

# Unicorns Counties Championship

## Competition Rules

### 1 Structure

The Counties participating in the Championship shall be placed in two Divisions, East and West. Each County shall play six three day matches, 3 at home and 3 away. Fixture dates shall be set by the MCCA Management Committee but, with the exception of the final Round of matches, these may be adjusted by the Home County subject to the approval of the Management Committee.

### 2 Qualification Of Players

- 2.1 The ECB Regulations governing the Qualification and Registration of cricketers in First Class County Cricket shall apply, subject to the overriding discretion of the MCCA Management Committee, with the following exceptions.
- 2.2 No player 'not qualified for England' shall be eligible to participate in the Competition
- 2.3 Each County shall be restricted to playing in any one Championship match not more than one current or former First Class player who has been in receipt of a First Class County Cap, or is uncapped but has played a total of 40 or more games consisting of any of the following: First Class County Championship matches, Test matches home and abroad, Representative matches home and abroad recognized as First Class matches, and First Class matches abroad. (For clarity: matches involving University teams do not count toward the total of 40, regardless of which side the player was representing.)
- 2.4 A player may only represent one Minor County in any one season whether in the same or different competitions.

- 2.5 No player shall be eligible to participate in the fifth and sixth rounds of the Championship matches or the Championship Final if during that season he is or has been registered for a First Class County unless he is registered for that Minor County at least 14 clear days prior to the date scheduled for the first day of that Minor County's fifth round Championship match. Likewise no player shall be eligible to play in the Quarter Final, Semi Final and Final of the Unicorns Counties Knock-Out Competition if during that season he is or has been registered for a First Class County unless he is registered for that Minor County at least 14 clear days prior to the date scheduled for the Quarter Finals.
- 2.6 The overriding discretion of the Management Committee shall also apply to these exceptions.
- 2.7 Any County who plays a player in a Championship match in contravention of the foregoing Rules shall forfeit any points earned from that match.

### 3 Points Scoring

- 3.1 For a win in a two innings match, sixteen points, together with any bonus points scored in the first innings. The losing side shall retain any bonus points it has gained, but shall receive no other points.
- 3.2 In a tied match, all relevant innings having been completed, each side shall receive eight points, together with any bonus points scored in the first innings.
- 3.3 In a drawn match, each side to score four points, together with any bonus points scored in the first innings.
- 3.4 If the scores are equal in a drawn match, the side batting in the fourth innings shall receive eight points, plus any points scored in the first innings. The other side shall receive four points, together with any bonus points scored in the first innings.
- 3.5 A maximum of 4 first innings batting points shall be awarded on the basis of one point at each of the following totals: 175, 225, 275 and, 325.

- 3.6 A maximum of 4 first innings bowling points shall be awarded on the basis of one point each for the 3rd, 5th, 7th and 9th wicket actually taken.
- 3.7 If play has not commenced before 4.40pm on the second day (in which event a one innings match shall be played) no first innings points shall be scored. The side winning on the one innings to score 12 points, and the losing side 4 points. In a tie each side to score (8) points. In the event of a draw in a 1 innings match in which both sides have batted a minimum of 20 overs each, unless a side is dismissed in fewer overs, the points awarded shall be 8 points each but if both sides have not batted a minimum of 20 overs, unless a side is dismissed in fewer overs, both sides shall score 6 points.
- 3.8 A two-innings match shall count as a No Result if it is abandoned before the first innings of the side batting second has started.. Each side shall receive 8 points and no bonus points shall be awarded.
- 3.9 Points shall be deducted for slow over rates in accordance with Playing Condition 22.
- 3.10 No bonus points shall be awarded in the Final.

### 4 Divisional Winners

- 4.1 The Counties which shall have obtained the greatest number of points shall be reckoned to be the winners of each Division.
- 4.2 If two or more Counties in a Division are equal on points, preference shall be given to that County which shall have won the greater number of completed matches.
- 4.3 If two or more Counties in a Division are equal on points and have also won the same number of completed matches, their positions in the table shall be based on the higher Nett Run Rate.

**Note.** A team's Nett Run Rate is calculated by deducting from the average runs per over scored by that team, the average runs per over scored against that team. All the

team's matches in the Championship, except for No Result matches will count for the purposes of Nett Run Rate. For the avoidance of doubt: the calculation shall be based on the number of legitimate balls received and bowled.

## 5 Champion County

The two Counties which have won each Division shall play each other in a 4-day match to decide the Championship, on a ground chosen by MCCA. The side which wins the match outright shall become Champions. In the event of the match being drawn the Championship shall be shared. The conditions for the generality of matches shall apply to the Final save where special overriding conditions relating to the Final are contained in the Playing Conditions.

## 6 Match Referees and Umpires

- 6.1 The arrangements for the selection and appointment of Umpires shall be in the hands of MCCA.
- 6.2 The MCCA may, in its absolute discretion, appoint a Match Referee for any Championship match, including the Final, as it considers appropriate. Match Referees will act as instructed by MCCA.
- 6.3 The Umpires shall report themselves to the Manager of the ground ONE HOUR before the scheduled starting time on each day.

## 7 Administration

- 7.1 At the end of each match both scorers shall sign an official Result Sheet which the Home County shall return to the MCCA Competitions Secretary, as set out on the form, within 24 hours.
- 7.2 The Management Committee retains ultimate discretion over the Regulations for MCCA Competitions and Playing Conditions and shall be entitled at any time to amend, vary, or add to them on reasonable notice to

interested parties as well in exceptional or urgent circumstances when the MCCA shall be entitled to immediately do so upon notification to the interested parties. In the event that any such decision is made on the day of or during a match in relation to which a Referee has been appointed the decision shall be notified to the Referee who shall give the notification to the interested parties.

- 7.3 In the case of exceptional or urgent circumstances as referred to in 7.2. the powers of the Management Committee may be exercised on its behalf by the Chairman of Cricket, or if he is not available or is conflicted, by the Competition Secretary, or if he is not available or is conflicted, by the Chairman or by a Member of the Management Committee nominated by the Chairman.
- 7.4 Players selected for Championship matches must participate throughout the match unless prevented from doing so by a genuine and unforeseen emergency. Specifically, no player may play in another match during a Championship match, if this prevents him from participating fully in the Championship match.

