

Cricket Ireland Annual Report 2020



Members of Cricket Ireland
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25 April 2021

Dear Members,

We are pleased to present the *Cricket Ireland Annual Report 2020* – providing an overview of the financial and operational achievements of Cricket Ireland (also known as The Irish Cricket Union Company Limited by Guarantee).

Best wishes



Ross McCollum
Chairman
Cricket Ireland



Warren Deutrom
Chief Executive
Cricket Ireland

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1 Overview



About Cricket Ireland

Cricket Ireland is the national governing body for the sport of cricket in Ireland. It is responsible for setting the strategic direction and the national administration of cricket on the island of Ireland.

Cricket Ireland (also known as “The Irish Cricket Union Company Limited by Guarantee”) was established in 1923, with a brief to organise the national squad, primarily arranging fixtures against the Scotland and the English MCC, as well as occasional visits by English Counties and Test teams.

BRIEF HISTORY

Since 1792, cricket has been played in Ireland, when the Military of Ireland and the Gentlemen of Ireland took each other on in the Phoenix Park, where the game still thrives in one of the world’s oldest established cricket clubs.

By the mid-1850’s the game had expanded to the point where it was the largest and most popular sport in the country. Its success was such that the first team to represent Ireland beat their English counterparts in 1855. The game went into decline towards the end of the century, largely a victim of politics and class, although it continued in the north of the country and in the heartlands of central and northern Dublin. Any thoughts of resurgence in the sport was restricted greatly when the Gaelic Athletics Association (GAA) introduced Law 27 in 1902, banning GAA players from either participating or even watching the so-called ‘English sports’ of football, rugby or cricket. The ban lasted for more than 70 years.

NATIONAL RE-EMERGENCE

Proper competitive national fixtures began for Ireland in 1980 with entry to the English Gillette Cup, and while it was a long road to becoming a competitive side, everything changed at the national level as a result of Ireland’s performance at the 2007 ICC Cricket World Cup.

Entering the tournament proper after success in the qualification stage, Ireland went on to defeat Pakistan and Bangladesh, and tie against Zimbabwe on the biggest stage of all – this was seen as unprecedented for an Associate Member country.

Subsequent appearances at the 2011 and 2015 Cricket World Cups further consolidated Ireland’s credentials as an emerging force, defeating England and West Indies respectively along the way.

THE WOMEN’S GAME

Women have been playing cricket since the 1880s in Ireland, and while formal competitive cricket was played sporadically throughout the 20th century, it wasn’t until the Irish Women’s Cricket Union was established in 1982 that a more structured approach was taken to promoting Irish women’s cricket on the international stage.

Ireland Women’s first capped international match was in 1983, and progress was rapid as they established themselves as the second best in Europe after England soon after.

Ireland Women played their maiden Test match in 2000 and a year later won the European Championship by beating England in what was an effective ‘final’.

In 2001, the Irish Women’s Cricket Union amalgamated with the then Irish Cricket Union.

FULL MEMBERSHIP

On 22 June 2017 the ICC announced that Ireland had been granted Full Membership status and had become a fully-fledged Test Match playing nation.

This granted Ireland Test status and allowed the organisation to join the ICC Future Tours Programme.

The Ireland Men’s team played their inaugural Test match against Pakistan at Malahide in May 2018.

GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

There are 12 Directors on the Board of Cricket Ireland, five of which are independent. There are also five provincial bodies who have responsibility for the game in their respective regions. Five standing committees also provide strategic oversight of the high performance, grassroots cricket, governance and finance of the business.

Chair's Report



2020 was the year that cricket, like every other sport in Ireland, stood still.

There could not have been a greater contrast between the highs of 2019 to the impact of the pandemic on cricket and Irish society at large in 2020. Instead of getting to celebrate achievements such as the senior men's team's qualification for the ICC T20 World Cup, almost everything we were looking forward to in 2020 was cancelled or postponed as the pandemic brought the game to an effective standstill from March onwards.

The impact of COVID-19 was felt at every level of the game, from the grassroots to international. With that came a range of consequences particularly for participation levels and the sport's finances. For Cricket Ireland, our revenue streams such as broadcast, matchday and ground income ground to a halt. While each of these impacts presented their own challenges, as an organisation we adapted quickly and decisively to ensure we would emerge from the crisis with the ability to rebuild from the grassroots upward.

