



Captains' Meeting

Wednesday 3rd July 2019 – Toby Inn, Bessacar, Doncaster – 7.00pm

Note of meeting

1. **Welcome & apologies.** Representatives were present from Aston Hall, Barnsley Woolley Miners, Cleethorpes, Doncaster Town, Elsecar, Hallam, Sheffield Collegiate, Tickhill, Wakefield Thornes, Whitley Hall, and Wickersley Old Village; in addition to Roger Pugh and Steve Ward. Apologies were received from Dave Sharp (Umpires Association chairman) who was delayed in traffic, and subsequently received from Treeton.
2. **Umpires' issues.** The following issues were raised:
 - *Health & safety.* There are at least a couple of umpires who, whilst there is no complaint about their umpiring ability, appear no longer to be sufficiently mobile for the standard of cricket and pose a health and safety concern.
 - *Understanding between umpires.* Some umpires work well together and have good communication, including signals between each other to aid decision-making, but this is not consistent across the panel. The suggestion was made that umpires are put in small groups and stand with umpires in their group in order to develop better understanding and work together to communicate more effectively.
 - *Consistency.* There is an understanding that different umpires see things in different ways, but it is felt very important that each umpire must be consistent to themselves, throughout each game and throughout the season. Some umpires are much better at this than others.
 - *Comments about decisions.* Examples were quoted about umpires making inappropriate comments about decisions made (eg, 'a pity because I like watching him play', 'I'm getting a bit tired now'); it was felt that in general, a comment made after a decision is rarely helpful and that umpires should confine themselves to answering factual questions.
 - *Ground conditions.* The following observations were made:
 - there needs to be more consistency about when conditions are suitable for play and when they are not
 - umpires need to take more account of where a wet or muddy area is – is it really in a position where it will cause a problem?
 - more information should be provided about what umpires are looking for in determining whether a ground is fit for play
3. **Ground conditions.** The following additional suggestions were made:
 - There should be a laid down minimum standard for drying equipment that clubs are required to have; umpires should check what is available before the start and ensure that it is used if necessary, irrespective of the state of the game.
 - Consider 11am starts to provide more time to get games in before light deteriorates at the start and end of the season.

- Where captains agree to a reduced overs game at the start, the calculation for overs lost should be based on the end time for a 50-over game to avoid a situation where the game has to end in brilliant sunshine.
 - Umpires to be in charge of the ground from one hour before the scheduled start time, rather than just from the toss as now.
 - The 'hours grace' was discussed – clubs are happy with the existing rule.
4. **Captains' reports.** RP encouraged captains to complete reports as constructively and timeously as possible, and said that the feedback is invaluable for umpire development purposes.
5. **Scoring issues.** SW and RP made the following points:
- *Printers.* SW reminded clubs of the need to ensure that their printers are available at matches, and linked to their scorer's laptop, to enable DLS par score sheets to be printed.
 - *Scorers.* SW also spoke of the need for clubs to embrace their scorers, and make them feel part of the club. This should include making training available for them and to ensure that they have the correct equipment, eg internet.
 - *Live scores.* RP said that use of live scores is one of the three criteria for Premier League performance payments – last year our record on this issue was very good; we need to ensure that it remains so in 2019.
6. **Publicity.** RP reminded clubs to use the full league name with sponsor name in any publicity and to ensure that the banners are displayed prominently at grounds. The more publicity we can generate, the more attractive we are to sponsors. On this note, RP was disappointed that the new League website is taking longer to be completed than we had hoped, but it should be launched very soon.
7. **Future League format.** There was a full discussion around the document that RP circulated in advance. He clarified that the motivation for this is twofold. Firstly, committee discussions on how we can ensure that the League is attractive to the next generation of players, and, secondly, the ECB steer that we review Premier League formats to ensure that we are providing what the players want. These reviews are being rewarded through the Performance Payment system. RP emphasised that it is doing a review that is important – if the players want to retain the current format, there is no pressure to change. Key points made in discussion were:
- There was an overwhelming endorsement of the existing 12-team 50-over red-ball Saturday competition and a rejection of any other form of cricket being played on Saturdays. The prevailing attitude was 'it ain't broken so don't try and fix it.' The point was made that we currently have the most competitive cricket in South Yorkshire that there has been in years.
 - There is no issue with the number of Saturday games, but it was suggested that if the season carried on for another week, this would allow the ideal situation of all league games being played on a Saturday. This could, however, only be done if the play-offs were put back by a week, for example, if the final were played abroad again.
 - Some relatively minor suggestions were made around earlier start times, reducing bowlers' overs to ten, introducing additional fielding restrictions on a 'powerplay' basis, and improving the quality of ball used.
 - t20. The view was that the current competition is 'rushed' and compressed into the early weeks of the season. There was a view that a second t20 competition should be played in the second half of the season, this might be on an optional basis, utilising evenings, with a minimum number of players under 23, and allowing a couple of guest players.
 - KO Cup. There was support for maintaining the current KO Cup, but on an optional basis and with all draws open rather than zoned.
 - The potential for the introduction of a second XI competition was discussed but there was no strong support for the idea.

8. **Under 23s.** RP asked clubs to think about who they could nominate for the League under 23 fixtures in August and September. Nominations will be asked for in the next couple of weeks.
9. **Participation Manager.** The post of League Participation Manager is to be advertised to provide support for our clubs on engaging with ECB/YCB participation initiatives such as juniors', girls' and womens' cricket. This post would be particularly suitable for a woman, and therefore in line with ECB priorities to increase the number of women on Premier League committees.
10. **National Knock-Out.** The League will have four places to allocate in the ECB National KO competition in 2020. Clubs that historically enter this competition will be listed, and the places allocated to the top four of these in league table order.
11. **Close.** RP thanked everyone for attending and for their input, and wished them all the best for the rest of the season. Suggestions made will be considered at committee and then, where appropriate, consulted on more widely and/or rule changes put to the AGM. Umpiring issues will be fed back to, and discussed with, the Umpires Association.