

# ASSOCIATION DES CLUBS DE CRICKET DU SUD OUEST

*Siège social : Hôtel des Associations - 47160 DAMAZAN*



## Minutes of AGM held at Damazan on 14<sup>th</sup> November 2009

Meeting started at 14:00 with Andy CRAWFORD, President, in Chair.

### **Present :**

Committee: Andy Crawford ("AC"), Stephen Harrison ("SH"), Peter Townsend ("PT").  
France Cricket : Tony Banton ("TB"), President.  
Armagnac-Bigorre: Richard Law (President).  
Bordeaux: Rupert Holderness (President, voting) & Neil Vasey (Captain).  
Catus: Ian Philby (President, voting) & Malcolm Grant (Treasurer).  
Damazan : Sheila Ayling (President, voting) & Peter Mackenzie (Secretary) & John Ayling (Grounds).  
Eymet: Tim Smith (President).  
Midi: Dominic George (Captain).  
Noé-Gascogne: Andrew Powderly (Grounds).  
St. Aulaye : Stephen Harrison (President, voting) & Wynford Hicks (Fixtures Secretary).  
Tarn: Andy Crawford (President) & Martin Leake (Treasurer, voting)  
Toulouse: Jeff Burridge (President).

**Agenda Item 1 : Quorum:** Verified (10/11 present). No proxies.

**Agenda Item 2 : Welcome by AC**

**Agenda Item 3 : Apologies :** Joe Larter (Angoulême)

**Agenda Item 4 : Attendee introductions.**

**Agenda Item 5 : Minutes of AGM2008:** Approved as published on Web site. Reading not required. No matters arising. Approval proposed by Bordeaux ; seconded by Catus. Signed and filed.

**Agenda Item 6 :President's report and review of Season 2009:** Accepted as published on Web site.  
No matters arising. Noted.

**Agenda Item 7 : Treasurer's Report and Financial Statement 2009:** Reviewed and approved as published on Web site. . No matters arising. Approval proposed by Catus; seconded by Armagnac.

**Agenda Item 8: Youth cricket Report:** Discussion centred on the document produced by Wynford Hicks and circulated to clubs ahead of meeting.

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8.1. The year 2009 saw an enlarged and highly successful series of inter-regional matches including a preparatory session ahead of the selection for the French U15 squad, where the south-west boys were very well represented and acquitted themselves well.

8.2. The French U19s also had the benefit of a session and two matches at Damazan.

8.3. St Aulaye endorsed the proposal by Toulouse to hold summer camps, but suggested that there should be just the one, to take place in July, in order not to conflict/overlap with the SAC Junior Week in early August. Agreement from Toulouse.

Jeff Burrige outlined the Toulouse summer camp proposal and covered the situation at Mondonville, where making any progress with the site management is slow work.

Toulouse CC are realistically not overrating the chances of attracting "raw" French potential: it is this which would influence any decision by France Cricket to involve David Bordes..

8.4. **The planned Junior league for 2010** was discussed.

Both St Aulaye and Toulouse confirmed their support for this.

Toulouse wanted to be able to avoid any clash with the soccer and rugby season and will discuss directly with St Aulaye, the other major provider of players into the league.

An age grouping of 12 to 15 is most likely, with the odd older player to be considered.

TB and SH highlighted the funding available to support junior league and representative matches in 2010.

8.5. There was general agreement that the dates for all junior matches (league and representative) must be set and published early, to get into parents'/childrens' diaries. And every effort must be made to fit in with the Equipe de France calendar, both for matches and for preparation.

8.6. Clubs were given the opportunity to talk about their respective situations on the junior front:

- Toulouse continue to look on their junior programme as a means of feeding players into the First XI, whilst looking to give all players opportunities to play.

- Catus are finding it difficult to hold on to their youngsters; and are frustrated by their inability to make solid in-roads into the local schools.

- Eymet's situation has changed to the extent that new president Tim Smith has two cricket-mad sons!

- Bordeaux's two 15-year-olds will be first team candidates in 2010. The club has a new 8-11 section; while Alex Durrans continues bravely to run a weekly session in his school all year round...

