



Finnish Cricket Association's Operations Plan 2019

Suomen Krikettiliitto ry - www.cricketfinland.com

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The mission of the Finnish Cricket Association is to make cricket a respected, successful, accessible and fun sport in Finland.

1. GENERAL

Cricket Finland's purpose is to promote cricket as a sport to as many Finns and foreign residents in Finland as possible, at all levels of the sport, and to act as a common link for its member clubs. In addition, the association promotes and monitors the development of the sport in our country and represents Finland in the sport's international bodies.

The aim of the association is to create opportunities for experiencing the joy of exercise brought by the sport, to as many different population groups as possible, and thereby contribute to the well-being and health of the enthusiasts in addition to maintaining and improving their mobility. The special focus of the association's work is on guiding children and young people to the sport.

The association achieves its purpose by carrying out education and training work related to the sport, by supporting cricket clubs in their creation and internal development, by organizing national competition cricket at all levels of the sport, by supporting non-competitive recreational cricket and by creating opportunities for competing internationally. The association prepares and confirms the Laws of Cricket and tournament playing conditions that are used in the sport and resolves any disputes that arise regarding them. The association also finances and publishes cricket related material, represents its members abroad, and maintains contact with similar organizations abroad.

As a national governing body for the sport, Cricket Finland promotes the interests of cricket in Finland, and monitors that the association and its affiliated clubs comply with the rules, regulations, obligations and ethical principles of the MCC (Marylebone Cricket Club), the ICC (International Cricket Council), Finnish sports law and directives, and other bodies that monitor and control sport and physical activity.

Cricket is a unique sport in Finland in the sense that it connects players who come from countries that play the world's second most popular team sport with grass-root Finnish enthusiasts. To those who play cricket this offers both the joy of playing the sport and the opportunity to experience new cultural influences as well as develop language skills. Joint participation is likely to bring migrants and the general population closer together, thus also reducing inequalities due to different backgrounds. Through its activities Cricket Finland is strongly involved in facilitating the integration of immigrant players into Finnish society, and through the multiculturalism of the sport it is promoting equality and non-discrimination.

The association will be 20 years old in 2019. This landmark will be visible in both everyday activities as well as in celebrations.

Priorities for action in 2019

The most important goals for the Finnish Cricket Association in 2019 are:

1. Development of women's cricket

- a. Continuing regular training that commenced in 2018. The goal is to have a tournament of at least two teams in the summer of 2019 and a separate women's league in 2020.
- b. The association is exploring the possibility for women's teams to play in some form in the association's indoor-league during the early spring of 2019.

2. Strengthening the association's administration and structures

- a. In order to carry out its essential planned activities, the association will complement the volunteer base for the various functions of the administration. This is done with both open and targeted recruiting. In particular, the following areas require active, skilled people:
 - i. Internal and external marketing and communication
 - ii. The various activities of the League Sub-Committee (umpiring, match reporting, education, scoring, etc.)
 - iii. Supporting club development

3. Strengthening the member clubs

- a. Clubs must understand their contribution to the development of the whole sport
 - i. Developing women's cricket with selected clubs
 - ii. Preparations for commencing junior activity, together with the association
 - iii. General awareness of the sport
- b. 1-2 clubs to the National Olympic Committee's "Star Club" process
 - i. Some clubs have already announced their interest
- c. Improving the level of administration within clubs
 - i. Understanding and fulfilling the minimum club management requirements
 - ii. Utilization of Suomisport platform

The association is stepping up its efforts to develop the national team, in order to take best advantage of the T20 World Cup tournament pathway that has become available.

2. RECREATIONAL SPORT

2.1 Non-competitive recreational sport

2.1.1 Youth and children's cricket – ensuring exercise through cricket

The development of junior activities and coaching is the cornerstone for the future of the sport, to which the association invests greatly with financial and human resources. The interest that arises from presentations of the sport is channelled into a hobby through a more clearer player pathway.

The main activities are:

- Centralizing a collaborative school project mainly to selected schools, but at the same time starting cooperation in a few larger cities outside the metropolitan area
- In addition to new coaches, training teachers in school cricket
- Starting junior activities with member clubs
- Regular junior coaching, summer camps and tournaments
- National team coaching for under 21-year-olds is established in cooperation with adult national team coaching and partly by organizing practices with it.
- Developing coaching for players under the age of 17 as part of the player pathway.

Collaboration with municipalities and schools

The principle of cooperation with schools is fewer schools than before, but more activities in those schools. The hope is that schools will take school cricket as an integral part of their activities, both during and after the school day. Searches for cooperation schools will be concentrated at this stage in the Helsinki metropolitan, Kerava and Turku regions, as well as in Oulu, Tampere, Mikkeli, and possibly other areas too.

At the beginning of the school year, cooperation schools are offered study group and class group-building lessons using cricket, familiarization to the sport during physical education classes, training for teachers, and running physical education classes together with a cricket specialist. These kinds of activities have already begun in the autumn of 2017 at the Kurkela school in Kerava and have been used to pilot the school's internal cricket tournaments. In addition to Cricket Finland's part-time coaches, this project will include sport instructors from outside of the sport who will be provided separately with cricket specific training.

In 2019 there will also be a tournament day for these cricket schools at the Kerava National Cricket Ground either at the end of the school year in May, or in August / September at the beginning of the school year.

In addition to school tournaments and other similar activities, cooperation schools are offered the opportunity to have either club activities during the school day or after it. Cricket, as a diverse sport, can also fit perfectly into a multi-sport club.