# Unicorns Counties Championship

## Playing Conditions

1 Except as provided hereafter, the current edition of the 2000 Code of the Laws of Cricket shall apply.

### 2 Duration of Matches

2.1 Matches shall be scheduled to be of three days' duration, and the first innings of each team shall be limited to a maximum of 90 overs.

2.2 If play has not started by 4.40pm on the second day the match shall become a 1 innings per side match provided that, if the game has not started at or before 12 noon on the third day (or in the case of the Final, the fourth day) the match shall be abandoned. The Referee or, if there is no Referee, the Umpires (the decision being final) shall (after such consultations as the Referee or Umpires as the case may be shall consider appropriate) decide the total number of overs likely to be left in the game after taking into account weather prospects, ground conditions, lunch and tea intervals and the deduction of 3 overs for the changeover of innings. The game will then proceed on the basis that this re-calculated figure will be the maximum number of overs to be bowled but subject to play ceasing at 6.30pm on the 3rd day except to complete an over in progress at that time (play shall cease when the maximum number of overs have been bowled, notwithstanding that this may be before 6.30pm). Fractional overs shall count as completed overs. The team batting first shall not exceed 60% of the available overs left in the game (as previously determined). If there are any further interruptions in play the scheduled number of overs shall not be re-calculated. In the event that the game becomes a 1 innings match a new toss shall take place before the start (replacing any previous toss that may have taken place).

### 3 Hours of play

3.1 For 3 day games the normal hours of play shall be as follows: On each of the first two days 11.00 am – 7.00pm, or after 110 overs have been bowled, whichever is the later; on the third day 11.00 am to 5.30 pm or after 85 overs have been bowled whichever is the later, from which point there shall be a further hour's play or 17 overs whichever is the later. The total number of hours of actual scheduled playing time in each match shall be 20½. Where there is a change of innings at any time during a day's play 3 overs shall be deducted from the maximum number of overs to be bowled for each change of innings during the day (except where the change occurs during a scheduled lunch or tea interval); no overs are deducted for forfeited innings.

3.2 In the event of play being suspended on one or more occasions on the first or second day by reason of the weather or ground conditions the actual playing time lost shall be made good by extending the scheduled closing time, subject to a total maximum of 30 minutes or 8 overs whichever is the later, and subject also to the cut off time referred to hereafter.

3.3 If 30 minutes or more of the time lost on the first day remain outstanding at the end of any permitted extension thereof then the starting time for play on the second day shall be advanced to 10.30 am. After 110 overs have been bowled (subject to any permitted reduction in overs for change of innings) play shall then continue (so far as possible) until the time brought forward from the first day has been utilised, subject to the cut off time referred to in 3.4. In such cases the Umpires may re-schedule the intervals in accordance with 3.11. If at the end of the second day a total of 30 minutes or more of the time lost on the first and/or second day remain outstanding then the starting time for play on the third day shall be advanced to 10.30 am and the scheduled close of play shall be 5.30 pm or after 93 overs (subject to any permitted deduction for change of innings) whichever is the later from which point there shall be a further 1 hours play or 17 overs whichever is the greater.

**Note** In applying the carry forward provisions to the second and third day referred to in this clause account shall only be taken of "time lost" on the first and/or second day and not "overs not bowled".

3.4 Notwithstanding any of the above regulations, on the first and second days no play shall take place after 7.30pm (irrespective of the starting time) except to complete an over in progress at that time unless a batsman is out, or retires, either within 2 minutes of, or after, that time.

3.5 For every 3 ½ minutes of playing time lost on Day 3 due to adverse playing conditions the minimum numbers of overs to be bowled shall be reduced by one.

3.6 The Captains may agree or, in the event of disagreement, the Umpires may decide to play 30 minutes (a minimum of 8 overs) extra time at the end of the first and second days' play if, in their opinion, it would bring about a definite result on that day. If it is decided to play extra time on either or both of these days, the whole period shall be played out even though the possibility of finishing the match may have disappeared before the full period has expired. The time by which play is scheduled to be extended shall be deducted from the total number of hours' play remaining in the match, and the match shall end earlier on the last day i.e. the time for the close of play shall be brought forward by 30 minutes (if extra time is played on either the first or second day) or one hour (if extra time is played on both the first and second days) and the minimum number of overs prior to the close of play shall be correspondingly reduced by 8 or 16 overs respectively. The cut off time referred to in 3.4 shall not operate so as to prevent the playing or completion of the extra 30 minutes (or a minimum of 8 overs) where this is invoked.

3.7 In the event of a suspension of play caused by serious injury to a player or by other external events unconnected with the weather or ground conditions the Umpires shall, at their discretion, have the power to extend the time for

close of play by an amount equal to that lost by the suspension but not beyond the cut off time referred to in 3.4. This provision, which applies equally to any day of a three day match shall, however, apply only where the suspension of play (for any one incident) amounts to 3 minutes or more. The Umpires having decided upon such an extension of play shall immediately inform both captains and the Ground Authority.

3.8 The minimum number of overs remaining to be bowled in the day shall be shown on the scoreboard.

3.9 Play may cease on the final day up to one hour earlier than the scheduled time for cessation of play by mutual agreement of the Captains: or, in the absence of such agreement, on the authority of the Umpires. For clarity, if the original scheduled finish time is 5.30pm, it may be agreed to finish at 5.30pm, even if more than 17 overs remain to be bowled.

#### **Luncheon Interval**

3.10 If a wicket falls in the final over of the day then Law 16.5(b) shall apply.

3.11 The Lunch Interval shall be of 40 minutes duration and shall be taken at 1.20pm.

#### **Tea Interval**

3.12 The Tea Interval shall be of 20 minutes duration and shall be taken at 4.20pm, subject to the Laws of Cricket.

#### **Intervals – Timing**

3.13 The timing of the luncheon and/or tea intervals may be varied by the umpires owing to the weather or the state of the ground but neither the luncheon nor the tea interval may be dispensed with. Law 15.10 shall not apply. Where any intervals are rearranged the umpires shall give priority to ensuring that the sessions of play are as near equal as is practicable.

## Intervals – Ringing of the Bell

- 3.14 The bell shall be rung five minutes before the start of play and before the termination of an interval, when the Umpires shall go to the wickets. Unless otherwise agreed in advance with the Ground Authority, the ringing of the bell shall be the responsibility of the Umpires.

