



## ORGANISATION AND PLAYING CONDITIONS OF THE ESSEX LEAGUE

The Organisation and Playing Conditions consist of:

**A. The Generic regulations governing all divisions of the League.**

The regulations governing:-

- B. Time Based matches in the 1st XI Premier Division**
- C. Time Based matches in all other 1<sup>st</sup> XI Divisions, 2<sup>nd</sup> XI Divisions and Divisions 9-12**
- D. Time Based matches in Divisions 13 and 14**
- E. 50/50 Limited Over matches in all 1<sup>st</sup> XI Divisions**
- F. 45/45 Limited Over matches in all 2<sup>nd</sup> XI Divisions**
- G. 45/45 Limited Over matches in Divisions 9-12**
- H. 40/40 Limited Over matches in Divisions 13 and 14**

These generic rules equally apply to matches played in the League Cup and T20 competitions where relevant.

**A. ALL DIVISIONS GENERIC RULES**

1. Each side of Member Clubs of the League shall play all other sides in its respective Division twice during the Season unless the weather makes it impossible for an arranged fixture to take place. One match will be in the limited over format and the other will be in the time-based format.

In 1st XI Division 3 and the Regional Divisions 14 there may not be 10 teams in each division and therefore teams may not play some teams in the division twice in the season.

In 1st XI Division 3 the league season will consist of 20 weeks – the first 5 games of the season will be in the timed format, the next 10 games will be in the limited over format and the final 5 games in the timed format.

In all other divisions the league season will consist of 18 weeks - the first 5 games of the season will be in the timed format, the next 9 games will be in the limited over format and the final 4 games in the timed format.

2. The fixtures shall be arranged by the Honorary Fixtures Secretary of the League in conjunction with the Fixtures Secretaries of Member Clubs.
  - a. Member Clubs should advise the Honorary Fixtures Secretary of the number of teams they intend to enter into the League for the following season by 31st October of the preceding year.
  - b. If a Member Club were to withdraw one of their teams from the League after 31st March of that season the following penalties will apply:-
    - i. 10 points deducted from all teams of the conceding club and the team is removed from the division.
3. All matches in each Division shall be played on Saturdays designated by the Executive Committee, such days to be not earlier than the last Saturday in April and not later than the second Saturday in September.

4. Before the toss for innings, the captain must nominate his players, who may not thereafter be changed without the consent of the opposing captain.
  - a. The nominated players must be set out on a team sheet which is handed to the umpires prior to the scheduled start of the match.
  - b. The age group of all players who are Under 19 or younger must be clearly shown on the team sheet. Contracted and overseas players must also be indicated. The umpires are requested to ensure that this Playing Condition is strictly adhered to in all circumstances. ***Failure to do so may result in a 5 point deduction.***
5.
  - a. The League shall run a Panel of Umpires to umpire all 1<sup>st</sup> XI matches. The Executive Committee has appointed the Essex County Cricket Board Association of Cricket Officials (ECCBACO) to be responsible to the Executive Committee to recruit and run the Panel of umpires. The representatives of the ECCBACO shall operate and organise the umpiring of all matches in these Divisions in accordance with the guidelines laid down by the Executive Committee from time to time.
  - b. In all other Divisions each Member Club shall provide its own Umpire. In a match where only one side provides an umpire, if he is prepared to do so, he shall always stand at the bowler's end while the batting side representative takes it in turns at the striker's end.
  - c. Each member club shall provide a competent scorer. Any club failing to provide a competent scorer for any 1st XI match ***will incur a one point penalty on each occasion.*** The umpires must advise both teams and indicate to them that a one point penalty will apply. The Umpires must also report the occurrence on the Umpire Report Form
  - d. In all 1<sup>st</sup> XI matches each club must complete an on-line umpire report form for each match. Failure to do so by the Thursday following the match ***will incur a one point penalty.***
6.
  - a. All matches shall be played with identical new balls nominated and supplied to the Member Club by the League for that season to ensure complete uniformity; other species of ball will not be acceptable for League fixtures. ***Any Home club in default will incur a 5 point penalty.*** If a ball is lost during play a similar equivalent ball would be acceptable.
  - b. Two new balls, one for each innings, shall be used in all League matches. The new ball must be taken at the start of each innings.
7. The Championship, promotion and relegation will be decided at the end of the season as follows:
  - a. The points awarded to all teams in the limited over and time based format matches will be aggregated into one composite league table per division. In the instance where there are an odd number of teams in any of the Regional Divisions 14, league positions will be decided on an average points basis.
  - b. At the end of each season the two sides finishing with the least number of points in the Premier, First and Second Divisions of the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> XI Leagues and Divisions 9 to 11 shall be relegated to the respective next Division down.

