

# WESTERN DISTRICT CRICKET UNION

## MINUTES of the EXTRAORDINARY GENERAL MEETING held on-line (by Zoom) on Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> May 2021, at 6.30pm.

### 1. SEDERUNT AND APOLOGIES:

The following clubs, and organisations, were represented at the meeting:

Ayr CC, Clydesdale CC, *Cricket Scotland Match Officials Association (CSMOA)*, Drumpellier CC, Dumfries CC, East Renfrewshire CC, Ferguslie CC, Greenock CC, Helensburgh CC, Hillhead CC, Inverclyde CC, Irvine CC, Kelburne CC, Kilmarnock CC, Motherwell CC, Milngavie CC, Langside CC, Poloc CC, Prestwick CC, Renfrew CC, Stenhousemuir CC, Uddingston CC, Vale of Leven CC, Victoria CC, West of Scotland CC, *West of Scotland Association of Cricket Officials (WoSACO)*.

In addition, the following Committee Members were in attendance:

Stephen Allison, Mark Colman (*Chair*), Tim Hart (*Secretary*), Peter Hempsey, Jim Hill, Iain Kennedy (*Administrator*), Sai Majeed, Colin Mitchell, Duncan Paterson (*Vice-Chair*), Shahzad Rafiq and Keith Young (*Honorary Treasurer*).

Apologies were received from East Kilbride CC, GHK CC, Glasgow Accies CC and Stirling County CC. (All had intimated they would attend – but suffered technical issues on the evening and could not join the meeting.)

### 2. CHAIR'S REMARKS:

MC welcomed everyone to the meeting and began by noting that usually the Chair would hope for good weather at this meeting – instead, this year, the hope is that everyone stays free of COVID-19! MC then updated the meeting on several topics:

- There has been regular contact between WDCU and Cricket Scotland over the previous few months, mainly via monthly 'Head of Regions' meetings which he and DP have been attending. These meetings informed a lot of WDCU's planning for the 2021 season.
- All member clubs should contact KY to organise collection of their cricket balls for the season – or to order them, if needed!
- There is a new umpiring body for 2021: Cricket Scotland Match Officials Association (CSMOA). They have joined us tonight, being represented by Neil Cauldwell.
- There is a new Cricket Scotland Code of Conduct and new procedures for any disciplinary issues. These procedures will be sent out to clubs shortly – with the hope being that there is no need to use them this summer. PH then confirmed that all hearings would be virtual and this will hopefully contribute to a much speedier process, should any disciplinary cases arise.
- The letter submitted by Greenock Cricket Club, and the letter of response from WDCU, were both referenced – with member clubs being reminded to submit any feedback to IK by Friday.

### 3. CRICKET MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE – 2021 SEASON

DP thanked all who had helped with planning for 2021 – notably the Cricket Management Committee, David Sturgeon and IK. The aim was, and is, to provide the maximum amount of viable cricket – by adopting a positive, but pragmatic, position on the season. There is an on-going discussion with CSMOA about rain delays and the wording, and practical application, of related regulations/guidance. Definitive guidance will be published prior to the start of the season. WDCU is also working in partnership with CS by trialling their new digital platform (with our Premier League clubs) and we are keen to provide meaningful feedback to CS about the experience our clubs have with the platform. DP then offered clubs the opportunity to raise any concerns / make comments about the upcoming season:

- Hillhead CC (Bernie Mitchell) asked what WDCU had considered should the season conclude earlier than planned – e.g. would league positions be calculated on games played, average points etc?
  - o MC noted this was a very valid point and that WDCU had considered this at length, including on calls with CS. The preferred position of CS and WDCU is to have a pre-determined number of rounds of COVID affected fixture postponements to lead to the end of the competitive season in respect of promotion and relegation – but not to go further than that at this stage. This is to provide flexibility which we hope we do not have to use. BM accepted this but intimated that we should consider this further now, so clubs can have input into the potential options i.e. wins, points per game, percentage etc.
  - o DP assured everyone that WDCU has considered various eventualities at length and reiterated that the matter BM was raising was very much valid.
  - o BM concluded this discussion by stating his concern that the WDCU Officer Bearers could face the accusation of a failure to discharge their duties should any problems arise and should the season end earlier than planned.
- Kelburne CC (Ross MacLean) referenced the new scoring system and asked if clubs could score electronically, instead of on paper.
  - o DP confirmed this is allowed – and that matches could even be scored off-line and uploaded upon conclusion.

