



Kiwi opener Brendon McCullum smashed his way to a well made 96 during New Zealand's easy win over the Australian Country XI on Wednesday at Bradman Oval.

Kiwis belt Country XI in one day demolition

By DANIEL JOHNS

THE boys from the bush were left battered and bruised after New Zealand smashed a staggering 392 runs off 50 overs in Wednesday's one-sided one-dayer at Bradman Oval.

The Australian Country XI were still wondering what hit them after the white-hot Kiwis went on a scoring rampage, mercilessly brutalising the Aussies bowling attack.

In its ground record total, the Kiwis smashed 48 fours and 13 sixes in a breathtaking display of power-hitting.

In reply the Australian Country XI were cleaned up for 143 off 50 overs.

On a grey and blustery Bowral day,

more than 3000 people packed into the oval to witness the one-day annihilation.

New Zealand captain Stephen Fleming was satisfied with his side's performance and claimed it was an important work out for the in-form squad.

"It was very nice and an important hitout for us before Saturday's match against Australia," he said.

"I think the guys played well and kept focused and I'm especially happy with the form of Dion Nash."

Fleming also dismissed suggestions that his team was overly-aggressive in the 249 run humiliation.

"Any game we play we play to win and aggression is a part of that," he

said.

Coming off last year's victory over Zimbabwe, Australian Country XI captain Craig Howarth was despondent after the match.

"We expected to do a lot better but I suppose we were on a hiding to nothing really," he said.

"It's certainly a comedown from last year but we didn't really expect to win."

But Howarth still maintained the international exposure was a good experience for his side.

"It's very self-gratifying for all of us to be able to play against such a world class side," he said.

"These are some of the best cricketers in the world and it's still a great

experience."

The Kiwis won the toss and elected to bat on a perfect Bradman wicket and quickly went about building a total.

Richardson and McCullum put on 135 runs in quick time before Richardson was caught for 44.

Captain Fleming strode to the crease and took over where his teammates left off, compiling a lightning 76 at nearly two runs a ball. Youngster Brendon McCullum also chipped in strongly with 96 while Dion Nash, 72, and Lou Vincent, 49, kept the run rate ticking over.

In an impossible run chase, the Aussies never really got going, with Paul Barber top scoring with 27 runs

and the side being bundled out for a modest 143.

Bradman Foundation director Richard Mulvaney was delighted with the response to the match and heralded the winning side as the best to ever lay foot on the hallowed turf.

"Clearly, New Zealand is the best side we've ever had here," he said.

"They certainly treated the match seriously and although they never gave in, the Australians were beaten by a much stronger side.

"I'm very appreciative of the supportive way the crowd conducted themselves."

All profits raised from the match will be donated to the Rural Fire Service.