

Cherwell Cricket League

General Playing Rules (2025 until further notice)

These general rules apply to all matches played in the Cherwell League and are applicable to all member clubs. Specific playing rules for the different formats and tiers are available as separate documents. They should be read in conjunction with this document.

1. LAWS

1.1) Playing Conditions. All matches will be governed by the MCC Laws of Cricket, 2017 Code (3rd Edition 2022) except as otherwise stated in the Cherwell League Playing Rules (this and other mentioned documents).

1.2) Affiliation Each club wishing to play cricket in the Cherwell Cricket League must first be affiliated to the County Board of the County in which it is situated and must then comply with that Board's requirements regarding the ECB "Safe Hands Policy". Clubs close to a county border may affiliate to the county of their choice.

2. BEFORE THE MATCH

2.1) Tiers 1-4. All matches must be played on the same ground that has been designated by the home club as their home ground, (except if subject to Section 4 below Ground/Weather) on the dates designated by the Fixture Secretary. Any match that cannot be played on a club's designated ground will be forfeited by the home team, who will receive a £50 fine, and their opponents will receive 25 points; the match can still be played as a friendly. In exceptional circumstances, and only with prior notice, the League Management Committee may grant permission for a change of ground.

2.2) Tiers 5-9. As above (2.1) but the League Management Committee will consider all requests for changes or flexibility for 3rd and 4th teams using second grounds.

2.3) All grounds used for Cherwell League matches (all divisions) must meet or be working towards the standards as laid down in the CCL Ground Standards document.

Should the League receive two or more adverse reports from visiting teams regarding the above requirements, the ground in question will be inspected (a charge of £50 will apply) and any recommended improvements must be carried out within an agreed timescale or permission to play on the ground may be withdrawn.

2.4) Match Forms. Where Umpires are present, between 30 and 15 minutes before the start of play the team captains must give the umpires an ECB form or a club team sheet with player names and ages/age groups to allow the umpires to regulate the ECB Young Player Directives.

2.5) Four new balls, as specified by the League, and at least six good quality spare balls of various ages/usage must be given to the umpires by the home club. These balls are the only ones that may be used as a replacement, except with the agreement of the umpires and both captains.

All balls must be official Cherwell League balls.

2.5a) Where non-playing umpire(s) are present they shall offer the side bowling first the choice of three new balls, having randomly removed one of the four presented to them from the selection process.

The side bowling second will then be offered the choice of the remaining three new balls for the second innings unless one has been used as a replacement in which case the choice from 2 new balls will be offered.

2.5b) A new ball MUST be used at the start of each innings

2.5c) A NEW ball spare may only be used if all following conditions are met:

i) The original ball is lost or otherwise damaged at or before precisely 10% of the overs available at the commencement of the innings have been completed. (i.e. 5 overs in T1-4, 4 overs in T5-9). (Any fractions of overs to be rounded to the nearest whole number, with ½ over being rounded up.)

ii) The umpires agree that genuine concerted efforts to find the original ball have been made without undue delay.

iii) There is no used spare ball that more closely mirrors the condition of the lost ball

2.5d) If a new ball spare is used, then no further new ball spare may be used in the same innings.

2.5e) Re-use of the original ball if found is covered by the following:

i) If a new ball spare is in use and the original ball is made available within 5 completed overs, then the original should be reused unless it is deemed to be in a significantly better condition than the current ball.

ii) If the replacement was a previously used ball, then the original ball should only be reused if made available within 5 completed overs.

2.5f) MCC Law 41.3.2.1 with regard to changing the condition of the ball will apply in CCL namely:

A fielder may, however

41.3.2.1 polish the ball on his/her clothing provided that no artificial substance is used, that the only natural substance used is sweat, and that such polishing wastes no time.

