

**President's Report to the Members of the Australian Polo Council
Presented on Wednesday, 5 November 2008**

Dear Delegates

It gives me great pleasure to present my fourth report to you as President of the Australian Polo Council.

2007/8 has been an active year for polo in Australia and the Australian Polo Council in particular.

On the polo field we contested five internationals with mixed, but close results:

In December 2007 a 20 goal team comprising:

Will Gilmore
Robert Archibald
Glen Gilmore
Damien Johnson lost by one
goal to Chile, in Santiago.

In March 2008 a 13 goal team traveled to Mumbai to play India. Unfortunately we lost.
The team comprised:

Callum McLachlan
Gillon McLachlan
Stirling McGregor
Dick Doolin

In mid March an Australian team played an Argentine team at the Royal Easter Show in Sydney before a crowd of 15,000. The 3 a-side team was:

Ed Archibald
Glen Gilmore
Kelvin Johnson

Later in March we fielded our strongest team (at 25 goals) to take on and narrowly defeat off the stick, a 28 goal New Zealand team at Windsor Polo Club outside Sydney. The Australasian Gold Cup was awarded to the Australian team comprised of:

Robert Archibald
Ruki Baillieu
Glen Gilmore
Damien Johnson

In July 2008 Australia played England for the Coronation Cup at Guards Polo Club, outside London. The crowd was estimated at 20,000. Unfortunately, this time we were unsuccessful, though only by one goal. The Australian team was:

Robert Archibald
Ruki Baillieu
Glen Gilmore
Damien Johnson

The fact that in all but one of these matches, the goal margin was only one goal, indicates that at the elite level, Australian handicaps are consistent with international standards.

Our elite players have shown a great deal of commitment to represent their country. We must ensure that do all that we can to preserve the integrity of our selection system.

This year the APC has also been very active in the administration field. The main achievement was being granted recognition status by the Australian Sports Commission. This is a vital step toward our objective of bringing the game of polo up to contemporary standards of risk management, access to funding and creation of an environment that will encourage growth of the sport at the grass roots level.

In meeting the standards to achieve ASC recognition, we have had to form a not for profit company, which has taken over the activities of the former unincorporated joint venture structure. For ease of accounting the transfer to the new entity was affected at year end. Accordingly, the 30 June 2008 accounts to be presented to you today by our Treasurer, Wallace Ashton, show the final position of the joint venture immediately prior to transfer of its affairs to the new company on 1 July.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Wallace for his contribution in keeping the financial affairs of the APC on the straight and narrow.

I believe the next step for us is to adopt a common registration system across the country. We are currently quite exposed by the cumbersome procedures needed to legally bind all the players, and the entities involved in polo administration, to a common deed or agreement that would withstand legal action. We are also constantly "burning out" volunteer helpers whose goodwill is severely put to the test by recalcitrant late payers and generally disorganized players and clubs.

Our difficulties are not unique to polo. Most sports have similar problems. This year I propose that we investigate and implement an on-line administration system which would pass a substantial component of the administrative burden back to players. We will hear more about this later in the meeting.

Implementation of on-line player registration will increase the workload of the APC marginally, and reduce the workload of the state associations significantly. It will also involve the APC having a much more direct relationship with clubs and even players. Consequently, I believe this may be a good time to consider a re-organization of polo into zones, which would more closely reflect polo activity.

In closing I would like to acknowledge the tremendous work done by our administrative team. Suzy who is on maternity leave. Jenny Herz who was so helpful and pro-active in developing the documentation for ASC recognition. And finally but certainly not least, Amanda Jansen who has so competently picked up all the loose ends, patiently prodded me to respond to any number of emails and handled it all with grace and enthusiasm.

Thank you Delegates for your support through the year.

Leon Reardon