

Our sportsmen and sportswomen are our dearest and most valuable assets. For the first time in the Club's history, we have now an **Insurance Scheme** for all fully paid up Sportsmen & Sportswomen. This would not have been possible if not for the team led by the Hon Treasurer, Mr. R. Mahendran.

I would also like to thank Mr. Cyril Fernando for his conscientious effort in preparing articles with the other contributors for our CSC Newsletters; and for the great help in putting together our CSC Millennium Magazine.

All these people including my other Management Committee Members, Advisors, Hon Auditors, Sub-Committee Members have played a very important role this last one year.

The future of the Ceylon Sports Club cannot thrive on the old set ways of doing things if the Club is serious about attracting more good members and committed professionals.

Old strategies may have worked well in the past when people seemed to have more time.

It must be driven by innovation with new ideas. As our PM had recently mentioned, this spirit of innovation must permeate every level and every sphere of our activities.

Ours will always be a family-oriented, traditional Sports Club. The elders of our community will always be welcome and have a respected, revered place in our Club. But we must at all cost, attract the youth of our community as well; and hence the coaching clinics and our efforts at approaching the various schools. Our youth are our future. The CSC is not a Club for a select few. We must NOT have the misguided passion with special interests, merely playing to the gallery-if you have ideas and if you are prepared to serve, then please come forward. The CLUB needs you.

On a more somber note, I ask all members here today to spare a few minutes to reminisce and

reflect on the Club's achievements and on how much more we could together achieve if we can all focus our energies on constructive, tangible and quantifiable programmes.

BUT it will be a sad day for the Club, if we cannot attract better people to run the Club. Allow me to reiterate that if any endeavour is good for the Club, and not for some sectional interests, members, the majority of whom I have full faith in, will support you.

We want people with proven track records and capability to steer us along; and who will ensure that there will not be any abuse of Club's funds, or use them for dubious programmes and entertain themselves at the Club's expenses.

As Bill Cosby once said, "I do not know what the keys to success are, but I sure know what the Key to failure is. It's when you try to please everybody."

Today marks the watershed. You, the members will be the ultimate deciding factor, where you want the Club to go — upwards or downwards. You will decide today, whether we continue to bring in more talented people to run the Club, or to go back to the days where we were in the red, and when there seems to be no clear direction where the Club is proceeding.

It will also be sad if we succumb to cheap popularity and tolerate mismanagement.

Yes my dear members, you are too intelligent for that. The destiny of the Club for the new Millennium is within your precious hands. You and your dear children — our children — will be the ultimate beneficiaries of the policies of the Club.

We have to SERIOUSLY consider self - renewal with good and young candidates.

Now, as much as my team and I are deeply grateful to our past leaders, I would like to end this speech with a relevant quotation:

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed people can change the world. Indeed it is the only thing that ever has. One person can make the difference; and every person should try."

Thank You.