

Worcestershire County League
Playing Directives (All Formats) 2019

1. FIXTURES

- 1.1 Save as may be otherwise decided by the Management Committee, each Member Club in each season, must fulfil its fixtures on such dates and at such venues determined by the Administrator. No switching of grounds is allowed without the express permission of the Administrator and this will not be given on the day of the match in cases of bad weather.
- 1.2 In the event of a fixture being unfulfilled for reasons other than bad weather or unforeseeable circumstances beyond the control of a Club, the Management Committee may award the match to the non-offending Club. The non-offending club shall be allocated 24 (WLD) OR 20 (WL) points and the offending club 0 points.
- 1.3 If a Club cannot fulfil fixtures on a particular day the residual side(s) must play their fixtures in order of seniority i.e. 1st XI, 2nd XI, 3rd XI. In the interests of the League, clubs are expected to field eleven players in the 1st XI, at all times, even if it leaves lower teams short of numbers.
- 1.4 If ANY side calls off a match for ANY reason other than weather at ANY time, they shall be liable to pay £50 to the league and the league will pass £45 of this sum on to the non-offending club. Once a side has conceded three matches in any season, the Disciplinary panel will consider if any further penalties are appropriate and whether the side should be allowed to continue in its' division for that season.

2. THE MATCH

- 2.1 A team will be deemed to be late if less than seven members are present at the toss.(See Law 13.4 The Toss).
- 2.2 A team that is deemed to be late will forfeit the toss and the overs remaining at the re-scheduled start time will be divided equally between the two teams. The team claiming the toss will be deemed to have won the toss and, in the case of Win/Lose/Draw matches points will be allocated according to Playing Condition 9.
- 2.3 A match may not be cancelled without the consent of both captains and any home team that cancels a match without offering the visitors an opportunity to view the conditions, for themselves will be deducted 24 points in Win/Lose/ Draw matches and (20 points in Win/Lose matches).
- 2.4 Normally, both teams must report to the ground before making a decision if conditions are fit for play. However, in the event of severe weather conditions, when there is no prospect of the match being played, the match may be called off, before the start, without the away team travelling, subject to the following conditions:
 - (i) The weather forecast and the weather conditions are such that the state of the pitch and/or the outfield means that there would be no chance of the game starting by the latest time allowable by the rules, even if the usual drying methods are employed.
 - (ii) Captains of both teams agree by speaking together and not by any other form of communication.

Additionally, a captain may wish to invite an independent umpire to inspect the ground to confirm any decision. The inspecting umpire would be entitled to claim an attendance fee of £10.

The home club must report the abandonment of the fixture to the Administrator immediately after the decision to abandon has been made.

The home club must inform the appointed umpires that the fixture has been abandoned. Should they have cause to travel, they shall be entitled to claim the full attendance fee.

- 2.5 If a dispute occurs, prior to or on the day of the match, the away team retains the right to travel to inspect the ground, for themselves, but they will be responsible for paying the full attendance fee of both appointed umpires and the cost of teas up to a maximum of £50 if the match is, subsequently, abandoned without a ball being bowled.
- 2.6 If this option is taken, the home team must attend, pending an inspection by the appointed umpires. If, subsequently, conditions are deemed fit and play commences, the umpires will report the facts to the Administrator, who will impose a penalty of 24 points in Win/Lose/Draw matches and 20 points in Win/Lose matches on the home team, subject to appeal.
- 2.7 If the decision to cancel is taken on the day before or on the day of the match and the away team has declined the invitation to view the conditions, for themselves, the appointed umpires should be informed immediately. They should be paid the full attendance fee if caused to travel.
- 2.8 Any team that concedes a match, once it has commenced, will be reported by the umpires to the Administrator. He will refer the matter to the League Disciplinary sub-committee who shall have the power to impose fines and/or points deductions if it finds that the concession is inappropriate and/or contrary to the Spirit of Cricket.
- 2.9 The following ECB Directives shall apply in all matches:
- (i) Fast bowling directives
 - (ii) The safety guidance on the wearing of helmets by young players up to the age of 18
 - (iii) The guidance on fielding regulations for young players
 - (iv) The guidelines for junior players in open age cricket

Captains, team managers and umpires shall be responsible for ensuring the directives are followed. The captain of each side shall inform the umpires, prior to the commencement of the match, the names and relevant age group of any player under the age of 19 on 31st August of the previous year.

- 2.10 The minimum number of players to constitute a team is seven and any side that does not have this minimum number present within one hour after the scheduled start of a match is deemed to have conceded.

3. GROUND AND FACILITY CRITERIA

Clubs must meet the Ground and facility requirements for their respective division. These are fully detailed in a separate League Accreditation document available on the League website. Appointed umpire are asked to take these criteria into account when completing their match reports.

