

The ninth General Committee meeting of 2023/24 took place on a virtual basis on Saturday 21 October 2023. The committee reflected on the Golden Jubilee event held in Leicester the previous week. They considered that it had been a successful and well-received occasion, which had been a welcome opportunity for members to get together in person for the first time since 2019. The meeting also discussed the outcome of the latest, much smaller, auction of material from the Tony Webb collection. The committee considered recommendations from recent meetings of two sub-groups set up to discuss initiatives to increase the membership.

The tenth General Committee meeting of 2023/24 took place on Monday 27 November 2023 on a virtual basis. Following the success of the Golden Jubilee lunch the committee considered whether to reinstate an annual face-to-face meeting for members next year. Plans for further mini-auctions of items from the Tony Webb collection were agreed. The Treasurer reported that the Association's finances were generally in a healthy state. It was encouraging that the World Cup had generated a number of very interesting postings on the ACS X (Twitter) site. It was noted that there is likely to be one vacancy on the committee next year.

The eleventh General Committee meeting of 2023/24 took place on Saturday 16 December 2023 on a virtual basis. The Committee heard positive feedback on the Association's annual financial performance from the Treasurer now that the financial year had ended. The Committee also discussed developments with a forthcoming publication on South African non-racial scores and received an update on progress on the ACS Second XI Annual. Arrangements for the Annual General Meeting in March were also considered.

The twelfth General Committee meeting of 2023/24 took place on Saturday 13 January 2024 on a virtual basis. The Committee was updated on progress with the planned publication on South African non-racial scores. Recent issues with the email service and the on-line shop were noted and remedial actions discussed. Arrangements for the AGM on 16 March were finalised. Encouraging interest in the third auction of the Tony Webb collection was noted. ACS's social media presence continues to thrive. The first day of the recent South Africa India Test match had generated considerable X (Twitter) input.

The thirteenth General Committee meeting of 2023/24 took place on Saturday 17 February 2024 on a virtual basis. The Committee received a very positive update from the Treasurer on the Association's financial position, partly attributed to the success of the programme of book auctions which have generated valuable additional income. The committee heard that 42 subscriptions had lapsed at the end of January due to non-payment, despite reminders, and it was agreed that more effort would be made to understand the reasons. The committee received an update on a number of statistical issues including the timing of the end of an individual innings when DRS was involved, and the recording of 'run out when backing up' and 'timed-out' dismissals. Discussions also covered the preparation and publication of obituaries of those who had contributed to the Association, and the plans for a survey of members in the spring.

The first General Committee meeting of 2024/25 took place on Saturday 16 March 2024 on a virtual basis. The meeting re-elected John Bryant as Chair of the Association and confirmed appointments for all committee roles and responsibilities.



ACS MEMBERSHIP BULLETIN

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Members' survey

In 2023, the Association of Cricket Statisticians and Historians celebrated its 50th anniversary. This was a moment to acknowledge many past achievements. However, the Association cannot stand still and the Committee has therefore decided to survey members for the first time for some years to gather information to help inform future developments.

The survey, which consists of 23 questions (many of which request simple Yes/No answers) asks members about: their main areas of cricketing interest; past involvement in ACS activities; views on ACS outputs and activities; views on the conduct of ACS business; and involvement with other cricket organisations. The survey also provides the opportunity to offer comments on any other matters relating to the ACS.

The Committee would be grateful if members would spend a little time (probably no more than 15 minutes) to complete the survey. It is envisaged that many members will find it convenient to answer the questions online via the link sent to the address that we hold. Those members for whom the ACS does not hold an email address are receiving a paper copy of the survey for completion and return with this mailing. All responses should be returned by 14 May. Thank you.

Format of the ACS International Cricket Year Book

The ACS International Cricket Year Book, now in its 39th edition, has established itself as a comprehensive statistical summary of the game world-wide. At its heart is a list of every cricketer that has appeared during the year in men's first-class, List A or senior T20 cricket, plus entries for players in women's international cricket.

However, the game has changed significantly since the Year Book first appeared in 1986. During this time an altogether new form of the game, T20, has emerged; tours have tended to get much shorter; players have increasingly appeared on very short-term contracts involving only a handful of games; and there has been a proliferation of tournaments that attract players from a range of countries.

For the Year Book, the overall effect of all these changes is greatly to complicate the information that has to be presented; and over the years there have been significant changes in format designed to eliminate duplication and present information more efficiently. For instance, from its inception until the 2015 edition, the Year Book contained a separate section for each country, even though this meant significant duplication if a player appeared in two or more countries during the relevant

year. Since 2016, however, the Year Book has included a single world-wide list so that each player appears only once, with a separate line for each country in which they appeared (if more than one). This change allowed us to reduce the size of the book from 490 pages in 2015 to 410 in 2016, a significant saving. This has helped to keep the size, and therefore the price, of the book within reasonable bounds: but even with this more economical format, the increasing complexity of the schedule means that the Year Book has continued to grow in size so that the 2024 edition, just published, runs to a hefty 558 pages.