Recognition must be given to Warren Deutrom and his team who responded quickly by implementing a series of cost saving measures in order to protect jobs and ensure support could be provided to Provincial Unions and clubs. These measures did not come about without sacrifice as staff accepted salary reductions and their forfeit, along with other measures, has meant that we have been able to prevent job losses and position us well for the future reopening of cricket.

While every part of cricket in Ireland has had to shoulder its share of the burden, we would not have been in the position we are in today without the support of our sponsors, business partners and government partners, like Sport Ireland and Sport NI. Sport Ireland in particular provided significant funding which we received at the end of last year, which resulted in the organisation recording a surplus. We have already started to distribute these monies through schemes like the Club Resilience Fund, with €197K allocated to date, and we continue to advocate for ongoing support through programmes like the Sports Capital and Equipment Programme to ensure hard-pressed clubs are able to navigate the pandemic.

Our sponsors have shown incredible loyalty – with the likes of Turkish Airlines, Hanley Energy, Clear Currency, Tildenet, Test Triangle, Techfynder and O'Neills continuing to support Cricket Ireland despite their own individual challenges.

We even managed to attract a new major sponsor during the year, with ITW coming on board. Our thanks to Bhairav and

his team for believing in Irish cricket during such uncertain times.

It's only through the continued support of our partners that we will continue the growth of the sport coming out of this challenging year, and we are thankful for all involved.

I would like to also acknowledge hard work by the staff of Cricket Ireland and the Provincial Unions that facilitated a safe return to cricket activity for all in 2020. In my role I often get to see behind-the-scenes on the operational work that goes into delivering cricket, and I know that you all went above and beyond during challenging times to ensure we could enjoy at least a partial season in a safe and healthy manner.

They say absence makes the heart grow fonder and people's passion for cricket has never been clearer to me over the past year. We are all looking forward to getting back into clubhouses, back onto the field and supporting our international stars, but we need to hold on a little longer for the sport to fully reopen. Suffice to say when that day comes – sooner rather than later hopefully – I look forward to celebrating with each of you.

Finally, I would like to thank the members of the Board of Cricket Ireland, and of our sub-committees, who all work tirelessly to ensure our sport has come through the pandemic, and will be in a position to once more build a brighter future for cricket across Ireland.

Ross McCollum
Chair

Chief Executive's Report



2020 was undoubtedly the most challenging year of my tenure to date. As an organisation we have experienced adversity in the past, but no-one could ever have envisaged such a rollercoaster of events since March. While we might still be in the midst of the pandemic and dealing with its fallout, the potential for cricket in Ireland has never been greater as is captured in our vision for the future outlined in our recently released new Strategic Plan.

The financial impact of COVID-19 has taken its toll, but every tough decision we have taken has been done with an eye to the future by ensuring our foundations remain solid so we can bounce back stronger from the grassroots up. The next three years will be challenging, but our longer term outlook is bright with a new International Cricket Council rights cycle promising to lead to improved funding from 2024 onwards.

While Cricket Ireland recorded a surplus last year, that is primarily due to the funding we received from Sport Ireland and it does not mask the significant financial challenges we face this year and through to 2023. We expect to record a deficit in 2021 and believe that it will take a period of time for our revenues to recover to the level of 2019.

What is of vital importance is how we bounce back. We are keenly aware of the struggles faced by the grassroots, and our guiding principle in this regard is best expressed by the plaque at Pembroke Cricket Club which reads "Behind every international cricketer, there is first and foremost a great family and a great club." We have to rebuild from the ground up and we have already made funding available via the Provincial Unions to begin addressing these challenges and will continue to provide support with the funding we have secured.

We also need to ensure that we not only need to bring everyone back after lockdown restrictions ease, but also attract the next generation of players, fans and volunteers to cricket. As such, we plan to invest in reactivation and promotional measures so that no-one walks away from the sport. Our *Smash It* and *It's Wicket!* initiatives are just two examples of this.

We additionally need to face the reality that the support from Sport Ireland also has to assist with a range of knock-on financial impacts such as rescheduled events and the provision of safety measures in order to provide a biosecure environment when hosting games. This work is also being undertaken during a period of great uncertainty as to the progress of the vaccination programme – of which a lengthy timeframe will exacerbate existing issues. While navigating

these challenges, we will be mindful at all times to ensure a balance between grassroots and elite cricket.

On a more positive note, the reopening of sport in Ireland is drawing closer and we believe the collective hard work last year in terms of how to run cricket safely during a pandemic means that we are well placed for when we eventually get back on the field. With a busy period of cricket in May, and World Cup Super League matches set for early June, there is a lot to look forward to already. We will build on these green shoots over the coming months and years on our journey to creating a cricket island.