## 4 The Final

- 4.1 When the first day of the Final falls in August, the hours of play on Days 1, 2 and 3 shall be 11.00am – 7.00pm. On Day 4 the hours shall be 11.00am – 5.30pm or after 85 overs have been bowled, whichever is the later, from which point there shall be a further hour's play or 17 overs, whichever is the later. When the first day of the Final falls in September, all these times shall be advanced by 30 minutes.

- 4.2 This clause shall only apply when the first day of the Final falls in August. If 30 minutes or more of time lost on Day 1 and/or Day 2 remain outstanding at the end of either day, play on the following day shall start at 10.30am. If 30 or more minutes of time lost on the first three days remain outstanding at the end of Day 3, the hours on Day 4 shall be 10.30am – 5.30pm or after 93 overs have been bowled, whichever is the later, from which point there shall be a further hour's play or 17 overs, whichever is the later.

- 4.3 The minimum number of overs on Day 4 shall be reduced by three for each change of innings, except when it occurs during a scheduled interval or a suspension of play due to adverse playing conditions.

- 4.4 For every 3 ½ minutes of playing time lost on Day 4 due to adverse playing conditions the minimum numbers of overs to be bowled shall be reduced by one.

- 4.5 On Day 4, the minimum number of overs remaining to be bowled shall be shown on the scoreboard.

- 4.6 On Days 1, 2 or 3 the Captains may agree or, in the event of disagreement, the Umpires may decide, to play 30

minutes (a minimum of 8 overs) extra time, if that is likely to produce a result on that day. If it is decided to play extra time on any day, the whole period shall be played out even though the possibility of finishing the match may have disappeared before the full period has expired; in such an event, for each extra 30 minutes played, the time before the last hour on Day 4 shall be brought forward by 30 minutes and the minimum number of overs to be bowled before it commences shall be reduced by 8.

- 4.7 Play may cease on the final day up to 60 minutes earlier than the scheduled time for cessation of play by mutual agreement of the Captains or, in the absence of such agreement, on the authority of the Umpires. For clarity, if the original scheduled finish time is 5.30pm, it may be agreed to finish at 5.30pm, even if more than 17 overs remain to be bowled.

- 4.8 Should Days 1 and 2 be abandoned to the weather and the match become a 2-day game the restriction on the number of overs per side on the first innings shall be reduced to 50; the deficit for the follow-on (subject to the innings of the team batting second having been completed as defined in Clause 26) shall be 100.

- 4.9 In the event of the match not having started before 2.20pm on Day 3 the match shall become a 1 innings per side game and similar provisions to those contained in Clause 2.2 shall apply.

- 4.10 Clauses 3.9-3.14 shall apply.

- 4.11 This clause shall apply only to the first three innings and shall not apply in a 1-innings match. In the event of the fielding side failing to bowl at an over rate of 17 overs per hour throughout each innings measured over the entire innings the batting side shall be credited with 6 runs at the end of that innings for every over that has not been bowled (to be adjudicated by the Match Referee after consulting the Umpires and scorers with no right of appeal. If there is no Match Referee the Umpires shall make the decision). This penalty shall only apply to an

innings in which 34 or more overs have been bowled. In making the calculations the provisions and procedures in 22.3 shall apply.

**Note:** The over rate penalties are calculated as follows;

- 1) Including time allowances for wickets and other qualifying interruptions, calculate what the finish time should have been at 17 overs per hour – giving X;
- 2) Subtract X from the actual finish time – giving Y;
- 3) Calculate how many complete overs would be bowled during Y at 17 overs per hour – giving Z;
- 4) Multiply Z by 6 – giving the penalty runs to be awarded.

## 5 New Ball

The Captain of the fielding side shall have the choice of taking the new ball after 90 overs have been bowled with the old one.

## 6 Covering of the Pitch

The whole pitch, plus ten yards behind the stumps at each end, shall be covered as follows

- 6.1 The night before the match and, if necessary, until the first ball is bowled, and whenever necessary at any time prior to that during the preparation of the pitch.
- 6.2 At any time when play is suspended due to rain or conditions of light during the hours of play, and on the nights of the first and second days.
- 6.3 The covers to be 12 feet wide.

**NOTE.** After cessation of play on the first and second (and in the Final the third) day the Umpires shall ensure that the minimum covering of the pitch and surrounding areas, as laid down in this Playing Condition, and any necessary renovation of foot holes, has been carried out to their satisfaction. Such renovation may also take place wherever possible and whenever it is considered necessary during any interval in play.

## 7 Drying of pitch and ground

Prior to tossing for choice of innings the artificial drying of the pitch and outfield shall be at the discretion of the Groundsman. Thereafter and throughout the match the drying of the outfield may be undertaken at any time by the Groundsman, but the drying of the pitch shall be carried out only on the instructions and under the supervision of the Umpires. The Umpires shall be empowered to have the pitch dried without reference to the Captains at any time they are of the opinion that it is unfit for play. The Umpires may instruct the Groundsman to use any equipment, including any roller, for the purposes of drying the pitch and making it fit for play. Following the artificial drying of the pitch, the Captain of the batting side shall not have the right to select the roller prior to the resumption of play, but the Umpires may decide on the use of a roller if they think fit.

## 8 Law 2 – Substitutes

In place of Law 2.1 the following shall apply:

- 8.1 In normal circumstances, a substitute shall be allowed to field only for a player who satisfies the Umpire that he has been injured or become ill during the match. However, in very exceptional circumstances, the Umpires may use their discretion to allow a substitute for a player who has to leave the field or does not take the field for other wholly acceptable reasons, subject to consent being given by the opposing Captain. Any abuses of this concession should be reported by the Umpires. If a player wishes to change his shirt, boots, etc., he may leave the field to do so (no changing on the field) but no substitute shall be allowed.
- 8.2 In addition to the above Regulations and as an exception to it, a substitute shall be allowed by right immediately in the event of a dually registered cricketer currently playing in a Minor Counties match being required to join a First Class team. Such substitute shall be permitted to bat and bowl in that match. The cricketer who is substituted

shall take no further part in that match even though he may not be required to play for the First Class County. If he is batting at the time he is required to leave the match, he shall retire "not out" and his substitute shall be permitted to bat later in that innings.

