



# Pitch perfect for Bradman one-dayer

By DANIEL JOHNS

BRADMAN Oval curator Josh Woodcock has promised to prepare a belter in readiness for next month's international one dayer between Australia Country XI and New Zealand.

The January 23 showdown will be Woodcock's second international as curator and he admitted feeling the heat over preparing a suitable wicket.

"It is a real challenge but it's also very exciting," he said.

"It's hard work bringing it up to one day standard and the timing has to be absolutely perfect.

"I'm very confident of having the wicket in great condition with a nice even cover.

"It'll be a typical one day pitch with plenty of bounce and carry.

"There will probably be a bit in it for the bowlers early but I think at the end of the day it will be a batting track.

"But really we're ultimately governed by how much grass is on the wicket."

More grass on the wicket means there will be more turn and movement for the bowlers while a lighter cover would make it a batsman's paradise.

But the heavy playing schedule on the historic ground means that two of the pitches are currently being completely resurfaced and Woodcock is forced to start from scratch with the wicket for January's big match.

"We have 56 matches per year here which is about double that of any ground in the state," he said.

"It actually just wears out so

we have to remove the old growth and completely resurface the wicket.

"It really is a matter of urgency that this be done at this time of year."

But the transplant operation does not come cheap with the procedure coming at a cost of nearly \$5000.

"We do strips a year and the museum bears the cost entirely themselves," Woodcock said.

"We don't get these international matches automatically given to us and it's through the level and performance of the outfield and wicket that we continue to draw them.

"The outfield is in sensational condition again and is like a billiard table."

Marketing manager at Bradman Museum, Jacquelyn Semple-Nolan claimed the foundations continued success in drawing these international matches was a huge coup for the Highlands.

"Being an event that draws about 4000 people it's a real boost to local businesses and is great for the community," she said.

"It's just such a great day of village green cricket.

"It's a fantastic atmosphere and you can get so close to the players."

The New Zealand side will be named on Wednesday while the Australian Country side will be made up of players selected from the Australian Country Championship and will be named on January 15.

Tickets for the big match are still available from the Bradman Museum.



Bradman Oval curator Josh Woodcock is confident he can produce a world class pitch for next month's one day international between Australia Country XI