

ECB REGIONAL PREMIER LEAGUE DISCIPLINARY REGULATIONS CONVERGENCE

The Birmingham & District Premier League
The East Anglian Premier League
The Home Counties Premier Cricket League
The North Eastern Premier League
The West of England Premier League

CONTENTS

- 1. AIMS AND JURISDICTIONS**
- 2. CODE OF CONDUCT AND SPIRIT OF CRICKET**
- 3. BREACHES**
- 4. PROCEDURE**
- 5. DISCIPLINARY HEARINGS**
- 6. PENALTIES**
- 7. APPEALS**
- 8. NON-PAYMENT OF FINES**

APPENDIX 1 – BREACHES OF DISCIPLINE

APPENDIX 2 – STANDARD PENALTIES

STANDARD UMPIRE'S DISCIPLINARY REPORT FORM

1. AIMS AND JURISDICTION

- 1.1. The England & Wales Cricket Board (ECB) is committed to maintaining the highest standards of behaviour and conduct. The ECB Regional Premier Leagues, namely The Birmingham & District Premier League, The East Anglian Premier League, The Home Counties Premier League, The North Eastern Premier League and The West of England Premier League (henceforth identified in this document as the Leagues) operating within the jurisdiction of the ECB, take this commitment very seriously.
- 1.2. To this end, these discipline regulations, incorporating major parts of the ECB Model Code of Conduct and The Spirit of Cricket, have been adopted by all the Leagues.
- 1.3. The regulations shall be complied with by all those who participate under the jurisdiction of any of the Leagues' Management Committees. The regulations shall apply to any player at any club, at any level, under the auspices of any of the listed Leagues.
- 1.4. The regulations are intended to provide assistance and uniformity to all clubs in dealing with any alleged breach of the Code of Conduct and The Spirit of Cricket.
- 1.5. Any club which fails to take all reasonable steps to ensure the proper conduct of its players, officials and/or members in all matters for which the club or its committee is responsible, or acts in any way which is prejudicial or detrimental to the interests or reputation of the League, breaches this Code of Conduct.
- 1.6. There is nothing in this Code preventing or discouraging clubs from applying additional or stronger sanctions against offenders than those appearing within the Code, whether or not they are the subject of a discipline report. To this end, it is important that clubs have their own code of conduct and disciplinary procedures in place.
- 1.7. For the purposes of these regulations, the expression 'player' shall throughout this document be deemed to mean and include not only any player, whether professional or otherwise, but also any member or official of any club or any other person involved in any incident of alleged misconduct occurring on any part of a cricket ground or building and not merely the field of play.

2. CODE OF CONDUCT AND SPIRIT OF CRICKET

2.1. Code of Conduct

- 2.1.1. The Leagues are committed to maintaining the highest standards of behaviour and conduct at cricket matches both on and off the field. All clubs and players, by virtue of their registration with their respective League, explicitly agree to abide by this Code of Conduct, which incorporates the Spirit of Cricket, and are bound by the provisions in these Regulations.
- 2.1.2. The captains are responsible at all times for ensuring that play is conducted within the Spirit and Laws of Cricket.
- 2.1.3. Players and club officials must at all times accept the umpire's decision. Players must not show dissent at the umpire's decision or react in a provocative or disapproving manner towards another player or a spectator.
- 2.1.4. Players and club officials shall not intimidate assault or attempt to intimidate or assault an umpire, another player, a club official or a spectator.
- 2.1.5. Players and club officials shall not use crude and/or abusive language (known as "sledging"), nor make offensive gestures or hand signals, nor deliberately distract an opponent.