School tournaments are primarily played with mixed teams and in school cricket the starting point for the rules is that everyone gets to play. In this way, everyone can experiment with different aspects of the game and find their own strengths.



The Active Schools (Liikkuva koulu) project, which has been carried out in cooperation with the town of Kerava, will continue during the academic year 2018–2019. The project will also serve as a good operating model for other municipalities in the future. Included in the project are all the primary schools in the town of Kerava and now also secondary schools; in all of these it is possible to try the sport. However, only some of the schools are selected as actual cooperation schools, to ensure that resources can be provided.

The unique conditions offered by the cricket ground in Kerava are utilized both within the framework of the Active Schools project and in the new cooperation school project, whereby the enthusiasm generated in the indoor games can be transferred to the outdoor grounds.

An important role in expanding the awareness of children and adolescents is also shared by different partners, with whom we are creating opportunities to get to know cricket and thus find new ways to practice sports. Such partners include **Espoon Palloseuran Jääkiekko ry** with which we have been continuing our cooperation for several years, leading to the creation of multi-sport club activities for first and second graders. A well-functioning and mutually beneficial cooperation has also been made with **Blackbirds United ry**, a floorball club from Kerava.

A low threshold sport

The threshold for starting cricket is very low. Familiarization events organized by the association are free for children and youth. In addition, summer camp prices are very affordable, covering primarily the costs of meals for the day. The price of day camps will continue to be affordable. The youth cricket format, Street20 street cricket, which is also being adjusted to schools, is technically and tactically easy to learn and so the junior players get the experience of success right from the start. This format is targeted through the use of simple training games. Novice players also do not have to make equipment purchases. The association and its member clubs have available the equipment needed to start the sport, so regular sport/outdoor clothing is all that is needed to start the hobby. This equipment solution works equally for children and adolescents, as well as for adults.

The Cricket Association will also organize two junior summer camps in Kerava in the summer of 2019, the first in June and the second in August.

A hit already on the first try



In Finland Street20 street cricket, which has been selected as the junior format, and which is now also known as school cricket, is one of the International Cricket Council's tools for global development of the sport. It is cricket's "fast format" and lasts about 20 minutes. A normal school gym, or even an outdoor basketball court, simplified equipment, and a tennis ball, are all that is required, and about 6 players per team. The game format is flexible and can even be played with 5, 7 or 8-person teams if needed. Due to the shortness of the game, a school cricket tournament is easy to organize within the framework of physical education lessons.

Juniors for member clubs

In 2019, efforts will be made to support clubs so that they are ready to include junior players in their activities. As this and the cooperation school project progresses, the goal is to help member clubs start regular cricket training for children and adolescents. Cricket Finland will explore ways in which it can support clubs to create the necessary capabilities to start and maintain junior activities. This requires at least coaching and education support for the clubs.

Player pathway

The Association has not yet been able to build a clear player pathway from school-age to adult players and then to the national team. Nonetheless, individual players have grown and evolved within the sport from junior to national level. With a more centralized school cooperation project the Association will clarify the pathway which leads to introduction to the sport at school, and through training to a school's internal tournaments, as well as to inter-school tournaments. The focus is at the beginning of the path and in the selected schools.

The next step from school cricket is local regular training for children and youth, which is already organized in collaboration with local cricket clubs. The goal is to form regional teams in the next few years that will be able to play against other regional teams. Through regional competition we will be able to develop competitive age-based activity in Finland and, for example, between the Nordic countries, and thus start age-based national team activity.



At the end of 2017, the Association launched its long-planned youth team training. The coaching group includes over thirty young talented athletes under 22 years old. In 2019 the group will be offered regular high-level coaching by the adult national team's coaching team. Junior members are playing in the Association's leagues either in their own clubs (outdoor season) or in the national team (indoor season) but meet several times a month for joint trainings. These trainings are carried out in part with the adult national team. In addition, youth players are included in the Twenty20-Elite series.

2.1.2. Adult non-competitive recreational sport – lifelong exercise

Recreational events under the Association - cricket is suitable for all ages

Non-competitive recreational sport for adults continues as in 2018 and is mainly driven by clubs. Local and regional amateur tournaments will be included in the Association's calendar. If possible, the tournaments and mini leagues organized by the clubs will be adjusted to the Association's league calendar so that the widest possible player base and supporter groups can participate in these events.

The Association encourages clubs to participate in sporting events in their area. Such events may include, for example, Unelmien liikuntapäivä ("Exercise Day of Your Dreams") (May 10, 2019) or other such municipal or regional sports events.

The association is also expanding its non-hard ball cricket activities (tennis ball, lightweight cricket ball, etc.). Until now these tournaments have been mostly outside of the Association's activities. The use of a non-hard ball lowers the threshold to start the sport and reduces equipment needs and ground requirements. Modified cricket using non-hard balls has also become part of the ICC's global development strategy.

Hobby license

The hobby license that has been in use for a few years has not yet fully established itself and does not yet cover all the cricket players outside the leagues. Using licenses, the Association seeks to obtain a better overall picture of the number of players and clubs in Finland. In return the players are included in the Association's activities, trainings, and events, while gaining financial benefits from, among other things, insurance and Association arranged discounted equipment purchases. The Suomisport application is used as a tool for all the Association's licensing activities.

The Association forms a team that, as part of club development work, seeks to activate those players and clubs who, for various reasons, do not participate in the Association's official leagues. The goal is to get these clubs and their players to better understand the benefits that Association membership will bring. These include, for example, access to small-scale tournaments, offering the opportunity to participate in open camps and training sessions organized by the Association (for example, umpire and scorer training) and access to the Association's equipment purchase and insurance arrangements. In this way, the aim is to also get "groups" who practice other sports, and new hobbyists from different ethnic backgrounds (including Finns), to join the Association's non-competitive recreational sports.