A further change has now been suggested with a view to saving space and limiting the size of the Year Book. The idea is to provide each player with only a single line for each format, instead of breaking up each format with a separate line for each country. However, this proposal, in contrast to previous space-saving measures which simply presented the same information in a more efficient way, involves an actual loss of information from users' point of view.

While we obviously want to save space if we can, at the same time we do not want to diminish the Year Book's value for users. We are, therefore, taking the opportunity to seek views about the suggested change by means of an article in the Membership Bulletin and an A5 flyer inserted in the 2024 Year Book. The simple question we are asking is this:

To save space in the Year Book, it is suggested that instead of providing a separate line for each player's performance in each country in which they appeared, the entry should simply contain separate lines setting out their performance world-wide at the various levels and formats (viz. Test, first-class, ODI, List A, T20 internationals, T20).

Would you support such a change?

..... YES, the breakdown between countries is not needed.

..... NO, the breakdown between countries is important.

We invite your responses, and any additional comments, by email to membership@acscricket.com or by post to the Membership Secretary, ACS, 36 Runton Road, Poole BH12 1NX

Change to handling charge on manual orders

Your Committee is fully dedicated to delivering value for the ACS membership and all committee members devote a considerable amount of their free time to supporting a wide variety of ACS activities and initiatives. Workload has been increasing – two recent examples are the need to manage multiple channels of social media communications and the administration of a series of large and complex auctions. At the same time, several committee members (and in some cases our outsourced suppliers) have to spend valuable time on non-value-adding administrative activities for which more efficient arrangements exist.

The great majority of ACS members are supporting the Committee by adopting three very straightforward administrative processes:

- **Ordering ACS publications using the ACS on-line Shop.** This avoids receiving and processing manual orders, banking cheques, manually verifying discount voucher entitlements and processing refunds for books that are out of stock. At the same time members save postal costs and avoid potential postal delays. Over 90% of orders are now paid electronically.

- **Paying their ACS annual subscriptions by direct debit**, for which they receive a £2 reduction in their membership subscription. Around 66% of ACS members now subscribe in this way. In addition, a significant number of Australasian members pay via Roger Page which saves ACS a lot of administrative effort.
- **Furnishing an email address**, to enable ACS to provide members with timely and cost-free communications. 88% of members are now open for email communications.

In recognition of the cost impact and workload implications of manual orders and cheques for purchasing ACS publications, in 2017 ACS introduced a £2 handling charge on manual orders. Since then the use of online ordering and electronic payment has increased from 50% to 90% of transactions, and we are grateful to all members who have contributed to this increase. In order to encourage a further movement in this direction, the Committee has decided to increase the handling charge from £2 to £4. The intention is not to generate more income but to create a greater incentive for members to use the ACS on-line Shop.

It is hoped that members who do not currently embrace all the three processes highlighted above will consider making the appropriate change both for their own benefit, and for the ACS as a whole.

Membership Update

We extend a warm welcome to the following new members: Scott Anderson, Prasanna Balasubramanian, Steve Blades, Dharmender Kumar Chaudhary, Alan Cutts, Ivan Dakin, Carl Davies, Tirthankar Dubey, Jeremy Henderson, Richard Hudson, Nikolas Mouriopoulos, Michael Paterson, Jerry Richards, Alan Robson, James Shadwell, Paul Sleeman, Ian Smith, Nigel Smith, Mitesh Tank, Darren Taylor, Paul Warren and Ian Wright.

The Association extends its deepest sympathy to the bereaved families of the recently-deceased members Mike Barnett, Mervyn Carson, Malcolm Ferguson, Ray Gaiger, Jim Ledbetter, Peter Matthews, Peter Roberts and Rev Robert Spaight.

Committee meeting reports

The seventh General Committee meeting of 2023/24 took place on a virtual basis on Sunday 17 September 2023. The meeting was set aside for a strategy discussion. This began with a consideration of the ACS's strengths and weaknesses, and the threats and opportunities in the external environment. There was then a discussion about future publications, including the importance of managing the 'pipeline' of potential books to ensure a steady flow. Future subscription levels were also discussed in the context of high levels of inflation and the rise in postage and printing costs. The potential for developing ACS's social media presence was also explored, particularly in the context of our attempts to increase membership levels.

The eighth General Committee meeting of 2023/24 took place on a virtual basis on Monday 25 September 2023. The Committee discussed plans for online interviews with authors about future ACS publications. A report was also received about the next stages of the auctioning of Tony Webb's collection of cricket books. The next auction would be held in October. It was agreed that, in order to allow greater participation of members, the 2024 AGM will again be held by Zoom. The Committee was pleased to note that the Association's social media presence continues to expand.