

# CRICKET IRELAND **ANNUAL REPORT** 2019



## MAKING CRICKET MAINSTREAM



Members of Cricket Ireland  
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Ireland

6 July 2020

Dear Members,

We are pleased to present the Cricket Ireland Annual Report 2019 – 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

# 1 OVERVIEW

About Cricket Ireland 4

Chair's Report 5

Chief Executive's Report 6

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# 2 PERFORMANCE REPORTS

High Performance 8

Participation 13

Commercial 15

---

# 3 FINANCIALS

Finance Committee 17

Financial Statements 18

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# 1 OVERVIEW

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# 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.

## 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.

## 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. Four standing committees also provide strategic oversight of the high performance, cricket operations, governance and finance of the business.

# CHAIR'S REPORT

2019 was a memorable year for cricket in Ireland for many reasons – however, not one without its challenges.



After the heights of the previous year, which included our inaugural men's Test match and two sell-out matches against India that became the most watched event by a global television audience ever staged in Ireland, there were some questions about whether the organisation could exceed these historic moments. Arguably, 2019 exceeded the previous 12 months on almost every measure.

On the field we witnessed:

- the senior men's team playing its first Test Match against England at Lord's – as memorable an occasion as any for Irish cricket fans;
- the senior men's qualifying for the T20 World Cup 2020;
- the senior men's team beating a Full Member (Zimbabwe) in a home series for the first time, and winning the GS Holding T20 Tri-Series against Scotland and Netherlands;
- the senior women's team compete admirably against the West Indies at home with a new cohort of young players beginning to make their mark on the international stage;
- the Leinster Lightning reclaiming their first Inter-Provincial Championship, but the Northern Knights dominating the T20 competition;
- the Dragons going back-to-back with the Super 3s title; and
- three hard-fought all-Ireland cup competitions, which included Pembroke winning its first Clear Currency Irish Senior Cup.

Off the field there were numerous challenges and financial headwinds that buffeted the organisation, however, one of the proudest moments of achievement was when Cricket

Ireland announced the first-ever player contracts for women in April.

A review of women's international cricket following the 2018 T20 World Cup brought about a range of changes – including a new Head Coach – but the opportunity to introduce the first women's contracts was game changing in its potential.

Hand-in-glove with the forthcoming Women & Girls Cricket Strategy, I hope moments like that are looked back on in years to come as turning points in the women's game. We know we have much more to do, but the symbolic nature of the contract offers should signal the intention of Cricket Ireland to professionalise the game over coming years.

Decisions made throughout any given year by Boards are often complex, long-term in nature and can be vigorously debated – however one thing is clear for Cricket Ireland's Directors – our decisions are made in the best interests, sustainability and growth of the sport in Ireland. There is no doubt that we have had, and will continue to have, growing pains as we seek to push forward with our objectives, but if you look back at the journey we have taken as a sport over the last decade, I believe we are on the right course.

In achieving this, though, we acknowledge that we do this in partnership with many others, including the International Cricket Council, the Irish Government and NI Executive, Sport Ireland and Sport Northern Ireland, our sponsors and commercial partners, the Provincial Unions and the many clubs around Ireland, our

members, and the fans of Irish cricket – both at home and abroad – who make this all worthwhile with their energy and enthusiasm.

One last group I do want to particularly pay tribute to is the army of volunteers who give so graciously of their time and effort. Without you, we simply could not survive and grow as a sport. Finally, I would like to acknowledge Warren Deutrom and the staff of Cricket Ireland for their tireless and high-quality work, and also to acknowledge the outgoing President David O'Connor, who delivered on the duties of the position with utmost respect and good nature.

David will be succeeded by Philip Black, a man with a long and engaged history within the sport, and someone who will undoubtedly carry on the mantle in what is set to be another big year for Irish cricket.

**Ross McCollum**  
Chair

# CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

2019 was a remarkable year for Irish cricket. With the memories created on the field, and the decisions made off it, the year will no doubt be seen in time as a great leap forward for Cricket Ireland in fulfilling our new obligations as a Full Member and growing our great game here in Ireland.



Personally speaking, I wasn't sure that any moment in Irish cricket could match the spine-tingling scene of Tim Murtagh bowling that first-ever ball in men's Test match cricket for Ireland in 2018. I was wrong.

Just over 12 months after Tim bowled that historic ball at Malahide, the very same man was running in at Lord's Cricket Ground to deliver the first ball in an Ireland v England Test match at the Home of Cricket. And yet, that first ball could not provide a sense of what would come over the next two hours.