Women's cricket

Although women's cricket is growing at a fast pace in the world, there is currently no separate official women's league in Finland due to the small number of female players. The development of female cricket has been set as one of the key goals of the Association in 2019.

In 2018, the Association and its member club Shaurya CC launched together regular women's cricket training with a group of enthusiastic female players. This activity continues and will be expanded in 2019. The aim is to organize one short tournament during the winter season and a series of at least five matches for women's teams during the summer season of 2019. In 2020, we are preparing to start a Women's Finnish Championship League.

Individual goals	The Association's actions	Indicators
Ensuring regular training	1) ensuring the facility 2) a well-trained coach for the trainings	yes/no yes/no
Increasing the number of participants at trainings	The coach writes down the amount of players Ensuring needed extra space Necessary coaching support	amount has/has not grown yes/no yes/no
Hold a tournament in the summer of 2019	Booking the grounds	yes/no
	Booking the needed officials	yes/no
	Taking care of social media visibility	yes/no
Prepare a league for 2020	Will be taken into account in the LSC's match schedule	yes/no
	Ensure a big enough player pool	enough/not enough (Suomisport)

The tournament is finished, and the feeling is good



2.2. Competitive recreational sport

Competitive recreational cricket is formed around the Association's organized leagues. Since 2018 the T20 format (20 over matches) has been the Association's most important form of game; the number of league games rose by about a third from 2017 to 2018. In 2019, league activity will be further focused by reducing the number of teams participating in the longer game format (40 over games) by two teams, which will help control the overall number of games, as well as raise the quality of the matches played and the teams competing. In the leagues the emphasis is still on playing in the Spirit of Cricket and with respect for equality. The Association will also support club organized cricket tournaments of various formats.

In the summer of 2019 the T10 game format, which was first played at the SM-viikko 2018 (Finnish Championships Week 2018) event, and which consists of 10-Over games and lasts about one hour, will be expanded. The T10 Finals will be played during the SM-viikko event in the city of Vantaa.

Both of these shorter game formats are more welcoming to beginners and are designed to bring new players to the game.

Twenty20

The T20 is the main cricket format played in the Finnish Leagues. With the longer 40 over game format being reduced the Cricket Association has decided to give more space to T20 games, which means more games at all levels. The reasons for this are both national and international. This format is what the national team plays in the quest for a place in the World Cup. The shorter game format is also more spectator friendly and less burdensome for both players and officials. The need for grounds is reduced and the costs per match are also lower. The shorter format is the entry point for new clubs to all leagues. Furthermore, the entry threshold is reduced for those clubs that also have to travel long distances to and from games.

In 2019 the T20 format will be expanded into a three-level league. The importance of the highest-level Premier League will be emphasized, for example, by playing all matches on grass grounds, in Kerava (KNCG) and at the new Tikkurila Cricket Ground (TCG), and by imposing on the clubs more stringent licensing requirements than for clubs that play in other league levels. The licensing policy ensures that only clubs with the best sporting and organizational skills are involved.

At the same time as tightening the requirements at the top level of the SM League, the requirements at the bottom level of the league will be reduced, making it easier for new teams and new players to enter the sport.

An additional change for 2019 is the introduction of promotion and relegation playoffs in all levels of the league. The aim is to create more excitement to the competition and better possibilities for good teams to be promoted to a higher level.

One Day (SM40)

The longer One-Day format (40 over and 30 over games) will continue with three league levels. The total number of participating teams will be reduced by two compared to 2018. In line with the Cricket Association's strategy, the amount of One-Day games will be well under half of all league matches occurring during the season.

Similar to 2018, the highest level One-Day Premier League has stricter requirements compared to the other One-Day league levels, for example with regard to ground quality, and by imposing more stringent licensing requirements on the clubs. The target is that we will be better positioned to compare player and team performance during the season. All Premier League matches will be held on the grass grounds in Kerava and Tikkurila, with the exception of home matches held in the city of Turku which will be played on gravel grounds with a coconut mat. A double-round-robin structure of 40-Over matches will be used for the Premier League and there will be six teams competing at this level.

In the two lower league levels there will be nine teams in each level and a single-round-robin system is used, with 30-Over matches in the lowest level. The length of matches in the lowest level is being reduced from the previously used 40 overs to make more effective use of grounds and reduce participation costs at the lowest levels of the sport. We have seen that the average length of innings at this level has been clearly below 30 overs.

The lowest level consists primarily of so-called “second teams” from clubs that play in the higher levels, which is a sign of clubs becoming larger and stronger. Strengthening club structures is a part of the sport development that the Association has been heavily focusing on for several years now.

Winter League

During the 2018/2019 winter season we will again hold an indoor cricket league for teams located in the Helsinki metropolitan area. The games will be played from January to April. The game format is similar to the World Cup format that was used at the SM-viikko 2016 event, however modified slightly to suit the limitations imposed by floorball facilities that we use.

T10 Finnish Championship (SM-viikko)

As a result of the very positive experiences from the previous SM-viikko events, Cricket Finland has already decided to participate again in the SM-viikko 2019 event that will be held in July. Compared to previous years there will be a larger number of teams competing for the title of Finnish Champion in this short game format. Prior to the Finals week we shall hold qualification rounds to determine which teams will proceed to the SM-viikko Finals event. The final itself is again expected to be televised live on national TV. The T10 format is one of the Association’s key tools for attracting new players to the sport.