Warren Deutrom
Chief Executive

2 Performance Reports



High Performance Report



The High Performance Department incorporates programmes for all high performance environments - men's international teams, women's international teams, the Shapoorji Pallonji Cricket Ireland Academy, national talent pathway and under-age international teams, domestic men's Test Triangle Inter-Provincial Series (including first class cricket), women's Super Series, and high performance facilities.

To support our work, the High Performance Committee acts in an expert advisory capacity in relation to the execution of the high performance strategy (men's and women's) and to support the High Performance Director in any matter relevant to the delivery of the high performance programme.

2020 was an unprecedented year due to the COVID-19 pandemic which significantly affected the whole high performance and international programmes. In what should have been an incredibly busy year, it was reduced to a very bare fixture list at all levels.

Key highlights for the year included:

MEN'S INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMME

Cricket Ireland confirmed 19 players were awarded central contracts for the 2020 season. Leg spinning all-rounder Gareth Delany earned his first full-time senior contract, as did Shane Getkate and Lorcan Tucker – the latter two having been on Emerging contracts in 2019.

In addition to the senior contracts, Peter Chase, Josh Little, David Delany and Curtis Campher were all awarded Retainer Contracts.

New captain Andrew Balbirnie started the year leading the men out in the Caribbean with three-match ODI and three-match T20I series. While the West Indies sealed the series with victory in the second one-day international in Barbados, Ireland should have been heading to Grenada for the final game all-square. In one of the longest and most dramatic final overs in any ODI, Ireland had two chances to take the final wicket but squandered both – the series was lost 3-0.

A world record powerplay score by Paul Stirling and Kevin O'Brien set up a stunning victory for Ireland over the T20 World Cup champions in the first game of the T20I series in Grenada. The openers put on 154, an Ireland record for any wicket, with 93 of them coming in the first six overs, but the loss of O'Brien in the 12th over followed by Stirling, five runs short of a first century in the shortest format just five balls later, halted the charge. A final total of 208-7, Ireland's joint third highest, was about par on a good batting surface,

however the Ireland bowlers held their nerve and won the first match by 4 runs. The second match was washed out, and Ireland lost the final match by 9 wickets.

In a very tight T20I series against Afghanistan in Greater Noida, India, Ireland lost the first match by 11 runs (DLS), the 2nd by 21 runs and won the final match in a Super Over, having tied the scores on 142.

Much of the year was marred by the pandemic. The originally scheduled Test match against Sri Lanka was postponed due not to the pandemic, but broadcast agreement issues with SLC. In April, Ireland was due to play Zimbabwe in three ODI's and three T20I's, but this was postponed. At home Ireland was due to host Bangladesh in three World Cup Super League (WCSL) ODI's and four T20I's; in June three WCSL ODI's and three T20I's against New Zealand; and two T20I's against Pakistan – all postponed and will be rescheduled in 2022 and 2023.

The scheduled WCSL ODI series against England in England did go ahead behind closed doors in a bio-secure stadium at the Ageas Bowl in Southampton. Having played no cricket with a delayed start to the domestic Inter-Provincial series, this series was never going to be easy. Having lost the first two matches despite some outstanding batting and bowling from debutant Curtis Campher, the final match saw heroics from captain Andrew Balbirnie (113) and vice-captain Paul Stirling (142*) sharing a record-breaking partnership to chase down 328 in a memorable victory against the current ODI World Champions – a crucial 10 points in the WCSL table.

In September the scheduled Euro T20 Slam did not go ahead due to the pandemic, and in October Ireland was due to be playing in the T20 World Cup in Australia, which was also postponed.

WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMME

The women's international programme in 2020 was reduced to no international cricket at all, similar to the rest of the world. The senior squad was due to play a ODI quadrangular tournament in Thailand in April to help prepare for the World Cup Qualifiers in Sri Lanka in June/July, however the former was cancelled due to the pandemic and the latter postponed until 2021. An International T20 triangular with Scotland and the Netherlands in August was cancelled and then a multi-format series with Scotland in Spain in November was also hit by COVID-19. With two world cup qualifiers in 2021, it is hoped the women's team will have more luck and resume their international programme in early summer 2021.

