

### JIRS Cricket Team Tour to Australia



JIRS cricket team had participated in the World School Cricket Challenge, which was held at Melbourne (Australia) organised by VSL Events. Haileybury School hosted the opening ceremony for the inaugural World School Cricket Challenge. A total 10 Teams from India, Australia and New Zealand competed for the World School Cricket Challenge Crown. The tournament was a great success.

The players had been exposed to a week of wonderful cricket on some of the best cricket grounds that they've ever played at. The playing conditions were different, the pitches much faster and bouncier than anything that they have seen in India till date. The bowlers, especially the fast bowlers, were quicker and more aggressive, and the ball has swung around throughout the day. The fielding has been athletic and some of the catches were taken and boundaries stopped by the fielding sides was unbelievable.

The running between the wickets was fast and aggressive and singles were converted into twos and twos into threes, effortlessly, mainly due to a much higher level of fitness and strength. It was a great experience, mentally and physically, to play against these tall, strong and athletic young players, particularly the fast bowlers from Australia and New Zealand, who are brought up on a different brand of cricket, compared to us.

This is precisely the reason why JIRS was so keen on doing this tour in the first place, to make the players aware of all these parameters, that are so different from what they are used to in India, and at the same time, are so vitally important to their development as cricketers in a global world.

It has already started to make them better players with a much higher level of confidence and commitment. For all the players in this tour, the new found, self-belief and confidence is going to make a huge difference when they go back, not just as players, but as individuals as well. Also the exposure and experience gained from this tough tour, will automatically make things a lot easier when the players next step out on home turf.

Apart from the cricket, the players have learnt a lot from the different things they have experienced like the culture, conduct and behaviour. The players have observed the discipline, the automatic adherence to rules and the inherent politeness of the people. As time comes, all these will reflect on the development of players own personalities.

These, in a nutshell, have been the major lessons for every player who travelled in this tour. These things were pointed to the players on time and again in the briefings during the course of the tour, so the players are aware and mindful of all this.

At the presentation Banquet, at International House of the Melbourne University, Aaryan received a prize for scoring one of the only two centuries of the tournament, an autographed book by Darren Lehmann, and the JIRS junior team finished Runners Up in the development section.

Our spinners came in for a lot of praise for the way they bowled and the senior team was applauded for having beaten the Champions, the Haileybury School first team, in the T20. In fact, if JIRS players hadn't lost narrowly by 3 runs to Saint Patricks in the other T20, our team would have beaten both Finalists of the senior section in the T20's!

Just shows that it takes a bit of time for any team to settle down in foreign conditions. If the tournament had gone on for a little while longer, who knows what our players may have achieved? The Haileybury head of Cricket in fact, mentioned how much their boys had learnt from the way our team played cricket and the fact that our boys looked better players and better coached than theirs, and how much they'd like to play against us again!



