

crichQ and Friendly Manager

The Story To Date

August 2020



NORTHERN
DISTRICTS
CRICKET



OVERVIEW

Cricket is a game for all New Zealanders; a game for life. The technology we use therefore needs to ensure the role of administering and running cricket is easy to use as well as making the game more enjoyable to play.

This document outlines the significant progress New Zealand Cricket (NZC) has made over the last 12 months to improve the efficiencies of two of the platforms we use within grassroots participation, cricHQ and Friendly Manager.

PART A: THE cricHQ STORY TO DATE

cricHQ was founded by Simon Baker in 2010, alongside former BLACKCAPS captains Stephen Fleming and Brendon McCullum. It began as a social/scoring platform where players (of all levels) could share statistics and follow their favourite players. The platform was a catalyst for cricket, moving NZC into a new technological age that many sports had already adopted.

NZC began using cricHQ in 2014, and encouraged its Major Associations (MAs), District Associations (DAs) and clubs to fully utilise each function. However, there was considerable resistance – the platform was clunky and cumbersome and cricHQ provided patchy, often poor, customer support servicing. NZC struggled to help cricHQ undertake system improvements to ease end-user concerns and cricHQ's precarious financial position prevented it investing in major upgrades.

cricHQ, from the beginning, had difficulty monetising its product offering. In September 2017 the company went into receivership in September 2017.

From 2018, with strong support from NZC, cricHQ began a concerted effort to rectify longstanding issues. These issues included:

1. Associations and clubs ill-equipped with cricHQ skills/knowledge

- More emphasis needed to be placed on equipping cricket associations and club administrators as advocates for the platform and understanding its benefits.

2. Limited capacity for NZC to support and act as a filter

- The filtering of issues and ideas for development through NZC gave us greater visibility of what the network was facing and allowed us to drive the development and support of cricHQ.

3. Outdated online resources

- Training and support materials on the cricHQ website were outdated and needed to be redone with the new functions and features.

4. Little focus on competition management and membership

- cricHQ was originally created as a social platform and needed a more pointed approach towards making development changes that suited the users.



USE OF THE CNPI AGREEMENT KPIS TO DRIVE PLATFORM PROGRESS

In mid-2018, NZC started using the 'Friendly Manager' (FM) platform (see *Friendly Manager Story*) for coach registrations and online training. Shortly after, NZC introduced the first CNPI agreement framework¹ and included a KPI focus on accurate, comprehensive cricket network adoption and usage of both FM and cricHQ functionality.

During 2019/20, as well as maintaining the 2018/19 FM and cricHQ participant database growth focus, NZC broadened the participant data capture process to include umpires and club administrator volunteers, as well as looking to steadily increase usage of cricHQ's 'match scoring' functionality.

cricHQ Player Profiles

NZC estimated that, as of June 2018, four years after cricHQ's introduction, there were no more than 5,000 player profiles correctly captured on cricHQ, and that there were hundreds of thousands of inaccurate, essentially useless, player profiles in the system (created to enable teams to access the match scoring function).

NZC decided to completely clean all then-existing player profiles out of the system and to start again. To obtain MA and DA support for this process, risk/reward KPI funding was introduced and a target of 50% of accurate player profiles was established.

At the same time, in addition to working closely with cricHQ to eradicate issues and introduce improvements, NZC identified two staff members dedicated to helping MAs and DAs.

cricHQ Match Scoring Functionality

A unique feature of cricHQ is the match scoring functionality. This not only enables matches at any level to be digitally scored but enables players' family and friends to follow matches 'live' and/or to see match results. This functionality also captures the career of individual players.

In the years following the first introduction of cricHQ, there was relatively slow uptake of this functionality. NZC's 2019/20 KPI aspiration was to increase usage of cricHQ's match scoring functionality with full scorecards from 44% to 50% in 2019/20.

KEY cricHQ IMPROVEMENTS INTRODUCED FOR THE 2019/20 SEASON

cricHQ Developments

Key Feature	What?
Players and club merge tool	<ul style="list-style-type: none">This development has created the ability to merge two players where one profile is claimed or where both are claimed and merge two of the same clubs

¹ In August 2018, NZC introduced the Cricket Network Participation Investment (CNPI) agreements framework, linking its investment into MAs and DAs to NZC strategic priorities.

Creation of the CRM tool	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CRM will allow club and team administrators to easily contact individuals and/or teams through email or push notifications on their phone
Cross-association transfers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This development means the administrator can send the player a transfer request
Registration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adding the ability for the club to absorb or pass on the credit card fee to the registrant • Adding discounts for siblings on the same subtype • Decoupling a child from a parent once 18 years old • Duplicating a subtype • Enforcement of mandatory fields
Removal of “would rather not say” in the ethnicities field and inclusion of “gender diverse” in the gender field	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removal of “would rather not say” allows clubs/individuals to assign an ethnicity to a player, giving NZC accurate data • Inclusion of “gender diverse” allows those who do not identify as the binary male or female, to correctly identify themselves
Player paying subs by bank transfer, moved to pending list	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allows an administrator to keep track of who has paid into the clubs’ bank account before they can be moved across into the “current players” list

NZC ‘MA & DA customer support’ capability improvement

Previous to the 2018/19 season, there were only two forms of support - through NZC’s Participation Manager and the cricHQ support email address.

