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## International accolades ensure Steffan bowls over his competition

**Notre Dame University student, Steffan Nero, doesn't consider himself an inspiration or even an ambassador for vision impaired sport – yet he has 'batted above the average' to become one of Australia's top talents.**

The first-year Behavioural Science student at the University's Fremantle Campus recently returned from the 2017 Blind T20 Cricket World Cup in India where he was the wicket-keeper and he is currently training for a place in next year's team.

Earlier in the year, Steffan scored his first century at a national level (104 runs of 57 balls) for WA against NSW at Cricket Australia's National Cricket Inclusion Championships in Geelong, Victoria.

"It was an amazing experience to be able to represent my country at 17, even more so as the youngest member of the squad. To be selected as wicketkeeper against international cricket heavyweights such as Pakistan and South Africa was just a dream come true," Steffan said.

Born with Congenital Nystagmus – a condition of involuntary eye movement which causes reduced or limited vision – Steffan was unable to participate in school and club sport. Despite the impairment he was determined to excel, especially in the novel sport of goalball.

After playing goalball for just one season, at just 12-years-old he was selected to represent Australia at the National Goalball Tournament in Sydney. He reached the peak of performance last year when he received the Highest Goal Scorer Award at the Australian Goalball National Championship in New South Wales and was selected in the National All-Stars team.

Goalball is a Paralympic sport comprising three blindfolded players on each team who try to throw a ball – embedded with bells - into the opponents' goal. The sport was invented in 1946 as a means of helping to rehabilitate visually impaired World War II veterans.

Steffan aims to change public attitudes toward Paralympic sport and, in turn, encourage others to realise their sporting hopes and dreams.

"Without sport, I would not be the person I am today. I have met so many incredible people that have all their own lessons and experiences to share with me. Through sport, I have found people whom I can count on for support and guidance," Steffan said.

### Ends

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**Caption:** Steffan Nero hopes to continue his remarkable Australian sporting success in cricket and goalball.



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