High Performance Report

There were five players on Retainer contracts in 2020 – Laura Delany, Gaby Lewis, Shauna Kavanagh, Celeste Raack and Mary Waldron, and outstanding performances from Orla Prendergast and Leah Paul in the 2020 Super Series saw both players awarded Retainer Contracts for 2021. Another 12 players were awarded non-retainer contracts for 2021.

TEST TRIANGLE INTER-PROVINCIAL SERIES

With significant delays to the season starting due to the pandemic, there were six one day matches played and 12 T20 matches. With no first-class cricket able to be played due to restrictions and budget, Leinster Lightning captain George Dockrell got his hands on both white ball inter-provincial trophies, completing a clean sweep of victories in the 50-over competition for the first time since 2014.

WOMEN'S SUPER SERIES

The women's domestic programme was also affected by the pandemic, and the focus was on 50-over matches with the World Cup Qualifier looming, and key preparation in this format much needed. Although the spoils were shared 4-4 in the eight-game series, Laura Delany collected the trophy for the Typhoons by virtue of their superior Net-Run-Rate (NRR). Half centuries from Rebecca Stokell and Rachel Delaney, plus an unbeaten 48 from skipper Laura Delany saw the Typhoons beat the Scorchers to seal their first Super Series title at Malahide.

IRELAND WOLVES AND NATIONAL ACADEMY

The Ireland Wolves team toured South Africa early in the year playing an ODI and T20 series with the Namibia national team. Four half centuries from four different players was the perfect finale in the final T20 match as they completed a 4-1 series victory in Pretoria. Captain Harry Tector and Gareth Delany each reached the landmark during a 120-run partnership in the morning game which Ireland won with 11 balls to spare and Neil Rock and Curtis Campher followed up with an unbeaten 112 in the afternoon when the Wolves had six balls to spare in another seven wickets win. Tector led the way with 91 from 47 balls (seven fours and 5 sixes) and although he was out in the 16th over with the Wolves still 33 short of their victory target of 183, Gareth Delany ensured a comfortable chase with an unbeaten 58 from 42 balls, ending the match with a six.

The Wolves played two 50-over matches which were lost, but they defeated the Northern Titans by 4 wickets in the very last match, ending a very successful tour

The Wolves were due to play a series against Scotland A in the summer season but this was also cancelled.

TALENT PATHWAY PROGRAMME

At Youth Inter-Provincial level the boys U17s and U15s were able to play their annual matches, however all planned boys and girls international matches were all cancelled with travel to and from Ireland not permitted. This also affected the men's and women's academy programmes.

However, 36 Intra-Provincial matches were arranged at all levels and were a great success given the restrictions in place and general lack of cricket for young players.

STAFFING

Stuart Barnes succeeded Rob Cassell as Men's Assistant Head Coach and National Bowling Lead.

ANTI-DOPING STATEMENT

In order to comply with Sport Ireland governance procedures, Cricket Ireland has an anti-doping code which is endorsed by both Sport Ireland and the International Cricket Council. Under Sport Ireland guidelines, Cricket Ireland is required to provide an anti-doping update annually at both Sport Ireland rounds of Mid Year reviews with the NGBs and also for Cricket Ireland's annual report and AGM. Compliance with SI and ICC guidelines also require us to provide a system of anti-doping education for players as well as a robust system of player registration and declaration of undertaking showing that all players understood their responsibilities, in which anti-doping was one of them.

Since 2019 Cricket Ireland has been undertaking through Sport Ireland, unannounced and randomised in-competition drug testing during the Inter-Provincial Series.

In collaboration with Sport Ireland who support the initiative, a programme of education supports all international and domestic men's players in the requirements and procedures involved in the event they were randomly selected to produce a sample for analysis. This is completed individually online using the Sport Ireland e-learning platform in which players are required to watch a series of instructional videos and completed multiple choice questions. On successful completion, the player is passed as Anti-Doping compliant and is issued a certificate proving compliance.

During the ICC global events (world cup and qualifiers) the ICC host anti-doping educational workshops, in line with



High Performance Report

WADA guidelines, for all squad players and staff. Anti-doping wallet cards are also distributed at these events. The ICC are revising their ICC whereabouts programmes that will now include the 12 Men's full members and Women's top 10 ranked ODI teams, so including Ireland. This revised system will include international team whereabouts, players whereabouts where they fall under certain criteria and a full submission of teams training schedules and fixtures in order to carry out testing where they feel necessary. This has been implemented in Q1 of 2021.

