

# Aussies must be aware Scots cricket is more professional

Scotland host Australia at the Grange club, Edinburgh, in three Twenty:20 cricket matches on Wednesday, Friday and Saturday this week.

From across the world comes a warning to the visitors to tread warily against the 13<sup>th</sup> ranked nation in the crash, bang, wallop version of the game.

Noting how the Scottish team have progressed since he represented those same Saltires as a permitted overseas player, including against English county opposition in 2007 and 2010, George Bailey, now an Australian chairman of selectors, singles out home captain Richie Berrington as an example.

Interviewed for the [cricket.com.au](http://cricket.com.au) website the man who was also a highly successful professional with the Grange club, says of one of the last links between his time as a Saltire and the present day:

“He (Berrington) was raw then – really talented, but you could see him going through the process of learning how to harness that and put that into a game.

“He was a great competitor and always had a really strong belief. I think now his consistency in his performance and the trust he has in his game is really evident.”

It is the third time Scotland will have faced Australia at home in official international matches and after referencing the fact Australia won ODI's comfortably in 2009 and 2013, Bailey says: "I think they (Scotland) have grown.

"Now when you look at that Scottish team, a lot of the guys have played some franchise cricket and it just looks to me like a team that's got a lot more belief.

"That's one of the real strengths of some of the franchise tournaments, that it continues to give exposure to some of the Associate members and the players within their teams.

"They have probably played against a lot more international cricketers now and had some really good exposure. They've got some individuals that can match it with the best in the world."

Scotland now employ contracted professionals with Bailey, an all rounder in the broadest sense in that he also won the Grange tennis championship during his stint in Edinburgh, insists that has made a difference as shown by a one day victory over England in 2018.

"It was a bit different playing the counties – they were all fully professional, whereas we would travel down on a Sunday and play all around the UK, then you'd jump back in the car and head back because most of the guys were heading off to work Monday morning" says George, adding:

"Some of those games where you play down in Southampton or somewhere like that, it was into the car and then drive all through the night, and guys were heading into work the next morning.

"It felt like Scotland got themselves into positions to win a few games. Sometimes it was almost just that knowledge of how you finish a game off, how you win it, and then feeling like they were good enough to win the game.

“There were some close games that went the other way.

“But I just loved it – and loved their enthusiasm.”

George was once asked by this correspondent what he'd have to do to make an Australian side on returning from his club stint in Scotland to his native Tasmania.

The reply is still easily recalled:

“Score a century every week of the season – then go back the next year and do it all again!”

George Bailey, Test cricketer, never had to go to such extremes to have his talent recognised and he generously attributes the necessary improvement in his game to responsibilities placed on both the club pro turning out overseas and the international marquee signing permitted under the rules of both the Friends Provident Trophy and the Pro 40 competition.



Australia players train at the Grange in preparation for the upcoming Scotland men v Australia men T20 series at the Grange, Edinburgh, UK.

Credit: Ian Jacobs

"That was probably more responsibility than what I had in the Tasmanian one-day team at that stage so that onus if you're chasing down a total, you've got to be the guy that that takes it a bit deeper and get into the innings.

"You've got to learn to self-manage a little bit as well. There's no one there telling you that you need to go to the gym or go for a run, so you've got to self-coach a bit. You've got to jump in with other guys, have extra hits, and just have that onus on yourself.

"I found that really appealing and beneficial."