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Cricket ECB director says Tymal's performances are 'exciting'

Mildenhall man Mills roughing up England ready for the Ashes

Tymal Mills may be putting England's Ashes team through their paces, but he has been told there is much to do before he can dream of a Test debut.

Mildenhall cricketer Mills was discovered by England as suitable practice for Australia's Mitchells — Johnson and Stare — during an Ashes warm-up clash with Essex in July.

The 21-year-old left-arm-er, dubbed 'the fastest bowler in England' by Test captain Alastair Cook, produced a fiery display and almost sidelined Graeme Swann with a ferocious bouncer.

And he has joined up with Cook's side in Australia ahead of the rest of his England Performance Programme squad teammates for more of the same.

However, England Cricket Board (ECB) performance director David Parsons has warned Mills that his role of roughing up the Test team is not an indication he will soon be part of it — although the Essex bowler's potential is exciting.

"There is still a rawness about him which is exciting — because he bowls quickly and is a left-arm-er, is very skilful and is massively enthusiastic with a lot of potential," said Parsons.

"But at the same time we have to keep reminding ourselves that actually his journey is only just starting.

"Tymal has that raw express pace, but there is still a way to go in his journey.

"There is a lot of refine-



PICTURE: SPORTSBEAT

RAW TALENT: Tymal Mills

ment of those skills still to come and when we see the consistency of him delivering then we can really get excited.

"He has hardly played any first-class cricket so when we start to see that with the Performance Programme, with the Lions, in first-class, then

we can think about elevating him to another level.

"The reason Tymal is out in Australia at the moment is that he bowls quickly and that he is a left-arm-er so he can replicate for the England batsmen what they may be facing."

Mills is part of a 16-strong England Performance Programme squad and among the 13 following the Ashes touring party to Australia this month — although he is already Down Under.

The much-vaunted programme has seen recent

graduates Joe Root and any Bairstow go on to establish themselves in the senior side up with Gary Ballance behind their heels.

With just 18 first-class games under his belt, Mills is one of the least experienced members of the squad. Moeen Ali has 107, while Buttler has played 44 times for England.

However, Parsons is aiming for the entire squad to hone their skills to the top level of cricket and in position to capitalise when opportunities arise.

"This is about preparing them for England," he added. "There are certain things aspiring young cricketers have not got 70 Tests to name have to do to earn the right to behave like international cricketers.

"So we work them hard, we look to challenge them wherever we possibly can.

"One of the mantras we are taking them to the edge of their capabilities.

"To really put their heads and put them under pressure and see how they will react because that's where the best improvement comes from.

"These guys are so used to have to play in these environments so it's a major benefit to have them through challenging conditions, rather than just spending a winter in Loughborough where you are always having to simulate."

Follow the England Performance Programme and their progress this winter at www.ecb.co.uk/epp