The two sides finishing with the least number of points in Division 12 shall be relegated to one of the Regional Divisions 13. The regional split between Divisions 13 and 14 will be reviewed by the Executive Committee and adjustments made as appropriate dependent on the location of the clubs that are relegated.

The three sides finishing with the least number of points in each of the two Regional Divisions 13 shall be relegated to one of the three Regional Divisions 14.

- c. The two sides finishing with the most number of points in the First, Second and Third Divisions of the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> XI Leagues and Divisions 10-12 shall be promoted to the respective next Division up.

The one side finishing with the most number of points in each of the two Regional Divisions 13 shall be promoted to Division 12.

The two sides finishing with the most number of points in each of the three Regional Divisions 14 shall be promoted to one of the Regional Divisions 13.

- d. No club shall be allowed to field more than one side in any of the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> XI Divisions and Divisions 9-12. In the event of a side being relegated to a Division where its own lower XI is playing, then that lower XI would also be relegated. Similarly, a team cannot be promoted to a Division which will contain a higher team from the same club.
- e. In the event of two or more sides finishing equal on points with each other, then in order to ascertain their respective finishing positions in their respective Divisions both generally and for the purposes of promotion and relegation, the position shall be determined in the following manner:
- i. The side or sides with the most number of wins shall be placed higher.
  - ii. If there are still two or more sides with an even number of points in equal position then the side with the most number of ties shall be placed higher.
  - iii. If there are still two or more sides with an even number of points in equal position then their position shall be decided by the results of the matches played between each other in that Season, i.e. the side which obtained the highest number of points in the matches shall be placed the higher.
  - iv. If there are still two or more sides with an even number of points in equal position then their position shall be decided on the basis that the side which finished in the higher position in the League structure in the previous Season shall be deemed to be the side finishing higher.
- f. Any club which does not have a valid ECB Clubmark accreditation (Or equivalent ECB accreditation) by 31st October of the preceding season will only be allowed to compete in 1st XI Division 3.

If the Executive Committee, in consultation with ECiC, determine that the club has made sufficient effort to attain Clubmark status and there are extenuating circumstances, that club's 1st XI will play in 1st XI Division 3 and there will be no further sanctions applied.

If the Executive Committee, in consultation with ECiC, determine that the club has not made sufficient effort to attain Clubmark status and there are no extenuating circumstances, the club's 1st XI will play in 1st XI Division 3 and they must gain Clubmark status by the following 31st October. If they fail to do this, the Club and all of their teams will be expelled from the league with no exceptions.

- g. Any Premier division club (Or a club being promoted from Division One) which does not meet the current ECB Premier Division club requirements (As communicated by the ECB on an annual basis) during any season may not be allowed to compete in the Premier Division in the subsequent season.

8. Cancelled and conceded matches.

- a. In the event that any club is unable to raise a side for an arranged fixture the non-offending club shall receive the maximum points (25 for a Time Based match, 20 for a Limited Over format match). In this instance Clubs must always cancel their lowest Essex League team's fixture.
- b. In the event that any club is unable to raise a side for an arranged fixture (any XI) and calls off the fixture after Thursday evening it will be responsible for any costs incurred by their opponents.
- c. If a ground arranged for a scheduled home fixture is unavailable, inaccessible or unplayable for any reason other than the weather then the visiting side shall receive the maximum points (25 for a Time Based match, 20 for a Limited Over format match) and the home side 6 points. This is subject to the League Executive's confirmation on each occasion.
- d. Clubs may not switch their designated home grounds without the consent of the Executive Committee. Consent will not save in exceptional circumstances be granted for a switch of a higher XI (e.g. 1st XI, 2nd XI) game to a lower XI (e.g. 3rd XI, 4th XI) ground where this involves the cancellation of the lower XI game.
- e. Any club failing to fulfil a League fixture will have the following penalties applied:-
  - i. For the first, second and third offences - **5 points deducted from the conceding team only.**
  - ii. For the fourth offence – The team is removed from the division and its record expunge

- 9.
  - a. All Member Clubs shall endeavour to provide waterproof covering for the whole pitch in the event of play being suspended on account of bad light or rain during the specified hours of play.
  - b. For all 1<sup>st</sup> XI matches between innings sweeping and remarking, plus use of roller if required, shall be arranged by the host club.

