



The Somerset Cricket League
Sponsored By
World Class Willow



Minutes of Committee Meeting held on 27th June 2023 At 7.30pm held by zoom

Present: Edward Martin, Amanda Counsell, John Squirrel, Andy Barrett, Matt Lunn, Matt Counsell, Toby Strang, Darren Taylor, Derek Hicks, David Derrick, and Ray Hancock

Apologies: Tom Packman, Martin King, Stuart Shepherd

Minutes of last meeting were approved and virtually signed by the Chair.

Edward informed the committee that Martin King was still in hospital and that Ray Hancock has also been unwell, we send them best wishes for a speedy recovery.

Edward welcomed Darren Taylor to our committee.

Matters Arising:

PL insurance - David Derrick has been in contact with the clubs whose insurance renews during the season to ensure PL is in place.

Governance - Still moving through the process – A Barrett is leading.

Refugee/asylum Seekers - several now playing regularly in SCL following receipt of required paperwork.

Correspondence:

From various clubs who have appealed points fines – all have been dealt with or being dealt with by disciplinary.

From Green Goblet – offering plastic reusable cups – information has been shared with clubs.

From various clubs highlighting vaping is becoming a regular occurrence on the field of play – clubs have been contacted and reminded.

From SCF, asking us to highlight the benefit of SHMS to clubs who have not yet signed up- 4 clubs contacted.

From the Leicester and Rutland League regarding a registration of a player by a team in Somerset.

From Battersby Sports Ground Supplies looking to support clubs with groundwork – this will be left to them to contact clubs through play cricket as Somerset Cricket foundation also work with many clubs in the league.

Somerton Council – seeking advice how to re-form cricket club at Somerton – passed to SCF.

From a Cricket Club regarding accident procedures – the league does not need to know, but accidents should be logged in the home accident book. Any head injury – there is an ECB concussion protocol. There is an injury reporting function on play cricket that leagues can report to ECB, but this is only a monitoring tool for ECB. We are happy to log any clubs wish.

Treasurer's Report: J Squirrel reported that all cricket balls have been paid for and we have a stock if any club wish to purchase more. He is waiting for the stock numbers from World Class willow.

Disciplinary Behaviour on and off the field (including social media posts) has not been of the standard expected. To date there have been four player bans, 3 served and 1 being served. The league is using the ECB recreational conduct regulations – this is freely available to see on the website.

In addition to the events that bans and suspensions have been issued for there is a lot of lower-level poor behaviour is being reported such as inappropriate language especially around young players, lack of respect for opposition, umpires, and their own teammates and in some cases for property and equipment. We are not yet halfway through the season and already we have had more reports than the whole of last year. We are not prepared to allow such behaviour to become the accepted norm – whatever level. A reminder will be sent to clubs to remind all players that this is unacceptable and remind them of the playing within the Spirit of the Game and within the Regulated Conduct Regulations.

Overseas Players 2024: The committee welcomed Nicola Clarke of the SCF to explain to the meeting the change in Home Office rules around players and visa requirements. The changes mean that the league will need to adhere.

If a player is playing here as they have a British passport – but live and play cricket domestically in another country, from 2024 they will be classed as an overseas player which the league does not allow in our rules. The rules mean that a player cannot be 'home grown' domestically in two different countries.

To be a category 1 player, they need to be:

- *have been resident in England and Wales for a minimum of 210 days between 1 April and 31 March in the year preceding their participation in the relevant League; and*
- *have not played cricket played as a local/domestic player in any ICC Full Member Country (except England) in the 12-month period up to and including 31 March before the season in question, or at any time subsequently before or after applying to be and being registered as a Category 1 Player.*

The league is aware that there are players in the league that are living and working here – who we currently class as OP2 players – under our rules they will still be allowed to play.

Nicola also explained that clubs (such as those in the WEPL) who do get players over to play over on visas need to have ECB club mark and other things in place.

The league is aware that there are players in the league that are living and working here – who we currently class as OP2 players – under our rules they should still be allowed to play.

It has been agreed that a working party will look at this and amend to rule to reflect the Home Office rules for 2024. It is important the league follow the rules as both the club and league could be liable for significant fines for breaches in the guidance.

Umpires Darren Taylor informed the meeting that there is a real shortage of umpires. 13 out of 35 Premier umpires are currently unable to officiate due to long term illness or injury. Therefore, all umpires are being shuffled up the pyramid and SACO are working on their bare bones – this means for the SCL Division 1 is unlikely to have any appointed umpires and in some cases Premier matches will only have one appointed umpire moving into the second half of the season.

Safeguarding: AC reported that one club was suspended for their first matches of the season for not having a fully qualified officer in place – both an ECB and SCL requirement. This has now rectified.

All captains in SCL listed on play cricket have been checked for a DBS – those that did not have one were contacted and most have actioned. There are some who still not actioned and will be followed up.

Clubs need to ensure that they have completed DBS for players/officials e.g., Captains, regular umpires in regulated roles. A list of who needs a DBS can be found <https://www.ecb.co.uk/about/policies-and-regulations/safeguarding/safer-recruitment>

Cricket Balls Trial: Each club has or will be trialling the WCW cricket ball alongside the current Lords one. Feedback is part of the part of the ground report, although there appears to be some confusion over what ball clubs have actually used. As well as this feedback we would welcome emails with ball comments.

Sponsorship: Edward reported that a company called PLAI which is an admin tool which takes online subscriptions and helps with general club admin (similar to pitchero) has contacted the league to see if they would offer some form of sponsorship. The committee agreed to investigate this further to see what the benefits/conflicts might be, before moving forward.

This would be in addition to the sponsorship of our main league sponsor World Class Willow.

Ground Reports: Some club pitches/outfields have been reported numerous times. Clubs will/have been contacted after 3 reports so we can offer support and especially if there are any repeated issues that are being reported. The league works closely with the SCF grounds committee and can offer supportive visits for advice.

Darren explained to the meeting that as part of the umpire's report, the umpire completes a report on the ground which covers unevenness of bounce, seam movement, carry/or bounce, turn/or not. He will ensure that any scores of 14 out of 20 or below is shared with the committee.

The new questions on the ground reports are allowing us to collect data, the analysing of this may be able to help us look at what levels of facilities there are across the divisions and how we can support improvements or set criteria.

Conceding/Loan Players: The high level of conceded matches is of concern; we know that some teams are struggling, and clubs do not have extra players who can be used as loans to others. Currently we only allow loans from SCL teams and no other teams in the WEPL pyramid, however with the improvements in the play cricket system and the ability to now register players as loans we are currently looking at a way to set up a loan system with The B and D league for 2024. Amanda is working on this. Any new loan system would be bound by number limit for example no more than three loans and would still follow team strengthen rules. This can only work with leagues that use play cricket system for player registrations. The West Somerset League is in the infancy of using play cricket – this may be another option in the future if they are happy to collaborate with us.

New Entry to the League 2024: Yeovil Royal Blasters have applied to join the league in 2024. The committee agreed to their application. They will play at Bradford Abbas in a ground share with Yeovil 3rds.

League Dinner: The 2023 dinner has been booked for Friday 20th October 2023, at the Somerset County Club at the County Ground. Details will be circulated as soon as they are finalised.

Meeting closed 9.02pm