SM-viikko 2018 finalists at the Tikkurila Cricket Ground in Vantaa



Other cricket

Outside the officially organized leagues, member clubs organize various low-threshold format tournaments and mini-leagues. These include tennis ball cricket leagues and tournaments, and 6- and 7-a-side mini-tournaments during the summer. As the popularity increases, the Association will continue to support these events and is attempting to at least partly integrate them into the Association's other activities.

3. ELITE SPORT

3.1. World Cup pathway

The international operating environment has changed significantly over the past year with the introduction of the revised ICC membership categories, criteria for international cricket matches, and format specific top-level tournaments. With a now clearer and all-member-state encompassing qualification system, the operation of the national team has become more goal-oriented, and from a player's perspective more attractive. The Association considers international tournaments an important method for marketing cricket and attracting new players to the sport; international interest in the Cricket Association has grown since the 2018 qualifying tournament.

From the beginning of 2019 the ranking-point system for T20 international (T20I) matches has been extended to include all official matches between members of the ICC. Every match played on an approved ground will be counted in the ranking of the Finnish national team.

Finnish Men's National Squad "Finnish Bears" at the 2018 World Cup Qualifiers in the Netherlands



The Kerava Cricket Ground meets the ICC's requirements with only minor changes needed, and the Cricket Association's goal is to develop a cricket infrastructure for organizing international tournaments in the metropolitan area. This can be done, for example, in connection with the development of the Tikkurila ground, or by constructing new grass grounds with permanent wickets in the Helsinki metropolitan area. An additional ground would give the opportunity to host not only

individual matches, but also, for example, a Nordic championships and other regional tournaments. At the same time, the hosting option would provide a significant opportunity for the national team to increase its number of international matches at reasonable costs.

The men's national team will participate in the T20 World Cup qualifiers, the next of which will be held in the spring 2020. The national team's preparations for qualifying will be supported by arranging a multinational training tournament in the summer 2019. In addition, a weekend of international matches will be held against Denmark.

3.2. National Team Development

The focus of the national team coaching is on individual level skills, teamwork and physical fitness. The current national team's coaching team, which has existed for a couple of years, has succeeded in creating a culture of positive continuity and consistency to the coaching. The team has also been supported by a professional fitness expert and, from summer 2018, also by a psychological coaching student from Jyväskylä University. All of these activities will continue in 2019 as part of the preparations for the 2020 World Cup qualifying tournament.

Individual targets	Association's actions	Indicators
Individual skill development	Updating of player specific development needs analysis	yes/no
	Customized training programs for every player already for winter 2018-2019	yes/no
	Confirmation of winter training facilities (Pallomylly)	yes/no
	Search for better indoor training facilities	yes/no
Improvement of player physical performance	Continue individual fitness measurements twice per year	Every player's fitness levels has improved
	Create individual training regimes using information from the fitness measurements	yes/no
	Diary of every training session (centralized log)	yes/no
Strengthening of the team's internal activities	Team supervises its own training (amount and quality)	Does/Does Not require actions from the team management
	Improvement in the team's internal communication processes	Information is/is not distributed to all persons without delay
	Players' commitment to common goals and actions	1) Deviations/no deviations 2) Players did/did not participate in the Elite League

The best against the best - the T20 Elite League

The T20-Elite League, held for the first time in 2018, will continue. The core goal of this league is to allow Finland's best players play together in the best possible operating environment. The League does not distribute a Finnish Championship title, but it forms a key part of the national team's training, as well as an important part of the national team's individual coaching. All players in the national team play in this series together with the "best of the rest" from the national leagues. This increases the quality of the matches and takes the sport towards international standards. The league is played in a tournament format, whereby players from the national team also receive necessary tournament experience.

Young people join the national team pathway

Training for the national youth team (Under-22), which commenced in autumn 2018, will be further developed during 2019. This will create a pathway for young talented players towards international representation. A significant part of the work of a part-time junior coach is invested in this task.

4. CLUB AND ASSOCIATION DEVELOPMENT

At the end of 2018 the Finnish Cricket Association had a total of 31 member clubs, one less than in the previous year (Helsinki-based SKK and Kerava Cricket 2010 merged during 2018). The number of club members has continued to grow, and this positive development however requires higher standards for club activities and administration.

All member societies have not understood the importance of club activity in the development of the sport. For example, the growth of women's and children's/youth cricket can only be achieved with support of the clubs. Selected clubs will be supported in starting their activities in a gradual manner. Support will be offered to clubs especially for children and youth activities.

The Association is setting up a team of volunteers, and one of the main tasks of this team is to support clubs. The team works with the Association's part-time CEO, who has also been named the Cricket Association's Club Developer. A new systematic approach will be introduced in 2019 for meeting clubs, and where the focus will be on strengthening club operations. The team also mentor's clubs to help them develop their administration.

In late summer 2018 the Cricket Association decided to participate in the Finnish Olympic Committee's Tähtiseura (Star Club) project. The association introduced the project to member clubs during the autumn and from the beginning of 2019 two to three cricket clubs, with the support of the Association, will start on the Tähtiseura pathway and pilot the program within the sport of cricket. With this program, cricket clubs get the help they need to support their development. At the same time, communication between the Association and the clubs will be strengthened, firstly between a small group, and this will allow the creation of a toolkit of well tested practices.

In addition to the Tähtiseura project, during 2019 the Association will guide its member clubs to expand the use of the Suomisport portal for club management. Three member clubs of the Cricket Association are participating in the Suomisport pilot project, which began in November 2018.

