

ASSOCIATION DES CLUBS DE CRICKET DU SUD-OUEST

Siège social : Hôtel des Associations - 47160 DAMAZAN



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ACCSO AGM 2017 – President’s Report / Bilan Moral

I hope that this, my first-ever report as president, will not disgrace all those written over the years since our founding in 1992.

It has been a year of considerable change. A playing population which continues to get younger with every passing year set about playing in a completely new league environment involving longer journeys and new opponents. I have been impressed all year with the commitment of clubs to the new format and the inevitable logistical problems that go with it. And pleased at the way in which halfway-house clubs stepped in and made some of the matches possible.

Both tournaments ended up with winners by the closest possible margins, including a T20 Final decided on run-rate.

Outside the competitive arena, the clubs were faithful to their tradition of mutually filling out the season with friendly matches, with a very high level of co-ordination on touring sides. Mike Gear put in an enormous amount of effort into getting tourists to commit to come and then parcelling out to the clubs. In that respect alone, Mike’s moving on leaves a large gap to be filled; and AGM should debate how best to do that.

I am aware of a proposal which Ian Brown will be making to establish a competitive calendar in good time to allow touring sides to be slotted in with confidence.

Finances: I am sure that you will join me in thanking Stephen Harrison for his habitual good stewardship. He’s had many years’ practice!

I underline what Stephen says about the vital contribution to our finances not only by the generosity of our sponsors but also our umpires. If either or both of these elements were ever reduced or disappeared our business model would be unworkable. We could end up charging the ridiculous entry-fees of our friends in Paris – and you would end up not only by buying the balls with which to play competitive matches but also paying towards umpire expenses.

Member clubs can all do something to put off such an evil day.

- By promoting the services of Blevins Franks whenever and wherever possible;
- and by pausing for a moment in the heat of a match to recognize that umpires might just merit some extra consideration for their long journeys and the generosity of almost all them in not claiming a penny in expenses.

Umpiring/Discipline/The Laws: Glyn Taylor has not pulled any punches in his report, which fully merits your attention.

For my part, it has not been an easy year, having to deal with no fewer than three disciplinary cases. It saddens me beyond words that our region, with its long tradition of a different, more respectful, style of play, produced more such cases in 2017 than the entire Paris region. So often looked on from the outside as a basket-case, over 400 matches were played in the Paris region, with more than 50 different teams competing. And I do mean competing.

And so to the new Code of Laws, now in force. Will the changes bring about a change of attitude on the field; or be the vehicle for even more disciplinary reporting?

France Cricket have decided that, at least for 2018, they will not implement the new on-field disciplinary procedures brought in by the new Law 42 (*aka* yellow & red cards).

As an autonomous region we are not bound to follow suit. In fact we owe it to ourselves to have the debate and I look to presidents to come to AGM fully aware of the terms of the new Laws and of the views of their own playing staff.

FC will, however, be reviewing the scope and content of the Code of Conduct which, as you know, is part of our tournament regulations. All the signs are that FC's new version will not only reflect the Penalty Run situations which are now more numerous but also include all sorts of administrative penalties (example: zero points and a €200 fine for not fielding 11 players). That version will not be debated in Paris until a week after our own AGM and so it will be necessary for you to authorize ACCSO Committee to ensure that we have a relevant document for our own tournaments in 2018.

I have been given the privilege of writing and signing the introduction to the French translation of the new Code. I end that introduction with a reminder to readers and users that we are all responsible for a vital balancing act: we need to ensure that the game changes in its execution and yet remains unchanged in its principles. I hope that I shall see that pious hope put into practice on the grounds of S-W France in 2018 and beyond.

Elections: Earlier I praised Stephen's financial stewardship. My own stewardship was made possible by the support I received from the management team you elected. Sincere thanks to them.

That team has to change this year following Mike Gear's move to pastures new and Glyn Taylor's decision to enlarge his knowledge of how to wage war. I look forward to working with the new members whom you will elect on 4th November in what I hope will be a productive and satisfying AGM.

Peter Townsend
ACCSO President
21st October 2017.