- Midi hold Saturday morning sessions, for 8/9 6-11 year-olds. Marc Dalling runs a programme in his school. A talented 11-year-old has sprung up: he will be plugged in to the Toulouse camp. Otherwise, distances to Damazan for the inter-regional matches are too great.

- Noé-Gascogne is a club of relatively young adults, many of whom live in Toulouse, with few drivers. Support to youth activities around the club location is therefore problematical.

- This is also the case at Damazan, but there Peter Mackenzie is preparing intervention in schools as part of his forthcoming 3-year plan.

- Armagnac-Bigorre may well have 6 youngsters of disparate ages on the books in 2010. this includes the president's son... who prefers golf! A-BCC's membership is also spread widely.

**Agenda Item 9: Umpires Report:** Accepted as published on Web site. In discussion led by SH:

9.1. Of the 55 official matches in 2009, only 2 were played with just the one official umpire. But this came at the cost of large distances travelled by a small, and reducing band of dedicated volunteers. Hence the insistence on a good representation of ACCSO clubs at the upcoming umpiring course in Bordeaux (13 slots out of the 19 taken up). This is most promising for season 2010.

9.2. SH has been asked by France Cricket to organise a (one-day) course for Scorers in the New Year.

Candidates will be sought. **Action by SH.**

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9.3. SH confirmed that Barrie Holland has kindly agreed to take over the management of the umpires' roster for 2010. He will pick this up after the umpires' course. **Action by BH.**

9.4. The meeting agreed that, where possible, disciplinary cases (happily, few and far between) should remain within the remit of ACCSO, and not have to be forwarded to "Paris". Whilst desirable, this needs careful management, especially in light of the current situation with the parent Federation's claim to ownership of all matters disciplinary. **Action: PT to work this out with FC.**

9.5. SH will consult with Barrie Holland about his taking over this local disciplinary role. **Action by SH.**

9.6. The meeting discussed various details of umpiring: allocation to their "home club" games; evaluations; consistency (example: leg wides).

SH will continue to travel around the grounds to see his "flock" in action.

The interaction of umpires on the field of play, and the "coaching" by senior umpires, are all to be encouraged.

There is already a box on the Feuille de Match where captains can record their remarks and evaluations (*after* the umpires have signed).

9.7. The meeting endorsed message of good wishes to Malcolm & Val Ward on their return to the UK; and to Keith Garner as he faces up to hospitalisation.

### **Agenda Item 10: Discussion session with Tony Banton, President of France Cricket:**

Tony Banton introduced himself formally to the meeting with a few personal details and described the major challenges facing France Cricket/cricket in France. Key amongst these are

- the physical size of France, which makes a regional bias almost inevitable; which makes it difficult to bring people and clubs together; and which makes organised penetration difficult;
- the absence of pitches in the Paris region, which inhibits growth in one of the few areas of France where growth is otherwise more easily achievable; and
- the lack of visibility of the sport in France (although recently this has been improving).

The extra money available to countries is substantial: a tripling of income to an Associate country such as France. But the ICC delivers it with strings attached, notably in insisting that the country operation be run, at least in part, by salaried employees. Hence the recent arrival on the scene of a General Manager, whose principal first tasks are to bring in extra grants and sponsorship, the better to free up funds for grass-roots development. But this will not happen overnight, and the crisis does not help. Nevertheless the person chosen has a real track record of doing just this job.

His arrival will free up David Bordes to do more of what he is good at: opening up opportunities for development within schools, primary schools above all.

Finally, TB explained some of the real opportunities open to the French senior side in 2010. It may not seem obvious, but Afghanistan's progress ought to be a model for us.

Against this backdrop, TB invited ACCSO clubs to propose areas where FC could be helpful, even proactive. A selection of the points raised (with apologies to those whose contribution is not explicitly covered here):

- Bordeaux: equipment, location and opportunities for children to play more easily and more frequently
- St Aulaye: better communication from FC about cricket in France, activities, opportunities, etc. Better a frequent series of short bulletins than a very occasional "glossy".
- Toulouse: raised the sense of "belonging" and be more encouraging to helping each other to promote the game. The question of printed licences was raised. **Comment post-meeting by PT:** a printed form of a licence is readily available from within the system; and a new system facility now exists whereby a plastic-coated licence can be ordered, at a cost of €4 each, at the time of taking out the licence.

