

'Aussie one-dayers are too soon' - Bond

Cricinfo staff

February 15, 2005

Shane Bond will miss the one-day series against Australia because the matches are "two weeks too early" for his return from a career-threatening back injury. Australia play the first of five ODIs against New Zealand at Wellington on Saturday (February 19), and Bond has also ruled himself out of the Test series.

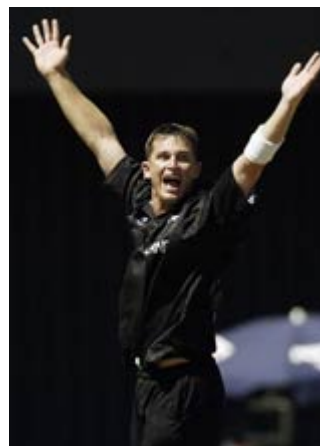
"This is my last roll of the dice," Bond told *The Australian*. There's no point pushing it. The one-dayers against Aussie are about two weeks too early."

Bond last bowled for New Zealand in May 2003, but has returned to club cricket over the past five weeks and wants to play for Canterbury, his provincial side, next month. "I'm feeling great and I'm bowling reasonably quick," Bond said. "If I had to play against the Aussies in a one-day game tomorrow I could get through my 10 overs no problems and I'd be quick. But I want to build a base before playing international cricket again."

Bond had bone chips from his hip placed into the fractured vertebrae in a surgery which took place in August, and said that he will continue to pace his "last chance" slowly. He has been one of the few bowlers to regularly upset Australia – he has 22 ODI wickets at 10.45 – and took career-best figures of 6 for 23 against them during the 2003 World Cup.

Damien Martyn told the newspaper that Bond would have ended up one of the greats if he had been fit throughout his career. "I know we'd have to play against him, but it's a shame to see someone like that get injured."

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Shane Bond appeals during his six-wicket haul against Australia at the 2003 World Cup © Getty Images