**8.3** In place of Law 2.5 (Fielder absent or leaving the field), the following shall apply:

If a fielder fails to take the field with his side at the start of the match or at any later time, or leaves the field during a session of play, the umpire shall be informed of the reason for his absence, and he shall not thereafter come on to the field during a session of play without the consent of the umpire. The umpire shall give such consent as soon as practicable. If the player is absent from the field for longer than 15 minutes, the following restrictions shall apply to their future participation in the match:

- (i) The player shall not be permitted to bowl in the match until he has either been able to field, or his team has subsequently been batting, for the total length of playing time for which he was absent (hereafter referred to as penance time), subject to a maximum cumulative penance time of 120 minutes. If any unexpired penance time remains at the end of an innings, it is carried forward to the next and subsequent innings of the match.
- (ii) The player shall not be permitted to bat in the match until his team's batting innings has been in progress for the length of playing time that is equal to the unexpired penance time carried forward from the previous innings, subject to a maximum cumulative penance time of 120 minutes. However, once his side has lost five wickets in its batting innings, he may bat immediately. If any unexpired penance time remains at the end of that batting innings, it is carried forward to the next and subsequent innings of the match.

For the purposes of (i) and (ii) above, playing time shall comprise the time play is in progress excluding lunch and tea intervals, intervals between innings and official drinks intervals. For clarity, a player's penance time will

continue to expire after he is dismissed, for the remainder of his team's batting innings.

The restriction in (i) and (ii) above shall not apply if the player has suffered an external blow (as opposed to an internal injury such as a pulled muscle) whilst participating earlier in the match and has consequently been forced to leave the field or is consequently unable to take the field. External blow should be interpreted broadly to include, but not restricted to, such things as collisions with boundary boards, clashes of heads, heavy falls, etc. Nor shall the restriction apply if the player has been absent for very exceptional and wholly acceptable reasons (other than injury or illness). In the event of a player already being off the field at the commencement of an interruption in play through ground, weather or light conditions, he shall be allowed to count any such stoppage time as playing time, provided that he personally informs the umpires when he is fit enough to take the field had play been in progress.

Similarly, if at the commencement of an interruption in play through ground, weather or light conditions or for other exceptional circumstances, a player is on the field but still has some unexpired penalty time remaining from a previous absence, he shall automatically be allowed to count any such stoppage time as playing time provided he returns to the field of play immediately after the interruption.

**8.4** Law 2.6 (Player returning without permission)

Law 2.6 shall apply except that the reference to Law 2.5(b) shall be taken to refer to Playing Condition 8.3.

**9** **Law 3.1 – The Umpires – Appointment and attendance**

Law 3.1 shall be replaced by:

The umpires shall report themselves to the Ground Authority by 10.00am at the latest on the first day of the match and, by mutual agreement with each other, one

Umpire shall report by 9.30am at the latest and the other by 10.00am on succeeding days. (These timings shall be advanced by 30 minutes in respect of the Championship Final when the scheduled first day is in September).

## 10 Law 3.8 – Fitness of Ground, Weather and Light

In the event of it being apparent that no play will be possible because the ground and/or pitch are unfit, an alternative venue shall be permissible, subject to the agreement of both Counties.

## 11 Law 3.15 – Correctness of scores

Law 3.15 shall apply. For the avoidance of doubt, a team innings score may only be corrected where necessary prior to the commencement of the subsequent team innings of the match.

## 12 Law 5 – The Ball

12.1 Grade 1 with seams conforming to the specifications laid down by the ECB shall be used, and spare balls for changing during a match shall be of the same brand.

### 12.2 Law 5.5 – Ball Lost or Becoming Unfit for Play

The Umpires may deem a ball that has become wet and soggy or unusually soft to be ‘unfit for play’. Either bowler or batsman may raise the matter with the Umpires and the Umpires’ decision as to a replacement or otherwise shall be final.

## 13 Law 6 – The Bat

In addition to Law 6 the blade of the bat shall have a conventional “flat” face. Only Type A bats shall be used.

## 14 Law 7.3 – Selection and preparation of the Pitch

Law 7.3 shall apply, but in addition: Captains, Umpires and Groundsmen should co operate to ensure that, prior to the start of a match, no player bounces a ball on the

pitch or strikes it with a bat to assess its condition or for any other reason, or causes damage to the pitch in any other way.

## 15 Law 10.1(c) – Choice of rollers

Law 10.1(c) is replaced by:

A light roller must be available. If more than one roller is available, the Captain of the batting side shall choose which roller, if any, is to be used. Before the toss, the Umpires shall establish what rollers are available and shall advise the Captains accordingly at the toss.

## 16 Law 15 – Intervals

### 16.1 Law 15.9 Intervals for Drinks

Law 15.9 shall apply with the addition that individual drinks may be brought to the edge of the field at other times provided that there is no wastage of playing time.

16.2 The Umpires may decide to play 15 minutes extra time at the scheduled lunch or tea interval of any day if requested by either captain if, in the Umpires’ opinion, it would bring about a definite result in that session. If the umpires do not believe a result can be achieved no extra time shall be allowed. If it is decided to play such extra time, the whole period shall be played out which may include, if applicable, 10 minutes for a change of innings. Only the actual amount of playing time up to the maximum 15 minutes extra time by which play is extended on any day shall be deducted from the total number of hours of play remaining, and the following session of play shall be reduced by the amount of time by which play was previously extended under this clause.

## 17 Law 19 – Boundaries

17.1 In addition to Law 19.1 (c), if a spectator or similar person enters the playing area and comes into contact with the ball whilst it is in play, the Umpire at the bowler’s end shall be the sole judge of whether the boundary

allowance should be scored or the ball be treated as still in play or called dead ball if a batsman is liable to be out as a result of the unauthorised person coming into contact with the ball whilst it is in play.

- 17.2 In addition to Law 19.6, subsequent to a boundary being scored, there shall be no scope for review of the number of runs scored from that boundary after the next ball comes into play or Time has been called.

## 18 Law 24 – No Ball

### 18.1 No Ball – Mode of Delivery

Law 24.1 will apply, except that the bowler may not deliver the ball underarm. If a bowler bowls a ball underarm the umpire shall call and signal 'No ball'.

### 18.2 Law 24.2 – Fair Delivery – The Arm

The Competition will adhere to the principles set out in the ECB document "Recommendations to Address a Suspect Bowling Action in Non First Class Premier League and ECB Cup Competition Cricket Cricket – Proposed Pilot Process 2014". The procedure to be followed by Umpires and the Competition organizers is appendicised to this document.