4. BALLS

- 4.1 A new ball of the grade approved by the Management Committee and supplied by the League shall be used for each innings of each match. Both balls should be inspected by the captains at the toss. The away Captain shall choose the ball his team will bowl with. Home sides must ensure that a selection of at least four suitable spare balls of varying ages and use, are available to the Umpires and approved by both Captains at the toss. Clubs may wish to offer a new ball to replace one which is lost or damaged within the first 5 overs of an innings. Failure to supply the correct balls to the umpires, prior to the toss, may result in a points deduction.
- 4.2 At the end of each match, home clubs are advised to mark the used balls with the number of overs bowled in the relevant innings. This will assist captains and umpires with their selection of spare balls in future matches.
- 4.3 If the home side fails to provide new balls at the time of the toss, it shall forfeit the toss. The team claiming the toss will be deemed to have won the toss and, in the case of Win/Lose/Draw matches, points will be allocated according to Playing Condition 9.

- 4.4 If the side claiming the toss, elects to field, the match will be delayed until the new balls arrive. If the side claiming the toss, elects to bat, the match will start at the scheduled time and the fielding side shall bowl with a used ball throughout the innings. The ball to be used shall be selected by the umpires.

5. UMPIRES

- 5.1 All Panel members shall be members of ECB ACO.
- 5.2 When available, umpires shall be appointed by the Management Committee. Such umpires will each receive an allowance from the home club, the allowance to be decided by the Management Committee at the start of each season. Clubs must pay the umpires fees before the match commences. Fees are an attendance fee and must be paid even when no play is possible. The cost of the Umpire(s) shall be met equally by both Clubs but the fee(s) shall be paid by the home Club to the Umpire(s) before the commencement of the match. Umpires, at their discretion, may decide not to claim the full fee in the event of a match not starting.
- In the event of an umpire standing alone, he shall receive 1.5 x the normal match fee.
- 5.3 All umpires should arrive at the ground at least 45 minutes before the scheduled start of the match, to confirm the completion of team sheets and any local conditions. They will also oversee the toss and should take the field five minutes prior to the opening delivery of each innings.
- 5.4 Umpires must wear a white coat/blouson, a white shirt, tie and dark trousers (black or navy blue). Coat/blouson and tie are optional according to the weather. A polo shirt may be worn, as an alternative.
- 5.5 Where there is no umpire present at the commencement of a match, both sides should attempt, in the first instance, to find a suitable person to stand on their behalf. If this is not possible, a player from the batting side should stand at the bowler's end and another player from the batting side should stand at square leg. If the match commences late because there is no umpire present at the start, the playing time may be extended to cover the delay e.g. if a match commences 10 minutes late then all timings for intervals and the completion of innings shall be put back by 10 minutes.
- 5.6 The penalty runs provided for in Law 41 shall not apply in matches where there is no umpire appointed by the Management Committee.
- 5.7 Umpires should ensure that:
- i) when necessary, sight-screens are moved by the batting side.
 - ii) The outgoing and incoming batsmen cross on the field of play following the fall of a wicket.
 - iii) On the conclusion of an innings, the match is resumed punctually within 30 minutes.
 - iv) When the last over is commenced it shall always be completed, unless a result has been reached or the players have reason to leave the field.
- 5.8 Umpires are responsible for noting the times and duration of play which must be noted on the Umpires Report.
- 5.9 Umpires are asked to notify the **Administrator** of any match which is late starting.
- 5.10 The umpires shall be the sole judges of the fitness of the ground, weather and light for play. See ECB guidance on Ground, Weather and Light.
- 5.11 If at any time the umpires together agree that the conditions of ground, weather and light are so bad that there is obvious and foreseeable risk to the safety of any player or umpire, so that it would be unreasonable or dangerous for play to take place they should immediately suspend play, or not allow play to commence or to restart.
- 5.12 Any captain, player, groundsman or club official who attempts to contradict the umpires or adopt delaying tactics to prevent a prompt start or resumption of play will be reported to the Disciplinary sub-committee for dissent.
- 5.13 Umpires should only enter players' dressing rooms at the invitation of the captain.

5.14 Cricket bats should only be measured at the request of the opposing captain and should be measured when the batsman comes to the wicket.

5.15 At the conclusion of a match with panel umpires, Captains and Umpires MUST meet to discuss any issues that have arisen in the match. If an Umpire feels it necessary to report a player or Club to the League because of misconduct, then he should advise the Officials of the offending club prior to leaving the Ground.

6. FIELDER LEAVING THE FIELD

6.1 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.

6.2 If the player is absent from the field for longer than eight 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 90 minutes.

(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 90 minutes. However, once his side has lost five wickets in its batting innings, he may bat immediately.

6.3 For the purposes of directives 6.2 (i) and (ii), playing time shall comprise the time play is in progress excluding tea intervals, intervals between innings and official drinks intervals.

6.4 The restriction in directives 6.2 (i) and (ii) 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).

6.5 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.

6.6 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 or waiting to bat but still has some unexpired penance 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 or, in the case of a batsman, provided that he personally informs the umpires that he is fit to participate.