Individual targets	Association's actions	Indicators
1-2 clubs participate in the Star Club (Tähtiseura) project	Support, instruction and guidance	Included/not included
Club support opportunities have been understood.	Association forwards information, supports and offers guidance	yes/no
At least one club has applied		yes/no
Clubs will be met "Face-to-Face"	The team meets every club before the end of 2020 and 50% during 2019.	yes/no
	Identify the most important organisational development areas in the meetings (jointly agreed)	yes/no
	Offer templates for administration	offered/not offered
Club coaching abilities	Arrange coaching courses	arranged/not arranged
	50% of clubs participate	50% reached/not reached

In addition, the Association encourages clubs to work together, for example when presenting the sport in public events in their local communities. This is supported, among other things, by the provision of ready-made presentation material to the clubs. Cricket has become a nationwide sport in recent years, but there is still a lot of work needed to develop public awareness. In this function clubs across the country play a particularly important role.

In the autumn of 2018, the Cricket Association has for the first time actively supported its member clubs to apply for club development support from the Ministry of Education and Culture.



5. EFFECTS ON SOCIETY

5.1. Ethical values of exercise and sport

In all its activities the Association complies with the laws in force, the rules of the International Cricket Council, and the regulations of the Ministry of Education and Culture and the Olympic Committee, as well as the "Spirit of Cricket" as it is written in the foreword of the official Laws of the game.

The association has no separate guidelines for environmental issues or sustainable development. The Kerava National Cricket Ground meets all current environmental regulations. In other grounds the majority of the environmental responsibility is borne by municipalities. On a small scale the Association aims to reduce the amount of waste generated in its events, for example by avoiding the use of single use plates, cups and cutlery.

Domestic cricket is not covered by gambling, so the risk of manipulating match results is low. The match umpires are responsible for monitoring the integrity of individual matches. The Association determines the umpires' responsibilities for each match and monitors the umpires' activities through reports submitted by team captains after the match. There have been no indications of manipulation of match results. The Alliance is working with the ICC to combat the manipulation of match results.

The Association has a functioning online reporting system for the use of umpires and team captains. A report is required after each match. The guidance highlights the need for immediate reporting of all types of offences.

5.2. International regulations binding on Finland

The Alliance has committed itself to complying with the ICC's and the Finnish Anti-Doping Codes and has appointed an Anti-Doping Officer within the organisation. Anti-doping training has been held for the national team, where the individual responsibility of each player has been highlighted. The Association has a valid anti-doping program.

5.3. Equality and equal opportunities plan

The Association has a valid equality and equal opportunities plan. The plan will be updated in 2019.

As a practical measure, equality and equal opportunities have been and will be reflected, among other things, in the fact that the Association does not support club events that are not open to all ethnic and religious groups. The board of the Association also reflects well the different groups within the sport.

Both sexes involved

Although the majority of the players in the game are men, the game is equally suitable for women and men, and the game is also played by mixed teams in Finland. The development of a female cricket is one of the main goals of the Association for 2019.

Considering cultural and religious differences

The sport has, throughout its history in Finland, been exceptionally multicultural in comparison to most other sports in Finland. Players and clubs represent a wide variety of nationalities (about 20),

religions, and social formats. Because of this multiculturalism, equality in a cricket-like sport is of central importance.

The Cricket Association adheres to the Finnish administrative culture, but the Association is aware of the cultural diversity of its members, for example by, where possible, taking into consideration the holidays of different religions and cultures during planning of the game program for the outdoor season. Likewise, diets from different religions are taken into account in the Association's events.



Supporting the integration of immigrants

The sport participates in the lowering of the cultural boundaries by having low thresholds that allow immigrants who have played the game elsewhere to take up the sport in Finland, with a wide variety of players from Finland and from different countries and backgrounds. In this way, those who have entered the country as an asylum seeker can get involved in activities that can be seen as an important part of the Finnish sports family.

Reducing regional inequalities

Although cricket is widely played around the country, the game is largely concentrated in the metropolitan area. In order to equalize opportunities for clubs outside the metropolitan area to participate in the Association's leagues, the Association will continue to use a league travel fund fee to compensate clubs for travel expenses. In the system, clubs that have to travel much more and further will receive support for their extra costs.

The association will continue its established activities to support the development of the sport throughout the country, even if the local clubs do not participate in the Association's official leagues.

6. CRICKET INFRASTRUCTURE

Cricket infrastructure development terms/objectives consist of the ground requirements set by the ICC for international matches.

6.1. Kerava National Cricket Center

The Kerava Cricket Ground is the Association's "crown jewel" and the Association will continue to invest in the ground during 2019. The Association is exploring the possibility of building light weather covers on the existing batting cages. This would extend the training period at least from early spring to late autumn. In addition, fixed sight screens are being built, which is one of the requirements set by the ICC for international matches.

Kerava ground is used for play and practice to the extent permitted by the turf surface. Using the ground as efficiently as possible is important for both sport development and the finances of the Association. In addition to international matches and league games, the ground is used for national team and club training sessions, school cricket and sponsor events, and also hosts the Association's junior camps.

The association is looking for ways to make better use of Kerava's infrastructure also during the winter season.

6.2. Tikkurila Cricket Ground

In connection with preparations for the 2018 SM-viikko, a new grass cricket ground was built in the Tikkurila Sports Park in cooperation with the City of Vantaa and the Association. The cricket-required artificial wicket was placed between two existing football pitches. In this way, the ground can be used



both by footballers and cricket enthusiasts. The ground was already in use during the end of 2018 for league matches.

In 2019, the use of the Tikkurila ground will be divided between cricket and football. Matching programs are the key to sharing. The ground will be used to the extent permitted by lawn wear.