2.6 Panel umpires should be paid their match expenses (£55) in an envelope, at least 20 minutes before the start of play. If umpires are amenable, clubs can make arrangements to pay by electronic transfer. Should a club agree to pay an umpire by electronic transfer but fail to do so by noon of the Sunday following the match, they may be liable to a 5-point deduction.

2.7) The Toss. The toss shall take place between 30 and 15 minutes before the scheduled start of the match. If either captain or his representative is not present at this time, then the other team will have the option of claiming or conceding the toss.

2.8 (a) Delayed Start. If, in the opinion of the umpires, either team is responsible for a delay to the start of the match, then that team will lose one over for each 3.5 minutes playing time lost from its allocation of overs when it bats.

(b) In the Win/Lose format such overs will be lost from the designated start time, in Win/Lose/Draw format overs will only be deducted after the expiry of the 30 minutes reserve time period.

(c) The reduction of overs as above from one team before the commencement of the game will render the calculation tables invalid should there be any further interruptions for ground weather and light issues.

In such cases umpires (or captains in the absence of any umpires) should deduct one over alternately from each team's innings for every additional 3.5 minutes lost starting with the innings of the side batting first.

2.9) Innings Break. Between the innings it is the responsibility of the home team to re-mark the creases at both ends to a standard acceptable to the umpires.

In Tiers 1-4 if remarking has not been carried out, appointed umpires will mark on the form that is sent in by them any instances of failure to do so. After two reports the club will be informed that they have been reported twice, and should they transgress on a third occasion, then they will lose 5 points on that and each subsequent occasion.

In Tiers 5-9 away teams should report to the League if this is not done.

3. TEAMS

3.1) Forfeits. Teams forfeiting before 5pm on the Friday preceding the fixture will be fined £50 and deducted five points. Both the opposing captain and the League Secretary must be informed by email and/or a telephone call before the deadline time. In the event of a team forfeiting a match after 5pm on the Friday preceding the fixture, the club will be fined £50, and the team deducted ten points. Fines will be paid to the League and passed on to the opponents of the teams who forfeited the fixture. The forfeited match must always be the match in the division in which the club's lowest ranked team plays (i.e., the team designated the 2nd 3rd or 4th XI).

3.2) Number of Players. Each club's first team and all teams in Tiers 1-4 must field 11 players. Lower ranked teams can play with fewer than 11 players provided no lower ranked team has more players than one of its higher ranked teams. Any team that transgresses the foregoing will be deducted 10 points and the lower club team who played with a full team will also be deducted 10 points.

3.3) Fewer than 11 Players. The minimum number of players in a club's lowest ranked team will be eight; any team fielding fewer than eight players will be deemed to have forfeited the match. The match will be awarded to their opponents and the subsequent penalties as shown in 3.1 may be imposed. With the agreement of their opponents the match can be played as a friendly. Should both teams have fewer than eight players neither team will receive any points and the match will be cancelled and the penalties as shown in 3.1 above may be imposed upon both teams.

A club may appeal against the loss of a match and the imposition of 3.2 or 3.3. Any such appeal must be made within five days of the date that the match should have taken place. The appeal will be dealt with by the League Management Committee.

Note: One team clubs will be treated as the lowest team in the club, and this will supersede the requirement in 3.2.

3.3a) Late arrival of Players. Should a team have less than eight players at the scheduled start time but believe that they have player(s) *en route*, no play will take place until they have eight players in attendance (with the consequent loss of overs from the offending side's batting allocation) OR, and at the sole discretion of the opposing captain, the opposing side can claim the toss (even if the toss has already taken place and the offending side had won it) and begin the match. In this case, there is no reduction to the offending side's overs. The late arriving players will be subject to penalty time in accordance with Law 24.2. If the offending side do not have eight players 90 minutes after the scheduled start time, the game is deemed forfeit but can continue as a friendly.