Domestic Cricket - During the 2020 domestic season, as with previous seasons, the ICC had requested that a minimum of 4 in competition testing rounds were completed. Unfortunately, only two rounds of testing were completed successfully. The reason for this were multiple incidents occurring that made the testing unable to be completed. Two rounds of proposed testing were cancelled with testers in attendance due to inclement weather, causing AD officers to be unable to conduct 'in competition testing'. Other incidents that thwarted further planned testing were a COVID-19 related incident causing a cancellation of a Cork based fixture and therefore the planned testing. A further two incidents caused testing to be cancelled due to mechanical faults with the mobile testing unit that was required to test at Malahide CC. All of these incidents have been considered as mitigating circumstances. Neither of the domestic testing rounds yielded positive results.

As there were no international fixtures in Ireland during 2020 during the pandemic, there was therefore no drug testing conducted in Ireland for international cricket in 2020. However, before the lockdown and halt on sport in Ireland, the men's senior team had toured the West Indies for a multi format series and then to India for a short international T20 series vs Afghanistan. During that time two rounds of in-competition testing and one round of out of competition testing was conducted. All were urine sample collection. To date, Cricket Ireland has not had a positive result for doping and we continue to pride ourselves on the development of clean athletes.

Going forward through 2021, the COVID-19 may continue to make in and out of competition testing difficult, however, we will continue to work with Sport Ireland to continue to conduct testing as safely as possible in order to make sure our sport is scrutinised closely and maintain a clean sport. Every effort has been made to continue to support all members of our Men's and Women's squads prior to the beginning of the 2021 domestic season and joint education between Cricket Ireland and Sport Ireland is currently being

scheduled to support players before their respective seasons begin. This programme of education now reaches all Men's and Women's international players as well as domestic Inter-Provincial and Super series players. Cricket Ireland is also currently working with Sport Ireland in order to train 'Anti-Doping' tutors that can support athletes in our senior and pathway programmes with any questions or issues concerning Anti-Doping.

As of 1st January, both the Men and Women's international squads are now subject to the ICC and WADA whereabouts programme and Cricket Ireland must log all Cricket Ireland training sessions and fixtures on the ADAMS system. Due to this, all Men and Women's squad members can be subjected to unannounced, random and non-random out of competition drug testing.

Richard Holdsworth
High Performance Director



Participation Report



2020 saw the Participation Department focus on a number of core programmes despite the challenges posed by the pandemic.

RETURN TO CRICKET

Following the delayed start to the domestic cricket season, as a result of the pandemic, Cricket Ireland worked closely with the Provincial Unions and Sport Ireland to get action back on the field in a safe and healthy manner.

There were a number of practical measures that the sport needed to fulfil in order to have a safe return to activity. Ultimately, Cricket was required to show that all has been done that could be reasonably expected in the circumstances to fulfil its duty of care. The following areas were delivered to support stakeholders during the Return to train and play phases:

- 22 Cricket Ireland and Provincial Union Staff completed COVID-19 Education and Awareness training course
- 96 club representatives certified through COVID-19 Education and Awareness training
- Subsidised club hygiene packs – (all product is clinical grade) were dispatched to clubs
- Signage was supplied to clubs
- Risk Assessment and booking templates provided.

Cricket returned in a limited fashion in June with the introduction of 1-on-1 training in clubs settings, followed by group training and return to matches behind closed doors in early July. With a season very much in doubt for the first half of the year, the amount of cricket which was played across Ireland was true testament to the work of volunteers and time spent ensuring safe environment for which cricket could be played.

YOUTH INTER-PROVINCIAL BOYS

The Youth Inter-Provincial week-long tournament fell victim to COVID-19 in the 2020 season. Investment was made by Cricket Ireland to each of the Provincial Unions to assist in bilateral friendly series to ensure that representative fixtures were at least partially fulfilled in 2020.

We extend our sincere thanks to the Unions, players, parents and caregivers and the hosting clubs for supporting and operating in such trying times and provide the opportunities to continue to play.

ALL-IRELAND CLUB CUP COMPETITIONS

The All-Ireland T20 Finals was the only all-Ireland club cup competition able to take place in 2020. After much discussion on the viability, feasibility and safety of the competition it was agreed across the Provincial Unions and Cricket Ireland to proceed. All games in the finals were livescored with the Final livestreamed.

We extend our sincere thanks to all participant clubs and their Unions - in a particularly difficult landscape of government restrictions and last-minute changes, clubs were exceptionally accommodating, understanding and patient as we sought clarity and tried to navigate through a myriad of government protocols.

