

College Colts XI cap national finals debut with 3rd place

For the first time in College history, the Colts XI made the national cricket finals in Palmerston North last week, finishing 3rd.

Strong victories were gained against John McGlashan College (Otago), Tauranga Boys' College (Northern Districts) and St Patrick's College, Silverstream (Wellington).

Felix Huston (94no) and Gus Eglinton (3/27) stood out on the first day in College's 101-run win while Ben Laing (59no) anchored the innings to help College make a respectable score against Tauranga, before Hunter Shore (4/19) ripped the opposition's batting apart in the 26-run victory.

Despite the team conceding 57 extras, Hunter Shore (4/36) was to the fore at the bowling crease against Silverstream while solid batting led by Felix Huston (37no) and Finn McCormack-Young (30) ensured a comfortable five-wicket win.

Day 4 was a virtual 'semi-final' as College played Napier Boys' High School (Central Districts). Unfortunately, College was dismissed for 129 and failed to bat the full 40 overs. Benji Nation (32) was the top scorer, with 'extras' the next highest. However, a 'Jekyll and Hyde' performance ensued when an excellent bowling effort put College in a dominant position as Napier was 69/7 and later 102/9. Hunter Shore (2/25) was again to the fore. College needed one wicket and Napier nine runs off the final over. Napier eventually secured victory off the last delivery.

The loss meant College had to perform at its best to challenge the only unbeaten team, Auckland Grammar School (Auckland). Despite a competitive opening 10 overs, College failed to lift as the pressure was applied on bowlers and fielders. Grammar's 222/5 was a good score but College had the ability to challenge it. At 68/2 in the 15th over, with Felix Huston (28) looking imperious, College was asking many questions. However, three run outs in the next 12 balls destroyed the middle order. The boys knew that the game was never over until the very end, and with this attitude Hunter Shore (58) took the long handle to the bowlers. The team was dismissed for 194 but Grammar was given a real fright.

Hunter Shore was named College MVP, ending the tournament as leading wicket taker (11). He also featured in the top run scorers (9th), 3rd in bowling averages (10.55) and 3rd equal in securing most run outs. He had an outstanding week. Felix Huston was also vital in his run scoring and finished as the tournament's fourth-highest run scorer (165). As a team College featured with Felix Huston and Austin Smith gaining the most run outs at the tournament, while Hunter Shore and Jackson Garry were 3rd and Finn McCormack Young 8th. Felix Huston was also 2nd in the catches taken, while Gus Eglinton was placed 8th in wickets taken.

The importance of the week is now the challenge of seeing whether learning and improvements can be made from the boys' experiences.

Colts XI: Felix Huston (c), Jack Baker-Sherman, Paddy Cochran, Gus Eglinton, Jackson Garry, Lucas Kelly, Ben Laing, Finn McCormack-Young, Frankie Meates, Benji Nation, Wills Ockwell, Hunter Shore and Austin Smith.