

PRESIDENT'S REPORT
WPCA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
7 August 2019

OFTEN social media provides a reflection of the degenerative status of our society. Sometimes, though, it provides us with a real gem too.

I could not but help notice a post on one of the platforms upon my appointment as WPCA President in March earlier this year. The fact that it was a comment from a club chairperson resonated with me even more.

“From this young white *laaitie* who stood umpire and then came to have a gatsby with us after the game 20 years ago, u have come a very long way.”

I believe that this accurately reflects my journey within the cricket community of Cape Town, which allows me to fully appreciate the honour of being bestowed with the status of WPCA President.

It is indeed a privilege to serve cricket in this diverse city of ours for we are mere custodians of the game and its people and I will seek to fulfill my duties in the most honourable manner for the duration of my term.

At this juncture I need to acknowledge the contribution of my predecessor Beresford Williams. I can only hope to fulfill the legacy that the current Cricket South Africa Vice-President has left at Newlands over the previous nine years, in particular the realisation of the R750-million building project that has been undertaken.

The building project is indeed exciting but also challenging with it being bigger than any project any cricket stadium has attempted in our country's history. We will walk a financial tightrope in the next couple of years to reach our end goal: The laying of a solid foundation that will contribute towards the financial security of our clubs and our organisation as a whole. We are off to a good start with Sanlam as an equity partner, but father time will reveal several challenges as we move forward.

I believe we are in similar position with regards to the World Sports Betting Cape Cobras. Although the long-term status of the franchise is in limbo with CSA set to terminate the current six-team system and revert to 12 provincial unions in 2020-21, the current group of players and coaching personnel has the potential to achieve great success before the restructuring process takes effect.

Ashwell Prince and his young charges were competitive in all formats the past season, with their first-class form being particularly impressive. In fact, they were extremely unlucky to be beaten to the post by the BizHub Highveld Lions with just nine balls remaining on the final day of the season. It was a cruel blow to a group of players that deserved the title, particularly due to them playing the entertaining brand of cricket the World Sports Betting Cape Cobras had been renowned for during its glory days.

Unfortunately this near miss spilled over to the two limited-overs competitions, namely the Momentum 1-Day Cup and T20 Challenge, where the team limped out at the semi-final stage. The team is acutely aware that they fell short last season, and particularly due to the amount of talent within the group, know they need to bring silverware back to Newlands.

Although the cabinet remains bare since 2013-14, the progression of individuals to the national team is a genuine accolade for the union.

The World Sports Betting Cape Cobras provided the Proteas with two debutants the past season. Zubayr Hamza strode out in the final Test against Pakistan at the Wanderers, and Janneman Malan the following week in the first T20 International against the same opposition. The uncapped Pieter Malan was also placed on standby for the Wanderers Test. Their elevation is recognition of the hard work put in by Ashwell Prince, Faiek Davids and the rest of the World Sports Betting Cape Cobras coaching staff.

Although the powerful WP Women's team suffered the disappointment of losing their crown at the National Week to North West in the final, the province continues to provide the Proteas with a host of fresh talent. Young wicket keeper Faye Tunnicliffe debuted during the series against Sri Lanka joining Sinalo Jafta, Lara Goodall, Saraah Smith, Andrie Steyn and Laura Wolfvaardt.

Even in trying circumstances Western Province has also continued to exceed in delivering the basic activities and compliance requirements of the CSA operating and funding objectives.

PERSONNEL

Hugely popular and extremely successful curator Evan Flint bid farewell to Newlands this past season to continue his career at the Bidvest Wanderers. Flint's contribution over the past decade cannot be under-valued, hence him winning the Curator of the Year at the CSA Awards for the past two consecutive seasons.

Flint's contribution runs deeper for he has ensured a smooth transition by mentoring his former assistant groundsman Ihtishaam Adams. Adams took over from Flint on 1 February 2019 under the supervision of Hilbert Smit (ground's consultant to CSA) on an interim basis. He has since been appointed on a full-time basis as Flint's successor as head groundsman.

Adams will face significant challenges in his first season in charge due the construction taking place with the first block of nets being turned into parking, hence placing stress on the remaining pitches especially during the Mzansi Super League.

REBUILDING THE WP BRAND

Western Province needs a battle plan and an expansive indaba on how to structure their return to the market as a domestic force due to CSA's pending termination of the franchise system. The decision is related to CSA's new austerity measures that have seen it revise their four-year loss from R654 million to R350 million.

In collaboration with the Marketing and Digital team, there will already be a specific focus on increasing the brand awareness of WP over the forthcoming season.

CHALLENGES FOR CLUB CRICKET

The maintenance of facilities, security of facilities and the effect of the water crisis need to be tackled head on with the various stakeholders: The City of Cape Town, WP Rugby and WP Football. An equitable solution needs to be discovered that will lead to the improvement of our facilities, especially the quality of our turf-wickets. The damage the water crisis has caused should not be underestimated with a number of

facilities being closed down by the City of Cape Town due to surfaces being unplayable. Clubs that have taken the initiative to be self-sustainable should be commended, although the reality remains that the majority of our clubs are not in a financial position to effect such changes and WPCA must find creative ways to address this gap.

A WORD OF THANKS

Both on the field and in the boardroom Western Province bid farewell to a couple of stalwarts that have served the union with blinded loyalty over the last decade and some even more.

In fact, former Proteas all-rounder JP Duminy has already said his goodbyes after playing his last match for the World Sports Betting Cape Cobras in the T20 Challenge semi-final at the conclusion of last season. Duminy will always be one of Newlands' favourite sons and his legacy will continue long after his playing days through his JP21 Foundation.

Equally, Chief Executive Officer Nabeal Dien will part ways with Newlands after a 20-year journey that has encompassed virtually every role within the organisation. Dien will be remembered fondly for his dynamism in driving the WP Youth and Amateur structures previously and in latter years for leading his operational team through often trying circumstances.

And finally, to the Executive Board, I wish to sincerely thank you for placing your trust in me to lead with governance and guide this proud union to the best of my abilities.

THANK YOU

Nic Kock
President