Our thanks also goes to the clubs who hosted and supported the delivery of the semi-finals: Bready CC, Pembroke CC, and to CIYMS for hosting the final and the European Cricket League play-off over one weekend.

Congratulations to YMCA for winning their first All-Ireland title and to CIYMS for being the Irish representative at the European Cricket League in 2021.

COACH EDUCATION

Cricket Ireland developed a webinar series called "A Coaching Journey", which was run during lockdown. It began in May and ran each Tuesday for six weeks - the final webinar in the series, focussing on Women in Sport, drew the biggest audience.

Cricket Ireland also launched in partnership with Hockey Ireland a joint teacher's Pilot coaching course for primary school teachers - Teaching Cricket and Hockey. There was very positive feedback on the course and the intention is that the two organisations continue to partner and deliver jointly across both ROI & NI in this space to help create more Cricket and Hockey experiences in schools.

ONLINE INITIATIVES

Cricket Ireland was particularly busy creating digital programmes and support during the pandemic lockdown period, most notably with:

- **DIY Cricket** - a fun and engaging series of videos using national coaches and a range of international and domestic players to provide challenges and drills for cricketers to try during lockdown at home.
- **CricHIIT**: originally a Cricket Scotland Women in Cricket Programme, Cricket Ireland partnered with Cricket

Scotland to launch CricHIIT in Ireland. Due to COVID-19, a soft launch of CricHIIT took place online on 31 July 2020 with a series of sessions released online – with the first video being picked up and shared by the ICC and has been viewed over 10K times. Launching CricHIIT online provided Cricket Ireland with an opportunity to create conversation and interest in the programme before it is rolled out on the ground with Provincial Unions and Clubs in 2021.

- **‘On the Front Foot’:** ‘On the Front Foot’ was originally planned as a face-to-face leadership programme for females across Ireland who are involved with cricket from playing, to officiating to committee members and boards. Unfortunately COVID made this impossible for 2020. In its place the Webinar series was developed. Hosted by RTE 2FM’s Marie Crowe, the webinar series took place over three weeks, and discussed specific topics around the importance of diversity, inclusion, leadership and visibility. Welcoming both female and male champions of sport to the discussions, the series aimed to underpin the notion that equality is best achieved when we work together and support each other. Investing in the future sustainability of our sport by engaging those with experience in the wider world of sport is important to our journey of growth, particularly in the female game. As decision makers, participants, coaches, officials, supporters and consumers of cricket, encouraging and supporting gender equality and diversity at all levels is key to our progression. ‘On the Front Foot’ is not a one-off initiative and will be built upon to deliver more leadership conversations and opportunities in the female space.

CLUB CONNECTS

The Club Connects programme is based on the philosophy that Clubs are at the heart of organised sport and are often the primary way people from a wide range of local communities connect ‘face-to-face’ with the sport. Building on the successful launch of ‘Club Connects’ in 2019, the programme was successfully held online for 2020.

Over the course of three weeks in November, Darren McMahon from 2into3 Consulting delivered two workshops on Club Fundraising and Club Sponsorship. Ian Sandbrook from Sport for Good Consulting delivered Leading Cricket Clubs which looked at putting clubs at the heart of the community.

Sixty-five participants from twenty-five clubs from across the country engaged in the workshops, with the majority participating in all three workshops.

CRICKET CONNECTS

In partnership with Cork Sports Partnership, we have completed the pilot online delivery of the brand-new participation initiative, Cricket Connects. Training and working with residents of Direct Provision in Cork, Cricket Connects is a bespoke training programme of communication, awareness, and leadership skills that can be used to deliver person-centred cricket coaching to local community groups and clubs.

Encouraging, supporting, and mentoring participants to undertake volunteering and coaching roles within the programme and the immediate and wider community, this pilot aims to diversify the cricket coaching base and create a more reflective workforce. Supported by the Sport Ireland Dormant Accounts Fund, Cricket Connects provides training for participants to become involved as players, coaches and volunteers within their local cricket club, school, or community.

Modules includes; ‘Leadership and Cricket’, ‘Sport Inclusion and Disability Awareness’ and ‘Multicultural Awareness’ with research on the social impact of the programme being carried out by UCC CARL.

GRASSROOTS CRICKET COMMITTEE

September 2020 saw Cricket Ireland announce changes to its Committee structures with an emphasis on driving toward a more focussed and strategic approach to developing the game at a grassroots level across Ireland. The changes saw the evolution of the former ‘Cricket Committee’ into a new ‘Grassroots Cricket Committee’.