3.3b) Players arriving late to a match that has started. A player arriving late to a match (in any division) can take part in the match providing they arrive and are ready to enter the field of play within 90 minutes of the scheduled start of the match. Once on the field of play, they will be required to serve penalty time in accordance with Law 24.2. Players arriving after this, will not be allowed to participate in the match in any capacity other than as substitute fielder, and only then if a fielder who started the match is removed from the field. The late arriving player's team will be deemed to have played with the number of players who were on the pitch or in attendance at the

match 90 minutes after the scheduled start time and may be subject to the penalties described in 3.2. Starting a game with a substitute fielder is not permitted in the Cherwell League. If a team starts with 11, those are the 11 players in the match and any players arriving after the scheduled start time are not eligible to play.

3.4) Failure to Fulfil Fixtures Any club that has one or two teams and whose only or second team fails to fulfil three or more fixtures, will have to be re-elected to stay in the League at the next A.G.M. If any club that has more than two teams has a team that fails to fulfil its fixtures on two or more occasions in a season, the League Management Committee will decide upon the future continuance of that team in the League.

3.5) Multiple Forfeits Any team which fails to fulfil at least two thirds of its scheduled fixtures shall have its record expunged from the league for that season and all points gained in fixtures against them will be removed and the tables recalculated without that team included.

4. GROUND AND WEATHER

4.1) Cancellations Due to Weather. The Ground Executive of the home team shall determine the fitness or otherwise of a ground before a match and shall advise its opponents when a fixture is to be cancelled. The decision to cancel a match should not be taken before the day of the match unless mutually agreed by both clubs and both clubs have informed the League Secretary. In the absence of any such cancellation, this responsibility is assumed by the umpires in accordance with the Laws of Cricket (Law 2) whose decision is final. If an umpire/umpires has/have not been informed that a match has been cancelled and the umpire/umpires attend the ground, the HOME team will be responsible for paying the umpire/umpire's fee/fees.

4.2) Artificial Pitches A fixture may only be played on a synthetic surface if: a. the non-turf pitch has been approved by the League, and b. both captains agree, and c. the captains, in consultation with the umpires, agree that a grass pitch of suitable condition is not available on the square.

4.3) Covers. See Ground Standards document. A pitch may be fully covered during a match in the event of inclement weather.

5. PLAYERS

5.1) Registration. All players must comply with the Cherwell Cricket League Registration Rules.

5.2) Payment of Players. Contracts between clubs and players for the payment of any sum of money or other remuneration or reward, is not allowed in the Cherwell Cricket League, except with the express written authority of the League Management Committee. Any player wishing to be involved in the "Chance to Shine" programme must obtain a letter from the County Board confirming that the player is approved by and being paid by the Board. A club may not be assisted by a third party to make a payment to a player of any sum of money or other remuneration or reward, which if paid by the club to the player directly would be a breach of these rules. If the Committee believes that a third party is paying any sum of money or other remuneration or reward which if paid by the club to the player directly would be a breach of these rules, the League Management Committee can take action against the club, as if payment had been made by the club itself.

5.3) Travel Expenses. A Club may pay players reasonable costs of travel to and from matches**, these costs are to be clearly shown in the club's audited annual accounts. For avoidance of doubt this does not include the payment of airfares. The Management Committee reserves the right to ask for and verify by sight any information that it requires concerning the application or a breach of these rules.

**NOTE: Reasonable costs of travel are deemed to be:

a) Second class return fare from player's UK residence to ground.

b) Return bus fare from player's UK residence to ground.

c) Return travel by car from UK residence to ground @ 35p per mile.

The League reserves the right to request documented verification in writing of the foregoing requirements.

5.4) Misconduct. Misconduct by any player, member, or associate of any club affiliated to the League in the course of or in conjunction with a Cherwell League match shall be viewed as a disciplinary offence and may result in action being taken by the League under its Disciplinary Regulations.

5.5) Behaviour. Any club being marked three times by panel umpires in the same season with a mark of 5 or below in umpires' fair play reports will be deducted ten points. Any further marks of 5 or below will result in a further deduction of points. The Secretary will inform a club once it has received two marks of 5 or below for behaviour.

