



A GUIDE TO THE COMMON LAWS OF CRICKET

The League operates a very successful Umpires Panel for the top two divisions.

These Umpires would have taken a course on the Laws of Cricket and they are likely to be members of the Somerset Association of Cricket Officials.

It is likely that, in local Cricket, the hardest places to fill in a team are that of Umpire and Scorer.

All Clubs should be aware of the courses that are available for both Umpires and Scorers.

In order to assist those who might be called upon to stand during the season we have put together some of the most common laws of Cricket to help such a person or persons during the season.

Leg before Wicket (LBW)

In order to give the batsman out LBW there are four main factors that require a "yes" answer.

- a) The ball must not be a "no ball"
- b) Did the ball pitch in line between wicket to wicket when striking the batsman's pads or did it pitch outside the off stump?
- c) Was the interception part of the Striker's dress or equipment and not the bat or the hand holding the bat?
- d) Was the point of impact in line between wicket and wicket?
- e) In the Umpire's opinion would the ball have hit the wickets?

Notes

- i) If the ball pitches outside the line of the leg-stump it cannot be considered for LBW.
- ii) If no stroke is offered then the striker can be out LBW even if the interception is outside the off stump, provided the umpire is sure that the ball would have hit the wicket.

No Ball

- i) At the point of delivery the back foot must land within and not be touching the return crease.
- ii) Some part of the front foot, whether grounded or raised, must be behind the line of the popping crease.
- iii) A ball that does not pitch and would have passed above the waist of the Striker standing in an upright position at the crease and at any speed.
The umpire shall call/signal no ball and warn the bowler that this is his first and final warning. If the same bowler bowls a further ball above waist height, the umpire will call no ball and when the ball is dead he shall direct the captain to take the bowler off. He shall not be allowed to bowl again in the innings.

Change in this Law for 2019

The above Law shall remain the same, but, if in the opinion of the Umpire, the ball is not a dangerous one, he shall call and signal no ball, but not warn the bowler.

- iv) If a bouncer goes over the Striker's head the Umpire will call and signal no ball.
- v) If the bowler in “ his delivery stride “ knocks one or both bails from the wickets the Umpire will call and signal no ball.

Wide Ball

Now that the wide lines have been introduced into the League there are few problems with wide balls being bowled.

But the Law is very straight forward; a wide should called and signalled by the Umpire if the ball is out of reach of a Striker standing in his normal batting position.

It is important that the Umpire remains consistent throughout the game.

Run Out

Provided that the batsmen cross on the pitch it is the batsman who is running towards the broken wicket who will be given out.

If after making his ground in the crease and then having to leave it to avoid injury from a throw in by a fielder the batsman will be given” not out “ by the Umpire.

Leg Byes

These can only be scored if a genuine attempt was made to play the ball.

If the Umpire considers that no attempt was made to play the ball he will call

“dead ball“ after the batsmen have completed any run they might have attempted.

This gives the fielding side a chance to run the batsman out as the ball is still alive.

Substitutes

A substitute fielder may field in any position with the one exception of that of wicket-keeper.

Also a substitute cannot bowl, bat or act as captain during the match.

When a substitute runner is being used for an injured batsman the injured batsman **must remain** in his crease area at all times.

If he is out of his ground for any reason and the wicket-keeper breaks the wicket with the ball in his hands he will be out run out.

A substitute acting as a runner must, if possible, have already batted.

He must be dressed in the similar external equipment.

Umpires

It is important to note that any person selected to stand as an Umpire has the full powers of an appointed official and should use these powers as directed both by the M.C.C.Laws and any League directives.

Umpires are the sole judges of fair and unfair play, fitness of ground and weather/light. Should the Umpires disagree then the state of the game will remain the same.

In the Divisions other than Premier and Two the Captains may have to agree.

The Umpires together will award a game if any side refuses to play.

Weather, Ground and Light Conditions

- The Umpires shall be the final judges of ground, weather and light conditions.
- When both Umpires consider conditions are suitable for play it will continue.
- When, in the opinion of both Umpires conditions become unsuitable then they must advise the batsmen at the wicket and the fielding Captain of their decision. The players must leave the field.

As soon as in the opinion of both umpires that the conditions become playable they must inform Captains and play will resume.

There are three levels of light, weather and ground conditions as follows...

Level 1. Conditions are perfect – play will take place.

Level 2. Conditions are not ideal for play, but the Umpires only shall decide if play can continue or restart.

Level 3. The Umpires consider that the conditions are very unreasonable/dangerous for play to continue and are likely to cause serious injury.

Play will be suspended immediately.

It is expected that all hosting teams should mark the creases at the start of play and remark said areas at the tea interval or between innings.

NEW FOR 2021

A substitute can now act as a wicketkeeper, with the consent of the opposing captain or an umpire.

**Derek Hicks
SCL Umpiring Adviser
February 2021**