By the time the teams walked off for lunch, Tim had his name on the Lord's Honours Board. The dedicated fans of Irish cricket exploded with joy that morning, while the rest of the cricketing world – and the general public back home – stood up and took notice. Irish cricket was again showing the world that it rightfully belonged on the world stage.

And this wasn't just biased Irish sentiment coming out. Television viewing figures showed that Ireland drew the third largest audience globally for a touring side in England in the last decade, behind India and Australia.

However, looking back, it is more remarkable that this match – so long dreamed of by many fans – was just one of many notable highlights in a year full of achievements.

Just a few of my personal highlights include:

- the men's senior side qualifying for the T20 World Cup, winning the T20 Tri-Series at home, and beating a Full Member in a series for the first time;

- the Ireland Wolves touring Sri Lanka, and beating two Full Member teams (Bangladesh and Zimbabwe);
- two Irish batters were the top 2 in the annual run-scoring list of T20I's;
- the Ireland Women's senior team competing well against a strong visiting West Indian side, with over 750,000 viewers logging on to watch the livestream of the series;
- receiving "NGB of the Year" at the Irish Sport Awards;
- seeing domestic successes for Leinster Lightning and Northern Knights in the Inter-Pros, while the Dragons claimed back-to-back titles in the Super 3s; and
- watching three great all-Ireland cup competitions deliver worthy winners.

Off the field, we delivered successfully on multiple fronts, including:

- delivering revenues of more than €10M for the first time;
- offering the first-ever women's contracts;
- offering the first-ever seasonal contracts for umpires;
- supporting the club game through continuing investment in Provincial Unions – providing funds for staffing, office space, development and performance coaching;
- increasing media and social media reach by 60%; and
- hosting a highly successful pre-Test match function at the Irish Embassy in London that drew more than 200 stakeholders and attended by Tanaiste Simon Coveney.

Delivering on these outcomes requires a team of staff, administrators, volunteers, match officials and groundskeepers working together with

a common purpose and common direction. This, of course, is backed by our commercial partners, supported by the ICC, the Irish Government, Sport Ireland and Sport Northern Ireland, and delivered for the fans – both at home and abroad.

To our Board, led tirelessly by Chairman Ross McCollum, the many Committee members and other stakeholders within the game who continue to voluntarily dedicate much time towards growing our sport, I simply say thank you for your guidance and support.

To my own team in Cricket Ireland, you have made Irish cricket what it is today, and quite rightly were honoured with "NGB of the Year" at the Irish Sport Awards 2019.

At time of writing, we are starting to see a re-emergence from lockdown and the hope that it brings for cricket to flourish on the field once again.

**Warren Deutrom**  
Chief Executive

## 2 PERFORMANCE REPORTS





# HIGH PERFORMANCE REPORT

The High Performance (HP) 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 3’s Series, and high performance facilities.



2019 was an extensively busy year, and to support the work of the HP Department, a High Performance Committee is in place to act 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.

Key highlights for the year included:

## MEN’S INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMME

The T20 side had a fresh injection of youth in line with our succession planning in this format, and results improved with an upward move in the ICC rankings from 18th to 14th. In total Ireland played 23 matches winning 13 and losing 10 and finished the year by finishing 3rd at the T20 World Cup qualifier, successfully qualifying for the T20 World Cup in Australia in 2020.

In 14 ODI’s the record stood at six wins, seven losses and one No Result – this included Ireland Men’s first-ever series win over a Full Member when Ireland defeated Zimbabwe. Ireland also drew a series 2-2 against Afghanistan in India, which was a significant achievement in such conditions.

Both Test matches were lost, but for a long part of the Lord’s Test, Ireland certainly held their own against England and were left thinking what might have been had the batting capitalised on Tim Murtagh’s masterclass 5-13 on his home turf.

In all Ireland played 39 international matches, winning 19, losing 19 and one no-result.

In the batting, three players passed the 1,000-run mark with Paul Stirling’s haul of 1,513, an Irish record, while Andrew Balbirnie’s 1,314 is second best, and Kevin O’Brien’s 1,146 the fourth best.

Stuart Thompson’s injury on the eve of the ODI against England saw Mark Adair handed a last-minute call-up which he grasped with both hands. He ended the leading wicket taker in the calendar year with 49 – fourth in the all-time list for a year and was rewarded with a full-time contract in July.