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- Dumfries CC (Andrew Reed) asked if “3” referred [for league curtailed purposes] to 3 full rounds of matches or to one club being affected 3 times.
  - o DP said that WDCU did not want to commit to that without knowing the exact circumstances e.g. the possibility that one Local Authority area could face different (harsher) restrictions to other areas.
    - AR accepted this and understood the open planning – but did state that we were entering a season without fully defined parameters.
  - o AR then asked what defines a COVID affected fixture – was it travel restrictions, players having to isolate etc?
    - DP confirmed anything which meets appropriate COVID factors will be counted – and that, as with a rain cancellation, a COVID cancellation would lead to the fixture being declared ‘null and void’.
- MC then highlighted the advice WDCU had been given on car-sharing. We are working to the latest guidance from **sportscotland** and CS. It says: “ideally not more than two”. The hope is that a further update will be issued shortly too.
  - o Dumfries CC (AR) stated clubs must protect their players and cannot pressure players to car-share – and that three households car-sharing significantly increases the risk of an outbreak of the virus. Therefore, unless CS and WDCU are explicit on updating guidance, Dumfries CC will leave the choice up to their players.
    - DP confirmed WDCU will not be enforcers and that WDCU is cognisant that the individual choice of players will be the defining factor on this issue – with playing conditions etc having been updated for 2021 in an effort to reflect this and afford enable additional flexibility to previous seasons.
- Galloway CC (Andy Naylor) asked what the WDCU’s position was should a team elect not to travel when there are no legal restrictions preventing the travel – would this count as a concession or a cancellation?
  - o DP emphasised that this is a really difficult issue – and that there has been a good level of debate within the CMC and Executive about this. DP encouraged all clubs to embrace the spirit of trying to get cricket re-started – but that WDCU would need to consider any eventualities on an individualised basis.
  - o MC stated that WDCU may ask for evidence of players having COVID / needing to isolate if this does arise – but that WDCU would try to consider the full depth of the circumstances i.e. young second team, number of drivers a clubs has, other transport possibilities etc.
  - o Greenock CC (Charlie Loftus) responded by saying their view was that WDCU are shirking their responsibility by forcing players to make a decision on car-sharing – and that WDCU cannot ask clubs/individuals to divulge their personal data i.e. proof of COVID. Greenock CC then asked WDCU to issue a written statement to all clubs saying WDCU would take full responsibility for any subsequent issues which arise relating to car-sharing for WDCU fixtures. MC declined to do this and informed the meeting that all leagues in Scotland have taken the same approach in trying to provide a full season and that all leagues were following the same guidance (**sportscotland** and CS), without issuing further statements. MC then invited others within the meeting to comment:
    - Hillhead CC (BM) highlighted that should any infection/outbreak occur, the Local Health Board would step in and it would be the Health Board who would make the decision as to what procedures were to be followed. In terms of the season to come, all clubs have all should be aiming to progress with the season as best they can – and the view of Hillhead CC is that WDCU have not compelled any club to do anything.
    - Renfrew CC (Sai Majeed) highlighted that the challenges we face related to COVID-19 do not leave us in anything like an ideal situation – and that the CMC have been pretty positive and have considered many things in respect of the upcoming season. Most leagues in UK have chosen to have a competitive season, so WDCU’s position is in-keeping with this – and WDCU and CMC have been in an unenviable position, particularly as any plan for the season could not possibly suit all clubs. This is a time for clubs to come together positively to help to continue to create some light and end of the tunnel.
    - Ferguslie CC (Tim Preston-Jones) agreed with the previous comments MC and SM, while emphasising that car-sharing is the tricky variable. Related to their letter, TPJ asked Greenock CC what they were looking for.
      - Greenock CC stated that the duty of care to their players was their key consideration. They have a young team, few drive and their younger players won’t have had the vaccine. Therefore, they need to protect them. Their opinion was the government states clearly “maximum of two (households) in a car”.
      - MC clarified that, should car-sharing be necessary, a maximum of two is a recommendation, not a law.
      - Greenock CC asked if WDCU was going by recommendations or the law?
      - Ferguslie CC said how tricky this situation was and, that while not necessarily taking an opposing view, did feel that it was unrealistic for WDCU to take on the responsibility of the actions of the clubs and the members of each club.
      - Greenock CC said their club was ready to start the season and the ground was well prepared etc – but travel remains their main concern.
      - Inverclyde CC (Cameron Gunn) asked Greenock CC if they had asked the parents of their young cricketers to help with transport (by transporting their own children to matches), as this is the approach that Inverclyde CC have taken and a specific request they have made to their parents.