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- Damazan: what are the limits and constraints of sponsorships? (**Comment post-meeting by PT:** do not sign up a local deal with Coca Cola!). Would clubs be obliged to wear the logos, under a centrally-negotiated deal? Answer: yes, if that were part of the central deal
- Toulouse: in the same area of sponsorship, TCC has struck a deal with Credit Agricole in Blagnac, where monies come to the club for every account opened. TB and SH recalled that this sort of interaction formed part of the previous deal with Barclays, and FC/the clubs could not really deliver.
- Midi: better information on discounts available from suppliers. TB reminded the meeting of deals made by the ICC which open up substantial savings on Surridge, Reader, Kookaburra, etc at the kit and clothing level. As for the parallel question of discounts on capital equipment, these are subsidised directly by the ICC via grants: each country is required to submit bids on behalf of its clubs, in priority order. The ICC no longer allocates a fixed amount of such grants; and so clubs need to get bids in early, well ahead of, say, the deadline for installation of a new track. ACCSO is fortunate to have experts in its midst: Eddie Cannon, SH and PT can all help.
- Noé-Gascogne asked about aid and grants towards pitch maintenance. TB replied that this is outside FC's scope; but all ACCSO clubs should take advantage of the presence of John Ayling who, as Grounds Commissioner, has access to specialist suppliers. And the possibility of using tax credits should perhaps be explored.

### **Agenda Item 11 : Budget Proposal 2010 :** Reviewed and approved as published on Web site.

In discussion, led by SH:

11.1 As in previous years, cricket within the ACCSO territory continues to benefit from the sponsorship by Siddalls, albeit reduced because of the present crisis situation. Rupert Holderness, in his capacity as "Mr Siddalls", re-affirmed his company's willingness to sponsor cricket in the south west and hopes for better days ahead! Meeting recorded its appreciation of Siddalls' continuing and valuable support.

11.2. ACCSO has benefitted from compensating income from France Cricket. This has helped to contain the drain on cash balances.

11.3. Looking beyond 2010, the meeting discussed the possible need for a radical overhaul of ACCSO membership fees: if they were to go up (from the present token €5 per club), to cover a continuing income "freeze", the increase would be significant. In discussion, the meeting agreed to review the situation at AGM 2010; and clubs are advised to take account in their financial planning for 2011 of the possible need to budget for, say, €300....

Approval of Budget proposed by Damazan; seconded by Armagnac. By acclamation.

### **Agenda Item 12 : Planning for Season 2010**

12.1. **National League 2010.** Opening discussion on the structure of the 2 south-west pools, Wynford Hicks proposed that, because of the distances involved in travelling to Catus, Pool C should be reduced to 4, with Catus moving to Pool D. For their part, Catus are prepared to make the journeys, feel that the squad is stronger and would prefer the current set-up.

A subsequent vote, with Catus abstaining, was tied at 4-4. The meeting agreed that Angoulême's opinion should not be overlooked and instructed PT to obtain this. **Action post-meeting:** Joe Larter informed PT that Angoulême wished to continue to play a maximum of competitive games, including against Catus. This decision means that the pool structure remains unchanged from 2009. PT informed presidents accordingly on 16<sup>th</sup> November.

12.2. The following proposal by Bordeaux, supported by Committee, was approved: that the top two clubs in each pool should play each other (C-1 vs D-2; C-2 vs D-1) for a place in the regional final. The

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winner of this final goes on to meet the winner coming out of the other pools, as in 2009. This arrangement is, in fact, part of the national rules, which ACCSO has hitherto not implemented.

12.3. **Super Ligue.** AC took the opportunity to congratulate Bordeaux on the National League final win; endorsed by meeting.

Bordeaux confirmed their desire to play in SL 2010, which has the support of ACCSO and the clubs. TB and PT presented a snapshot of the relevant regulations.

### 12.4. Siddalls Cup 2010.

All ACCSO clubs – including Damazan – confirmed their intention to play in the 2010 competition. Neil Vasey caused some surprise close to home by confirming Giscours' intention to enter two sides. No objection was made to any of all of this, so this all makes for a tidy 12-strong operation, meaning 4 preliminaries and a full set of quarter-finals.