Boyd Rankin also impressed with his 47 wickets, while Tim Murtagh, George Dockrell and Gareth Delany all can be proud of their efforts. Craig Young’s appearances were limited, but he topped the averages thanks in no small part to his destruction of Nigeria during the T20 World Cup qualifiers.

New debutants as part of the succession plan were Gareth Delany, Harry Tector, Mark Adair, Shane Getkate, James Cameron-Dow and David Delany making six debutants handed the baggy blue.

## WOMEN’S INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMME

2019 was always going to be a difficult year for Ireland Women given the high-profile retirements of four of their most talented players at the end of 2018, and a fifth early in 2019.

It was in many ways a turbulent year, with Aaron Hamilton’s four-year reign ending in the middle of June following a high performance review, and assistant coach Andrew Poynter also ceased working with the senior team. Ed Joyce

was appointed acting, and then full-time head coach as replacement.

Six players were awarded part-time professional contracts for the first time – Irish captain Laura Delany, the Pembroke trio of Kim Garth, Mary Waldron and Shauna Kavanagh, YMCA’s Gaby Lewis, and Merrion’s Celeste Raack. It marked a significant landmark in our women’s game – the first in cricket in this country and making cricket one of very few team sports in Ireland to have professionally-contracted women players.

On the field, the team played 14 T20 internationals, as well as three uncapped games against an England Academy side (those latter three matches were hastily arranged following Zimbabwe Women’s withdrawal from a planned six-match series just 48 hours before the African side were due to arrive – a series that was due to be a major part of the Irish team’s preparations for the T20 World Cup Qualifiers and was an undoubted blow).

Of the 14 capped games, Ireland won five, lost eight and there was one No Result, which was unfortunate as Ireland had posted 213 for 4 against the Dutch, with a record stand of 112 between Gaby Lewis (71) and Orla Prendergast (38).

There was the bitter disappointment of not qualifying for the T20 World Cup in Australia, losing a crucial group game against Thailand in the Qualifier, which meant a much more difficult semi-final against Bangladesh, which they lost by four wickets despite a valiant bowling display.

There were 16 players used during the

course of the season, including many young and relatively inexperienced players.

A look at the batting stats show four players scored half centuries – Gaby Lewis (2), Kim Garth, Mary Waldron and Eimear Richardson passing the landmark. The bowling stats made for better reading with six bowlers having economy rates under six. Eimear Richardson was the stand-out performer taking 16 wickets and an economy rate of 4.21. Others who kept things tight were Orla Prendergast, Kim Garth, Sophie MacMahon, Leah Paul and Celeste Raack.

The year ended with the news of another retirement. Opening bowler Amy Kenealy called it a day having not featured all season.

The decision by ICC to start an Under-19s World Cup is a welcome one, and that may be the vehicle for Ireland's young up and coming talented teenagers to make their mark.

## TEST TRIANGLE INTER-PROVINCIAL SERIES

Leinster Lightning claimed the Inter-Provincial Championship for a sixth time after the final day of the North West Warriors-Northern Knights game at Bready went the same way as the first two – and for the only the second time in seven years – a game was abandoned without a ball bowled. It was by far the worst season for overs lost in the Inter-Provincial series.

Leinster Lightning claimed their sixth successive Inter-Pro 50-over Cup title after their game against the NW Warriors

was abandoned without a ball bowled.

Northern Knights managed to clinch the T20 trophy thanks to impressive displays in Dublin as the NW Festival was washed out on all three days.

## TOYOTA SUPER 3s

The Dragons were crowned Super 3s champions again after their 50-over match against the Typhoons was abandoned at Holywood due to persistent rain. Two of the three scheduled T20's managed to beat the weather with the Dragons staying top of the table after a 15-run win against the Typhoons. They won 5 out of 9 matches.

## IRELAND WOLVES AND NATIONAL ACADEMY

The Ireland Wolves and Men's Academy played a good amount of games during the year. Highlights included:

- **Academy in Bristol** – Gloucestershire 2nds and England U-19: White Ball Series Won 5-0. Some excellent pre-season cricket in great conditions against good opposition with a young and very inexperienced Academy side. Captained by Ireland U-17 Neil Rock with Jack Tector having an outstanding series with the bat.
- **Academy in Loughborough** – England U-19s 50 Over Series: Lost 2-0. These games were a great opportunity for several of our U-19s to gain experience against full member opposition
- **Academy in Bristol** – Gloucestershire 2nds: Drew 4-day

game. A brilliant end to the season in Rockhampton on a quick pitch. A hard-fought game interrupted by some rain. Stand out performer was U-17 Irish Captain Mitchell Thompson with bat and ball.

