

# WESTERN DISTRICT CRICKET UNION

**NOTES from the WDCU FORUM held on-line (by Zoom) on Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> October 2021, at 7.00pm.**

## **1. SEDERUNT AND APOLOGIES:**

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

**Ayr CC** (Andrew Baird), **Clydesdale CC** (Patrick Barbour), **Cricket Scotland Match Officials Association** (Neil Cauldwell), **Drumpellier CC** (Josh Allison), **Ferguslie CC** (Tim Preston-Jones), **Glasgow Accies CC** (David Holloway), **Greenock CC** (Greg MacDougall), **Hillhead CC** (Bernie Mitchell and James Thornhill), **Irvine CC** (Stuart McCallum), **Kelburne CC** (Russell Lauder), **Kilmarnock CC** (Alistair Smith), **Langside CC** (John McCrossan), **Poloc CC** (Andrew Mallichan), **Prestwick CC** (Tom Halpin, Fraser MacDonald and Shahzad Rafiq), **Renfrew CC** (Sahil Chopra & Sai Majeed), **Stenhousemuir CC** (Nicky Rodgers), **Stirling County CC** (Matthew Tweedie), **Uddingston CC** (Bryan Clarke), **Vale of Leven CC** (Graham Lawrence), **Victoria CC** (Jon Barnes).

WDCU was represented by:

Mark Colman (*Chair*), Tim Hart (*Secretary*), Jim Hill, Sai Majeed, Duncan Paterson (*Vice-Chair*), Shahzad Rafiq.

Apologies were received from:

**GHK CC** (Khizar Ali), Peter Hempsey (WDCU), Jack Hutchinson (**Greenock CC**), Iain Kennedy (WDCU Administrator), **Milngavie CC** (Matthew Edmonds), Colin Mitchell (WDCU), Derek Neil (Irvine CC), **West of Scotland CC** (Chris Ross).

## **2. CHAIR'S WELCOME AND OPENING REMARKS:**

DP welcomed everyone to the meeting and began by thanking everyone for joining the meeting – and by noting that most people present were those heavily involved in the running of their club. DP confirmed the meeting would follow the agenda and any other enquiries should follow from clubs after the meeting, via [admin@wdcu.co.uk](mailto:admin@wdcu.co.uk).

## **3. PLAYING CONDITIONS BELOW PREMIER LEAGUE:**

DP invited comments from those in attendance, with the following observations being made on the structure of matches:

- We could continue to offer 50-over cricket on a Saturday and 40-over cricket on a Sunday.
- 45 over per side matches could be an option, instead of a bigger reduction from 50 to 40 overs.
- We could consider a Saturday structure 50-over per side cricket and another structure for 40-over per side cricket.
- Saturday First Division and below should be 40-overs per side, with a 2hr 40 mins maximum innings length.
- Saturday First Division matches should be the same format as the Premier Division to create an aspirational pathway for younger players.
- There should be a 12:00 start for all Saturday Third Division matches.

## **4. CSMOA & UMPIRES:**

DP welcomed CSMOA (Neil Cauldwell) to the meeting – noting that 2021 was CSMOA's first season and there had been excellent cooperation and communication between WDCU and CSMOA. DP invited NC to address the meeting:

- CSMOA's allocation prioritisation is from Premier League downwards.
- As CSMOA was now a national organisation, if there was a shortage in the west that would be back-filled by umpires from other regions – and, overall, this worked well during the season.
- There are 5 categories of umpire. Premier Division matches must be umpired by Category 1 or Category 2 umpires.
- As this was year 1 of a new system, there will be some umpires who will have a change of category from 2021 to 2022.
- CSMOA's aim was to get an official at as many matches as possible – but retirements and COVID had been challenges.
- There were several new umpires, but they need supported by a colleague during the early stages of their umpiring career.
- CSMOA also had to manage some challenges with the ECB's umpire training programme and accreditation.
- Captain's Reports are vital to helping the grading and development of the umpires.

A discussion followed relating to umpiring matters:

- The order for appointing umpires should be Premier Division, First Division, Premier Reserve – then Second Division.
- It was suggested there could be an opportunity to fast-track some umpires – if appropriate, on an individual basis.
- When umpires were being assessed it had a big effect on their performance and they were umpiring more to the assessors at the side of the pitch than to the players and game itself.

## **5. DISCIPLINE BEHAVIOUR AND PLAYING WITHIN THE SPIRIT OF THE GAME**

DP noted that ill-discipline and umpiring issues in matches with player umpires was a source of great frustration for WDCU – particularly the amount of WDCU Committee time which had been spent investigating complaints / breaches.

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The number of Level 1 charges issued had increased – however, this was not surprising as there had been a move to a new disciplinary code. As far as WDCU was aware, the main issues with ill-discipline had occurred in matches umpired by player umpires and the statistics (Fair Play scores being almost 1 point lower in the Premier Reserve League) seemed to back this up.

Comments from the meeting were:

- Captains have an important role to set the tone for their team.
- It was suggested that a slightly higher tariff penalty for a Level 1 might encourage more positive behaviour and result in fewer reports.
- Similarly, having club penalties (suspended points) for higher level offenses may lead to an improvement in behaviour.
- There will always be more discussion over the quality of umpiring in player-umpired matches, due to the lack of neutrality – and one solution to this could be for WDCU to provide additional clarity on playing conditions such as wides.
- CSMOA (Neil Cauldwell) confirmed that teaching the Laws is comparatively easy – teaching interpretation can be a more challenging issue, which can lead to issues around the standardisation of the application of code breaches.
- One suggestion was that clubs could engage umpires to address their players during the winter or that players could attend CSMOA educational opportunities.
- It was suggested that the names of umpires officiating any matches which result in disciplinary reports should be listed on the WDCU website, along with details of the report.

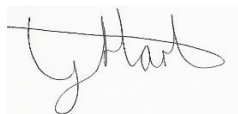
### 6. **AOB:**

DP opened the meeting up to AOB:

- An issue of two players not being called for “clearly throwing” in a Premier Division match was raised.
  - o It was confirmed that the appropriate process was for umpires to report any incidents such as this.
- It noted how well clubs, and players, had adapted to bringing their own teas – and this may be something to consider further.
- Clubs should be encouraged to continue to build positive relationships with their opposition after matches.
- An issue of poor-quality scorecards in the lower leagues was raised.
- There was an extensive discussion about the colour of the cricket ball used in matches – and the colour of clothing worn.

DP closed by thanking everyone for attending and encouraged anyone with further thoughts to get in contact with him directly or via the [admin@wdcu.co.uk](mailto:admin@wdcu.co.uk) email address.

The meeting closed, with a vote of thanks to the Chair (MC), the Chair of the meeting (DP) and the notetaker (TH), at 8.21pm.



Tim Hart (*Secretary*)  
November 2021