

MCC Player Discipline Trials

League Umpire and player training

28th April 2016

Today's agenda

MCC Player Discipline trials

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Introduction and Context

- MCC is keen to ensure that the Laws give the umpires the ability to manage and control the behaviour of the players effectively.
- Majority of cricket played in competitive but fair spirit, but...
- Worldwide evidence of a deterioration in player behaviour: 5 recorded instances in league cricket in the UK in 2015 of matches being abandoned after a brawl involving at least 3 players.
- After global consultation, umpires feel they would control the game better if there were sanctions **within the game**. Successful trial in New Zealand.
- MCC will be publishing a new Code of Laws in 2017, and is keen to trial a system of sanctions to **deter** players' misconduct. Various leagues and competitions are taking part in the trials. Informed by these trials, MCC will then decide whether or not to incorporate all or some of these sanctions into the Laws.
- The system is based upon ECB Levels 1 – 4, modified so that only behavioural offences are included, because MCC wants to examine the effect of these sanctions on players' conduct alone.

The full package based upon ECB Levels 1 – 4

General points

This takes the modified Levels 1 – 4 breaches of the ECB Code of Conduct, and applies a different sanction for each level. It is important to stress the following general aspects of this system:

- All of the sanctions are intended as **deterrents** to prevent extremes of player indiscipline, and are intended to be used rarely.
- Knowledge that sanctions exist **within the game** will hopefully reduce the incidence of such misconduct.
- Summary notice of the different levels of breaches and the different sanctions should be displayed in the dressing rooms, so that player are aware.
- There will be no ‘red’ and ‘yellow’ cards as such, rather, if the umpires agree that a Level 3 or 4 offence has occurred, they will inform the captain of the offending player and advise the captain to remove him from the field of play, temporarily or permanently respectively.

The full package based upon ECB Levels 1 – 4

General points (continued)

- If the captain refuses to act, then the umpires warn him that a continued refusal would be deemed to be refusing to play, and the umpires would award the match to the opposing team if he failed to cooperate.
- If a bowler is suspended mid-over, then that over must be completed by a different bowler.
- At Level 1, on the first occurrence, a first and final official warning would be given to the captain of the offending player, and 5 Penalty runs awarded on any subsequent occurrence. Umpires have the discretion to issue ‘friendly’ warnings to the captain of an offending player in order to manage any developing situation. At Level 2, 5 Penalty runs would be awarded immediately because of the more serious nature of the offence.
- The opposition captain shall be informed of any sanction or warning. The scorers must be informed of any sanction that is applied.

The full package based upon ECB Levels 1 – 4

General points (continued)

- This system is not intended to replace the League/Competition Disciplinary process or Disciplinary Committee action. **Any sanction or official warning** should be reported in full by the umpires. Disciplinary Committees should impose consistent, realistic and deterring punishments.
- Umpires should be qualified and independently appointed. The umpires have to agree which Level any breach has occurred, before taking the appropriate action. If they disagree then the sanctions for the **lower Level** are incurred (if any); however, every effort should be made to reach a consensus, particularly if there is further incident.
- Each Level's breaches and the appropriate sanctions are now considered in detail, with examples of behaviour that would breach that Level.

Disciplinary breach at Level 1

Less serious offences

(a) Abuse of cricket ground, equipment or fixtures/fittings;

Deliberate hitting of stumps, deliberate throwing of cricket bat; wilful damage to ground; wilful damage to dressing room or windows; wilful damage to sightscreens or other equipment.

(b) Showing dissent at an umpire's decision by word or action;

Any level of dissent that is worthy of a report: such as a batsman excessively delaying departure from the pitch or clearly disagreeing verbally or gesturally with a decision, but which is not insulting or offensive to an umpire; a bowler either by word or gesture doing likewise.

(c) Using language that is obscene, offensive or insulting and/or making an obscene gesture;

Bad language, particularly that which is audible from the middle of the field to the boundary (or vice versa) or an unambiguous gesture which is clearly visible.

Disciplinary breach at Level 1

Less serious offences (continued)

(d) Excessive appealing;

Sustained multiple appealing from a single delivery; clear evidence that fielders are appealing knowing that the batsman is not out.

(e) Charging or advancing towards an umpire in an aggressive manner when appealing.

Fielders and/or the wicket-keeper running towards an umpire when appealing.