- 2.1.6. Players and club officials shall not use language or gestures that offend, insult, humiliate, intimidate, threaten, disparage or vilify another person on the basis of that person's race, religion, sexual orientation, colour, descent or national or ethnic origin.
- 2.1.7. Players and club officials shall not use or in any way be concerned in the use or distribution of illegal drugs.
- 2.1.8. Players and club officials shall not make any public or media comment which is detrimental to the League, clubs, umpires or the game in general. In this instance, media shall include press, radio, television, external websites, club websites, social networking sites and club match programmes.
- 2.1.9. Players and club officials shall not disclose or comment upon any alleged breach of this Code or upon hearing any report or decision arising from such breach.
- 2.1.10. Clubs must take adequate steps to ensure the good behaviour of their players, officials, members and supporters.

2.2. **Spirit of Cricket**

Cricket is a game that owes much of its unique appeal to the fact that it should be played not only within its Laws, but also within the Spirit of the Game. Any action which is seen to abuse this spirit causes injury to the game itself. The major responsibility for ensuring the spirit of fair play rests with the captains.

- 2.2.1. There are two Laws which place the responsibility for the team's conduct firmly on the captain.

Responsibility of Captains

The captains are responsible at all times for ensuring that play is conducted within the Spirit of the Game as well as within the Laws.

Player's Conduct

In the event of any player failing to comply with the instructions of an umpire, criticising his decision by word or action, showing dissent, or generally behaving in a manner which might bring the game into disrepute, the umpire concerned shall in the first place report the matter to the other umpire and to the player's captain, requesting the latter to take action.

2.2.2. **Players**

Captains and umpires together set the tone for the conduct of a cricket match. Every player is expected to make an important contribution to this.

2.2.3. **Fair and Unfair Play**

According to the Laws the umpires are the sole judges of fair and unfair play. The umpires may intervene at any time, and it is the responsibility of the captain to take action where required.

2.2.4. **The umpires are authorised to intervene in cases of:**

- Time wasting
- Damaging the pitch
- Dangerous or unfair bowling
- Tampering with the ball
- Any other action that they consider to be unfair

2.2.5. **The Spirit of the Game involves RESPECT for:**

- Your opponents
- Your own captain and team
- The role of the umpires
- The game's traditional values

2.2.6. **It is against the Spirit of the Game:**

- To dispute an umpire's decision by word, action or gesture
- To direct abusive language towards an opponent or umpire
- To indulge in cheating or any sharp practice, for instance
- Appeal knowing the batsman is not out
- Advance towards an umpire in an aggressive manner when appealing
- Seek to distract an opponent either verbally or by harassment with persistent clapping or unnecessary noise under the guise of enthusiasm and motivation of one's own side.

2.2.7. **Violence**

There is no place for any act of violence on the field of play.

2.3. Failure to comply with the provisions of this Paragraph 2 may lead to disciplinary action, irrespective of an alleged breach being related to a match not under the jurisdiction of the League.

3. BREACHES

3.1. A breach of the disciplinary regulations occurs when:-

- a. Any player in the course of, or in connection with a match, offends against the Code of Conduct or acts at any time to prejudice the good name or interests of the Leagues
- b. Any club fails to properly control or discipline its players or acts in a manner prejudicial to the good name or interests of the Leagues.

3.2. Any player or club committing such a breach shall be liable to penalties in the manner prescribed in this document.

3.3. A Breach of Paragraph 2 will normally be categorised as Level 1, 2, 3 or 4, as set out in Appendix 1.

3.4. First & Final Warnings

3.4.1. For a **Level 1** breach of Paragraph 2 the umpires will caution the player as to his conduct, advise him and his captain that it is a **First and Final warning** and that the player will be named on the umpires' report card.

3.4.2. Any player so named three times in a season will receive an automatic ban – see section 6.

3.4.3. If any player who has been warned under Paragraph 3.4.1 above commits a subsequent breach in the same match, the umpires will advise him or his captain or the executive of his club that they will be submitting a **Level 1** report.

3.4.4. Umpires have authority to decide that a player has committed a breach of Paragraph 2 without having previously issued any informal or formal warnings.

3.5. Reports

3.5.1. For any Level 1 breach under Paragraph 3.4.3 above or for any Level 2, 3 or 4 breach, the umpire(s) will submit a report using the standard disciplinary report form, a copy of which is attached to these regulations.

