



## Stage set for one-day showdown

BY DANIEL JOHNS

THE pitch is perfect, the Kiwis are keen and the boys from the bush are ready to roll for today's one-day international showdown at Bradman Oval.

The Trans-Tasman raiders will be hot favourites to knock off the Australian Country XI but the green and golds certainly won't take a backward step.

Bradman Oval Curator Josh Woodcock and apprentice Troy Meredith were busy making final preparations to the pitch yesterday and Woodcock remains confident the pitch will play well.

"The pitch is very fast and hard and a great one day wicket," Woodcock said.

"It's at least a 290-300 run wicket."

The Australian Country XI will be playing for pride in the match, with the Kiwis gaining the upper hand over the Aussies in the VB Tri-Series.

And the competitive nature of the tri-series has added even further interest to the clash, with organisers expecting more than 3000 people through the gates.



**Finishing touches... Bradman Oval curator Josh Woodcock and apprentice Troy Meredith make the final touches to the pitch.**

"Every time New Zealand wins the phone rings off the hook," Bradman Museum marketing manager Jacquelyn Semple-Nolan said.

"National pride is on the line and given the performance of the

Australian side recently the boys from the bush have a chance to make a real name for themselves."

Organisers have reminded prospective patrons that they cannot guarantee tickets will be available at the

gate today but there is still a chance they will be.

And the Bradman Foundation has decided to donate all profits from the match to the Rural Fire Service in the wake of the recent bushfire crisis.