

Trelawny pitch gets fair comments on debut

BY ANDREW HANCEL Observer staff reporter
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Despite the expected grey areas, the virgin pitch at Trelawny's multi-purpose stadium that hosted a limited-over match between a Jamaica XI and a USA Invitational XI last weekend has gotten favourable remarks.

"I haven't seen anything out there that suggests to me that we would not be able to pass an ICC test, based on the wicket that was presented..." said Oneil Cruickshank, cricket operations manager of the local organising committee of Jamaica Cricket 2007 Ltd.

From the four strips that have been laid in the middle, this is the second wicket being tested. The first was tested during a Capital & Credit limited-over game in August between Trelawny and Westmoreland.



Spectators watch the limited-over match between a Jamaica Select XI and a USA XI at the Trelawny multi-purpose stadium last weekend. (Photo: Bryan Cummings)

The Trelawny stadium will host the opening ceremony and four warm-up matches during next year's ICC Cricket World Cup, which is being staged in the region for the first time. The ICC has recommended that all official practice and match pitches be tested before the staging of any games. Once the pitch passes the standardised testing, the ICC will approve the scheduled World Cup games.

Overall the pitch was good for a strip being used for the first time, but there were also odd moments. For instance, Steve Massish was clean-bowled by a creeper from pacer Jermaine Lawson.

Jamaica's top-order batsmen also struggled against the slower bowlers from the USA, which is a sign the wicket was rather slow-paced.

Nonetheless the surface stood up fairly well and according to Jamaica captain Tamar Lambert, anything over 260 was going to be a competitive score.

"I think it was a fair pitch. Earlier on it was a little bit difficult, but as the game went on the pitch seemed to get a little better," Lambert told the Observer on Saturday.

"It's a start and it's a new pitch," he added. "I think 260, 265 is an average score on this pitch. Looking on this outfield, it's a huge one... so once you score 265, then on a surface like this, it could be 300 runs. But as I said before 265 seems like an average score on this pitch."

Mark Johnson, who captained the USA XI, had similar

comments: "...The wicket is good, but there is need for improvement... the outfield is remarkable... we came out and we appreciate what we had to play with."

According to Johnson, "At first-class level you need the wicket to be true where batsman can benefit and bowler can benefit, but today we saw Steve (Massish) got bowled by an almost rolling ball from a pace bowler.

"And when we were in the field our bowlers had a few balls that kept low. At one end the ball was coming through and bouncing even, but at the other end you had up-and-down deliveries.

"It was a bit slow... there wasn't any consistency in pace." But Cruickshank, who said the pitch was "true", said an assessment would be done at the end.