Disciplinary breach at Level 1

Sanctions

- The umpires must agree that a Level 1 breach has occurred.
- On the first occasion, the umpires summon the captain of the offending player and state that a Level 1 breach has occurred, and issue a first and final warning which applies to all members of that team, and lasts for the rest of the match. They warn him that any further breaches of Level 1 by any member of that team during the match will result in 5 penalty runs being awarded to the opposing team.
- However, if anyone in that team has already committed a Level 2, 3 or 4 offence during the match, the warning procedure for a Level 1 offence outlined above shall be dispensed with, and any Level 1 breach by any member of the same side will result in 5 Penalty runs immediately being awarded to the opposing side. (See below)
- On the second and any subsequent occasion that a Level 1 offence is committed, the umpires award 5 Penalty runs to the opposing team.
- Any official warning or award of Penalty runs must be reported by the umpires in a joint report to the League or Governing Body.

Disciplinary breach at Level 2

Serious offences

(a) Showing serious dissent at an umpire's decision by word or action;

More serious dissent at a decision which is significantly more sustained than at Level 1 or which involves insulting or offensive language to an umpire.

(b) Inappropriate and deliberate physical contact between players in the course of play;

Pushing, tripping, barging or any other inappropriate and deliberate contact.

(c) Throwing the ball at or near a player, umpire or official in an inappropriate and dangerous manner;

A breach will have occurred if the umpires consider this to have been done deliberately rather than through the normal course of play.

Disciplinary breach at Level 2

Serious offences (continued)

(d) Using language or gesture that is obscene or of a serious insulting nature to another player, umpire, referee, team official or spectator;

Bad language, particularly that which is audible from the middle of the field to the boundary (or vice versa) or an unambiguous gesture which is clearly visible, which is significantly more sustained or obscene or insulting than at Level 1.

Disciplinary breach at Level 2

Sanctions

- The umpires must agree that a Level 2 breach has occurred.
- The umpires immediately award 5 Penalty runs to the opposing team on every occasion that such a breach occurs.
- The umpires warn the captain that any future breach of a Level 1 offence by any member of his team will immediately result in Penalty Runs, with the warning procedure in Level 1 dispensed with.
- Each occurrence must be reported by the umpires in a joint report to the League or Governing Body.

Disciplinary breach at Level 3

Extreme offences

(a) Intimidating an umpire;

Any act by a player, short of violence, which is intimidating towards an umpire, such as moving threateningly into his personal space, or moving towards an umpire in a threatening manner, or using language which is aimed at intimidating him.

(b) Threatening to assault another player, team official or spectator;

Any physical gesture or language which threatens an assault on the specified individuals.

(c) Using language or gesture that offends, insults, humiliates, intimidates, threatens, disparages or vilifies another person on the basis of that person's race, religion or belief, colour, descent, national or ethnic origin, age, disability, gender, sexual orientation or background;

Using a physical gesture or language which satisfies the criteria above, but which is milder than what would be considered in Level 4 below.

Disciplinary breach at Level 3

Sanctions

- The umpires must agree that a Level 3 breach has occurred.
- The umpires summon the captain of the offending player, inform him that a Level 3 breach has occurred, and instruct the captain to remove the offending player from the field of play for a specified number of overs, as determined below.
- If the captain is the offending player or if the captain is unavailable, the umpires should summon the vice-captain or a senior player.
- There will be no signal or brandishing of a card but the umpires must ensure that the scorers are informed.
- The umpires warn the captain that any future breach of a Level 1 offence by any member of his team will immediately result in Penalty Runs, with the warning procedure in Level 1 dispensed with.

Disciplinary breach at Level 3

Sanctions (continued)

- The number of overs for which the offending player shall be temporarily suspended shall be 10 overs in a 'time' game. In a limited-overs game, it should be one-fifth of the number of overs available to each side at the **start of the match**, with fractions rounded up.
- For example in a T20 match, the suspension period would be 4 overs; for a 37 overs per side match, the suspension period would be 8 overs.
- If the incident occurred off the 4th legal delivery of the 3rd over, and an 8 over suspension were applied, then the suspension would be served after the 4th legal delivery of the 11th over.
- Any overs lost during an unscheduled break in play will not count towards serving a player's period of suspension. He must serve the prescribed period of absence from overs that are **actually completed on the field**.