### 18.3 Law 24.7 – Ball bouncing more than twice or rolling along the ground

Law 24.7 is replaced by:

The umpire at the bowler's end shall call and signal No ball if a ball which he considers to have been delivered, without having previously touched bat or person of the striker, either (i) bounces more than once or (ii) rolls along the ground before it reaches the popping crease.

### 18.4 Law 24.12 – No Ball – penalty

In place of Law 24.12, the following shall apply:

A penalty of two runs for a "No Ball"<sup>1</sup> shall be awarded, and shall in all cases be scored as "No Balls".

This penalty shall stand in addition to any other runs which are scored or awarded.

- 18.5 In the event of the striker's end Umpire failing to call and signal No Ball when Law 41.5 has been breached (at the point of delivery, not more than two fielders other than the wicketkeeper shall be behind the popping crease on the on side), immediately the ball becomes dead the striker may draw the matter to that Umpire's attention. If the striker's end Umpire is able to verify the breach he shall call and signal No Ball. If the striker's end Umpire is unable to verify the breach then he shall confirm that the events of the delivery shall be unchanged.

## 19 Law 25 – Wide Ball – penalty

Law 25.1 and 25.2 shall apply, but in addition:

- 19.1 For bowlers attempting to utilise the rough outside a batsman's leg stump the strict Limited Over Wide interpretation shall be applied.
- 19.2 For bowlers that Umpires consider to be bowling down the leg side as a negative tactic, the strict Limited Over Wide interpretation shall be applied.
- 19.3 Law 25.5 and 25.6 shall apply.

## 20 Law 41.3 (Fieldsman's Protective Helmets)

In addition to Law 41.3 the following shall apply:-

- 20.1 In order to eliminate any waste of playing time caused by the removal from the field of fieldsmen's protective equipment other than helmets (e.g. shin pads, etc.), such equipment, once taken on to the field must be worn until the fall of a wicket or until the next interval. The exchanging of equipment between members of the fielding side shall be permitted, provided that the Umpires do not consider that it constitutes a waste of playing time.
- 20.2 Umpires are not to hold helmets.

20.3 A batsman who chooses to wear a helmet must wear (or carry) it personally all the time while play is in progress. While he may call for a helmet to be brought out to him during a break in play he may only have the helmet taken off the field at the fall of a wicket or at the next interval.

20.4 A batsman may only change an item of protective equipment other than a helmet (e.g. batting gloves etc.) at the fall of a wicket or at the next interval, unless the equipment is clearly damaged or unserviceable and then only with the approval of the Umpires.

## 21 Law 42.3 – The Match Ball – changing its condition

21.1 The Umpires shall make frequent and irregular inspections of the ball.

If the umpires together agree that the deterioration of the ball is inconsistent with the use it has received, they shall determine that there has been a contravention of this Law. They shall then decide together whether they can identify the player(s) responsible for such conduct.

21.2 If it is possible to identify the player(s) responsible they shall:

a) change the ball forthwith. The batsman at the wicket shall choose the replacement ball from a selection of six other balls of various degrees of usage (including a new ball) and of the same brand as the ball in use prior to the contravention.

Additionally the bowler's end umpire shall:

- b) award 5 penalty runs to the batting side.
- c) inform the captain of the fielding side of the reason for the action taken.
- d) inform the captain of the batting side as soon as practicable of what has occurred.
- e) together with the other umpire report the incident to MCCA who shall take action as is appropriate against

the player(s) and/or Captain and/or County responsible for the conduct.

21.3 If it is not possible to identify the player(s) responsible they shall:

- a) change the ball forthwith. The umpires shall choose the replacement ball for one of similar wear and of the same brand as the ball in use prior to the contravention.
- b) the bowler's end umpire shall issue the captain with a first and final warning, and
- c) advise him that the incident will be reported to MCCA and that should there be any further incident by that team during the remainder of the match, steps 21.2 (a) to (e) above will be adopted, with the captain deemed under (e) to be the player responsible.

21.4 No member of the fielding side may skim the ball along the ground, and use what in the opinion of the Umpires is an excessive number of bounces on to the ground when returning the ball by any means to either the wicket-keeper or bowler.

## 22 Law 42.6: Dangerous and unfair bowling

In addition to Law 42.6 the following regulation shall apply:

22.1 A bowler shall be limited to two fast short pitched balls per over. (The Umpire at the bowler's end shall make it clear to both the bowler and the batsman when such a delivery has been bowled).

22.2 A fast short pitched ball is defined as a ball which passes or would have passed above the shoulder of the batsman standing upright in the crease.

22.3 If this limit is exceeded the Umpire at the bowler's end shall call and signal "No Ball" on each occasion.

22.4 A different signal shall be used to signify a fast short pitched "No Ball". The Umpire shall call and signal "No Ball" then raise the other arm across his chest. If the

bowler exceeds his limit of short pitched deliveries in an over not only must the Umpire call "No Ball" but he must invoke the procedures of Law 42.7 (a) in regard to cautioning the bowler. If a bowler is "No Balled" a second time in the innings for the same offence the Umpire shall advise the bowler that this is his final warning as provided for in that innings.

- 22.5 A third such offence in the same innings shall cause the Umpire to invoke Law 42.7 (c), i.e. the bowler shall be removed forthwith and shall not be allowed to bowl again in that innings.

**NOTE:** the above regulation is a supplement to and not a substitute for Law 42.7 which the Umpires are able to apply at any time.

In addition to the above Law 42.6 (a) (ii) shall apply.

## 23 Law 42.6(b) – Bowling of high full pitched balls

Law 42.6(b) is replaced by the following:

Any high full pitched ball (regardless of its pace) which passes or would have passed above waist height of the striker standing upright at the crease shall be called and signalled No Ball by the umpire at the bowler's end. In addition, if the high full pitched ball is fast, it shall be deemed dangerous and unfair and the umpire at the bowler's end, in addition to the call and signal of No Ball, will adopt the procedures of Law 42.7.

## 24 Law 42.15 – Bowler attempting to run out non-striker before delivery

Law 42.15 shall be replaced by the following:

The bowler is permitted, before releasing the ball and provided he has not completed his usual delivery swing, to deliberately attempt to run out the non-striker. Whether the attempt is successful or not, the ball shall not count as one of the over. If the bowler fails in an attempt to run out the non-striker, the umpire shall call and signal Dead ball as soon as possible.

## 25 Fast Bowling Directives

The ECB fast bowling directives shall apply in all matches.