5.6) Weeks 17 and 18 eligibility. In weeks 17 and 18 a player is not permitted to play in any division lower than that in which he has played the most games in weeks 1 to 16 inclusive, except that he will be eligible to play in such a lower division so long as he has played in that same division for 4 or more weeks in that time.

Clarifications

- i) Games which are abandoned without a ball being bowled, or forfeited before the start of play are not counted as games played and cannot be included in the calculation of 'most games' or as one of the required 4 appearances. For a player to be considered as having played in a game, their name must appear on a normally submitted scorecard.
- ii) If a player has played an equal number of games in two divisions, the higher division will be deemed the most.
- iii) A player who is eligible to drop down, can only drop one club XI from that in which he has played the most games.
- iv) If a player has transferred into the club from another CCL club during the season, games from his previous club will count. In determining eligibility, it is the level that the games were played at rather than the designation of the club XI that is relevant.
- v) For the purposes of this rule, any matches played in the HCPCL (for any club, including TVCL clubs), will be deemed to have been played in a division higher than CCL1.

Note: The object of rule 5.6 is to prevent clubs in weeks 17 and 18 from using players from higher divisions to unduly influence promotion and relegation issues of lower divisions in which they would not normally play and to continue to promote The Spirit of Cricket.

It is recognised however that there may be occasions where exceptional circumstances (e.g. a significant absence through injury) may impact on a player's eligibility. In such cases, an exemption to the rule may be requested by application to the Registration Secretary, League Secretary or their nominated deputy, stating clearly why the club is requesting it. Any such request must be received by 12.30pm on the Thursday before the match and you must have confirmation from one of the aforementioned before the player can be deemed eligible. Exemptions will not be granted 'after the fact'. NB. Poor form is not considered an exceptional circumstance.

If a team is deemed to have played a player who is ineligible under the provisions of this rule for any reason, the match will be awarded to the opposition who will be awarded 25 points (26 where an umpire's point is available) and the offending team will receive 0 points.

Note: Player appearances for Weeks 1-12 are shown on the club details pages on the league website for each club once you are logged in.

6. UMPIRES AND SCORERS

6.1) Umpires. Umpires shall be appointed as available and where appropriate, on behalf of the Management Committee by the League Umpires' Secretary from a panel maintained by the League.

6.2) Panel Umpires. **ALL Cherwell Cricket League teams in HCPCL or CCL Tiers 1-4** must nominate, for each week of the season, an umpire who has full DBS clearance, has taken part in a recognised ECB ACO training course to stage 2 (or equivalent) and be at least capable of umpiring at this level.

6.2b) All teams in Tier 5 must have a non-playing umpire at each of their games, either by nomination to the panel or a club umpire. Failure to do so will result in a 5-point deduction as per Rule 6.4 below.

6.3) Umpires Reports. Any umpire so nominated who constantly receives 3 marks of 'Weak' (a score of 7) or below in any one season may, after consultation with the club who nominated the umpire, be removed from the panel and be required to undertake a period of retraining/observation of performance before being appointed to further games.

6.4) Failure to Nominate to the Panel **or provide a non-playing club umpire in Tier 5.** Failure to nominate **or provide** an umpire for any week of the season will result in a 5-point deduction on each occasion. **Any such penalty will be applied to the club's lowest ranked team required to provide an umpire first.**

If an umpire subsequently drops out of a date that he has been nominated for, it is the nominating club's responsibility to name a replacement, regardless of whether he has an actual appointment or is on "Stand by".

6.5) **CCL panel umpires appointed to the HCPCL panel shall count as if they were standing on the CCL panel for the purpose of determining the number of umpires provided by the club in a given week.**

Where a CCL umpire is called up to the HCPCL after 5pm on a Thursday, the club will still need to try to provide a replacement if they can but will not be penalised the points deduction if they are unable to do so.