- c. Where there are no panel umpires officiating, captains of both sides must agree on whether to continue, or resume play, in adverse conditions of ground, weather or light. If the captains disagree then play will be suspended if currently in progress, or not restart if the players are off the field, until and if conditions improve and the captains agree.
  - d. Throughout the season panel umpires provide marks for the standard of 1st XI pitches on their match report. On receipt of these marks the Executive Committee may choose ***to apply points penalties (up to a maximum of 25 points)*** to clubs in the following scenarios:-
    - i. Consistently achieving marks of 14 or below
    - ii. One-off marks below 14
10. Division 9-14 matches may be played on artificial turf pitches at the discretion of the home side, but First XI and Second XI matches may only be played on artificial turf pitches with the prior permission of the Executive Committee.
  11. All Member Clubs participating in the League shall be equipped on their ground(s) with a clock sufficient in size to be readily visible by players and umpires during the course of a match.
  12. Overseas Players:
    - a. An overseas player is defined as one who is not qualified to play for England under ECB regulations. However, certain Overseas Players are exempt from the restrictions placed on overseas players. An Exempt Overseas Player is one who:
      - i. has been ordinarily resident in this country for a period of 18 consecutive months and under three years before the date of his request for registration. (For the avoidance of doubt any overseas player who has been ordinarily resident in this country for over three years is classified as a Category 1 UK Resident player as long as he remains ordinarily resident in this country and does not leave this country for any extended periods.) and
      - ii. has not been out of the country for longer than 35 days consecutively or 70 days in total during the previous twenty four months; and
      - iii. does not derive the main source of his income from playing cricket.

The definition of what is ordinarily resident shall be in the absolute discretion of the body responsible for registration of the player in the relevant competition.

(For the avoidance of doubt a copy of the regulations governing qualification of cricketers to play for England is retained by the Hon. League Secretary. Please note that holding a British passport is not necessarily an automatic qualification.)

- b. All Overseas Players and overseas exempt players must be registered with the League before playing and must be registered on the Play-Cricket site prior to playing each season. Forms for completion for Exempt Overseas Players must be completed and returned to the Executive Committee prior to playing each season.
- c. A Member Club may not field more than one non-exempt overseas player in any match in any division.

- d. A Member club may not field more than three overseas players in any 1st XI side, at least two of whom must be overseas exempt and have been ordinarily resident for 18 months.
  - e. There is no restriction on the number of Exempt Overseas Players a Member club may field for all non-1st XI matches.
  - f. No non-exempt overseas player (as defined) shall play in any match after week 5 of the League programme if he has not been registered by his Member Club with the Executive Committee as a playing member of that club prior to week 5 of the League programme of that year. However clubs may apply for an exemption to this regulation to the Executive Committee in the case of non-exempt overseas players who are of 3rd XI standard or below and wish to register after week 5. The decision of the Executive Committee is final with regard to any applications for exemption.
13. Contracted players:
- a. In each division of the Essex League no Member Club may play more than one player in any match who is at that time contracted to a county club or who is on the MCC groundstaff (hereinafter in both cases referred to as a contracted player).
 

For the purpose of this playing condition a player who was first awarded a county contract or who was first taken on the MCC groundstaff when a member of a club shall not be a contracted player when playing for that same club.

In the event that the contracted player registered by a member club is also a non-exempt overseas player, as defined in Regulation 12.1, then that club cannot play any further non-exempt overseas players in their 1st XI. However that club can register and play a further English qualified or overseas exempt contracted player in their 1st XI.
  - b. A contracted player shall only be entitled to play in the 1st XI side of a Member Club. For the purpose of this playing condition a contracted player shall mean any contracted player and the exemption in playing condition 13.a shall not apply to exempt any contracted player from his rule.
  - c. No contracted player as defined in playing condition 13.a above shall play in any match until he has been registered by his Member Club with the Executive Committee as a playing member of that club and no contracted player shall play in any match after week 5 of the League programme who has not been so registered by his Member Club by week 5. Registration shall take place on an annual basis and any contracted player must be re-registered each year if he has not changed clubs.
- 14.
- a. A player can only play for one Member Club in the League during the season except with the prior approval of the Executive Committee via the Registration Sub Committee. A dated Player Transfer Form must be completed by the player and both his old and new clubs. The old club must sign the form within 7 days or notify the League Secretary of their objections to the transfer.
  - b. No player who has played in any match for one club in the Essex League in week 10 or beyond shall play for any other club in the Essex League in that same season.
  - c. No new players can be registered to play 1st XI cricket after week 9.



