



## **ISRAEL EARN PROMOTION TO ICC EUROPE DIVISION 2**

Israel have earned promotion back into ICC Europe Division 2 two years after being relegated, as the national team followed up their win at the Division 3 tournament in Spain, with a comfortable 6-wicket win over Croatia in Zagreb last month. The win completed a long but successful season for the national squad, which began with five matches during the Maccabiah and continued with a further five matches in Spain.

### ***Start delayed after heavy rain***

Israel flew out to Zagreb knowing full well all the success of winning the tournament in Spain wouldn't be worth much if they were unable to defeat the Croats and secure promotion. Young Ashdod's hard hitting opening batsman Shmuel Moses was the only new cap in the 12-man squad, which was missing star batsman Raymond Aston (injury), as well as a number of players who were unable to get leave from the army or their work.

Heavy overnight rain left the pitch waterlogged and the outfield muddy, with the chances of play seemingly

very small as the teams arrived at the ground. However no further rain allowed for a 1pm start and the game reduced to 36 overs per side. Israel skipper Herschel Gutman won the toss and decided to bowl in the overcast conditions.

### ***Samson and Massil keep openers in check***

Israel's opening bowlers Eliezer Samson and David Massil continued from where they had left off in Spain, giving nothing away as the hosts crawled through the opening 18 overs at barely more than one an over. Samson picked up the first wicket as well, finishing with figures of 1 for 6 in his 7 overs. Massil took 1 for 10 in 7. Yaniv Razpurker maintained the pressure coming on first change.

### ***Shein takes 5 as wickets tumble***

With wickets in hand, Croatia began batting more aggressively, but with the score on 55 spinner Steven Shein broke the 2<sup>nd</sup> wicket stand which had been worth 50. Wickets tumbled thereafter as Croatia collapsed to 61 for 7. The lower order managed to add a few more, taking their team to 96 for 9 in 9 in their 36 overs, with Shein finishing with 5 for 27.

### ***Batsmen complete the job with Gutman leading from the front***

Israel had real issues chasing 256 in the first 50 overs of the match. Shein