## 26 Follow-on

The follow-on shall only apply if, in addition to the team batting second having a deficit of 150 or more, their innings has been completed (an innings terminated because the maximum number of overs has been bowled shall not be deemed to have been completed for this purpose if the batting side is not all out, unless the batting side declares). Notwithstanding Law 13 the follow on shall be 150 runs even if play has not taken place on one of the days, save where regulation 3.3 above applies in the case of the Final.

## 27 Over Rates

- 27.1 A team which, in the course of a match, (with the exception of the Final – see Para 4 above) has bowled 75 overs or more, shall suffer a deduction of points (to be adjudicated by the Umpires, and with no right of appeal) should its over rate, measured over the entire match, be less than 17 overs per hour.
- 27.2 For rates of 16 or above, but below 17, there shall be a deduction of 2 points, and for rates below 16, 5 points.
- 27.3 Umpires, in making the calculations shall make allowances as follows: 3 minutes for each wicket taken, (except the 10th wicket), and a full allowance for time lost, this latter, however, to apply only where such a single stoppage is of three minutes or greater duration. The Umpires shall note any such stoppages and notify the scorers and Match Referee (if any) at the conclusion of an innings. In calculating over rates those overs bowled during the last scheduled hour of the match shall be excluded. No time allowances shall be made for drinks intervals.
- 27.4 In the event of sightscreens having continually to be moved (i.e. for a bowler changing regularly for whatever

reason from over to round the wicket and vice versa) then in the absence of requisite ground staff/helpers the batting side shall assume responsibility for their movement. This also applies to the Final.

## 28 Disputes

In the event of there being a dispute which cannot be resolved by the Umpires the matter shall be referred to the MCCA Chairman of Cricket (or if he is conflicted to the MCCA Chairman), whose decision shall be final and conclusive.

## MCCA Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Procedure

This Code of Conduct incorporates the Spirit of Cricket, as set out below. It applies to all matches played under the auspices of the Association.

- (i) The Captains are responsible at all times for ensuring that play is conducted within the Spirit of Cricket as well as within the laws and the rules of the Association.
- (ii) Players and Club Officials must at all times accept the Umpire's decision. Players and Club Officials must not show dissent at the Umpire's decision or react in a provocative or disapproving manner towards an Umpire at any time. Club officials must not make direct or indirect comments to or about umpires which are insulting, offensive or intimidatory nor should they make comments to the umpires or make public comment about an umpire's performance or decisions save that they may make such comments in the confidential match report submitted to MCCA. Any such breach reported to MCCA shall be dealt with by the MCCA Management Committee who shall be empowered to impose such penalties (if any) as may be considered appropriate.
- (iii) Players and Club Officials shall not intimidate, assault, or attempt to intimidate or assault, an Umpire, another Player or a Spectator.
- (iv) Players and Club Officials shall not use crude and/or abusive language, (known as sledging), nor make offensive gestures or hand signals nor deliberately distract an opponent.
- (v) Players and Club Officials shall not use or in any way be concerned in the use or distribution of illegal drugs.
- (vi) Clubs must take adequate steps to ensure the good behaviour of their members and supporters towards players and Umpires.

- (vii) Players and Club Officials shall not disclose, or comment upon, any alleged breach of this code or upon the hearing, report or decision arising from such breach.
- (viii) Players and Club Officials shall not make any public or press comment which is detrimental to the Association clubs or the game in general.
- (ix) In the event of an appeal all members of the fielding side, unless legitimately in the act of fielding or backing up a ball which is not yet dead, must maintain their fielding positions until a decision has been given.

## The Spirit of Cricket

*Cricket is a game that owes much of its unique appeal to the fact that it should be played not only within its Laws, but also within the Spirit of the Game. Any action which is seen to abuse this spirit causes injury to the game itself. The major responsibility for ensuring the spirit of fair play rests with the Captains.*

- (i) There are two Laws which place the responsibility for the team's conduct firmly on the Captain.

### (a) Responsibility of Captains

The Captains are responsible at all times for ensuring that play is conducted within the Spirit of the Game as well as within the Laws.

### (b) Players' Conduct

In the event of any Player failing to comply with the instructions of an Umpire, criticising his decision by word or action, showing dissent, or generally behaving in a manner which might bring the game into disrepute, the Umpire concerned shall in the first place report the matter to the other Umpire and to the Player's Captain, requesting the latter to take action.

### (ii) Fair and Unfair Play

According to the Laws the Umpires are the sole judges of Fair and Unfair play. The Umpires may intervene at any time, and it is the responsibility of the Captain to take action where required.

### (iii) The Umpires are authorised to intervene in cases of:

- Time wasting
- Damaging the pitch
- Intimidatory bowling
- Tampering with the ball
- Any other action that they consider to be unfair

**(iv) The Spirit of the Game involves RESPECT for:**

Your opponents  
Your own Captain and team  
The role of the Umpires  
The game's traditional values

**(v) It is against the Spirit of the Game:**

To dispute an Umpire's decision by word, action or gesture

To direct abusive language towards an opponent or Umpire

To indulge in cheating or any sharp practice, for instance;

- a) appeal knowing the batsman is not out
- b) advance towards an umpire in an aggressive manner when appealing
- c) seek to distract an opponent either verbally or by harassment with persistent clapping or unnecessary noise under the guise of enthusiasm and motivation of one's own side

**(vi) Violence**

There is no place for any act of violence on the field of play

**(vii) Players**

Captains and Umpires together set the tone for the conduct of a cricket match. Every player is expected to make an important contribution to this.

**1 Umpires Responsibility and Levels of Breaches**

1.1 Umpires shall be solely responsible for categorising any breach of the Laws of Cricket or Code of Conduct or the Spirit of Cricket at one of the four following levels:

1.1.1 Level 1 for minor breaches

1.1.2 Level 2 for persistent minor breaches or more serious breaches justifying the penalties applicable to a level 2 breach. A Captain of a team shall be responsible for the good behaviour of his team and for his team playing within the Spirit of Cricket. If the Umpires are of the opinion that a team is not behaving or not playing within the Spirit of Cricket (e.g by persistent unjustified appealing) then the Umpire shall report the captain for a level 2 breach.

1.1.3 Level 3 for persistent serious breaches falling within level 2 or for more serious breaches justifying the penalties applicable to a level 3 breach.

1.1.4 Level 4 for persistent serious breaches falling within level 3 or for an act or threat of violent conduct or for very serious breaches justifying the penalties applicable to a level 4 breach.