This new Board subcommittee is constituted by members with a mix of skills and expertise from Irish sport, and members who have a first-hand knowledge of the club game in Ireland.

In particular, the Committee will advise the Board of Cricket Ireland and Provincial Unions on:

- the growth and development of grassroots cricket
- national participation
- community engagement strategies

While driving strategies for growth in general participation, the Committee will incorporate members with expertise in:

- Marketing and engagement in sport
- Women in sport
- Diversity and inclusion

Elaine Nolan

Participation Director

Commercial Report



2020 was a year when the true partnerships shone through. It was a year, when our commercial partners demonstrated through their continued support, that sponsorship associations should be about the long-term and not just about good times and successes. For this, we are grateful to all our commercial stakeholders especially in light of their own challenges across the many business sectors they operate in.

SPONSORSHIP RELATIONS

In the absence of a full international and domestic fixture calendar, we had to continuously adapt our sponsorship activation planning to reflect the everchanging landscape. During the year we worked closely with all our partners to create bespoke activation plans which featured branded content initiatives, online player engagement, pre-match hospitality events on zoom and specific tailored sponsor events utilising current and ex-players and backroom support staff. While there is no real substitute for face-to-face contact, online meetings enabled us in many cases to increase the frequency of sponsor interactions and ensured that our partners were always aware of developments and impact of evolving restrictions on activity.

TEAM SPONSORSHIP

Of all the sectors that are being challenged by the pandemic, the airline industry has been one of the hardest impacted. As a direct result, Turkish Airlines advised of their intent to withdraw from their primary sponsorship of the Men's International team while still maintaining their association as Official Airline Partner. Like other valuable partners, Turkish Airlines have decided to continue to support Irish cricket which demonstrates their commitment to Cricket Ireland but also acknowledges how our growing global reach can be used as a platform to leverage and build affinity for a global brand of this scale.

ITW, a large Indian sports agency who own many sponsorship rights of other ICC Test nations, replaced Turkish Airlines as primary sponsor ahead of the England series. This series saw ITW bring on board MPL and Skoda to appear on the Irish Men's shirt for the first time. This strategic partnership with ITW is in place until October 2022 and will also see ITW providing essential marketing and digital in-kind services to Cricket Ireland in addition to the financial quantum in place.

GROUND RIGHTS

Cricket Ireland also formed a ground rights partnership with ITW up until October 2022 which includes title sponsorship of all our Men's Home International fixtures, access to match day inventory and promotional rights to our fixtures. Annual

TV viewership of Irish cricket matches have been increasing significantly as we play ICC Test nations more frequently and our ground rights are now, not only being considered as a channel for our sponsors including domestic brands, but also for global brands and in particular brands who are looking to increase exposure in South East Asia where our matches are regularly broadcast. The broadcast reach of our men's internationals was over 500M people in 2020, involving fixtures against West Indies, Afghanistan and England. These figures dwarf other Irish sports, and show the true potential for cricket as a commercial force in Ireland.

UNDERAGE SPONSORSHIP

Clear Currency who sponsor both the Irish Senior Cup and National Cup and are the Official Currency Exchange Partners to Cricket Ireland, also broadened their association of Irish cricket by taking on the sponsorship of all our underage international teams. This is an exciting development for Clear Currency and Cricket Ireland and we look forward to building on this association for 2021 and beyond.

CORPORATE NETWORK

Similar to our sponsors, our growing network of domestic and overseas corporate members continued to support Cricket Ireland in 2020. This network now comprises corporate members from Ireland, UK, UAE and India. Cricket Ireland are working on plans and initiatives for 2021 to add more value to all our sponsors and corporate members including online networking events and promotion through our corporate newsletter: "The Inside Edge" which was launched in 2020. This year also saw Cricket Ireland host our inaugural Commercial Conference which took the form of an online event for all our corporate stakeholders.

The e-conference focussed mainly on how to support our partners to enable them to utilise and grow their own networks and to create new commercial opportunities using Irish Cricket as a platform. The event featured Philanthropy expert, Kingsley Aikens, Cricket Ireland CEO Warren Deutrom, along with International players, Gaby Lewis and Andrew Balbirnie.

Finally, 2020 was a year where Cricket Ireland got to witness first-hand the huge impact our commercial partners have on Irish cricket even as they faced their own challenges in 2020. I would like to thank all of our valued partners for their generosity, unwavering support and deep loyalty shown to Cricket Ireland.