- **Ireland Wolves in Sri Lanka** – Drew 2-Day Warm Up Game vs President's XI; Lost 1st Unofficial Test by 10 wickets; Drew 2nd Unofficial Test after enforcing a follow on; Lost ODI Series 5-0. Huge positives came out of this tour, especially given the conditions and nature of the opposition. Sri Lanka A had 496 Senior Caps in their side, compared to 104 in the Wolves squad. Individual highlights of the tour were 100's for Harry Tector and Lorcan Tucker and two five-wicket hauls for James Cameron-Dow.
- **Ireland Wolves at Oakhill CC** vs Scotland A: Lost 50 Over Series with Scotland A 2-1; Drew T20 Series with Scotland A 1-1; An inexperienced Ireland Wolves side was selected, with opportunities for younger U-17 players like Nathan McGuire and Oliver Metcalfe. Scotland brought a strong side with some well-known white ball specialists; it was a very competitive series.
- **Ireland Wolves List A Warm Up Games** vs Zimbabwe and Bangladesh - Ireland Wolves vs Zimbabwe (Eglington CC): Ireland Wolves won by 27 runs; Ireland Wolves vs Bangladesh (The Hills CC): Ireland Wolves won by 88 runs; The Bangladesh victory was of particular note as Bangladesh went on to win the tri-series with Ireland and the West Indies. It was unprecedented for an A Team to win against two Full Member Senior Teams. With the Senior Squad

competing in their own series at the same time, these players were either currently in the Academy or Academy Graduates.

## TALENT PATHWAY PROGRAMME

The 2019 season saw Ireland's Youth cricketers compete locally and abroad. Highlights were the retention of the Celtic Cup's for both U-15 and U-17 Boys teams. The big disappointment was the U-19 Boys failing to qualify for the U-19 World Cup. Highlights included:

- **U-19 Boys** – The squad played 10 games, with the season culminating at the World Cup Qualifiers in The Netherlands. The Tournament was preceded with 5 friendly fixtures. One qualifying spot was available for the U-19 World Cup Tournament in South Africa (January 2020). The Qualifying Tournament format was a Round Robin format with each team playing each other once. Ireland defeated Jersey by 113 runs; Denmark by 132 runs; Netherlands by 69 runs; and France by 5 wickets. Ultimately, the tournament ended in disappointment as we came off second best in a winner takes all game vs Scotland by 47 runs.
- U-19 Performances: Will Smale, Tim Tector and Nathan McGuire were the standout batsmen, while Mitchell Thompson (2nd highest wicket taker), Nathan McGuire and Alex Neary were our most reliable bowlers. Three U-19 players earned selection to The Wolves team in 2019. Neil Rock and JJ Garth for the tour to Sri Lanka. Rock also played in the wins against Bangladesh and Zimbabwe. Nathan McGuire was selected for the fixture against

Zimbabwe. JJ Garth (Munster Reds), Neil Rock (Northern Knights), Will Smale (North West Warriors), Nathan McGuire (Munster Reds), Oliver Metcalfe (Munster Reds), Marcus Poskitt (North West Warriors), and Gregory McFaul (North West Warriors) all played Senior Inter-Pro cricket.

- **U-17 Boys** – The U-17 Boys had back-to-back series in Ireland, where we hosted Worcestershire Academy and Scotland U-17s in the Celtic Cup. The series comprised of two 50-over games and two T20 games. All in all, this was a hugely satisfying week. It proved strong opposition, with a few older players and we also got to see some new players, who have not previously featured in our National Youth squads. Mitchell Thompson lead the team well and after a tough first two days, the group responded and played some exciting cricket. They shared the spoils 2-2 and there were some positive outcomes. This served as good preparation for the following week, where we took on Scotland U-17 in the Celtic Cup.
- U-17 Performances: Tim Tector, Nathan McGuire and Jamie Forbes returned to the squad for this series. The series comprised of two One Day games (50 over) and two T20 games. This was a hugely satisfying week. The 3-1 series win was secondary to the strides made by the players over the course of the two weeks.
- **U-15s Boys** – the U-15s were on the road this year, with a trip to England to play Berkshire and Middlesex in July. In August they travelled to Scotland to play in the Celtic Cup. An excellent 115 not out, by Wilhelm de Klerk, against