6.6) Umpires Allocation. Umpires will be allocated matches by:

- a) Being appointed to a specific match or
- b) By being put on "Stand by".

Being on "Stand by" means that the club who originally nominated the umpire may offer him /her, another appointment in a lower Division, but should they later be required to umpire a match in Tiers 1-3 that requirement would take precedence.

6.7) Unavailability of Nominated Umpire. If a nominated umpire becomes unavailable and there is no "Stand by" available as a replacement, then the club who originally nominated the umpire who is no longer available will be responsible for nominating a suitable replacement. Clubs will be informed no later than 8pm on the Friday before the match if their nominated "Stand by" is required. Any club, who fails to nominate a replacement, will be deducted 5 points.

6.8 Teams in **Tiers 6 - 9** may nominate an umpire to the panel or a 'Club Umpire' and will receive 1 bonus point for doing so. A Club Umpire is defined as a non-playing umpire who stands for the entirety of the match. They must be qualified to at least Stage 1 (or equivalent), DBS cleared and capable of umpiring at the level of the match. Teams can only receive 1 bonus point per week irrespective of how many umpires they nominate. If a club nominates or provides fewer umpires than it has teams in Tiers 5 - 8, the point(s) will go to the team providing the non-playing umpire.

If a team receives three or more adverse reports regarding their Club Umpire(s) (it need not be the same individual), the League Management Committee reserves the right to appoint a panel umpire to officiate future matches for the team, to whom the team will be required to pay the standard umpires' fee. In such a case, the club will only receive the bonus point if they nominate an umpire to the panel.

Additionally, any individual Club Umpire who receives 3 marks of 'Weak' (a score of 7) or below in any one season may, after consultation with the club who nominated the umpire, be barred from further CCL umpiring indefinitely. They may be required to undertake a period of retraining/observation of performance before being appointed to further games.

6.9.1) The standard umpire fee for any non-playing umpire is £55 to be paid, in cash, prior to the start of the game or by mutually agreed method between the club and individual umpire.

Should a club wish to pay any umpire by electronic transfer it is the responsibility of the club to contact the umpire in advance of the scheduled match day to obtain the umpire's consent to this method of payment

6.9.2) Only One Umpire. If only one umpire is provided, whether panel or club, then that umpire shall stand at the bowler's end throughout the match. A panel umpire should be paid a match fee of **£70 which will be made up of £55 from the team that did not supply an umpire (or nominate one to the panel) and £15 from the team that did.**

Payment to be arranged as above

6.10) If a club provides a Club Umpire to stand in a match, with a panel umpire or with another Club Umpire, the other club cannot object to this umpire on the day of the match. This rule applies in all divisions.

6.10) Decision on Play. When only one official umpire (Panel or club) officiates in a match, all decisions relating to the condition of the pitch, weather or light and regarding starting, stopping or restarting any match will be taken by the official umpire only, without reference to a player acting as an umpire.

6.11) Umpires Payments for Abandoned Matches. If a match is abandoned without a ball being bowled, panel umpires who have travelled to the ground shall receive their match fee in full. If the home club fails to inform the panel umpire(s) that a match has been cancelled and the appointed umpire(s) travel to the ground, the home club will be responsible for paying the fee(s) due.

6.12) Scorers in Tiers 1-4. In Tiers 1-4 it is the responsibility of each club to provide a competent scorer who is not otherwise participating in the match and is available throughout. Umpires will be asked to inform the League on the official League Report Form that this rule has been complied with. Failure to comply will result in the offending Club(s) being deducted two points.

6.13 Scorers in Tier 5. It is the responsibility of the HOME side to ensure a competent, non-playing scorer is present and available throughout the match. Umpires will be asked to inform the League on the official League Report Form that this rule has been complied with.