Disciplinary breach at Level 3

Sanctions (continued)

- If a member of the fielding side has been suspended, then he can return to the field of play immediately he has served his period of suspension, and he may bowl the next over immediately following his return. A substitute fielder is **not permitted** whilst he is off the field.
- After he has served his suspension, a batsman can return to bat at the fall of the next wicket **or** he can return at any time before the next wicket falls, in which case the batsman that he replaces is **retired out**.
- If 9 wickets are down when a batsman is suspended, or during his period of suspension, then his team are all out.
- If a player has not yet served his period of suspension when a team's innings ends, then the period of suspension continues into the next innings.
- If a Level 3 offence is committed by a member of the batting side after he has been dismissed, the period of suspension shall begin at the commencement of the following innings if applicable.
- The umpires shall award 5 Penalty runs to the opposing side, and shall jointly report the incident to the League or Governing Body.

Disciplinary breach at Level 4

Very extreme offences

(a) Threatening an umpire;

Any physical gesture or language which threatens an assault on an umpire.

(b) Physical assault of another player, umpire, official or spectator;

Any physical assault that takes place on or off the field of play during the match.

(c) Any act of violence on the field of play;

Any act of violence on the field of play during the match.

(d) Using language or gesture that seriously offends, insults, humiliates, intimidates, threatens, disparages or vilifies another person on the basis of that person's race, religion or belief, colour, descent, national or ethnic origin, age, disability, gender, sexual orientation or background.

Using a physical gesture or language which satisfies the criteria above, but which is more serious and excessive than Level 3.

Disciplinary breach at Level 4

Sanctions

- The umpires must agree that a Level 4 breach has occurred.
- They summon the captain of the offending player, inform him that a Level 4 breach has occurred, and instruct the captain to remove the offending player from the field of play for the rest of the match.
- If the captain is the offending player or if the captain is unavailable, the umpires should summon the vice-captain or a senior player.
- There will be no signal or brandishing of a card but the umpires must ensure that the scorers are informed.
- They warn the captain that any future breach of a Level 1 offence by any member of his team will immediately result in Penalty Runs, with the warning procedure in Level 1 dispensed with.
- If the offending player is a batsman, he is **Retired out**, and if 9 wickets are already down at the time of the offence, his team is all out.

Disciplinary breach at Level 4

Sanctions (continued)

- The umpires shall award 5 Penalty runs to the opposing side and shall jointly report the incident to the League or Governing Body.
- The League or competition needs to stipulate the maximum number of players in a team that can be sent off (for example in a brawl involving several players), before the match is abandoned. MCC is suggesting that each team should contain at least seven remaining players.
- In these extremely rare circumstances, it will be for the League or Governing Body to decide on the result, based on the umpires' report.

Repeat offences

- A player who commits a second or subsequent offence will only be punished with the appropriate sanction for that offence. The previous commission of another offence will not escalate the punishment to a higher level – unlike football, for example, where a 2nd yellow card offence results in a red card. So, a player could receive, for example, three Level 3 warnings during a game.
- The only exception to this rule would be when, if a player has already received a Level 2, 3 or 4 sanction and then any member of his team commits a Level 1 offence, then the warning procedure is skipped and 5 Penalty runs would be awarded immediately.

Umpiring philosophy

- Umpires should, where appropriate, go about their business in the same way that they would have done before these changes.
- It is important for the trial that umpires do not become over-assertive, and should perform as they have done in the past, so that comparisons can be made.
- The sanctions are there to support the umpires in dealing with any disciplinary incidents and can be used as a warning and reminder of the consequences of unfair play, when initially dealing with a developing situation.
- The sanctions are intended primarily as **deterrents**. However, they are there to be used if the players' behaviour breaches Levels 1-4 of the Code of conduct, and umpires should apply the sanctions where this occurs.

Post match sanctions

A suggested tariff

Level 1 breach (either official warning or sanctioned) – player receives 1 point.

Level 2 breach – player receives 2 points.

If a player receives 3 points in a season, he will miss at least the next match in the official MCCU fixture list.*

Level 3 breach - he will miss at least the next match in the official MCCU fixture list.*

Level 4 breach - he will miss at least the next 3 matches in the official MCCU fixture list.*

Any player who has already been suspended and who commits any further breach at any level will automatically be suspended for at least one match.

MCC will be the final arbiter on the length of any suspensions.

* Matches for which suspension applies are MCCU Championship, BUCS, Challenge Final and a whole day of T20 cricket.

Questions?

Thanks for your attention