Middlesex Emerging XI, was the highlight in a great game. Ireland U-15 held their nerve in a tense finish, winning by a solitary run. This followed by a convincing win the next day against Berkshire's U-15 in a T20 fixture. On the last day Berkshire's Emerging XI, racked up an imposing score and after losing wickets early in the chase we were never really in the game. It was a good tour against some strong opposition and we saw some good individual performances. Daniel Forkin with his left arm spin, was Ireland's most consistent bowler over the 3 days. For the U-15s Celtic Cup Series in Scotland, it was a week marred by rain. The first two games fell foul of the weather without a single ball being bowled. The result of the series came down to a single game. Led by a captain's innings by Jamie Forbes (69 from 115 balls) the side left Scotland with a win, after a frustrating week.

- **U-19 Girls** – Ireland U-19 travelled to Northants for two One Day matches and a T20 fixture. We lost both one day games but finished the tour on a winning note with a T20 win. This was a good experience for the girls against good opposition. Our first game we struggled in our reply but an encouraging partnership between Cliodhna O'Reardon and Cliona Tucker was a positive takeaway. Cara Murray was our leading bowler, with two wickets. In the second game against Northants Women, Amy Hunter was superb with a 51 ball 70 at the top of the order, that allowed us to chase down a challenging total. Cara Murray with 3 wickets was the best of our bowlers. It was great to end



the tour with a win and see how the girls adapted and learned over the course of the week.

- **U-15 Girls** – The U-15 Girls team travelled to Utrecht, Netherlands for a 5-match series. Some indifferent weather forced us to alter the fixtures to T20 fixtures. Even with that we only played 2 out of the 5 games, winning both. There were good batting performances by Amy Hunter, Zara Craig and Zoe Hoffman. With the ball, Zara Craig, Georgina Dempsey, Ava Canning and Freya Sargent stood out.

## ANTI-DOPING STATEMENT

In order to comply with Sport Ireland governance procedure, 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 CI'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.

In 2018, the ICC requested that Cricket Ireland begin the introduction of unannounced and randomised in-competition drug testing during the 2019 Inter-Provincial season.

In collaboration with Sport Ireland who agreed to support us in the initiative, a programme of education was set up in

order to educate 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 was completed individually online using the Sport Ireland e-learning platform in which players were 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 World Cup qualifiers in Abu Dhabi and Dubai, the ICC also hosted an anti-doping educational workshop, in line with WADA guidelines, for all squad players and staff which has been common practice at ICC events. Anti-doping wallet cards were also distributed at this event. All in attendance found the workshop to be very useful and generated discussion to help players grow in an ever evolving world of anti-doping rules and regulations.

The ICC are also revising their ICC whereabouts programmes that will now include the 12 Men's full members and Women's top 8 ranked ODI teams. 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. More information on this will be available in due course.

During the 2019 domestic season, the ICC had requested that a minimum of 4 in competition testing rounds were completed. Three rounds of testing were completed successfully, but unfortunately, during our T20 festival in Bready CC where the anti-doping

officers arrived, we had 3 consecutive days of rain and the festival was forced to be abandoned. Due to this, the anti-doping officers were unable to carry out testing as it would not have complied with the definition of 'in-competition testing'. This has been accepted as a mitigating circumstance.

Throughout the 2019 domestic testing programme, no positive test were recorded.

During our international fixtures, multiple training and in competition tests were carried out at by ICC at both home and away venues. In total, 15 ICC authorised tests were carried out between February and November 2019. This was made up of 11 out-of-competition tests and 4 in-competition tests. All were urine sample collection. To date, Cricket Ireland has not had a positive result for doping and we will continue to pride ourselves on the development of clean athletes.

Going forward through 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic has hampered multiple international fixtures as well as our science and medicine programme. Every effort has been made to continue to support all members of our Men's and Women's squads whilst the lockdown period was endured and this included anti-doping education via the 2020 Sport Ireland Anti-Doping Wallet cards. Furthermore, now that ICC has resumed their testing programme, we have arranged the relevant testing education for any new squad members and have encouraged the Provincial Unions to do the same in the event of any new squad additions.

**Richard Holdsworth**  
High Performance Director

# PARTICIPATION REPORT

2019 saw the Participation Department focus on a number of core programmes.



## COACH DEVELOPMENT

The last 12 months have seen a number of significant developments in the coach development area.

