangha, the captain, recently became the youngest Australian to score a first-class century against England.

Zimbabwe were one of the crowd favourites in Bangladesh two years ago and defeated South Africa in the Plate semifinals. As a part of their preparations for the World Cup, Zimbabwe have toured Malaysia, South Africa, Namibia, Australia and India. At home, they beat Kenya 4-0 in a 50-over series.

Captain Liam Roche, who has already played first-class cricket, scored an unbeaten 108 in one of the matches. Before that, he had made two half-centuries against the Windies in a series that Zimbabwe lost.

The squad also played practice matches against a senior franchise team. After a long

camp at home, the squad travelled to New Zealand in early December to have a month's time to acclimatise.

This will be the eighth time the Garamuts have qualified for the ICC Under 19 CWC, having already played in the ICC Under CWC in 1998 (South Africa), 2002 (New Zealand), 2004 (Nepal), 2008 (Malaysia), 2010 (New Zealand), 2012 (Australia) and 2014 (UAE).

The 15-man Garamuts squad will once again be led by Parri's Vaqi Karaha, with all the players currently playing in the Port Moresby Cricket Association (POMCA).

The squad consists of 12 players that competed in the 2018 ICC Under 19 CWC East-Asia-Pacific (EAP) Qualifiers in Apia, Samoa in August last year where finished the tournament undefeated and advanced to the World Cup. They needed to beat Samoa

in the final match at this tournament, and the eight-wicket win was achieved without much difficulty. The Garamuts had lost to Fiji in the qualification race for the previous edition.

The Garamuts returned from a tour to Brisbane, where they played Queensland representative sides, winning two out of their four matches.

The Hebo PNG U-19 Garamuts have played Australia at the ICC U-19 CWC once (1998), India three times (2008, 2012 and 2014) and Zimbabwe twice (2012). Out of these three teams, the Garamuts have only defeated Zimbabwe in the 13th place playoff at the 2012 ICC U19 CWC in Australia.

The 2018 ICC Under 19 CWC will be the 12th time the tournament has been held and it will be the third time the tournament will be held in New Zealand.

happy that the Vanuatu Mini Games have been able to provide valuable competition leading into the Gold Coast Commonwealth Games," Minoque said.

Asked to comment on athletes' development programs, Minoque said the PGC does not have funding programs for athletes as they simply host an event.

"However, ONOC in Fiji is providing funding to many athletes via Olympic Solidarity and CGF (Commonwealth Games Federation) also has funding available to athletes," he said.

PGC has also written to the new PGA office bearers and outlined the steps required for the suspension of the Tahiti Nui Pacific Games Association to be lifted.

"We will resume discussions with them later in January," Minoque said.

# Grass Skirt project funds community gym

BY PAEOPE OVASURU

BESE Fitness and Healthy Centre were lucky recipients of sporting and gym equipment.

The gym and sports equipment were donated by the Grass Skirt Project.

The fitness and health centre, which is located behind Badhagya Technical Secondary School in Port Moresby, is community-based and is aimed at raising awareness on health and fitness.

Owner Klia Mala said the whole idea of building the centre was to encourage people of all ages to keep fit and stay healthy.

"Many people do not have

access to gyms and centres such as the High Performance Centre. The idea for this centre is to encourage people to exercise and stay healthy," he said.

Mala said that community initiated gyms like the one that he heads can thrive and be successful, if there is support from stakeholders.

He thanked the Grass Skirt project for the equipment, saying that it will go a long way to helping the community and the people that use the centre.

Grass Skirt project, a non-government organisation (NGO) is dedicated to supplying sporting equipment from Australia to community based

gyms and sporting clubs. The NGO is not restricted to such services only.

Founder Tahina Booth said, the Grass Skirt project is about addressing gender-based violence in sports.

"Grass Skirt project is about teaching young boys that it is not right to hit or touch a woman inappropriately. It's about empowering women so they can participate in sports," she said.

Booth said that the project is grassroots based because they want to help communities and village-based sporting clubs with equipment which results in helping them reach out to people, especially women and young girls.

She also said that logistics is one of the main areas that the NGO struggles with in terms of bringing the equipment in from Australia.

She said there was a need for more support from individuals and business houses.

Booth has a lifelong passion for sports including athletics, basketball, tennis, surfboat rowing and football.

In May 2014, she broke an Australian record in powerlifting. She currently holds the number two ranking for women's weightlifting in the 75kg-plus category.

Her mother is from Iokea in Gulf province and her father is an Australian.



GRASS Skirt project donating sports equipment.