3.5.2. If any player has been reported in 3.5.1 above, the umpires will advise the player or captain or the executive of the club that they will be submitting a **Level 1** report

4. PROCEDURE

- 4.1. Any alleged breach of Paragraph 2 which will be the subject of a report (to be known as 'a complaint') shall be notified by telephone to the League Administrator or delegated official within 48 hours of the end of the match and confirmed in writing or preferably by email within 5 days of the end of the match.
 - 4.1.1. Any complaint so initiated must be referred to the League Administrator or delegated official who shall, as soon as reasonably practicable, inform the Secretary of the club against whom the complaint has been made. If any player has been reported, the umpires will advise the player or captain or the executive of the club that they will be submitting a report.
- 4.2. Any player so named twice in a season will receive an automatic two matches played ban
- 4.3. It is intended that any breach of Paragraph 2 should in the first instance be dealt with by the participant's club who shall notify the League Administrator or delegated official of any action taken. In the case of **Level 1** and **Level 2** breaches, this shall, as a minimum, be a two match ban to be effective immediately.
- 4.4. Within 48 hours of receipt of the written complaint, the League Administrator or delegated official shall consider the complaint and resolve either:
 - a. To take no action except to record the complaint and notify the club; or
 - b. To endorse any action taken by the club and confirm that no further action is required; or
 - c. To refer the matter for a full Disciplinary Hearing.
- 4.5. In the case of an incident involving a player under the age of 18 years old, the County Board Welfare Officer will immediately be informed. In such circumstances, the incident may be regarded as
 - a. A welfare and child protection case or
 - b. An outright disciplinary case. If the incident is being investigated by another organisation (e.g. the Police, ECB Welfare Department etc.) the League will await the outcome of that investigation.

5. DISCIPLINARY HEARINGS

- 5.1. In any case which is referred for a Disciplinary Hearing, the League Administrator or delegated official shall convene the hearing within 14 days of the decision to refer. Any delay may only be granted at the discretion of the Chairman of the Disciplinary Hearing.
- 5.2. At least seven days' notice in writing of the hearing shall be given to the player via his club Secretary. In the case of a club, its Secretary shall be so notified. The notice shall specify the alleged breach or breaches of Paragraph 2 above.
- 5.3. The accused player or club shall be entitled:
 - To submit written statements ahead of the hearing
 - To attend the hearing
 - To state his case (in the case of a club, by its Secretary or other official)
 - To be supported by a colleague and to call witnesses.
- 5.4. If the player or club is to have representation present at the hearing then the details of that representation must be given to the League Administrator or delegated official not less than 48 hours before the date of the hearing.

- 5.5. The Hearing shall be conducted by a Disciplinary Panel appointed by the League Administrator or delegated official and shall consist of not less than three persons and not more than five persons drawn from a list approved by the League's Management Committee. None of the Panel should be connected with the player, the club or their opponents at the time of the alleged breach, or a club which might directly benefit from any disciplinary action.
- 5.6. A club or player involved in disciplinary proceedings will be solely responsible for meeting such costs or expenses as it or they may incur, including the cost of any legal or other representation.
- 5.7. The standard of proof shall be on the balance of probabilities rather than the criminal standard of beyond reasonable doubt.

6. **PENALTIES**

6.1. **Level 1**

- 6.1.1. Automatic suspension by the club for the next TWO League matches played.
- 6.1.2. Any player reported for the second time in any one season shall be suspended by his club for the next FOUR League matches played.
- 6.1.3. Any player reported on three occasions in any one season shall be suspended by his club for the next TEN League matches played
- 6.1.4. Where the same player of a club is reported on more than one occasion in any one season, that club shall have FIVE league points deducted, on the second, and each subsequent occasion the player is the subject of a report.
- 6.1.5. Any individual club having three or more different players reported in any one season shall have TEN league points deducted, in addition to deductions made above
- 6.1.6. Any appeal against an automatic sanction imposed for a Level 1 breach shall only be allowed on the grounds of mistaken identity, misrepresentation or failure of the umpires to follow the procedures in Paragraph 5 above.

