

PRESIDENT'S REPORT for AGM October 2020

It has been an eventful season with Covid and obviously we were blessed to be able to play as much cricket as we did. I have served on the executive for six years and this was the most difficult year in many ways, but it would have been much more difficult if I did not have an effective executive who by and large worked very well together and agreed to act to overcome some difficult situations. For instance, we agreed to act together when after the first week or so it became obvious that the harmony in the league would be disrupted if we allowed BCMCL players to participate. Clearly it was going to be unfair to some clubs and it was going to sideline some players who would be dropped by their clubs. Our action was nearly unanimous, a rare feat to achieve in such a highly competitive cricket environment here on Vancouver Island.

I cannot emphasize enough the amount of time and energy that went into preparing all the documentation needed by the authorities so that we could play cricket this season. It was difficult to follow procedure as the goalposts seemed to move on us and at times the right hand seemed unsure what the left hand was doing. Full marks to Izak Brussow, who tackled this job with his usual resolve and determination, refusing to be put off by setbacks along the way. It was a lot of work and at the same time he had to keep reworking schedules as our season kept being shortened. Douglas de la Mare was involved in this matter and also had to rejig the Midweek schedule. As Secretary and Treasurer this past year they have served us admirably. Doug also oversees the web and is Chairman of Midweek. On behalf of the VDCA I extend my gratitude for all that you both have done this year and in the past. Without your help my job which extends to all aspects of the VDCA would have been impossible to manage.

Covid has had a detrimental impact on our cricket in many ways. Our junior development program did eventually start up again but of course we have lost a lot of the traction gained from previous years and will have to work doubly hard next year to gain lost ground. I am concerned that individual clubs are not involved enough in bringing on youth and urge all involved in cricket to bring their children (boys and girls) out on Saturday and Sunday mornings.

Another victim of Covid has been our monthly meetings but for the most part I think we overcame this deficiency by consultation among the executive led by our Secretary Izak. One wonders, even if Covid is defeated, perhaps some of our meetings could be virtual and conducted on an app such as Zoom.

And now, to the cricket itself. Congratulations to UVIC for winning the Times Colonist Cup as League Champions and then Albion's for winning the Knockout Trophy in the playoff format. In a normal year they would compete with the winner on the mainland for the Tomalin Cup and the right to represent British Columbia for the Western Canadian Championship. In the Midweek Broncos were Midweek Champions and Pigs Trotters won the Scutt Plate.

As we wind down the year, we should all take a moment to consider just how much goes on in the VDCA to make it all work. I have outlined much of that above. Yes, consider your club, the responsibility of your officers, the captain and those who have attained their right and duty to umpire. After that, please tip your cap to those who work quietly in the background with VISCUS and the Disciplinary Committee.

Thank you, Darren Buhr and Johnny Carline, for all you do so efficiently with VISCUS and thank you DB for the untold hours you spent, even this year with your Disciplinary Committee. Though only one sanction was deemed necessary, members of the Committee met on a number of occasions to discuss various incidents which were serious enough to consider but perhaps not well enough supported by incident reports to warrant further action. Thank you, Keith Harris, for helping us obey the Covid protocols at BHP and the work you have done for years with advertising for our Booklet. Further contributors to the booklet effort were Nagy Thomas and once again Doug. Graham Smith also did his usual part in assisting to keep the pavilion presentable.

For almost 50 years David Billingham has been immersed in VDCA Cricket. He was a potent player with Albion and Oak Bay, served on the executive of the VDCA as President and on the British Columbia Cricket Association as President. Twenty-eight years ago, he started the Victoria International Six-a-Side tournament bringing in teams from all over the world, a full time undertaking in itself. If that was not enough, he and Pat Ely were instrumental in forming the Beacon Hill Pavilion Society and cooking monthly Friday afternoon lunches for up to 50 of us. This venture has raised about \$150,000 for the Society and hence the pavilion. Fourteen years ago, when Bob Sherratt died DB left off where Bob had started by being the de facto custodian of the pavilion. Somehow during all this time DB has managed to take 33 touring teams from Victoria to all parts of the world, putting Victoria on the map and facilitating reciprocal visits from teams around the world. This year, the year of Covid, DB has spent hundreds of hours scrubbing and painting the upstairs of the pavilion as well as attending to countless other details. Good things do not last forever though, and DB tells me that he is done. Words cannot convey the huge debt of gratitude that we all owe DB for his herculean efforts. How he has managed all this and still almost walks upright is remarkable. He has enriched our Cricket beyond measure and surely there is a reward in heaven for him. What to do? Firstly, I think he would appreciate a quiet "thank you DB" from all of us as individuals so please do so when you get the opportunity.

Finally, as I depart the executive but not the VDCA I want to thank all those who have supported me in my duties as President. It has been an honour to serve.

Yours sincerely,

Jim Wenman
President of the VDCA