

Welcome all to our Annual General Meeting

This has been the year of the Zonals culminating in the 9<sup>th</sup> African Zonal competition held at the President hotel this past week.

Egypt made a clean sweep, winning all three categories.

South Africa's Open and Senior team took second place and they will be playing in the Bermuda Bowl and D'Orsi Cup in Lyon France this coming August.

It is impossible to sufficiently thank our Cape Town zonal team. You guys were incredible and really you **should** be running the country.

It was headed by Tim Cope and a fireball by the name of Jocelyn Ashberg. Nothing, but nothing was left to chance. Now, I must do something I dread, in case I inadvertently leave someone out, but there was a whole team that worked miracles.

Thank you in no particular order to:

Shirley Kaminer, Steve bunker, Malcolm Siegel, Ann Sturrock, Hilary Nick, John Bryant and Andrew Cruise,

Also to the Vugraph operators: Lotte, Claire, Di, Rob Sulcas and James

Shirley Karon, Jeanette Sewitz, Jackie Solovei and Harold Bernstein, who manned the hospitality desk

None of this could have been achieved without their amazing dedication.

As for congress, once again my grateful thanks to Kitty Cruise and Hilary Nick who worked tirelessly to make this congress the success that it is.

Needless to say, we are ever grateful for the enormous amount of work put in by Roz Bernstein, our ever vigilant treasurer and Peter Bircher for all the behind the scenes work . A big thank you to our tournament directors Jan, Sid, Neil and Stephen.

We have had some interesting meetings with SASCOC and I have realised that if we are to get benefit from this organisation it is vitally important that we form a close bond with our provincial sports councils. The provincial sports councils will assist us if we only take the time and effort to join their organisation. Diana has gone to enormous lengths to give all the unions the contact details.. Please use them - Cape Town has - with great success thanks to Hilary.

My thanks go to the 'trials committee' which was formed as a result of a proposal at the last AGM. The recommendations of this committee, chaired by Graham Burrows, were put into effect at the last trials.

Later on this year we need to hold trials for the Commonwealth games to be held in Gold Coast, Australia in February next year. We will be sending one team and for these trials, we will not be using the trials criteria allowing all players the opportunity to enter. The format is still to be decided.

James Grant and Ann Sturrock have worked tirelessly to make our website more interactive and James will give us a report on the progress as well as his vision for the coming years.

At this point I would like to raise the matter which has been of concern to me in recent years; that of the Interprovincial tournament.

In bygone years, this tournament was a prestigious event as we were excluded from international competition. However, things have changed. It has become increasingly difficult for provinces to field 1 let alone 2 teams. The cost incurred by both players and provinces has become very onerous.

I would like to open discussion regarding the viability of this event.

My thanks go to my entire committee for all the support this past year, and I wish to thank Lindi Honey and Kathy Driver who will be leaving for their valuable contribution.

Helen Kruger