6.2. **Level 2**

- 6.2.1. As a minimum, automatic suspension by the club for the next TWO League matches played
- 6.2.2. If the Chairman of the Discipline Committee of the League is satisfied with the action taken by the club, the case will be closed.
- 6.2.3. Should the Chairman of the Discipline Committee decide the breach is sufficiently serious, he will refer the complaint for a full disciplinary hearing.

6.3. **Levels 3 & 4**

- 6.3.1. All complaints reported as Level 3 or Level 4 will be referred for a full disciplinary hearing.
- 6.3.2. Where a charge against a player is referred to a disciplinary hearing, his captain and club may be charged separately under their responsibilities as set out in Paragraph 2 above.

6.3.3. If at a hearing a breach of Paragraph 2 is proved, the Disciplinary Panel shall have the power to impose one or more of the following penalties, together with such order as to costs as it deems appropriate:

In the case of a player :-

- To require the player to submit appropriate letter(s) of apology within a specified time
- To record a reprimand and to give a warning as to future conduct
- To impose a fine
- To suspend the player for one or more matches, or for a stated period of time
- To deduct League points from the player's team
- To expel the player from the League

In the case of a club :-

- To require the club to submit appropriate letter(s) of apology within a specified time
- To record a reprimand and to give a warning as to future conduct
- To impose a fine
- To deduct League points from the club's team
- To expel the club from any competition of the league
- To relegate to any lower division of the League or to a 'linked' league

6.4. Panels will take the following factors into account when determining the penalties to be imposed:

- a. If the accused player/club has pleaded guilty
- b. The player's previous disciplinary record
- c. If the player is also the captain
- d. The conduct of the player subsequent to him being warned and told that he will be reported
- e. If an appeal is considered to be spurious

6.5. In addition, where an individual or their representative and/or witness(es) behave inappropriately or fail to respect the formality at any level during a Disciplinary hearing, the Disciplinary Panel assumes the right to impose further corrective actions or penalties as it sees fit.

6.6. The Disciplinary Panel shall have the power to suspend the operation of any part, or all, of the penalty it imposes for such period and subject to such terms and conditions it deems appropriate.

6.7. Decisions of the Disciplinary Panel (a finding that a complaint is proved or not proved or a decision on penalty) shall be by majority vote; where necessary the Disciplinary Panel Chairman shall have a casting vote.

7.

8. APPEALS

8.1. There are no appeals allowed against an automatic ban instigated for a Level 1 or 2 offence.

8.2. Where a breach of Paragraph 2 has been proved at a Disciplinary Hearing, a player or club shall have the right of appeal. Where a player and his club are appealing in relation to the same incident, they must do so separately.

8.3. A notice of appeal setting out the grounds must be given in writing to the League Administrator or nominated official within seven days of the decision of the Disciplinary Panel, together with a deposit of £50.

8.4. If a notice of appeal is given, the penalty shall not take effect pending the hearing of the Appeal, which shall take place as soon as is practicable and in any event within 14 days of receipt of notice of the appeal.