The City of Vantaa and the Cricket Association will continue discussions that started already in 2018 to launch the necessary additional investments (batting cages, storage, etc.) required for cricket practices. Based on good-hearted discussions, it seems that at least some of the projects will be implemented in 2019.

6.3. Cricket infrastructure development

The lack of suitable infrastructure for the sport is currently a limiting factor for its growth. For this reason, the development of this area is a vital condition for the development of the sport. Good experience from multi-sport use of grass grounds, as in Vantaa, is the starting point for future projects.

Helsinki

In recent years, some of the grounds used by cricket have been abandoned in Helsinki either for safety reasons or because grounds have been used for other purposes. Discussions with the City of Helsinki, which were ongoing for years, have in late 2018 finally led to the conversion of the only gravel ground area at the Käpylä Sports Park into a ground specifically for use by cricket and baseball. This is a very positive development. Discussions about equipping the ground continue.

The ground is likely to be available during the summer 2019. The aim of the Association is to transfer matches that would have been played on smaller grounds to the new Käpylä ground, provided the groundwork completion schedule is achieved.

Other infrastructure development

In the context of the 2017 strategy work, three key areas for infrastructure development were highlighted: the possibility for batting and bowling practice during the winter season; the lack of a suitable indoor match facility; and the need to increase the number of outdoor grounds that are suitable for cricket use (grass and dimensions).

The board of the Association continues to look for a suitable space for the winter training of batters and bowlers. The best option would be a movable or removable solution to be built within an existing indoor sports hall. The goal would be to find a space where two or three parallel batting nets/cages could be installed. The main principle of the solution is that the space would be easily convertible to cricket use, and for other sports. Existing sports facilities would also provide the necessary changing and washing facilities. An alternative is to find a easily accessible rented facility only for cricket use. However, this latter option is such a great financial commitment that it does not seem feasible at this stage.

For winter indoor games we will attempt to find a facility that is more suitable than the one currently used. An ideal solution would be a location where we could install the nets needed for cage cricket. The cage solution would allow the facility to also be used by other sports. If possible, the cage would be placed in the same hall as the batting nets.

The lack of full-scale cricket grounds is a clearly limiting factor for development of the sport. In addition to sizing, the goal is to get more grass grounds (natural or artificial grass). Although there has been a positive development in the metropolitan area, there is still a significant proportion of league matches that need to be played on undersized gravel grounds.

Outside the Helsinki metropolitan area, only the Kupittaa ground in Turku has sufficient dimensions, but unfortunately it is a gravel ground. With regard to Kupittaa, discussions on developing the ground have already started with the City of Turku. Planning may begin already in 2019. The Association, together with the Turku based club, is actively supporting these plans.

The Association is in contact with at least the cities of Espoo and Tampere, so that the needs of the clubs operating there will be clearly presented and taken into consideration by the cities when carrying out future sports facility planning. The multi-sport ground solution developed in Tikkurila is a good example of how small investments can advance the sport of cricket without another sport having to suffer.

7. INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES

In 2018 the International Cricket Council (ICC) changed the sport's structure, priorities, World Cup tournament pathways, and in particular the sport's development scorecard weightings and the criteria for distributing financial support based on the said scorecard. These changes have a significant impact on the functioning of the Association.

For Finland, regional co-operation within the ICC covers the national associations of Sweden, Denmark and Norway. The major internal changes that have taken place in our neighbouring countries have slowed down the development of cooperation. The benefits of cooperation have been identified and initiatives are being taken, for example, in national team activities (Nordic Championship competitions, tournaments, etc.), in women's cricket and in junior activities, and in development of self-financing and sponsorship. The International Cricket Council's interest in developing Nordic regional cricket is a promising sign for the Association.

In recent years, cooperation with the Danish Cricket Association has worked well and efforts will be made to strengthen the development of the sport in the future. Denmark has the longest cricket history in the Nordic countries and its international level is clearly the highest in the region.

International positions of trust

The work of the Chairman of the Finnish Cricket Association, **Andrew Armitage**, in the International Cricket Council's ICC Development Committee and as the representative for the ~50 lowest ranked Associate members will continue until 2019. With the help of this important task, the Finnish Cricket Association has the possibility to network internationally and gain valuable insight into how cricket develops as a sport worldwide. Active international operations have also played an important role in ensuring financial support for the Cricket Association.

8. MARKETING AND COMMUNICATION

8.1. The goal is recognition

Increasing the awareness of the sport among Finnish sports enthusiasts is challenging. In marketing for sports and more broadly for leisure activities, cricket competes not only with traditional Finnish sports, but also with the entire digital entertainment market. Even the number of spectators that attend significant matches is only a fraction of the total audience following via live streaming services.

The Cricket Association's multi-channel marketing model is also based on the content produced by 2019 social media services and the well-deserved media publicity that comes due to natural curiosity as well as in connection with infrastructure projects.

Communication planning for the summer season is considered at all levels of the organisation. The task is to make more targeted and independent communication. Volunteer resources will be added to competition communication in order to provide more up-to-date and more understandable information for the summer season. Marketing activities coordinated by the Association typically relate to infrastructure projects, international matches, the prioritized T20-, women's- and junior cricket, the SM-viikko tournament and the summer season league finals.

Victory celebrations and nationwide visibility



The development of marketing and communications also focuses on mapping the opportunities for business cooperation. The summer season will once again gather a growing number of streaming service viewers, of which at most the share of random cricket followers will be increased. For first time viewers of cricket there will be offered a better chance to learn more about the sport.

