

# India camp just the ticket

## Backing to prepare for Nepal tournament is vital, says coach

Jersey cricketers break new ground next weekend with a four-day program in India to help them prepare for their World Cricket League Division V tournament in Nepal, which starts the following Saturday 20 February, *writes Andy Bradshaw*

The India part of the trip is seen as being crucial to the success of the Nepal venture, with the time spent acclimatising to conditions and pitches expected to give Jersey the best possible chance of emulating their feat of

gaining promotion from the division when they hosted it in May 2008. Jersey, subsequently relegated in the Division IV tournament in Tanzania will hope to have a far better start to this competition, their

first-ever in the sub continent, thanks to training and playing three warm-up matches in India. The Jersey Cricket Board's trip to Chandigarh, the capital of the twin states of Punjab and Haryana, close to India's border with Nepal, is being supported by **Minerva Financial Services**.

Island coach Craig Hogan is in no doubt as to its importance 'Without **Minerva's** support there is no way we could have gone to India. We now have an excellent program lined up, but without their fantastic help we would probably have gone straight from playing indoors'.

'However, we have three training sessions to look forward to, two Twenty20 matches and one 50 overs game. As well as the games we will be in the nets batting and bowling against Indian players to

get us as used to their style of play and conditions expected to be very similar to those in Nepal'. 'There's no point going all that way and our batsmen facing our own bowlers; playing against Indian players will be closest to what we will experience in Nepal.'

Jersey players are now training three times a week and they are at the peak of their fitness following an intensive ten-week conditioning program.

Hogan added 'We will go to India with our eyes wide open and accept everything that is offered to us. It is going to be a learning experience for everyone, myself included and all 14 players will be given the opportunity to acclimatise to the Asian culture and the cricket'.

'For a few players I am sure it is going to be well and truly out of their comfort zone and that's

the reason for the Indian part of the trip.' It's off-season, the boys have trained really well and they are as good as they can be going into the competition.'

'There is no way we would be able to compete on an equal footing straight from indoors to outside; it would simply been too big an ask'.

It was clear from the outset when the JCB knew where the WCL tournament was going to be played they had to do their homework and try out similar conditions. Hogan's arrangements for the coaching have been assisted by Sachin Bajaj of the Global Cricket School. Bajaj has previously arranged similar exercises for ICC Europe, the English Cricket Board, and several English counties.

Chris Minty, JCB director of cricket said; 'this exercise has a considerable cost and the generous support from Minerva is allowing us to do everything that we hoped to do in India.'

Minerva marketing manager Charles Le Feuvre said: 'We are delighted to be sponsoring the Jersey Cricket Board as part of our community support program and we wish the team every success in their preparations for Nepal.'



Putting everything into it : the Jersey squad have been training indoors throughout the Winter Picture: © JERSEY EVENING POST (00883589)

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—Craig Hogan, Jersey cricket coach