



Name	Joe Austin-Smellie
DOB	17/10/1989
Nationality	New Zealander
Player Status	
Playing Role	Wicket-Keeper
Batting Style	RH Top Order Bat
Bowling Style	RA Off Spin
Entry Route	British Passport
Coaching Qualifications	NZC Level 1

Joe Austin-Smellie is a former New Zealand Under-19 and Wellington Firebirds professional cricketer. He played 27 matches for the Firebirds, across the three formats, from 2009 to 2011 before retiring from domestic cricket as the tender age of 22.

Following his retirement, Austin-Smellie headed over the Tasman to pursue employment opportunities in Australia. However, after an 8-year hiatus, the former Firebirds star returned to New Zealand and resumed club cricket. Playing for Karori in Wellington's Premier competition, he averaged 27.20 and 39.50 in the 2-Day and T20 competitions, respectively, and earned a re-call to the 'A' side in March 2020. He proved he hadn't lost his ability, hitting 113\* against Central Districts in their National Provincial A fixture.

Austin-Smellie initially shot to prominence for Wellington at age group level, culminating with New Zealand Under-19 selection. He toured the UK in 2008 in a squad that featured the likes of Kane Williamson, Jimmy Neesham, and Michael Bracewell. He played 1 Test and 2 ODI's against an England side including Alex Hales, Chris Woakes, Liam Dawson, and James Taylor.

A fluent batter and top-end wicketkeeper, Austin-Smellie broke into the full Wellington fold the following year, and over the next two summers struck 3 fifties in the Plunket Shield, including a career best 97. In his 16 first-class matches he captured 45 dismissals with the gloves. However, injury in 2011 curtailed what proved to be his final season, resulting in his early retirement.

At the time, Wellington's Director of Cricket, Robbie Kerr stated "...in many ways it's a mature decision and I know he's enjoying being in the workforce, which is a good thing. He's been right through the representative system, and he's put a lot of time into it and he's not convinced it's necessary for him,".

However, 9 years after his last first-class match, it was great to see Austin-Smellie back on the field for Wellington, and his century for the 'A' side clearly shows he still has undoubted ability.

Seeking pastures new, the former Firebirds star is open to opportunities in England for the 2023 season. He is fortunate enough to hold a British Passport and is ideally seeking a club in the West London / Berkshire area, albeit will consider all decent options next summer.

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