#### **4. CONFIRMATION OF PLANS FOR DISTRIBUTION OF CRICKET BALLS:**

MC confirmed that KY was prepared to help clubs with the collection of their 2021 cricket balls. KY said it was unrealistic to expect him to be ‘on-call’ to clubs almost 24/7 – but he would set up some clear (and COVID-19 safe) windows for collection from Shawholm (Poloc CC) which would be at times which would be deemed reasonable for both clubs and himself.

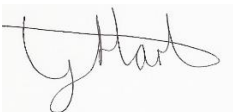
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### 5. AOCB:

- Clydesdale CC (Colin Mitchell) acknowledged that Hillhead CC had made some good points during the earlier discussion – but, while highlighting that should any club have deep concerns they should feel comfortable in approaching WDCU before and during the season, asked what would happen should any club choose to opt-out of the season following tonight's meeting?
  - o DP stated that, at the moment, the CMC doesn't know - but that the CMC would aim to look at the case very sympathetically and understand the reasoning of the club.
    - There would be less sympathy afforded if a club completed part of the season, didn't appear to be content with how their season was progressing on the pitch and then decided to stop playing. However, DP felt this would be an extreme example – and was not what he, nor WDCU, were expecting from any of our member clubs.
  - o Dumfries CC welcomed Clydesdale CC's point before highlighting that their risk is bigger because of the more significant travel they face every week. The competitive season does add a little pressure to the season – but Dumfries CC will stay in close contact with CMC, through DP. Whether or not we like it, as schools have returned so has virus transmission – and that there is the additional consideration of young people coming from one environment to another (school to club). Dumfries CC also highlighted their view, from their close association with their Health Board, that any infection will be tracked and the source discovered – and that all clubs have a duty to be very mindful of risk mitigation procedures.
  - o DP confirmed that this winter has undoubtedly been the biggest challenge WDCU and CMC, and the associated Office Bearers, have ever faced – particularly as we have cross boundary travel for matches. WDCU has tried to create as much leeway as possible, to make as much competitive cricket available as possible.
  - o Motherwell CC (Shazad Khan) stated he was a cab driver and has some concerns – but he hopes that everyone stays safe and that following safe distancing and masks in cars etc was a good way forward.
  - o Galloway CC (AN) echoed the point made by Dumfries CC about extra travel some clubs face every week – but that they applaud WDCU for arranging a competitive season.
  - o Stenhousemuir CC (Nicky Rogers) shared a different perspective – their challenge is encouraging their players to stick to the guidance of two households per car, when many of their players are already re-engaged in social activities where they have more than two households travelling together!
  - o MC summarised this part of the discussion by reminding everyone that the playing of our sport (as a non-contact, outdoor sport) has less risk than many other sports / social activities – and that travel is the biggest area of risk and concern which WDCU has been discussing throughout the planning of the 2021 season.
- Kelburne CC (RM) thanked WDCU for their efforts to date and mentioned that their club had made a concerted effort to reengage with former members – something which has proved to be very successful.
- Galloway CC (AN) asked for clarity on the length of Saturday matches.
  - o DP confirmed that matches were 50 overs per side in all divisions (except division 3, which is 40).

MC closed by thanking all those who have been involved in planning the 2021 season and wished everyone all the best for the season. Finally, MC reiterated that any, and all, concerns will be listened to as we progress through another unfamiliar year – and if clubs do have any concerns / challenges, they should contact IK in the first instance.

The meeting closed, with a vote of thanks to the Chair, at 7.28pm.



Tim Hart (Secretary)  
May 2021