To reduce the amount of time and administrative support, NZC developed a plan where MAs and DAs nominate one person to lead cricHQ in their region. These individuals are available to help with ad hoc questions that administrators or club managers needed help with. This has positively impacted on capability development across the cricket network – there are now leaders and advocates at all levels, meaning that there is the same reliance on a few superusers.

RESULTS FROM 2019/20

cricHQ Player Profiles

In April 2019, there were 38,255 accurate player profiles (approximately 55% of our playing base) captured correctly in cricHQ.

By April 2020, there were 51,746 fully complete accurate player profiles on cricHQ plus another 3-4,000 substantially complete profiles, a superb overall result, closing the gap between the census and cricHQ numbers.

NZC’s 2019/20 playing census indicates that we now have 65,000 players. As a result of this data capture, we now know who 80% of our players are and with whom we can be in direct communication with.





Through the 2020/21 partnership agreements, NZC has an aspiration to increase the number of complete player profiles from 51,700 to 58,000. NZC will set different targets for each association in order to ensure this target is achievable.

cricHQ Match Scoring Functionality

Since the introduction of the CNPI agreements in August 2018, this has dramatically improved. At the end of the 2017/18 season, 32% of all cricket matches that season had been scored with full scorecards in cricHQ. By the end of the 2018/19 season, this has risen to 44%.

By the end of the 2019/20 season, usage of the cricHQ match scoring functionality has increased to 58% nationwide in April 2020.



NZC has an aspiration to increase scorecards to 65% in the 2020/21 agreements.

It should be noted that, due to the nature of how many junior and adult social matches are scored, there is no desire or need on the part of those organising such matches to record full scorecards within cricHQ.

cricHQ competition management

cricHQ is used by all MAs and DAs to manage various competitions. Competition management features include:

1. General management

- Creating draws with different structures (e.g. round robin, pool play, home and away) and assign grounds to individual games



- Assigning managers/administrators and players and to teams; and
- Assigning points based on different bonus strategies.

2. Player registrations

- Ability to register players of all levels of the game
- Collecting subs (payments) from players; and
- Ability to see funds collected through sub registrations (both stripe and internet banking).

3. CRM (customer relationship tool)

- Ability for cricket clubs to email members (e.g. individual members, specific groups as well as the whole membership database); and
- Ability to send those registered push notifications.

crichQ SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS - WHERE TO NEXT?

There are a number of major developments coming to crichQ this year. The table below outlines some of the key features.

Key Feature	What?
Support for the registration process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adding the ability to select your team, allowing social players to add themselves into their own team • Adding the ability to create multiple registration forms (i.e. junior and senior) • Development on the family discount from last season, so that families can get discounts across multiple subtypes • Ability to sign in at the beginning of the registration process if you already have an account, removing future duplicates
Support for administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being able to select more than one player at a time and move them into a team, saving administrative time
Competition management development including	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adding more match levels and draw types • Adding team's mid-competition • Updating point strategies and selection and cancelling of fixtures • Adding extra levels for competitions that were not already captured
Updates to the mobile application	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The retirement button now has an icon • Adding notes for scorers
Creation of crichQ help videos	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The creation of crichQ help videos will reduce the amount of administrative time it takes to bring a new club onto the platform as well as being a helpful guide to refer back should issues arise

PART B: THE FRIENDLY MANAGER STORY TO DATE

OVERVIEW

In July 2018, within its CNPI agreement framework, NZC made 'coach development' a major strategic priority with its six MAs and 23 DAs.

NZC's 'coach development' objectives are to work with our members nationwide to build a programme which ultimately results in:

1. appropriately qualified and skilled coaches being attached to all junior and youth, including school teams and supporting as many adult teams as possible; and
2. significantly increasing the depth of appropriately qualified and skilled coaches to work within and service our high performance, including professional programmes.

To underpin such progress, NZC, MAs and DAs have focused our attention on improving the capability of our nationwide coach developer workforce. This has positively impacted on the experience of the coaches attending coaching courses, which ultimately benefits our players.

HISTORY

In July 2016, as a result of feedback from MAs and DAs suggesting that our coaching courses should be available online, NZC contracted Bracken as our online learning platform; developing a blended approach to coaching courses. The first courses to be developed in this way were the Superstar Cricket Academy, Foundation and Advanced Foundation Courses. In the absence of a coach database, Bracken was used for that purpose as well, by downloading spreadsheets. However, because it was set up as an online learning platform and not a database, it became obvious that we needed an online database that was able to integrate with Bracken.

