

AGM MINUTES - 2009

The 36th AGM of the Association of Cricket Statisticians and Historians was held in the Bute Suite at the Welsh Institute of Sport, adjacent to The SWALEC Stadium, Cardiff, on Saturday 28 March 2008, starting at 11.30 am.

Present – Kit Bartlett, Keith Booth, Ian Bounds, Paddy Briggs, Robert Brooke, John Bryant, Colin Fricker, Roger Gibbons (Treasurer), Peter Griffiths, Brian Heald, Jenny Heald, Roger Heavens, Andrew Hignell (Secretary), Ashley Hill, Michael Hill, David Jeater, David Kendix (Chairman), Dennis Lambert, Eddie Lawrence, Tim McCann, Tony Martin, Ian Maun, Douglas Miller, Harriet Monkhouse, Roger Moulton, Chris Overson, Alex Potts, David Pracy, Philip Richardson, MJK Smith (President), Paul Smith, John Stockwell, Willie Sugg, Cyril Waite, Keith Walmsley, Peter Watts, Geoff Wilde, Robby Wilton and Peter Wynne-Thomas.

The meeting began with a minute's silence in memory of the following members of the Association who had passed away during the course of the year – G.Allman, A. Barker, W.H.Frindall, M.Lubliner, J.J.McCormick, R.W.Moxon, E.J.Smith and P.B.Woodroffe.

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Dave Allen, Don Ambrose, David Baggett, Philip Bailey, Ian Balfour, Paul Bolton, P.T.Clare, Guy Curry, Neal Davies, Ric Finlay, Hugh Garrod, Keith Gerrish, Alan Grove, Martin Howe, Gerald Hudd, Richard Isaacs, Neil Jenkinson, Ian King-Holford, Jim Ledbetter, Eric Midwinter, Roy Morgan, Bryn Nathan, Huw Nathan, Tony Percival, Mick Pope, Kevin Preston, Norman Rogers, Simon Sweetman, Colin Tong, John Ward, Tony Webb and David Whittingham.

2. Minutes of the 35th Annual General Meeting

The minutes of the 35th AGM held at Derby on 29 March 2008 were unanimously approved (Proposed – Dennis Lambert; Seconded – Peter Griffiths).

3. Election of Committee Members

The Secretary reported that he and Huw Nathan had stood for re-election. No other nominations had been received, so they were duly re-elected for a further three-year term.

4. Annual Report of the Committee for 2007/08

- 4.1 The Chairman began by offering some broad observations on the current position of the Association. Despite the economic hardship, the membership had grown, and with the internet continuing to relieve people of the time consuming task of data compilation, a number of new and more fruitful areas of research had opened up.
- 4.2 The Chairman thanked the Treasurer, Secretary and Membership Secretary for keeping the Association administratively sound and enabling the Committee to take informed decisions. He also thanked the President for his outstanding efforts with the membership drive, which had led directly to a 10% jump in our membership numbers, which hitherto had remained stable for many years.