The so far unstructured Finnish vocabulary of cricket terms will be harmonized by the translation of the key terminology. Cricket terminology is already in itself a marketing activity, because the sport is dealt with not only in the context of sport, but also in the culture, politics and entertainment news. The introduction of cricket language into the general language supports the long-term spread of the sport.



8.2. Social media and web pages

The attractiveness of Finnish cricket in social media is improved by creating more multimedia content with a better visibility than traditional text formats. Content production requires better and especially communication focused resource allocation, which shall however be managed by volunteers. The application process for skilled volunteers has been launched in late 2018.

Social media channels are increasingly used in marketing and communication. The most successful social media hits of 2017 and 2018 reached hundreds of thousands of cricket-interested followers. Especially during the main summer events, the Cricket Association actively communicates online and through social media. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and the YouTube Channel will enhance interaction with clubs, players, and other cricket friends around the world.

The Association has set a target of increasing the number of followers of social media channels by **at least 20%** in 2019. The Association will clarify the roles and objectives of its various channels and will set development and growth targets for different channels.

Updating of the Association's website will be continued in 2019. The goal is to make the information needed by the various parties more easily and obviously available. Awareness and accessibility of the sport will be improved by adding a more comprehensive Finnish information package on cricket in Finland.

8.3. Live streaming of matches

Live streaming of matches on YouTube and CricHQ has significantly improved cricket accessibility.

Matches broadcast live from Kerava cricket ground will continue. Live streaming will be further developed, within the limits of financial and human resources, by adding new microphones closer to the bowler, by commentating on selected matches, and by adding a second camera for more versatile action tracking. All cricket games played in Kerava will be broadcast live, and changes are being made to the league rules to ensure full use of the Kerava ground.

The Finnish Cricket Association is a pioneer in streaming matches. The know-how gathered over two years will be used more actively for the benefit of Associations in other countries that are also interested in live streaming, and likewise we will try to apply the experience gained from the much larger resources of larger cricket countries. Streaming significantly increases the accessibility of the sport, and both sport enthusiasts and occasional armchair athletes can enjoy top level domestic cricket and international games in Kerava, regardless of their place of residence.

9. TRAINING

Educational activities in various forms strongly support the activities of member clubs. The primary objective is to safeguard the basic training of the Association and clubs. Basic training includes cricket coaches, league umpires, and scorers, as well as the training of coaches for children and adolescents. In addition, clubs are supported in administrative development.

9.1. Umpiring and Scoring

For the 2019 summer league season we will hire an experienced external umpire whose task will especially include the training and supervision of umpires appointed by the clubs but will also officiate the most important matches in the top league levels. A separate umpiring panel, independent of league teams, will continue as in 2018. Umpires for the top-level league matches will be selected from the panel. Umpires for finals matches will be chosen from among the most experienced umpires. It is hoped that this will inspire novice umpires in their development.

An umpire at work



Umpires are the most important individuals in cricket matches. For this reason, as in previous years, the Association will continue its strong efforts to train umpires and develop their capabilities. The Association has the necessary expertise and authority to organize an international Level 1 umpire course by itself.

A 2019 umpire, who is officiating in any of the Associations official league matches (One Day, T20 or T10):

- must have passed an Association approved umpire's course (at least a beginner's course)
- a course that has been successfully passed entitles the person to remain an umpire only if the umpire has also acted as an umpire in a sufficient number of matches (activity criteria). If the activity criteria is not met, the course has to be repeated.
- The League Sub-Committee (LSC) will define the activity criteria by January 2019 to allow clubs time to plan their umpire training arrangements.
- has to carry out an annual update course (physical or online course) where changes to the rules and regulations will be studied.

In addition, in order for an umpire to officiate at the highest level, the umpire must have passed an international Level 1 umpire course and must have been actively umpiring during the previous and current seasons. The Association currently has 8 umpires trained at this level who form the Association's umpire panel. The Association is supporting the qualification of these umpires (experience, professional umpire evaluation and mentoring, etc.) so that they will be able to obtain the official international umpire certificate.

Due to the positive experiences from the weekly online meetings of the more experienced umpires who started in the summer season, the Association is organizing during the winter season a long online umpire course for club umpires who wish to develop themselves and for anyone interested in umpiring. Tutorials will be recorded for later use and will be used as material for spring refresher courses.

The Finnish Cricket Association will continue and develop its cooperation with CricHQ to further develop the electronic scoring system. This system is the most commonly used worldwide. The system has already been made suitable for live streaming of Kerava ground matches, allowing internet viewers to watch and listen to actual events in real time.

As the umpiring development path stabilizes, the association is now also focusing its attention on the training of scorers. The task of a dedicated scorer is central to the accuracy of the match result and player-specific entries. Before the beginning of the summer season, the Association will form a group of advanced scorers who will work in Premier League matches to ensure the quality of their scorecard entries. For more advanced scorers, an international pathway will also be opened for the scoring of future T20I matches in Finland.

The role of the scorers as the controllers of match preparations and post-match procedures, together with the umpires, will be emphasized by providing scorers with compensation in the same manner as for umpires. By developing scorer activities, the Association will reduce the amount of work that is currently carried out in correcting scorecards that have been made with mistakes and will again offer a new group of enthusiasts a pleasant way to be a central part of the Finnish cricket community.

9.2. Training and coaches

An essential part of the development of juniors is the presence of suitable coaches and their adequate training. This training is offered both in cooperation with various European cricket associations and through ESLU (Sports Federation of Southern Finland) that provide VOK courses (supervisor and coach training arranged by the Finnish Olympic Committee).

