

Central Districts and Otago top the table at Under 23 tournament

Central Districts remain in top spot despite losing to Canterbury by 77 runs while Otago's four wicket win over Auckland saw them secure four points and a share of first place.

Canterbury batsman Henry Nicholls struck a fine unbeaten 111 off 81 balls to help his team through to a formidable 289 for seven after batting first against Central Districts. Nicholls was well supported by Tim Muir who hit 68 with the pair putting on 139 for the fifth wicket. Opener Dean Robinson got the Central reply off to a positive start and along with BJ Barnett took the score through to 133 for three before Barnett fell on 45. Robinson went a short time after for 64 with the rest of the batsmen offering little resistance. Spinner Tim Johnston proved the most difficult of the Canterbury bowlers taking three for 33 while Muir backed up his useful batting with two for 53 with the ball.

The Otago v Auckland match was a one sided affair with Auckland bundled out for 157 in 33.4 overs and Otago passing the target with 6.4 overs to spare. The Otago bowlers hunted as a pack with everyone returning tidy figures - Anthony Bullick's three for 18 being the best. Brad Rodden's unbeaten 71 provided the backbone of the Otago run chase while Bullick hit 33 not out at the end to help seal the comfortable win.

Wellington would have fancied their chances after posting 296 for six after winning the toss and batting first but a superb top order batting display by Northern Districts saw them make 299 for four in 47 overs. An aggressive 85 off 72 balls from opener Michael Dodunski set up the pursuit and his effort was followed by Bharat Popli who struck 56 and Daryl Michael who made 69. Earlier, Niranjan Naguleswaran anchored the Wellington innings with 97 while James Baker was the best of the Northern bowling attack returning figures of 4-41.

Wellington U23 v Northern Districts U23

Toss: Wellington won the toss and elected to bat

Result: Northern Districts won by 6 wickets

Wellington 296-6 (*Niranjan Naguleswaran 97, Michael Pollard 47, Barry Rhodes 54, M Taylor 38; James Baker 4-41*) lost to **Northern Districts 299-4** (*Michael Dodunski 85, Bharat Popli 56, Daryl Mitchell 69*)

Full scorecard: <http://scoring.blackcaps.co.nz/livescoring/match1088/scorecard.aspx>

Canterbury U23 v Central Districts U23

Toss: Canterbury won the toss and elected to bat

Result: Canterbury won by 77 runs

Canterbury 289-7 (*Tom Latham 44, Henry Nicholls 111, Tim Muir 68; Roald Badenhorst 3-41*) beat **Central Districts 212 all out** (*Dean Robinson 64, BJ Barnett 45; Tim Johnston 3-33*)

Full scorecard: <http://scoring.blackcaps.co.nz/livescoring/match1086/scorecard.aspx>

Auckland U23 v Otago U23

Toss: Auckland won the toss and elected to bat

Results: Otago won by 4 wickets

Auckland 157 all out (*M Barry 37; Anthony Bullick 3-18, Daniel Duke 2-16, Andy Dodd 2-21*) lost to **Otago 160-6** (*Brad Rodden 71; Bhupinder Singh 2-17, Richard Lane 2-22*)

Full scorecard: <http://scoring.blackcaps.co.nz/livescoring/match1085/scorecard.aspx>

Points:

Central Districts – 10
Otago – 10
Wellington – 9
Northern Districts - 8
Canterbury - 5
Auckland - 2