There are contained in the Appendix to these playing conditions recommendations as to the categorising of breaches.

These are guidelines only and the Umpires shall have absolute discretion in categorising breaches.

There may be breaches which are not expressly or implicitly referred to in the Appendix.

**1.2 No Need for Prior Warnings**

Umpires have authority to decide that a player has committed a breach without having previously issued any informal or formal warnings.

**1.3 Action**

1.3.1 For a level 1 breach the Umpire shall issue, at what the Umpire considers is an appropriate time, a formal oral warning to the player and if the player is not the Captain shall inform orally his captain.

1.3.2 For a level 2 or a level 3 breach the Umpire shall complete a Report form in a format prescribed by the MCCA and submit it to the MCCA Competitions

Secretary who will supply a copy to the Secretary of that player's County who shall in turn be responsible for notifying the player. The umpire may, if he considers it appropriate and circumstances permit, orally notify the player during or after the match of the breach.

- 1.3.3 For a level 4 breach the Umpire shall immediately suspend the player from any further participation in the game and shall orally inform the player and his Captain of this action. A substitute will not be allowed for this player for the remainder of the game. After the suspension from the game the Umpire and the MCCA shall adopt the same procedures as for a level 1.2 and 3 breach.

#### 1.4 Penalties

- 1.4.1 A player who commits two level 1 breaches in a three year rolling period will receive an automatic 1 match suspension. The three year period shall be deemed to commence on the day the first counting breach occurred.

- 1.4.2 A player who commits one level 2 breach will receive an automatic 1 match suspension.

- 1.4.3 A player who commits 2 level 2 breaches within a 2 year rolling period will receive an automatic 2 match suspension. Further such breaches within the 2 year period will result in an additional 2 match suspension for each additional breach within that period.

The 2 year period shall be deemed to commence on the day on which the first counting breach occurred.

- 1.4.4 A player who commits a level 3 breach shall be suspended by the MCCA for not less than 3 and not more than 6 matches as the MCCA considers appropriate.

- 1.4.5 A player who commits a level 4 breach shall be suspended by the MCCA either sine die or for such lesser period as the MCCA considers appropriate but being not less than 6 matches.

- 1.4.6 Any complaint upheld against a Club Official will be reported to his/her County who will inform MCCA what action it has taken.

#### 1.5 Suspensions

- 1.5.1 Subject to the powers of the ECB under the provisions of condition 1.5.6 suspensions shall be from MCCA Championship matches only.

- 1.5.2 Suspensions for level 1 and 2 breaches shall start from the first Championship match to be played by the offending player's County after the date of the last scheduled day for the match in which the suspension was triggered (whether or not there was any play on that last scheduled day).

- 1.5.3 Suspensions for level 3 breaches shall start from the first Championship match to be played by the offending player's County after the date of the imposition of the suspension by the MCCA.

- 1.5.4 A player who commits a level 4 breach shall not be permitted to play in any Championship match until the MCCA decide the penalty for the breach and any suspension imposed by the MCCA shall take immediate effect from the date of the decision made by the MCCA.

- 1.5.5 If a player shall be suspended at the same time for more than one breach such suspensions shall be served consecutively.

- 1.5.6 If a player commits a level 3 or level 4 breach then the MCCA Disciplinary Committee may, if it thinks it appropriate, report the player to the ECB Disciplinary Committee and if that Committee shall impose a longer suspension than that imposed by the MCCA Disciplinary Committee then the suspension imposed by the ECB Disciplinary Committee shall replace the suspension imposed by the MCCA Disciplinary Committee. The ECB shall have power to impose or extend a suspension to any other cricket matches or competitions.

#### 1.6 Disciplinary Hearings and Appeals

- 1.6.1 The powers of the MCCA shall be exercised by a Disciplinary Committee or an ad hoc Committee of not less than three persons appointed by the Management

Committee of the MCCA. Any two out of the Chairman, the Chairman of Cricket and the Secretary of the MCCA shall have the power to make such appointments on behalf of the Management Committee of the MCCA.

1.6.2 There shall be no right of appeal by a player against a decision by an Umpire that he has committed a level 1 or 2 breach.

1.6.3 A player may appeal against a decision by an Umpire that he has committed a level 3 or 4 breach or against any sentence imposed for such a breach by making written representations to the MCCA Secretary not later than 7 days after the last scheduled day for the match in which the suspension was triggered (whether or not there was any play on that last scheduled day) or within 7 days after the date when the sentence was decided and shall in either case at the same time pay a deposit of £150 to the MCCA Secretary who will then arrange a personal hearing.

At the hearing the MCCA Disciplinary Committee may allow the appeal in the whole, in which event the deposit will be returned, or may allow the appeal in part, in which event the MCCA Disciplinary Committee may order that the whole or part of the deposit be returned as it thinks appropriate, but if the appeal fails the deposit shall be forfeited to the MCCA unless the MCCA Disciplinary Committee considers that there are exceptional circumstances justifying the return of part or whole of the deposit.

If the suspension imposed by the MCCA Disciplinary Committee for a level 3 or level 4 breach is less than the maximum applicable to that breach then on any appeal the MCCA Disciplinary Committee shall have power to increase the suspension up to the maximum applicable to that breach.

1.7 Conflict of Conditions.

The Code of Conduct and the Spirit of Cricket contained in playing condition 10 shall apply but if there is any

conflict between the provisions contained in playing condition 11 and the Code of Conduct and the Spirit of Cricket contained in playing condition 10 then the provisions contained in playing condition 11 shall prevail and these conditions shall be interpreted and applied accordingly.

1.8 Interpretation

The terms "Umpire" and "Umpires" in these conditions shall be deemed in each case to include the singular and the plural and these conditions shall apply whether decisions are made by one Umpire or by the two Umpires jointly.

2 Deduction of Points

2.1 Any action in the playing of the game which shall be considered by the Management Committee to have brought the game into disrepute shall result in the deduction of sixteen points from the offending County without the right of appeal. The deliberate bowling of wides or no balls is an example of such conduct.

2.2 In addition to the provisions of Law 42.3 paragraphs (d) and (e) the following shall apply; In the event of a team tampering with the ball there shall be a five point deduction for a first breach. For a subsequent breach by the same team in the same season the penalty shall be increased to ten points in the second instance, fifteen in the third and so on in like manner. Should such breach occur in the Championship Final (for which no match points apply) the deduction shall take place in the following season.