- 4.3 He also drew attention to the quality of the publications, especially the Journal, which continues to be the Association's core publication. He thanked the Editor and Graphic Designer for delivering something of a quality that belies the Association's size and budget.
- 4.4 The Chairman also praised David Jeater's editorship of the Lives in Cricket series, and the excellent booklets which earned praise and have been sold well beyond the confines of Association members. The Chairman highlighted how the series continues to allow many members to become authors, and a measure of the success of the initiative was the healthy list of people keen to produce booklets in the series. He added how pleased he was that the revamped royalties scheme meant that authors now receive a proportion of the sales proceeds, thereby rewarding their efforts on behalf of the ACS.
- 4.5 The Chairman also commented on the Grants Scheme, which has had a slow, but steady, flow of applicants, whilst the books of scores continue to progress, with the prospect of the ACS first-class scores books advancing into the 1920s and meeting the Ledbetter series.
- 4.6 Looking ahead, the Chairman also mentioned how the Association was planning to publish new material in two very different directions, with an Overseas Scores annual, covering all non-UK first-class matches, together with a detailed guide to important matches in the 18th century. He felt that the latter would add to the Association's reputation of drawing up definitive lists, and with this in mind, he thanked Philip Bailey for his thorough and well researched work on the classification of limited-overs matches, which has been adopted by the ICC.
- 4.7 The Chairman ended by drawing attention to one area where the ACS has just become seriously deficient. With the retirement of Douglas Miller from the Committee, there were now gaps in very important areas of the Association's operations, especially the marketing of our publications. Appeals for new committee members had been made, but sadly no new candidates had offered themselves for election. The Chairman finished by hoping that some members would be willing to be co-opted as it would be a great shame if the ACS's development stalled on account of insufficient people to undertake the duties of actually running the Association.
- 4.8 Robert Brooke raised questions about the Grants awarded and the applications which had been rejected. The Secretary replied that Grants had been awarded for work on cricket in North America, as well as for the proposed Who's Who series and volumes in Lives in Cricket. He stressed that they were works in progress and that the results of the research would be published soon. Applications had been rejected as a result of questions being raised over incomplete costings, and the amount of original research being proposed.
- 4.9 Dennis Lambert, who chairs the Grants subcommittee, reiterated the high standard of applications and the research which had been proposed.
- 4.10 Peter Griffiths confirmed that Mark Leopard's research on cricket in the Philadelphia area, for which a Grant had been awarded, was likely to be published during 2010.
- 4.11 The Report was unanimously approved and adopted (Proposed – Roger Heavens; Seconded – Dennis Lambert).

5. Annual Accounts for 2007/08

- 5.1 The Treasurer outlined the salient points in the Annual Accounts, stressing that the shortfall for the year was intentional, in that the committee wanted the membership as a whole to benefit from the excess generated in the previous financial year.
- 5.2 The Treasurer drew the meeting's attention to the way enough cash was still being generated from membership fees and book sales to cover the cost of the Association's day-to-day operations, and this in turn meant that there was no need to draw upon the Legal & General investment funds.
- 5.3 He also outlined how the value of that fund, in line with the current market, was £109,687 – a slight reduction from the year-end valuation, but because the fund exists to support the long-term aims of the Association, year-to-year market fluctuations should continue to have no material impact on the Association's ongoing activities.
- 5.4 Geoff Wilde and John Stockwell raised queries over the reporting of the contingent liability. The Treasurer replied that he had also discussed the matter with the external accountants who were very happy with the way it had been presented.
- 5.5 Peter Griffiths raised a question over the drop in sales. The Treasurer replied that it reflected the disposal of old stock, which was now declining in volume.
- 5.6 Douglas Miller added that the figures in the Annual Accounts did not include items sold in the Christmas and New Year sale in 2008/09.
- 5.7 Peter Griffiths agreed that it was important to promote old stock in the Journal and on the Association's website. Douglas Miller suggested that all new members should be issued with a list of back stock.
- 5.8 The Treasurer reiterated that all print-runs were carefully considered by the Committee, with full costings being taken into account prior to a decision being made.
- 5.9 The Annual Accounts for 2007/08 were unanimously approved and adopted (Proposed – Philip Richardson; Seconded – Brian Heald).

6. Appointment of an external accountant to prepare the Association's Annual Accounts

The Treasurer proposed that Gerrard and Company be appointed to prepare the Association's Annual Accounts. This was seconded by Roger Heavens and unanimously approved.

7. Statistician of the Year Award

- 7.1 The Chairman spoke about the outstanding work undertaken by Peter Griffiths, whose research and wholehearted efforts with the CricketArchive website were being recognised in the award of Statistician of the Year. Peter had joined the Association in 1977, before becoming involved with Cricinfo in 1994, and subsequently creating CricketArchive in 2004 with Philip Bailey. As a result, the scorecards of every first-class and List A match were now online, together with many thousands of Second Eleven, Minor County, club and junior matches in an archive including over 155,000 matches and 219,000 players.

- 7.2 In accepting the award, Peter Griffiths briefly spoke during which he stressed that CricketArchive was the result of a team effort, including a number of ACS members and other volunteers worldwide.

8. Presentation to Retiring Committee Member

- 8.1 The President paid tribute to Douglas Miller who was retiring from the Committee after seven years, during which time he had served as Chairman for four years. He reminded the meeting of Douglas' many achievements and initiatives, which had all helped to raise the profile of the Association.
- 8.2 After receiving his presentation, Douglas Miller thanked the past and present committee members for their support, and added that it had been an enormous privilege to serve as Chairman.