In August 2018, NZC launched its first-ever online coach database and training platform through Friendly Manager and strongly encouraged registration of all junior and club youth coaches.

Before FM, NZC and its MAs and DAs would capture coaching data on multiple spreadsheets, and when coaches qualified, they were required to contact NZC for their certificate. This system was cumbersome lacked practicality. The establishment of FM has been a huge step forward for the cricket network for several reasons, including:

- ensuring that the network knows who its coaches are (regardless of whether they are active coaches or not)
- enabling NZC, MAs and DAs to communicate directly with coaches; and
- offering online coaching courses as well as access to coaching resources.

Our starting point has had a strong focus on the support the cricket network provides to coaches at junior and youth club levels and, over a period of five years, from July 2018, will extend this support network to cover the entire spectrum of our community network of coaches.



CNPI AGREEMENTS

NZC used its CNPI Agreement Framework to ensure coach development became a top priority throughout our nationwide cricket network. In particular, these CNPI Agreements used KPI targets and 'risk/reward' funding as the mechanism to focus attention on coach development.

Whilst these KPIs have largely been quantitative, they have provided a target for MAs and DAs to strive towards. As a result of this approach, many of the coach developers have engaged more with their communities, developed better relationships with their clubs, schools and coaches, which in turn will provide future benefits for their associations and their communities.

In July 2019, all existing FM registrations were archived, and registered coaches were encouraged to re-register if they intended to remain actively involved in coaching in 2019/20 or if they were not actively coaching but still wanted to remain connected to NZC's coaching network².

SYSTEM VALUE – COACHING DATABASE

The coaching database has been, and will continue to be, invaluable to NZC, MAs and DAs, for example:

- NZC, MAs and DAs now know who coaches around the country, as well as what level of cricket they coach and which club they belong to
- upskilling the cricket network to use FM to its full potential (increased capability of the network); and
- constant education across the cricket network to ensure that people use the features correctly.

While there are many advantages to using FM, one disadvantage is that we are unable to allocate a coach to the team they are coaching.

SYSTEM CAPABILITY

Online Welfare of Children and Vulnerable Persons and Police Vetting

NZC developed a customised online vetting tool in FM to administer, on average, 1,000 Police vets per year. Our goal was to ensure the process was streamlined and easy to administer for our wider cricket network. As a first step, coaches registering on FM are now required to complete three Welfare of Children and Vulnerable Persons modules before the online Foundation or Advances Foundation coaching modules are made available to them.

To date, the feedback on the system has been very positive, and each MA and DA also has a 'designated person' trained in dealing with cases of suspected and/or actual abuse.

Key results:

- 902 Police vets were processed by NZC in 2019/20
- 2,074 vets have been processed since compulsory vetting was introduced in 2018/19 (73% of our registered coaching database); and

² 3,500 coaches registered during 2019/20, including 2,800 who identified themselves as being current 'active coaches.'

- 2,503 (88%) of our registered coaching database have completed the Welfare of Children and Vulnerable Persons online modules.

ONLINE COACHING COURSES

In keeping with making coaching courses more accessible, and everything coach related within the same place, Friendly manager set up an API with Braken. Braken is an online training system based out of Dunedin, which allows companies to create their own training content. With the introduction of this database, coaches could then receive their personalised certificates, automatically generated once they had completed an online course.

In order to ensure coaches were meeting the requirements for each level, there were two types of courses introduced:

- Open (Foundation & Advanced Foundation) means anyone can apply for and complete the course automatically.
- Closed (Master Foundation, Development & Level 2) means that when applying for a course, an email is sent to the relevant coach developer who can then open the course. This was created to stop coaches from completing courses that were at a higher level than they should be.

Key results:

- by the end of the 2019/20 season, of the 2,823 'active coaches' registered on FM, 2,241 had completed an NZC coaching course; and
- NZC are not yet able on FM or cricHQ to 'match' the names of qualified coaches to specific teams, however the numbers indicate that most teams now will have a qualified coach attached. Some teams will have more than one.

Direct communication

As a result of FM, we now know who our coaches are and can communicate with them directly. We are now able to contact registered coaches through FM, as well as sending emails or newsletter out to individuals, groups and/or the whole coaching database.

FM SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS – WHERE TO NEXT?

There are a number of improvements coming to FM over the next 12 months. The table below outlines some of these improvements.

Improvements	What?
Performance Coaching course	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This will replace the Level 2 course and become a blended course (i.e. combination of online and practical modules)
Advance Development course	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Course which offers an opportunity for development coaches to continue to learn. This will also be a blended course
Additional reports and fields within existing reports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report for data on new coaches – registered qualified softball, hardball coaches. Date of Police vet included in current members report