The two new coaching courses developed by and for the Irish cricket community – Coaching Kids 5-11 Years, and Coaching Cricket – were piloted across four Provincial Unions prior to the 2019 summer season. The pilot courses were led by experienced Cricket Ireland facilitators, with the essential support of Union staff. The feedback on the initial delivery of the courses was overwhelmingly positive, primarily because of the quality of the facilitators, but also because of the wonderful resources each course participant received; resources that would be the envy of any sport.

Following the summer, the Provincial Unions took over the administration and delivery of the two courses. Feedback from coaches on the courses remained exceptionally high. Importantly, new facilitators from each Union began to deliver on these courses. This important development – the growing of the coach developer (facilitator) workforce – was aided by a coach developer workshop being held in October in Dundalk.

The 2019 Cricket Ireland Coach Developer Workshop marked an important step for coaching, as it was the first time a workshop of this kind had been developed, led, and delivered solely by members of the Irish cricket community.

As well as 30 current or future coach developers from across the Unions, the workshop was attended by

representatives from Hockey Ireland, Cricket Scotland, and Sport Northern Ireland. While a number of individuals contributed to the success of the workshop, it is appropriate to acknowledge the critical contribution of Brian Kelleher and Andy McCrea to this event.

In addition to the new Cricket Ireland coaching courses, another ECB Level 2 course was delivered. It is pleasing to see coaches wanting to gain further coaching qualifications. As a greater focus gets placed on participation, particularly the key drivers of youth participation, of which coaches are arguably the most critical, it will be a logical step for Cricket Ireland to continue to develop its own coaching courses and development opportunities. Such a step would almost certainly provide a stimulus for further collaboration between coaching personnel working across the participation and performance areas.

The experience and knowledge exists within the coaching and coach development community to develop and support coaches using coach-centred approaches to engagement and continuous learning, and in a manner that reflects the very specific context of Irish cricket.

## CLUB CONNECTS

2019 saw the launch of the Club Connects Programme. Club Connects offered an opportunity for clubs to get together to network, share ideas and best practice, and have it all facilitated by an external consultant that challenged thinking and provided new ideas, with key focus on engaging with

volunteers and member, and customer/membership journey for clubs.

Cricket Ireland saw this as a positive opportunity to invest in both Unions/Clubs to address an important area and try to support collaboration between all stakeholders. The club connects programme recognise that the challenges facing clubs are significant and won't be solved by working in silos. With the programme encouraging a team effort and shared learning as we all try to strengthen the backbone of our sport – clubs.

- Workshops were run across four Provincial Unions:
  - 27 Clubs engaged in the process.
  - Over 50 Volunteers and staff benefited from the workshops.
  - Exceptionally positive feedback from clubs – which suggests that more workshops and support of this nature would be very well received.

## WOMEN IN SPORT

Successful awarding of Sport Ireland Women in Sport funding provides Cricket Ireland with the opportunity to generate growth and interest in the female game by aligning with the Sport Ireland Women in Sport Policy. With the four key pillars standing as; Active Participation; Coaching and Officiating; Leadership and Governance and; Visibility, a whole-of-sport approach is envisaged for our game.

To inform the specific Cricket Ireland female programmes, research was conducted amongst 218 schoolgirls across all four provinces. The outcome

of this research provides support for the four pillar approach along with good evidence that there is strong interest in trying cricket by girls in the 9 – 13 year old age bracket. The research further informed the importance of an attractive, relevant design, look and feel of a sport as key to engagement. Given the continuous increase in drop off amongst girls from sport generally and the beginning of the progression from participation toward competition, this is an important age in both recruitment and retention. Creating opportunities for girls to play is equally as important as the opportunity that a nationally aligned programme will provide for more females to get involved in coaching.

Work has also been underway in preparation for the introduction of CricHIIT is a non-traditional engagement programme for females aged 16+ that employs a fitness based approach. CricHIIT allows its participants to learn terminology, actions of play and experience of modified games while benefitting from high intensity interval training. Developed by Cricket Scotland, the knock on effects have been as beneficial to clubs and the sport in general as the fitness activity itself. An increase in volunteers, fans, advocates, coaches and players encompasses the holistic approach Cricket Ireland plans to adopt making CricHIIT an ideal headline programme.

## PROVINCIAL UNION DEVELOPMENT

Cricket Ireland continues to support Provincial Unions in order to increase their ability to deliver on their own

strategic purpose, support national objectives and form a growing support structure for clubs, and assist with growing the game regionally. This is done both financially but also through close collaborations on key strategic areas of the game.