In 2019 the Finnish Cricket Association will train coaches and coaching orientated players by organizing workshops and basic training courses in different cities.

In addition to this basic training, the Association, in cooperation with the International Cricket Council's European department will organize top-level internationally approved training course/courses. The aim is to implement these courses in cooperation with other Nordic countries.

The aim is to strengthen coaching skills in clubs, allowing clubs to develop their own training culture. In addition, the association seeks partners through instructor training, which aims to further enhance the awareness of the sport, while seeking more talent for a school-based cooperative school project.

The Finnish Coaching Association has provided the Cricket Association with the opportunity to join a conversion training for immigrant players who are aiming at coaching (URVA). Some players from the Association have already applied for this program. The Association sees this as an excellent opportunity to increase coaching skills and encourage its players to participate.

10. ADMINISTRATION AND PERSONNEL

The Association has recognized that the scale and quality of operations cannot be improved without strengthening governance and structures. The Association's board has not been able to keep up with the strategic level, while operative management has even committed itself to the most detailed tasks and has not been able to focus on the key areas of development.

The Association will solve the described challenge by expanding the number of the volunteers involved. Working groups/teams will be set up to support effective management in at least the following areas:

- Managing the different activities of the leagues (LSC) (umpires, scorers, rules, etc.)
- Disciplinary Action
- Internal and external marketing and communication
- Club development, including women's and juniors' cricket
- National team development

The aim is that a competent team of experts in all key areas should be the backbone of a functioning management.

The CEO of the Association and the leaders of the teams described above form the Executive Team (the name will be specified further in 2019). The task of the Executive Team is to transfer the strategy of the board of directors to practical actions on the ground, thus supporting the Association's effective leadership and releasing its resources to promote key goals.

According to the Association's rules, the Association's board will determine the roles and powers of the various working groups.

Functional management is partly employed personnel. The Chairman of the association, who is also the National Development Director, has been part-time employed since 2016. The job description of the part-time Operations Director responsible for operational functions remains unchanged.

Growing junior activities and school projects will be managed in 2019 by adding salary resources to these tasks. In 2019, the Association will continue one of its key objectives which is to provide support to member clubs. This means both development of coaching, women's cricket, and junior activities, as well as provision of education and documentation support for development of club management. The development of coaching, women's cricket, and junior activities also requires additional investment in existing human resources.

As in previous years, a part-time ground keeper will be hired for the Kerava Cricket Centre during the summer season (April to October).

The Association's board members make active and valuable volunteer work to advance the work of the Association. Similarly, the professional management team that has supported the national team has worked on a voluntary basis.

The Cricket Association's office is located in the Sporttitalo in a shared office space with a few other small Associations. The Sporttitalo premises and new operating models will continue to increase collaboration between sports and reduce management costs.

Individual targets	Association's actions	Indicators
Volunteers found for key operations	Start application process by 2019	yes/no
	Teams to be formed by the end of March 2019	yes/no
	Management team established and its duties and mandates have been specified by March 2019	yes/no
The Association's operations shall be more structured	An "Annual Activity Clock" has been prepared before the next AGM	yes/no
	Requirements and timetable for the "Annual Activity Clock" have been distributed to the community	yes/no

11. FINNISH CRICKET'S STRATEGY COMMENCING 2017

During the winter of 2016-2017, the Finnish Cricket Association carried out a comprehensive survey, which formed the basis for the strategy of the Association in the next few years. The survey was carried out with a comprehensive set of interviews (Association's active members, stakeholders, etc.) supplemented with a full questionnaire sent to all members and licensed players. Based on this work, the report was presented to the members at the 2017 Annual General Meeting, where members approved the report and its recommendations as priorities and key development points for the next few years.

Based on the above, the **mission** of the Finnish Cricket Association is **to make cricket a respected, successful, easy-to-reach and fun sport in Finland.**

The **vision** of the Finnish Cricket Association is:

- Finnish top-level cricket shall be of a high standard at the highest level of the league as well as in the national team
- The national team wins matches and inspires other players and those interested in the sport
- The sport is easy to reach and fun. A suitable format shall be found for each player (age, skill, gender).
- The sport reaches both Finns and immigrants
- The management of the sport is based on paid staff and is organized in a robust and sufficiently reliable manner, so that administration does not rely solely on a few committed volunteers.

Finland is seeking to become one of the best European countries in the International Cricket Council and the aim is to reach the T20 World Cup through the qualifying tournament.

The Cricket Association's **operational strategy**:

Key projects highlighted during the survey:

- The goal of administrative development is to differentiate the Association's strategic leadership from day-to-day operations
 1. A new board was elected in spring 2017 with a more strategic perspective
 2. Better representation of clubs and regions
 3. Two-year operational period (2017-2019)
 4. Direct and supervise the operational management of the Association
 5. Solve key questions
 6. The first steps towards full-time paid operative management have been taken
- Infrastructure development
 1. The three most important issues to be developed:
 - i. Possibilities for batting and bowling training

- ii. Indoor match facility
- iii. Additional suitable cricket grounds (dimensions and grass surface)

- Cricket gets its viewpoints heard better and wider than before and at both national and local levels
- Professionalization of functional operational management and administration

In addition to the issues that emerged from the 2017 survey, the Association will incorporate in its operational strategy from previous years those sections that are still of central importance. These include:

- The Association will continue to work to strengthen member clubs. The activities focus on developing club management, increasing membership numbers, and expanding clubs for example in junior coaching and women's cricket.
- The Association will also continue as an Association for the development of junior activities. The goal is to have junior leagues that form a pathway to age group national teams.

Finnish Cricket Association 29.11.2018