9. Any other business

- 9.1 A number of items for discussion had been received by the Secretary and these were discussed either side of the Annual Lunch.
- 9.2 The Secretary began by reporting that the Committee, at their meeting in January, had unanimously agreed to recommend to the AGM that Don Ambrose be appointed an Honorary Life Member of the Association.
- 9.3 He reminded the meeting of Don's outstanding work on 18th and 19th-century cricket in north-west England, besides preparing biographies of leading players from these times as well as indexes of various sources which will be a lasting legacy for future researchers and members of the Association.
- 9.4 Brian Heald and Peter Griffiths drew attention to Don's research in several other areas, including the typing of scorecards and the creation of match lists for Cricket Archive.
- 9.5 The meeting unanimously endorsed the Committee's recommendation (Proposed – Dennis Lambert; Seconded – Roger Heavens), and in the absence of Don, the Secretary read out a message from him thanking the Committee for their recommendation.
- 9.6 Robert Brooke raised a question over the quality of certain recent articles in the Journal.
- 9.7 The Secretary, in Simon Sweetman's absence, read out a reply from the Journal Editor which highlighted the proof-reading and cross-checking process, which included peer reviews by Association experts.
- 9.8 Chris Overson, Willie Sugg and Robbie Wilton all added that the articles in the Journal were the work of volunteers so it was inevitable that mistakes would be made with what were often works in progress.
- 9.9 Tim McCann suggested that contact details (address or e-mail) should be given at the end of articles, allowing members to make contact with authors and to inform them – and the Journal Editor – about any additional information or corrections.

- 9.10 Robert Brooke also asked about London meetings. The Chairman responded by saying that the Committee was keen to reinstate them, providing that a suitable venue could be found. He, and other members, noted the rising costs of certain venues, and the Chairman asked members to recommend suitable venues which offered good value for money.
- 9.11 The Chairman outlined the provisional arrangements being made by the ICC for a Cricket History Conference at Oxford University on 22-24 July. He added that a stellar list of speakers had been assembled, including players, officials, historians and statisticians from all over the world. He added that he had requested an opportunity to make a block registration for ACS members, and asked that any members interested in attending should contact him as soon as possible.
- 9.12 Roger Heavens briefly spoke about the forthcoming *Chronicle of Cricket 1700-1799* written by Ian Maun and to be published in June 2009. The book had the endorsement of both the MCC and the Association, with various members assisting with the research.
- 9.13 Ian Maun then spoke about the various sources he had used, including provincial newspapers and various manuscripts that were now available online. He added that the book would include a chronology of major and minor matches, as well as listings of artwork and other literary references.
- 9.14 Peter Griffiths raised a question about the production of a major match list for the 18th and 19th centuries, as well as a recent article on this topic in the Journal.
- 9.15 John Bryant replied that the intention was for further dialogue between interested parties and experts, with a summary of views being published in the Journal. He stressed that the intention was to include matches where there was evidence that the games actually took place, with a minimum requirement of team totals and names.
- 9.16 Peter Wynne-Thomas added that when the 19th-century guides were produced, a major criterion had been teams representing county units. He felt that the 18th-century lists would need to incorporate sub-divisions of counties as well as elevens raised by patrons and prominent individuals/sponsors.
- 9.17 The Secretary stated that this topic was on the agenda for the committee meeting on 4 April, and he stressed that the Committee would discuss the mechanisms and procedures for drawing up a working party which could discuss and agree on a match list. The Chairman agreed that it was important to create a core group of experts, comprising members and non-members who could communicate by e-mail, via the Journal and potentially at face-to-face meetings.
- 9.18 Peter Griffiths also raised a question about the statistical articles in the Journal, and the immediacy of similar articles in *The Wisden Cricketer* magazine. The Secretary said that Simon Sweetman had already raised such concerns, and he added that a suitable solution would be to publish such articles on the revamped website, allowing the Journal not to get clogged up with out-of-date statistical articles.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 2.45 pm.

The Secretary then gave a short presentation about the development of the SWALEC Stadium. Bob Young, the senior tour guide at the Stadium, outlined some facts and figures about the Stadium, before he and the Secretary took the Association's members on a short tour around the Stadium.