



Yorkshire Cricket Southern Premier League

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Feedback from the Premier Section captains' meeting – 17 July 2023

Present: Gareth Davis, Alex Grimes, Shawn Hopkins, Ian Mansfield, Gareth Purshouse, James Smedley, Greg Wadsworth, James Ward, Dean Williamson, Roger Pugh

Apologies: James Brown, Alex Rowland

Ball trials

- views were sought from the captains present to supplement the information gained from feedback forms
- there was a general consensus that the Dukes ball is an improvement on the Oxbridge ball currently used; it is harder and holds its shape much better
- RP said that the Dukes ball would be more expensive (*the price is likely to be approx £27.50 per ball, compared to the £21 currently charged to clubs for the Oxbridge*), and there was a request that some subsidy was considered if a change is made
- although the Reader ball trial was badly affected by the weather, it did not make a favourable impression
- there is an issue with Oxbridge balls going out of shape
- it was agreed that the higher quality Oxbridge ball could be trialled and that we should make further enquiries about this (*subsequent enquiries indicate that the cost may be prohibitive*)
- RP said that the ultimate decision will be made by Premier Section clubs, who will be given the options and costs for their vote at the AGM
- if a change is made, a transitional arrangement will be necessary to ensure that clubs who have existing stocks of Oxbridge balls can use them

Cancellations

- views were sought for feeding into the working party meeting next week
- there was general support for the principle of a 'washed out' weekend being rearranged for a later date in the season, views were split on whether this should be just for the opening Saturday of the season, or for other weekends up to an agreed 'cut-off' point, but RP emphasised that it could be done only once in a season
- there was general agreement that in the Premier Section, where the highest possible standard of pitches was a priority, a different approach to the Senior Section might be needed
- RP clarified that the working party will make proposals, which would go to the AGM, that would specify the circumstances and principles to be followed, with alternatives if appropriate, for vote by clubs
- there was a concern about umpire availability if a Sunday was used – RP said that there was a possibility that the Championship play-offs might be moved back a week, which could free up the August Bank Holiday Monday
- RP mentioned also the other part of the working party's agenda, which is to provide clearer and enforceable guidance in terms of what is required to ensure that we get the game on whenever reasonably possible

Potential rule changes

- it was requested that we look at bowlers' overs restrictions – there is no strong appetite to move away from the current overall restrictions (particularly when other leagues are not doing so, and would therefore be more attractive to top specialist bowlers if we reduced our maximums) – but it was pointed out that where the innings is reduced, the current corresponding bowlers' restrictions are not quite proportionate and, in some cases, allow just three bowlers to be used
- the point was made that if at any future stage we were to review bowlers' maximums, that decision would need to be made early enough for clubs to recruit accordingly – November is too late
- there was significant feeling that we should review our position on teas. Some clubs find provision of teas very difficult, whilst others want to do so, and there was strong feedback that many players are not bothered about teas – it was suggested that we should go back to allowing clubs to provide if they so wish
- there was some discussion on whether the cup and T20 competitions should be run on an opt out basis, but the overall feeling appeared to be that the balance of competitions is right, and that we should remain as we are

T20 finals day

- overall, despite the weather constraints, the new format was considered a success
- one comparatively minor request is that we ensure a one-hour gap between the games, to allow proper warm-up time (possibly starting the games at 10.30 and 15.30)

Discipline

- RP fed back comments from Neil Vaughan that overall, discipline in the Premier Section has been very good this season – keep it up!

Captain's reports on umpires

- RP said that comments on the reports are really useful for umpires to help them address any perceived issues and to help their development – he asked captains to make comments where they felt there was an area for improvement and reminded them that comments must be made for '1' and '2' markings anyway
- the comment was made that the format of the reports is not fit for purpose – for example, on decision-making, the top mark should be 'fully met requirements' – decisions cannot exceed requirements; RP said that he knew that there was dissatisfaction about the forms amongst umpires, but they are ECB standard forms that are used nationally in assessing umpires for progression purposes, and we have no alternative but to use them (*David Ward has advised that the ECB has agreed to conduct a review of the forms after the season*)
- one captain asked whether umpires got feedback from the reports, citing an instance when he had highlighted an instance of the ball being thrown in the batsman's direction where no action had been taken; also saying that he had asked why this had happened, but had received no answer – RP undertook to check out what exactly the procedure was for progressing captains' comments (*we have identified that the current system is not working as well as it should and a new system for passing on umpires feedback will be implemented next season*)

Other issues

- the issue of the play-off final being held at New Farnley was raised, and specifically whether the League had been consulted about it – RP said that there had been no consultation or communication with the YCSPL on the issue; he said that this was one of a number of issues that the LEB were unhappy about, and which David Ward was taking up with the PLMB chairman
- RP said that his priority was to ensure a continuing improvement of standards in the Premier Section – including pitches, facilities and playing standards