7. SCORING

7.1 The scorers should be totally under cover and the box (or room provided) should be of an acceptable standard, maintained inside and outside in good condition. The board should be clearly visible from the pavilion and throughout the field of play.

7.2 A competent non-playing scorer shall be provided by each team in the Premier Division and home teams in Divisions 1 to 5. A competent scorer is considered to be a person who:

- Has basic knowledge of the Laws of Cricket.
- Has basic knowledge of scoring procedures.
- Has a knowledge of umpires' signals and is able to communicate appropriately with umpires.
- Is able to identify all individual players of the team for which they are scoring.
- It would normally be expected that a competent scorer would be scoring on a regular basis and is likely to be aged 13 or over.

7.3 Scorers are urged to acknowledge umpires' signals by displaying a white or coloured disc or a light which can be clearly seen from the middle.

8. TEAM SHEETS

8.1 At the start of the season the League will provide all clubs with a template for a team sheet which must be completed by the Home and Away teams before every match throughout the season.

8.2 Before the toss for innings, each captain must nominate his players and they may not, thereafter, be changed without the consent of the opposing captain.

8.3 The nominated players must be set out on a team sheet, a copy of which must be presented to the umpires and another copy which must be presented to the opposition captain at the toss. Both Captains must sign both team sheets to indicate that they know the respective ages of opposition players. A copy must be retained by the home club for inspection by the League on request.

8.4 Captains, wicket-keepers, Category 3 players (Overseas and Exempt) and players under the age of 19 years must be identified on the team sheet.

8.5 If it transpires, after the start of the match, that a mistake has been made on the team sheet (e.g. the same player is named twice) the match shall continue and the umpire shall report the facts to the **Administrator**. He shall have the power to deal with the matter himself or refer it to the Disciplinary sub-committee who will have the power to impose sanctions and penalties if they see fit.

8.6 The League will take action against clubs who attempt to add players who were originally selected in a "HIGHER" match on the same day and had become available due to its cancellation. No "Overseas" Category Three players can be allowed to play in any match below their club's 1st XI without prior permission from the League administrator.

8.7 For the last 3 matches of the season, Clubs "dropping" established players from higher teams into their lower teams in an attempt to influence promotion or relegation will be considered to be in breach of the "Spirit of Cricket" and should expect the League to take action. If there is any doubt, clarification and permission should be obtained from the League Administrator before the match.

9. UMPIRES REPORTS

Umpires are required to:-

- i) record which side won the toss
- ii) report on the facilities provided for themselves and the scorers
- iii) report any failure to meet the required over-rate
- iv) mark the quality of the pitch and outfield
- v) report on the conduct of the match
- vi) report any other matter they deem relevant.

The form should be completed online via the League website no later than 5pm on the Tuesday immediately after the match.

NOTE: If an umpire wishes to mark a pitch at 2, 1 or 0 (ie unsatisfactory, poor or dangerous) this should be reported to the Administrator and or Ground and Facilities sub-committee Chairman immediately after the match so that an inspection can be arranged.

10. CAPTAINS REPORTS

Captains are required to:-

- i) assess and mark the umpires
- ii) mark the quality of the pitch and outfield

The form should be completed online via the League website no later than 5pm on the Tuesday immediately after the match.

NOTE: If a Captain wishes to mark a pitch at 2, 1 or 0 (ie unsatisfactory, poor or dangerous) this should be reported to the Administrator and or Ground and Facilities sub-committee Chairman immediately after the match so that an inspection can be arranged.

11. CLOTHING

White clothing must be worn in all matches and it is recommended that advertising insignia regulations comply with those required by ECB for the First Class game. Details are available from the ECB website.

12. TEAS

12.1 The home side shall provide teas for the Umpires and Scorers free of charge. They will also provide teas for the away side who will contribute (£40) towards the cost.

12.2 A separate tea table must be laid for umpires and scorers. They should not be expected to queue or help themselves to tea, which should be available on their table as soon as the first innings is completed.

13. LEAGUE TABLES

13.1 Teams will be ranked in a League Table according to the number of points awarded.

13.2 In the event of two or more sides finishing equal on points then in order to ascertain their respective finishing positions in their respective Divisions, both generally and for the purpose of promotion and relegation, the positions shall be determined in the following manner.

- i) The side with the most number of wins shall be placed higher.
- ii) If there are still two or more sides with an even number of points in equal position then the side with the most number of ties shall be placed higher.
- iii) If there are still two or more sides with an even number of points in equal position then their position shall be decided by the result of the matches played between each other in that season, i.e. the side obtaining the highest number of points in the matches shall be placed the higher.
- iv) If still equal, the team with the higher Runs per Wicket Calculation (RPWC) will be awarded the higher finishing position. RPWC is calculated in the following way; Runs scored/wickets lost – (minus) Runs conceded/wickets taken in all completed matches.

In the unlikely event of continued equality, the Management Committee may arrange a play-off match to decide the final positions with a toss to take place to determine the venue.

14. REPORTING RESULTS

The procedure for reporting results will be confirmed to clubs before the start of each season.