

News Release

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Papatoetoe cricket team inspired by WHITE FERNS at send-off

The Papatoetoe Under-16 women's cricket team received new gear and fresh inspiration from the national team ahead of the 2018/2019 cricket season this afternoon.

At an event hosted by ANZ, the team, which finished first-equal in their Under-15B grade last season under coach Regina Lillii, was presented with new bags and equipment.

But that wasn't all. The players also met their sporting idols in the WHITE FERNS players who leave to compete in the ICC Twenty20 World Cup in the West Indies on Thursday night.

As major sponsor of the WHITE FERNS, ANZ hosted a send-off for the national team at the ANZ Centre in Auckland on Thursday where they were also welcomed by Ngāti Whātua Orākei. ANZ gifted each WHITE FERNS player a pounamu ahead of the international competition and invited the Papatoetoe team to present them on the bank's behalf.

ANZ heard about the young south Auckland side through its "On Your Team" community grants programme which has supported grassroots cricket across New Zealand since 2009.

The team largely shares sports uniforms and kit which can prove difficult at practises and on game day, says coach Lillii.

"It's incredible, ANZ gave the team brand-new cricket gear and uniforms to keep. This means so much to them and has a significant impact on team morale.

"The opportunity to meet the WHITE FERNS and ask them questions about their game ... This doesn't happen every day. It's inspiring for our players and something they'll remember for the rest of their lives."

The team is excited to use their new team kit during their 2018/2019 season which starts on Saturday.

ANZ Chief Executive David Hisco says it's encouraging to see so much interest surrounding women in sport.

"As committed sponsors and fans of the WHITE FERNS and women's sport generally we hope public interest and support continues to grow. The players are fantastic role models for Kiwi girls and it's great to see teams like the Papatoetoe Under-16 side enthusiastic about their sport and seeing where it could take them in future.

"We wish the WHITE FERNS the best for ICC Twenty20 World Cup."

WHITE FERNS all-rounder and ANZ ambassador Suzie Bates says: "It was a great to have an official send-off at ANZ before we head away to the Caribbean. You could really feel the support in the room - the country is right behind us.

"What I loved most was chatting to some of the players in the Papatoetoe Under-16 girls cricket team. They make you realise why we play the game and essentially what it's all about. Really motivating as we head overseas."

ANZ supports New Zealand cricket

ANZ is proud to support cricket in New Zealand at all levels, from Saturday-morning sport in New Zealand communities right through to professional levels playing on the international stage. Since 2009 ANZ has given more than \$900,000 to local cricket players, teams, fans, clubs and schools to help them reach their cricket goals.

ANZ is also proud to be major sponsor of the BLACKCAPS.

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