6.14 Scorers in Tiers 6-9. In all other divisions it is the responsibility of the captains to ensure that two people are acting as scorers throughout the match. Each club must make sure that a full and proper record of the match is kept showing, under batters, all the players who played in the match not just those who batted.

This record may be by means of a proper scorebook or recognised and appropriate electronic scoring system

7. RESULTS AND MATCH REPORTING

7.1) Results Submission. In all Divisions the result and registrations/match scorecard need to be recorded and submitted by the home captain using the Cherwell League website. Details of the procedure are set out on the website. Clubs in breach of this procedure will be deducted two points.

7.2) Timing. The match result must be submitted to the website by 10pm on the Saturday of the match.

7.3) Registrations. ALL home team captains, in all divisions, are to ensure that the appropriate Match Scorecard is properly completed on the Cherwell League website before 5pm on the Monday following the match. Failure to do so by due date may result in a £15 fine and a two-point deduction. Forms not completed within a further 7 days may result in a further penalty of 5 points being deducted. If after 14 days a form is not completed the matter will be reported to the Management Committee for possible further disciplinary action.

7.4) Umpires Report Form. In ALL Tiers the Captain of BOTH teams will complete an "Umpires Report Form" where non-playing umpire(s) have stood in the match. This form should be submitted on the website, during the week following the match and before 5pm the Wednesday following the match. Failure to do so may incur a fine of £15 and a two points deduction. Forms not submitted within a further 7 days may result in a further penalty of 5 points being deducted. If after 14 days a form is not submitted the matter will be reported to the Management Committee for possible further disciplinary action.

All reports that score an umpire 7 or below must be accompanied by an explanation of the reasoning behind the low score.

7.5 Umpires' Reports. Where non-playing umpire(s) are present at a game they must complete the match report on grounds/players as part of their duties. The form should be completed before 5pm of the Wednesday following the match.

Where any mark of 7 or below is given, this must be accompanied by an explanatory comment. (This in addition to any disciplinary report submitted on any individual player or players)

8. LEAGUE TABLES

8.1) League Tables. Teams in each division will be ranked according to the number of points gained. If two or more teams have the same number of points, the team with the greater number of wins shall be placed higher. If the number of wins is the same, the team who has lost fewer games will be placed higher, if the number of losses is the same, the team(s) with more bonus points shall be placed higher. If the number of bonus points is the same, the team gaining more points in matches between the teams will be placed higher; if the teams are still level, then the team with the best cumulative run rate in matches between the teams will be placed higher.

9. PROMOTION RELEGATION AND ANNUAL AWARDS

9.1) Promotion to Home Counties Premier League. If the League champions (Division 1 winners) do not meet the criteria for promotion or decline an invitation to join the Home Counties Premier League Division Two, the team finishing in second place will become eligible for promotion.

9.2) Acceptance to HCPL. Clubs invited to join the Home Counties Premier League Division Two must confirm in writing to the League Secretary whether they have accepted or declined the invitation within 14 days of the invitation being made.

9.3) Promotion. In all divisions except Division 1 a minimum of 2 teams will be guaranteed promotion at the end of the season, except where 9.4 below applies.

9.4) Teams in the same Division. No club can have two teams in the same division apart from the bottom Tier.

9.4.1) Promotion. If a team is promoted into the same Tier as another team from the same club, they will be placed in a different division within the Tier. There will however be restrictions on movement of players between the two teams. In this instance, the club will have the option to decline the offer of promotion.

9.4.2) Relegation. If a team is relegated into the same Tier as another team from the same club, they will be placed in a different division within the Tier. There will however be restrictions on movement of players between the two teams. In this instance, the club will have the option to request that the lower placed team is also relegated. If the circumstances in 9.4.2 result in a club having 2 teams in the bottom Tier, at the sole discretion of the League Management Committee, the teams may be allowed to play in the same division if a move would cause significant geographical difficulties.

9.5) Annual Awards Eligibility. Annual Batting and Bowling awards can only be won by Category 1 registered players.