## PROVINCIAL UNION ACTIVITY SUPPORTING NATIONAL GROWTH: SCHOOL PROGRAMMES

A key part of the national and regional development programme activity is school engagement and these school programmes are a primary avenue to introducing children who otherwise would have no opportunity to try the sport. Cricket can actively support promoting a healthy lifestyle and lifelong participation and love of our sport through the schooling system. School Engagement:

- 301 schools visited
- 983 school sessions delivered
- 16,426 children seen (9,527 boys, 6,899 girls)

## YOUTH INTER-PROVINCIAL TOURNAMENT WEEKS.

In 2019 the Youth Inter-Provincial weeklong tournaments were run for a second year and were very successful. Both 50 over and T20 formats were played with players from all four Provincial Unions involved.

Both weeks in 2019 were held in the Northern Cricket Union with players and coaches staying in the historical Campbell College. Matches were played at Campbell College, Holywood

CC and Bangor CC during tournament weeks with Fox Lodge CC, Phoenix CC, Lisburn CC and Cork Harlequins CC all hosting the pre-tournament games.

Cricket Leinster U-15 team won the U-15 tournament taking home both the T20 and 50 Over trophies.

At U-17 level, the Northern Cricket Union U-17 team won the 50 over competition with Cricket Leinster winning the T20 competition.

In 2019, O'Neill's became sponsor of both tournaments and provided some O'Neill's merchandise to every player involved. The winners of the 50 over competition won an Ireland ODI jersey each, with the winners of the T20 competition winning an Irish T20 jersey each.

Cricket Ireland would like to acknowledge tournament sponsor O'Neills, the NCU for hosting and supporting, all Provincial Unions, the clubs who hosted games, Campbell College and match officials for their support and making both tournaments a wonderful experience for players.

**Elaine Nolan**  
Participation Director

# COMMERCIAL REPORT

2019 revenues across our Commercial partners and our sponsors remained on a par with 2018. While there was a decrease in ground rights sponsorship in 2019 on the previous year, this was due to the higher ground rights revenue received for the 2018 India series.



## SPONSORSHIP

O'Neill's, Official Kit partner of Cricket Ireland since 2012, renewed their agreement with Cricket Ireland for three years at an increased quantum. Cricket Ireland are very grateful to Kieran Kennedy and his team for their valuable support.

Cricket Ireland also welcomed Irish start-up Techfynder into our commercial portfolio in 2019. Techfynder is an online technology recruitment platform and are a subsidiary of our Inter-Provincial sponsor, Test Triangle.

GS Holdings became an event sponsor to Cricket Ireland which saw them secure title sponsorship rights for the England ODI and Zimbabwe series during the season. GS Holdings are the main investor of the Euro T20 Slam. While the inaugural Euro T20 Slam planned for 2019 was postponed, discussions are ongoing around the commencement of this T20 franchise series at a future date.

## UK IRISH EMBASSY PRE-ENGLAND TEST MATCH NETWORKING EVENT

The Irish Ambassador to the UK, Mr Adrian O'Neill, hosted a Cricket Ireland pre-Test networking event on 23 July at the Irish Embassy in London. The audience for this event was the Irish/UK business community with approx. 200 guests in attendance on the night. The purpose of the evening was to build stronger relationships with the Irish UK business sector with the intention of working with this network to generate funding in the short,

medium and long-term for Cricket Ireland philanthropy projects, sponsorship programmes along with domestic and overseas corporate membership.

Many of the attendees also had the opportunity over the next few days to attend and enjoy the Test match against England which turned out to be a very memorable week.

## CRICKET IRELAND PHILANTHROPY PROJECT

Cricket Ireland launched a new Philanthropy project after examining the potential of the Irish market and the opportunity for Cricket Ireland to put in place a Philanthropy Strategy for 2020 and beyond. The findings from our research of this relatively new market for Irish sport were encouraging and have led us to put in place a number of specific programmes to support women's overseas development, our player alumni, fundraising efforts and the Cricket Ireland High Performance Centre.

## COMMERCIAL ADVISORY GROUP

In 2019, Cricket Ireland set-up a Commercial Advisory Group (CAG) which comprises Cricket Ireland Board Members with the relevant skill-sets along with experts within the business community in Ireland, UK and further afield. The role of the CAG is to provide support to the Commercial Department of Cricket Ireland by offering advice, opinions and making recommendations on relevant commercial and broadcast matters.

Cricket Ireland are grateful to the members of CAG for giving their time, knowledge and experience. CAG will also over time use their own networks to make introductions to support Cricket Ireland revenue growth.

