

## General news

### SA women's cricket superstars fuelled by CSIR notational technology

Notational analysis software developed by the CSIR added to the power packed by the South African women's cricket team who recently hit the ICC Women's World Cup qualifying tournament for a six. The team walked away the winners of the tournament, securing a place in the ICC Women's World Cup to be held in Australia next year.

Performance analysts from the CSIR's sports technology centre were approached in 2006 to help the cricket team identify its strengths and shortcomings through the use of highly specialised technology. The technology, known as 'Crickstat', consists of CSIR-developed notational analysis software that enables real-time video footage of the match to be analysed using specialist reports and advanced database technologies.

Crickstat enables coaches and players to analyse performance instantaneously and objectively, which gave the South African team a distinct competitive advantage in the 50-over version of the game. For example, when Magdalena Terblanche was dismissed in the game against Papa New Guinea, the video data were instantly available for review and analysis. Not only could the technical and tactical reasons for her dismissal be identified on the spot, but the opponent's strengths and techniques could be better understood.

CSIR performance analyst, Dayle Marshall, who travelled with the team to capture the video footage and log the data, says the technology had a clear impact on the players over the past year. "The players are far more confident," says Dayle. "By reviewing their own performances, they now know what line and length to bowl and the batters are clear on their shot selections. The notational analysis technology has truly empowered them to develop winning game strategies."

Since enlisting support from the CSIR, the team's performance has showed a marked improvement: from a defeat against Pakistan in 2005 to the convincing eight-wicket victory against them in this year's final qualifier.



Player of the match, Sunette Loubser, bowls to Ciara Metcalf from Ireland (Photo courtesy of the ICC)



The South African team shortly before the match against Bermuda (Photo courtesy of the ICC)



Team captain, Cri-Zelda Brits, celebrates her first ODI century (Photo courtesy of the ICC)

"Although many factors affect performance," says Dr Tony Kirkbride who heads up the CSIR's sports technology centre, "it is generally accepted that technical and tactical analyses play a leading role in improving sports performance. All credit should go to Cricket South Africa for providing the financial support to underpin this work, which gave the South African players the required edge."

Armed with passion, skill, commitment and the CSIR's benchmarking technology, the South African women's cricket team is well on its way to making its mark at the ICC Women's World Cup in 2009.

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