Dennis Cousins
Commercial Director



COVID-19 negatively impacted the financial performance of Cricket Ireland and the organisation would have posted a deficit, had it not been in receipt of a series of supports from Government and funding bodies. The impact of the pandemic will have lasting effects, with a deficit forecast for FY21 and FY22.

The pandemic caused the cancellation of all home internationals resulting in the loss of broadcast and matchday income and ground sponsorship. Sponsorship was also been adversely impacted, with the loss of a key sponsor and other sponsorship agreements also affected, as well as a lack of ground sponsorship. The overall lack of activity saw a complete fall-off in membership subscriptions.

Given the sudden financial impact associated with COVID-19, Cricket Ireland was required to react quickly to reduce its cost profile to ensure the long-term sustainability of the organisation. We took a series of actions which included a hiring freeze; a salary reduction for non-playing staff; elimination of all non-essential expenditure across the organisation such as business travel, hospitality and promotional costs; and accessing employee retention schemes North and South of the border. These actions ensured that no redundancies were required and we have retained all staff for the future reopening of the sport.

It is important to note that while cost saving measures were required, Cricket Ireland sought to acknowledge the unique impact on professional players and due to the loss of match fees from postponed matches, there was no salary reduction to the base remuneration of international players.

COVID-19 supports, primarily provided by Sport Ireland, the International Cricket Council and further assisted by employee retention schemes in both jurisdictions in which Cricket Ireland operates, were the primary factor in the surplus of €1.54 million for the financial year. It is important to note, however, that these funds will be used to offset future costs associated with postponed events that have been rescheduled to 2021; depressed revenue streams in FY21; and the provision of continued supports for the Provincial Unions and grassroots game.

The ongoing uncertainty associated with COVID-19 has caused a range of knock-on financial impacts. Rescheduled events will result in additional costs in 2021 and 2022. Costs associated with staging future fixtures will increase because the provision of safety measures such as testing and other requirements like additional accommodation and extra staff in order to provide a biosecure environment.

Other external risks, including potential mandatory quarantine and delays in the roll out of the vaccination programme, could impact upon the ability of visiting teams to travel to Ireland, resulting in further negative impacts to revenue.

Cricket Ireland will continue to take a financially prudent approach to managing the organisation and it will seek to grow the income lines back to pre-COVID levels over the coming years. There will be strong focus on managing costs while seeking to deliver as much activity as possible within our income and resource limitations. We will work closely with key stakeholders such as the ICC, Sport Ireland and Sport Northern Ireland to access enhanced funding to support the delivery of activities in line with our new Strategic Plan.

Our longer-term outlook is positive and we are very hopeful of receiving enhanced ICC funding in 2024 as a result of the next rights cycle. By also securing permanent facilities at the Sport Ireland National Sports Campus this will enable us to reduce our expenditure on temporary infrastructure, and allow investment in other parts of our organisation.

Andrew May
Chief Financial Officer

3 Financials



STATEMENT OF INCOME AND RETAINED EARNINGS

For the financial year ended 31 December 2020

	2020 (€)	2019 (€)
Income	7,934,398	10,624,514
Direct expenses	(3,219,104)	(6,732,238)
Gross surplus	4,715,294	3,892,276
Administrative expenses	(3,177,932)	(3,902,073)
Net surplus / (deficit) before tax	1,537,362	(9,797)
Retained earnings at the beginning of the financial year	3,673	13,470
Surplus / (deficit) for the financial year	1,537,362	(9,797)
Retained earnings at the end of the financial year	1,541,035	3,673

There were no recognised gains and losses for 2020 or 2019 other than those included in the statement of income and retained earnings.

BALANCE SHEET

As at 31 December 2020

	2020 (€)	2019 (€)
Fixed assets		
Tangible assets	1,026,564	959,876
Current assets		
Debtors: amounts falling due after more one year	-	15,000
Debtors: amounts falling due within one year	664,166	1,333,216
Cash at bank and in hand	3,188,142	63,480
	3,852,308	1,411,696
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	(1,728,695)	(1,526,894)
Net current (liabilities) / assets	2,123,613	(115,198)
Total assets less current liabilities	3,150,177	844,678
Creditors: amounts falling due after more one year	(1,609,142)	(841,005)
Net assets	1,541,035	3,673
Reserves		
Accumulated surplus	1,541,035	3,673
Total reserves	1,541,035	3,673





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