



# Absolute cricket perfection for Tuks team

Absolute perfection over five days of cricket is possibly the best way to describe the way Assupol Tuks played last week to retain the Momentum National Club Championships title for a second consecutive year.

On the final day, in what was a must-win game against the Crusaders from KwaZulu-Natal, the Assupol Tuks players again played with clinical precision to do what was needed to be done on the field. The result was that they won with 121 runs.

Assupol Tuks who batted first scored 282/4 thanks to brilliant batting display by Neil Brand with 120 runs off 131 balls and Jiveshan Pillay with 75 runs off 109 balls.

Tuks's bowlers then did their part and the Crusaders were all out for 161.

To say that the team dominated the tournament would not be an exaggeration.

In the first game, Assupol Tuks beat Wellington by seven wickets, followed by a 162-run victory over Yorkshire, a nine-wicket victory over Fort Hare University and a 125-

run victory over Northwest Pukke.

The exciting part is that Tuks's coach Kruger van Wyk believes that the team is capable of even more exceptional performances in the future.



Neil Brand, captain of Tuks Cricket, led his team by example in last week's Momentum National Club Championships. Photos: Reg Caldecott.

"It was a long season, eight months to be precise, in which the players played a lot of cricket. I must admire them for the way they found the energy and passion to 'step up to the plate' one last time. A performance like this is what makes coaching worthwhile," said Van Wyk.

He declined to single out the performance of any player, saying cricket was all about the team.

But he could not help being excited about the way his captain, Neil Brand, played throughout the tournament.

Leading by example seems to come naturally to Brand. He had an impact on each

game – scoring 72 runs against Yorkshire, taking 4/14 with his off-spin deliveries against the Fort Hare, hitting 73 runs against Northwest Pukke and then topping it all by

scoring 120 runs against the Crusaders.

"Neil is an unbelievable player and I hope the decision makers in franchise cricket start realising it. If ever there was a player worthy of a professional contract it is Neil," said Van Wyk.

The coach was equally full of praise for Migael Pretorius.

He played his last game for Assupol Tuks in this tournament as he has been contracted by the Lions.

Pretorius bowled like a player possessed, taking 5/18 in seven overs in the game against the Crusaders.

"It is never nice to lose a player. But the fact that Migael got a professional contract proves that we are doing something right."

Ruan de Swardt also impressed with his bowling and batting.

He was the perfect all-rounder, not only excelling with bat and ball – Van Wyk is also convinced that he was the best fielder at the tournament.



Ruan de Swardt impressed with his all-round exploits throughout the tournament.