The meeting agreed that the draw and process should again lead to two “north”/”south” semi-finals, as in 2009. For the purposes of the draw, both Bordeaux teams will be in the same “north” section, together with Angouleme, Damazan, Eymet and St Aulaye. Catus will join the Pool D teams in the other section.

12.5. St Aulaye and Toulouse offered, as in 2009, to co-ordinate fixtures for their respective communities. This offer was gratefully accepted by the meeting. Presidents are invited to make sure that their fixtures secretaries are aware and work together to produce mutually acceptable dates.

12.6. The meeting considered the question of the “neutral” locations for the senior games thus far identified (leaving aside, for the moment, a North-South representative match, which was well-received as a notion, see 12.7, below).

For the Cup final, Rupert Holderness restated his principle that the match should be rotated around the ACCSO region; and repeated his requirements that the host club be willing to provide the necessary facilities and services for the the customers, plus that the cricket should be “safe”.

This last point led to the withdrawal of the conclusion reached at AGM 2008 (that all such final-phase matches should be played only on carpets - item 10.2 of AGM 2008 minutes refers).

**Note post-meeting:** Rupert confirmed that Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> August would be his choice of dates.

Damazán proposed that the Committee should decide ground suitability for final-phase matches based on various factors, including safety of the playing surface, ability to mobilise volunteers to organise events, geographical location, ground size, etc. Input on the aspect of ground safety should be sought from the umpiring community and from John Ayling in his role as FC Grounds Commission president. This proposal, endorsed by Catus and by Toulouse, was approved.

12.7. The meeting was receptive to the idea of a “N vs S” senior match. **Action by Committee:** to see whether the evolving “formal” fixture list can accommodate.

12.8. For the junior league, St Aulaye and Toulouse will work on the basis of two week-ends in June and July, using Damazan as the base for the matches between the regions.

12.9. The meeting agreed upon the desirability of informing potential host clubs of all key dates without delay, the better to prepare bids and organise calendars. **Action by Committee, with input from Wynford Hicks and Jeff Burrige, for League & Cup; by WH and JB for the junior league.**

### Agenda Item 13 : Election of Officers:

13.1. AC and PT, having arrived at the mid-point of their two-year term of office, continue in post.

13.2. SH, whose term ended at this meeting, confirmed his willingness to stand as Treasurer for a final 2-year term. There being no other nominations, SH was duly re-elected, by acclamation.

13.3. A motion of thanks to the Committee for their efforts and commitment, proposed by Rupert Holderness, was approved by acclamation.

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13.4. AC was pleased to announce that Neil Vasey was prepared to stand for election as the very first Vice-president under the terms of the present Constitution. Neil's candidature was proposed by Damazan, seconded by Armagnac, and approved by acclamation.

### **Agenda Item 14 : Any other business:**

14.1. Toulouse's proposal for summer camps at Mondonville was brought forward into the discussion on youth programmes (see 8.3, above).

14.2. Toulouse circulated a copy of the A6-format, sponsor-driven booklet picked up on a recent tour to the UK: a version for ACCSO could be useful means of conveying information to other clubs, to bodies and to potential recruits.

TB agreed to take the booklet away and consider the extent to which FC could advance. TB was asked to look at this opportunity in the context of other marketing materials: car stickers; posters; and the like.

### **Action by TB.**

14.3. Catus raised the question of playing with a white ball, given the green surroundings to most grounds. League regs speak of balls as supplied by FC, which means red. There is an inexpensive way to mount sight screens (details from John Ayling). All further discussion off-line, between interested parties.

**Meeting closed at 18:40**, with thanks to Sheila Ayling for tea and coffee and to John for organising the room.

**Prepared by ACCSO Secretary Peter Townsend.**

**Approved for distribution by ACCSO President Andy Crawford.**

**28<sup>th</sup> November 2009.**

### **Distribution:**

1. Attendees
2. Club presidents not present (Joe Larter, Angoulême; Colin Trickett, Midi; Jack Cox, Noé-Gascogne)
3. Anbu, captain of Noé-Gascogne.
4. Barrie Holland
5. ACCSO Web site.