- 8.5. The Appeal shall be by way of a re-hearing before a different Panel. The Appeal Panel shall be appointed by the League Administrator or delegated official and shall consist of not less than three persons drawn from a list approved by the League's Management Committee. None of the Panel should be connected with the individual or the club or their opponents, or a club which might directly benefit from any disciplinary action or have been a member of the original Disciplinary Panel.
- 8.6. The player or club shall have the same entitlements as set out in Paragraph 5.3 above.
- 8.7. If the player or club is to have representation present at the hearing then the details of that representation must be given to the League Administrator or delegated official not less than 7 days before the date of the hearing.
- 8.8. Non-attendance at a hearing of the Appeals Panel by the club or person that submitted the appeal without good and valid reason for such non-attendance will automatically result in forfeiture of their right of appeal.
- 8.9. The Appeals Panel may confirm, vary or reverse the decision of the Disciplinary Panel and it shall have the power to increase the penalty and award costs of the Appeal hearing and forfeit the whole or part of the deposit. Decisions of the Appeal Panel shall be by majority vote; where necessary, the Chairman shall have a casting vote.
- 8.10. The decision of the Appeals Panel or, if no appeal, of the Disciplinary Panel, shall be final and binding.
- 8.11. The League shall report match bans in writing to the relevant club's County Board for national circulation. Players should understand that match bans will normally apply to all cricket played under the auspices of ECB.

9. NON PAYMENT OF FINES

- 9.1. Any fine levied under these procedures or imposed for the breach of any match rule must be paid to the Treasurer of the League within twenty-eight days of the Club being notified of such fine.
- 9.2. Any fines still outstanding at the end of that period shall be increased by 100% of the original fine, when the Secretary or Chairman of the offending Club shall be notified to the effect that the fine is outstanding. They will be given a reminder that if after a period of fourteen days from that reminder, the fine is still outstanding, a deduction of five points shall be made from the points gained by the side that received the fine.
- 9.3. In respect of other payments owed to the League by member Clubs, these shall be treated as if they were a fine, except that points shall not be deducted. Such payment shall continue to increase by 100% for each further twenty-eight day period that the payment remains outstanding.

APPENDIX 1 – BREACHES OF DISCIPLINE

Certain conduct, whether on or off the field of play of play, amounting to a breach of the Laws of Cricket and/or the Spirit of Cricket has been categorised into 4 levels which are set out below:-

Level 1

- a) time wasting by either the fielding side or the batting side
- b) abuse of the cricket ground, equipment or fixtures
- c) showing dissent at an umpire's decision by word or action
- d) using language that is obscene, offensive or insulting and or the making of an obscene gesture
- e) excessive appealing

Level 2

- a) showing serious dissent at an umpire's decision by word or action
- b) inappropriate and deliberate physical contact between players in the course of play
- c) charging or advancing towards an umpire in an aggressive manner when appealing
- d) deliberate and malicious distraction or obstruction on the field of play, regardless as to whether such conduct is deemed to be fair under law 42.5
- e) throwing the ball at or near a player, umpire or official in an inappropriate and dangerous manner
- f) using language or gesture that is obscene or of a serious insulting nature to another player, umpire, team official or spectator
- g) changing the condition of the ball other than as permitted by Law 42.3
- h) the bowling of fast short pitched balls that result in the bowler being disallowed from bowling further in that innings
- i) causing avoidable damage to the pitch contrary to Laws 42.13 and/or Law 42.14 that results in a five run penalty being awarded

Level 3

- a) intimidating an umpire
- b) threatening to assault another player, team official or spectator
- c) using language or gesture that offend, insult, humiliate, intimidate, threaten, disparage or vilify another person on the basis of that person's race, religion, sexual orientation, colour, descent or national or ethnic origin
- d) the deliberate bowling of any high full-pitched ball contrary to Law 42.8

Level 4

- a) threatening an umpire
- b) physical assault of another player, umpire, official or spectator
- c) any act of violence on the field of play
- d) using language or gestures that seriously offend, insult, humiliate, intimidate, threaten, disparage or vilify another person on the basis of that person's religion, sexual orientation, colour, descent or national or ethnic origin.

The conduct listed in Level 1 to Level 4 above cannot be considered to be exhaustive.

APPENDIX 2 – STANDARD PENALTIES

The following is a guide to the match bans and penalties that may be imposed by Disciplinary/Appeals Panels for individual breaches of discipline, as set out in Appendix 1:

Level 1	2 to 6 matches
Level 2	2 to 8 matches
Level 3	4 to 10 matches
Level 4	A minimum of 10 matches