Finally, I would like to thank all of our valued commercial partners for their ongoing and important support in 2019, at all levels from grassroots to international level.

**Dennis Cousins**  
Commercial Director



# 3 FINANCIALS



# FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

For 2019, Cricket Ireland experienced further growth on its top line of 9.5%, taking our revenues past €10M for the first time. Our cost base also increased due to the level of international cricket we hosted and our further investment in our Provincial Unions and domestic game.



Our revenues continued to grow in 2019 with an increase of 9.5% on the prior year. The two key areas that have increased are; ICC income (+€1.1M) and the ET20 Slam (+€1.1M). However, our Broadcasting income dropped by \$367K which was mainly attribution to one of our main contracted broadcasters going into administration the day before our season started. We also recorded a drop in match income of €500K, this was partially down to a cyber-crime incident which cost us €175K and the balance was down to a reduction in gate receipts comparative to an exceptional 2018 during which we hosted lucrative matches against India and our inaugural Test match against Pakistan.

Our direct costs increased by €467K driven by our domestic competitions which increased by +€197K, largely due to playing some inter-provincial matches in La Manga in Spain. While the facility is largely used for training purposes, its playing facilities also

provide the opportunity of extending our short, occasionally weather-affected playing season. Provincial Union funding was increased by €196K, mainly to support the introduction of new roles in the Provincial Unions to assist in participation and grass roots development.

Our Administration costs saw a jump of €253K on 2018 and while our salary and payroll costs dropped (partially because of the phasing out of development officer roles centrally in favour of new provincial positions), we saw an increase in Travel, Marketing/promotion, Depreciation and Financial costs ostensibly to service our growing playing programme at all levels. The first phase of our High Performance Centre in Abbottstown came online in 2019 which drove our depreciation charge up by approx. €49K.

Our cash position has improved by €528K year on year and we anticipate

this trend will continue into 2020 as we work hard towards building cash reserves in the organisation. During the course of the year we also put in place lending facilities to ensure we have access to sufficient working capital at all times during our season.

The final year result was a small deficit of €9.8K which was an improvement of €193K on 2018. Whilst our Balance Sheet shows retained earnings remaining very low at €3.7K, the Board and Management will work hard to deliver a surplus in 2020 and beyond to build this to a healthy level.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the team for all the hard work they have put in during the course of the year to help stabilise our financial performance and improve our cash flow position.

**Bill Cunningham**  
Chair, Finance Committee



# STATEMENT OF INCOME AND RETAINED EARNINGS

For the financial year ended 31 December 2019

	2019	2018
	€	€
Income	10,624,514	9,708,177
Direct expenses	(6,732,238)	(6,262,511)
<b>Gross surplus</b>	<b>3,892,276</b>	<b>3,445,666</b>
Administrative expenses	(3,902,073)	(3,649,013)
<b>Net deficit before tax</b>	<b>(9,797)</b>	<b>(203,347)</b>
Tax on deficit	-	-
<b>Deficit for the financial year</b>	<b>(9,797)</b>	<b>(203,347)</b>
Retained earnings at the beginning of the financial year	13,470	216,817
Deficit for the financial year	(9,797)	(203,347)
<b>Retained earnings at the end of the financial year</b>	<b>3,673</b>	<b>13,470</b>

There were no recognised gains and losses for 2019 or 2018 other than those included in the statement of income and retained earnings.

# BALANCE SHEET

As at 31 December 2019

	2019	2018
	€	€
<b>Fixed assets</b>		
Tangible assets	959,876	986,559
	959,876	986,559
<b>Current assets</b>		
Debtors: amounts falling due after more one year	15,000	1,164,483
Debtors: amounts falling due within one year	1,333,216	870,585
Cash at bank and in hand	63,480	4,862
	1,411,696	2,039,930
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	(1,526,894)	(1,924,487)
<b>Net current (liabilities)/assets</b>	<b>(115,198)</b>	115,443
<b>Total assets less current liabilities</b>	<b>844,678</b>	1,102,002
Creditors: amounts falling due after more one year	(841,005)	(1,079,782)
<b>Provisions for liabilities</b>		
Government capital grants	-	(8,750)
	-	(8,750)
<b>Net assets</b>	<b>3,673</b>	13,470
<b>Reserves</b>		
Accumulated surplus	3,673	13,470
<b>Total reserves</b>	<b>3,673</b>	13,470





# CRICKET IRELAND

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