- d. Registration of all players who play in the Premier Division will take place in accordance with ECB guidelines at a time designated by the Executive Committee.
15.
    - a. No member club shall, without the sanction of the Executive Committee made by 2.00 p.m. on the Wednesday prior to the date of a match, play any player in such match in any of the 2<sup>nd</sup> XI Divisions or Divisions 9-14 during the last four matches of any season of the Essex League who has played during that season in 9 or more matches for any member club or clubs in any higher divisions.
    - b. The Member Club found to be in breach of the playing condition in a match shall take no points from that match. The opponent club in the match will take the points it actually achieved in the match.
    - c. ***20 points shall be deducted from the Member Club found to be in breach of this playing condition.*** The Executive Committee shall have an overriding discretion to waive all or any part of the penalties in exceptional circumstances. All allegations of breaches of the playing condition must be made in writing to the Honorary Secretary of the Essex League by any Member Club within 14 days of the alleged breach and the Executive Committee shall make and notify their decision to the Clubs within 14 days of the receipt of any complaint.
  16. In accordance with the accreditation by the ECB, the League will meet the following requirements:
    - a. Ensure that all Member Clubs adhere to the following:-
      - i. ECB Guidelines for Junior Players in Open Age Cricket
      - ii. ECB Fast Bowling Directives for young fast bowlers
      - iii. ECB Safety Guidance on the Wearing of Helmets in the Recreational Game
      - iv. ECB Fielding Regulations for young players
    - b. Ensure that all Member Clubs and Umpires adhere to the ECB Premier League Disciplinary Regulations.
    - c. Ensure that all Member Clubs and Umpires adhere to the ECB Premier League Suspect Bowling Action Protocol.
    - d. Encourage players to make themselves available for the ECB XI and for County Board or County Club sides. The following regulations will apply:
 

“Any player selected for an ECB XI match or County representative match who does not make himself available will not be eligible to play in a Premier Division match scheduled for the same day unless approval is received from the ECB Director of Cricket Operations or Cricket Operations Manager (Recreational Cricket), or from the Manager of the County team in the case of County matches. This rule also covers the period when players would be expected to travel/report for ECB or County matches.
  17. Short-pitched Bowling
    - i. In any one over the bowler may only bowl one delivery that would pass over the shoulder height but below the head height of the batsman when standing upright at the crease. Any further deliveries that pass above shoulder height shall be called No ball by the bowler's end umpire.

- ii. In addition to i above any ball passing over the batsman's head when standing upright at the crease will be called and signalled No ball by the bowler's end umpire. Such delivery will count as the bowler's one delivery for the over as defined in iv above.
18. Notification and checking of results:
- a. Each home team must enter an accurate summary result and scores on play-cricket (including details of all times and lengths of rain stoppages and, in limited overs games, changes to targets and any over reductions):-
    - 1st XI matches – by 9pm on the day of the match.
    - All other matches – by 8pm on the Sunday following the match.
    - Failure to do so will result in a **one point penalty**.
  - b. Any 1st XI home team not entering full match details (as far as is possible) on play-cricket by 12 noon on the Monday following the match will have **five points** deducted.
  - c. Any 1st XI home team not ticking their box by 12 noon on the Monday following the match will have **one point** deducted.
  - d. Any 1st XI away team not entering full match details (as far as is possible) on play-cricket by 8pm on the Monday following the match will have **five points** deducted.
  - e. Any 1st XI away team not ticking their box by 8pm on the Monday following the match will have **one point** deducted.
  - f. Any non-1st XI home team not entering full match details (as far as is possible) on play-cricket by 8pm on the Wednesday following the match will have **five points** deducted.
  - g. Any non-1st XI home team not ticking their box by 8pm on the Wednesday following the match will have **one point** deducted.
  - h. Any non-1st XI away team not entering full match details (as far as is possible) on play-cricket by 8pm on the Friday following the match will have **five points** deducted.
  - i. Any non-1st XI away team not ticking their box by 8pm on the Friday following the match will have **one point** deducted.
19. The Executive Committee shall be empowered to deal with any query or dispute concerning the Organisation and Playing Conditions of the League and all disciplinary matters. In the event of any query or dispute concerning the Organisation and Playing Conditions or disciplinary matters or in the event of any breach thereof or of the Spirit of Cricket the decision of the Executive Committee shall be final. In addition to the penalties laid down in these Playing Conditions, the Executive Committee shall be empowered to take whatever other action and impose whatever other penalties it deems appropriate against a Club or any individual member or members of a Club found to be in breach. This rule shall not, however, give the Executive Committee the power to expel a Member Club from the League - such a decision can only be taken in accordance with Rule 8.3