

To; All WCL Club Delegates, Team Captains & Panel Umpires

Hopefully your club will have now have either received or heard the latest update from the ECB regrading recreational sport within the UK (& Wales). If not, I am delighted to inform you that following ECBs extensive lobbying with the Government we will be able to commence playing recreational cricket from Monday 29th March with no restrictions on travel, this in turn obviously means that we can start our season as originally planned using the Plan A which is our current and countywide Divisional structure together with the fixtures that have already been published on your play-cricket.com websites. Excellent news!.....

I would like to take this opportunity to firstly thank you for staying in touch, attending various Zoom calls and carrying out the behind the scenes work that will enable us all to start the season on time and with Plan A now we are informed we are able to. A reminder of a few things that will be important to remember as we now move forward;

Covid-19 Procedure

Please find attached a Road Map and Latest Guidance Document distributed by the ECB today. The Guidance document is a lengthy piece but you will find that other than doing a Risk Assessment (document attached within the Guidance document) we will generally be delivering what we were practising at the end of the season last year, i.e; social distancing, hand and ball sanitisation, track and trace and general control of pavilion areas. I have also attached a Team Sheet and a Track & Trace form that MUST be completed by both teams on the day and stored in a safe place by the HOME TEAM for a minimum 21 days and a WCL Team Sheet for your utilisation as required and discussed previously at Team Captains meetings.

The WCL advises that we MUST AT ALL TIMES do our utmost be seen to be delivering on these advised best practices. Should any club/team be reported and furthermore proven to be in contempt of any of these procedures the WCL will carry the power to put that club (as a whole) in to Covid-19 'Special Measures' which is one warning away from being stopped from playing. We are ALL responsible. If a club is visited by a Local Authority or Government representative who witnesses any poor practise this could be very dangerous for us all, this is why we will be asking our Appointed Umpires and our Team Captains to report any concerns they have via the WCL Reporting Portal to ensure we know what is actually going on and in addition League Officials may visit clubs during match days from time to time. We are NOT yet out of the woods with regards to the pandemic and we do NOT want a third spike therefore as an organisation we MUST at all times be seen to be delivering on the best practice as advised or we could find the whole county in 'Special Measures'. As a League, we will be taking these procedures extremely seriously and will not be afraid to initially warn and furthermore suspend anyone that continues to display contempt of the advised directives. In addition, all future updates and guidance distributed by the ECB will be forwarded to you to ensure you are kept up to speed with common best practice advised and hopefully if things continue to improve the relaxation of procedures and regulations as outlined in the Road Map.

I apologise if I sound a little strong on this subject, but we MUST as a whole organisation play our part in helping the Country back to its feet in whatever way we can. A lot of fantastic

practice went on last season and the cricket played on our return was played and enjoyed in the right way in extremely Covid-19 safe environments, let's deliver on that again.

Covid-19 (Match Loss Strategy)

On the playing side the WCL is aware that a rule will need to be implemented at the start of the season, before a ball is bowled to decide how many points each team is awarded should a match be cancelled due to Covid-19 directives. For example, should Team A/Club A be advised they need to cancel a match or all club matches due to a Covid-19 outbreak at their club the WCL feels that this is not the direct fault of the team/club and they should not be punished for that reason whilst the opponent has not done anything wrong either. However, both Team A and Team/s B (the opponent/s) need to be sufficiently rewarded in this case. The WCL will be deciding their chosen option and informing clubs that should a match be cancelled due to Covid-19 the WCL rule as decided will be used to award an agreed amount of points to each team. Clubs will be made fully aware of this rule and the amount of points to be awarded prior to the commencement of the season.

Promotion/Relegation

It has been agreed across the West Midlands that promotion and relegation will take its normal form, i.e; 2 up/2 down from the Regional League which will lead to the usual processes as advised in the WCL Handbook to be delivered in 2021. The only proviso is that a team who has 6 or more matches cancelled due to Covid-19 shall not be considered for relegation (highly unlikely and if this happens I suggest we may be in a lockdown situation anyway).