3 Residual Powers

The Management Committee of the MCCA shall have power in its absolute discretion (without any right of appeal) to impose such penalty or penalties (if any) as it considers appropriate for any breach of the laws of cricket, rules, regulations, or these playing conditions

where the laws of cricket, rules, regulations, the ECB, or these playing conditions do not provide any express penalty.

#### **4 Powers of Delegation**

- 4.1 The MCCA and the MCCA Management Committee shall both have powers to delegate the exercise of their powers and functions under these conditions to any Disciplinary Committee, ad hoc Committee or Sub-Committee of not less than three persons appointed for the exercise of such powers and functions.
- 4.2 Any two out of the Chairman, the Chairman of Cricket and the Secretary of the MCCA shall have the power to appoint any Disciplinary Committee, ad hoc Committee or Sub-Committee to exercise the delegated powers and may serve thereon.

## **APPENDIX TO MCCA CODE OF CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE**

### **BREACHES**

Certain conduct whether on or off the field of play amounting to a breach of the Laws of Cricket and/or the Spirit of Cricket has been categorised within 4 levels. Details of the breaches within each of these levels are set out below:

#### **Level 1**

- (a) time wasting by either the fielding side or the batting side;
- (b) abuse of cricket ground, equipment or fixtures;
- (c) showing dissent at an Umpire's decision by word or action;
- (d) using language that is obscene, offensive or insulting and/or the making of an obscene gesture.
- (e) excessive appealing.

#### **Level 2**

- (a) showing serious dissent at an Umpire's decision by word or action;
- (b) inappropriate and deliberate physical contact between players in the course of play;
- (c) charging or advancing towards an Umpire in an aggressive manner when appealing;
- (d) deliberate and malicious distraction or obstruction on the field of play, regardless as to whether such conduct is deemed unfair under Law 42.5;
- (e) throwing the ball at or near a player, Umpire or Official in an inappropriate and dangerous manner;
- (f) using language or gesture that is obscene or of a serious insulting nature to another player, Umpire, Referee, Team Official or spectator; (It is acknowledged that there will be verbal exchanges between players in the course of play. Rather than seeking to eliminate these exchanges

- entirely, Umpires will look to act when this falls below an acceptable standard).
- (g) changing the condition of the ball other than as permitted by Law 42.3;
  - (h) the bowling of fast short pitched balls that results in the bowler being disallowed from bowling further in that innings.
  - (i) causing avoidable damage to the pitch contrary to Laws 42.13 and/or 42.14 that results in a five-run penalty being awarded
  - (j) unjustified persistent appealing and unacceptable noisy behaviour. (Note apart from individual being responsible for such conduct the team Captain may also, in addition or alone, be held to be in breach for his team's behaviour).

### Level 3

- (a) intimidating an Umpire or Referee;
- (b) threatening to assault another player, Team Official or spectator;
- (c) using language or gesture that offend, insult, humiliate, intimidate, threaten, disparage or vilify another person on the basis of that person's race, religion, sexual orientation, colour, descent or national or ethnic origin;
- (d) the deliberate bowling of any high full-pitched ball contrary to Law 42.8.

### Level 4

- (a) threatening an Umpire or Referee;
- (b) physical assault of another player, Umpire, Referee, Official or spectator;
- (c) any act of violence on the field of play;
- (d) using language or gestures that seriously offend, insult, humiliate, intimidate, threaten, disparage or vilify another person on the basis of that person's race, religion, sexual orientation, colour, descent or national or ethnic origin.

## PROCEDURE TO ADDRESS A SUSPECT BOWLING ACTION IN MCCA COMPETITIONS

The following is the recommended process to be followed in the event that an Umpire has reason to believe that, in his/her opinion, an individual player's bowling action is suspect and may not conform to the Laws of Cricket.

**\* NOTE:** This process does not deal with a deliberate throw of a cricket ball on delivery to a batsman, which shall at all times be called a "No Ball."

### 1) On the Field of play:

- a) On the first occurrence of what appears to be a suspect action the umpire should make a note, to be used as a formal record if required in future, containing the name of the player, over and ball.
- b) Upon a second occurrence (recorded as above) the umpire concerned should first establish if his colleague has similar concerns / recordings.

At this point and whether the other umpire has any specific input or not, the Captain of the fielding side must be alerted in the presence of both umpires as to the nature and recorded facts of the observations and informed that a report will be made in writing to the MCCA immediately following the completion of the game.

It is the responsibility of the Captain to inform the player concerned and the game should continue without undue delay.

The calling of subsequent "No Balls" should be discouraged as finite assessment would not have been made at that time.

If in the opinion of BOTH Umpires their concern regarding the suspect bowling action is of such a nature that it could affect the game itself, then TOGETHER they may agree to:

i) Speak with the Fielding Captain and suggest that the bowler is taken off or;

ii) Inform the Captain, who will inform the bowler, that each subsequent delivery, considered suspect, WILL be called "No Ball."

**2) Post Match Report:**

A concise report must be written by the observing Umpire(s) and signed by both Officials to be sent within 48 hours of the game to the MCCA Competitions Secretary.

**3) Report Management:**

Upon receipt of the report the MCCA Competitions Secretary (or his nominated deputy) will investigate whether there are any similar reports on file and in any event notify the County Club affected, recording that a report has been received and an investigation commenced.

If:

i) The report is the first received regarding the player and his bowling action the MCCA Competitions Secretary will notify the County Club. There will be no further action taken by the MCCA.

or

ii) If the report is the second regarding the player and his/her bowling action, within any 36 month period, the MCCA will notify the County Club, ECB Competitions Executive and ECB ACO Senior Executive Officer that the player should not bowl until an assessment of the bowling action has taken place.

The County Club shall be responsible for notifying the club for which the player is registered to play league cricket and the appropriate league and the responsibility, enforcement and any costs incurred will reside with the latter Club and / or the player.

**4) Assessment and subsequent action:**

The procedure to be followed is that set in sections 4, 5 and 6 of the document issued by the ECB following the Premier League Chairman's Meeting on 13 August 2013.

The County Club for which the player is registered shall be responsible for ascertaining from the League involved the result of the assessment and details of any further action and communicating these to the MCCA Competitions Secretary.

In determining the player's future involvement in MCCA competitions, the MCCA will act in accordance with the decision of the player's league management committee.