Over Rates

With mandatory sanitisation breaks every six overs in place again, the WCL Cricket Sub Committee will consider adding a certain amount of time to the length of the innings to cover this. Again, clarification of innings timings will be distributed once decided prior to the commencement of the season.

Spectators

As you will see in the Road Map document it is planned for Spectators to be allowed back in to grounds from Monday 12th April (with advised restrictions on numbers/households mixing, etc) during the week before the first scheduled Premier Division to Division seven matches. Clubs will need to monitor those on the ground as last season and have one way systems in place with regards to toilet facilities in Clubhouses, etc and also advise/posters of social distancing procedures, etc.

Captains Reports & Portal Passwords

Now we have received the news that we can start on time we are now beginning the process of building the WCL Reporting Portal. All Team Passwords will be communicated to you prior to the commencement of the season. Please ensure you check the Captains Portal Reporting procedure and timelines for completion as the penalties for non compliance will again be in place this season. Once you have received your Team Password please check it works in the usual way at; <http://www.worcscl.org/home.html> Should you encounter any problems please get in touch.

Teas

It has been decided to continue with the same arrangements for the provision of tea as we finished with last season. This means that it will be the Players (& Umpires) responsibility to 'bring your own' tea until further notice. We will review this procedure as the season hopefully returns more to as near normal as possible with any change to the provision being communicated to you, however, we do not envisage any change to the 'bring your own' until at least the second half of the season.

Payment of Umpires

This subject has been raised by a number of clubs, particularly those who are trying to move to a 'cash free' operation where all payments are made by Bank Transfer. The situation is currently being discussed, hopefully to be agreed at next week's Umpires Pre Season Panel Meeting. Following this meeting the WCL will circulate an agreed, advised procedure to all clubs who are likely to benefit from appointed Umpires this season.

Resources Distribution

A reminder to you that this pre-season Resource Distribution where clubs pick up their allocation of cricket balls and Handbooks, etc will take place at ***Kidderminster Cricket Club from 5:00pm until 8:00pm on Monday 12th April***. A single file, one way collection system will be in operation along with social distancing and please ensure the individual/s that attend/s to collect your club resources is informed of the requirement to wear a protective mask and bring along a sturdy form of carriage (e.g; a box or strong plastic bag/s) to ensure safe transport. Thank you to over half of our clubs who have already forwarded payment (as attached), to those that have not done so yet please remember to pay either before or on the evening – no payment, no resources and in addition fines will be in place for those clubs who do not send a representative to collect their goods.

Technical Breaches

As hopefully we return to a full season I must remind you that we move back to the League rules with regards to conceded matches, meeting attendance, over rates and match reporting procedures. This is the worst part of the job, penalising teams/clubs but we do need to enforce these penalties for what we call technical breaches to ensure we continue to deliver a fair and up to speed service for all. With this in mind, please refer to the WCL Handbook when you receive them to educate yourselves again with regards to match, meeting and reporting requirement and timelines.

Duckworth Lewis Training

Gary Roberson and I will be delivering a Duckworth/Lewis Standard training evening for those Captains interested. The date for Division Five to Division Seven Teams is Wednesday 7th April from 7:00 pm to 8:00 pm via Zoom. Further sessions aimed at teams in Divisions 8 & 9 are planned for Tuesday 27th & Wednesday 28th April just prior to the first match and a session for Premier Division to Division 4 Captains will be delivered towards the middle of May as the first 6 matches will be played under the the Win/Lose/Draw playing conditions for which the DL method is not used. Final, Zoom details will be forwarded to all Team Captains next week.

Finally, as mentioned above, I will endeavour to keep everyone in the loop with new updates, documentation and information when received. Thank you to those who have already

completed and returned your Club Declaration Forms (attached), to those that have not please ensure you return the correct forms to me completed and signed prior to the advised date.

Apologies for the lengthy brief but as seen a number of things were needed to be reported and one or two rulings to be made which will be forwarded prior to the commencement of the season. Should anyone require any further information or assistance please feel free to contact me as advised below.

All the best for an enjoyable and competitive season ahead, I look forward to seeing a representative from your club at the Resources Distribution evening.

Kind Regards,

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