

# Disciplinary Regulations Of Middlesex Premier Cricket League

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Approved By	MPCL Committee

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#### 1. Aims and Jurisdiction

The England & Wales Cricket Board (ECB) is committed to maintaining the highest standards of behaviour and conduct. The Middlesex Premier Cricket League (the League), which operates within the jurisdiction of the ECB takes this commitment very seriously. To this end, these Discipline Regulations, incorporating major parts of the ECB Model Code of Conduct, the new MCC Laws and The Spirit of Cricket, are based on the ECB Premier League Disciplinary Regulations 2018 and have been adopted by the League with some modifications.

These Regulations shall be complied with by all those who participate under the jurisdiction of the League's Management Committee. These Regulations shall apply to any player at any Club, at any level, under the auspices of the League. These Regulations are intended to provide assistance and uniformity to all clubs in dealing with any alleged breach of the Code of Conduct, the new MCC Laws and The Spirit of Cricket.

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 these Regulations.

There is nothing in these Disciplinary Regulations preventing or discouraging clubs from applying additional or stronger sanctions against offenders than those appearing within these Regulations, 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.

In the event that any incident or other matter occurs which is not provided for by these Regulations (whether it relates to conduct, jurisdiction, procedure or penalty), then the League Committee may take such action as considered appropriate in the circumstances, taking into account the specific circumstances and the principles of natural justice and fairness.

These Regulations shall not apply to penalties imposed on Clubs by the League's Management Committee for reasons other than the behaviour and conduct of Players or Clubs. For the purposes of these Regulations, the expression 'player' shall throughout this document be deemed to mean and include not only any player, but also any member or official of any club 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 League is 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 or by joining their respective club, 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 major responsibility for ensuring fair play rests with the captains, but extends to all players, umpires and coaches.
- 2.1.3.Players and club officials must always accept the umpire's decision. Players and club officials must show self-discipline, even when things go against them. This means not

- showing dissent at the umpire's decision or reacting 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 based on that person's age, 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 interests or reputation of other Participants, the League, clubs, umpires or the game in general. In this instance, media shall include (but not necessarily be limited to) press, radio, television, external websites, club websites, social networking sites and club match programmes. Nothing in this provision shall prevent any comment which constitutes honest opinion regarding cricketing matters, and which is made in a fair and respectful manner.
- 2.1.9.Players and club officials shall not disclose or comment upon any alleged breach of this Code (save as necessary to implement the provisions of these Regulations) until the outcome of any disciplinary process initiated under these Regulations has been finally disposed of.
- 2.1.10. Clubs must take adequate steps to ensure the good behaviour of their players, officials, members and supporters.

#### 2.2. Code of Conduct

Cricket owes much of its appeal and enjoyment to the fact that it should be played not only according to the Laws, but also within the Spirit of Cricket. The major responsibility for ensuring fair play rests with the captains, but extends to all players, umpires and, especially in junior cricket, teachers, coaches and parents. Cricket is an exciting game that encourages leadership, friendship and teamwork, which brings together people from different nationalities, cultures and religions, especially when played within the Spirit of Cricket

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

#### **Responsibility of Captains**

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

#### **Players' Conduct**

In the event of any player failing to comply with the laws relating to Player Conduct or Unfair Play the umpires shall summon and inform the offending player's captain that an offence has occurred and will request that the captain take appropriate action.

#### **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.

#### 2.2.2. There Unfair Play

According to the Laws, the umpires shall be the sole judges of fair and unfair play. If either umpire considers an action, not covered by the Laws, to be unfair he/she shall intervene without appeal and, if the ball is in play, call and signal Dead ball and implement the procedure as required.

#### 2.2.3. League Umpired are authorised to intervene in cases of-

- Damaging the ball
- Distracting the batsman
- Unfair bowling
- Time wasting
- Damaging the pitch
- Non-striker leaving his/her ground early
- Any other action that they consider to be unfair

#### 2.2.4. Respect is central to the Spirit of Cricket-

- Respect the captain, team-mates, opponents and the authority of the umpires.
- Play hard and play fair.
- Accept the umpire's decision.
- Create a positive atmosphere by your own conduct and encourage others to do the same.
- Show self-discipline, even when things go against you.
- Congratulate the opposition on their successes and enjoy those of your own team.
- Thank the officials and your opposition at the end of the match, whatever the result.
- Cricket is an exciting game that encourages leadership, friendship and teamwork, which brings together people from different nationalities, cultures and religions, especially when played within the Spirit of Cricket.

#### 2.2.5. Violence

There is no place for any act of violence on the field of play and if reported and guilty this act will be dealt with as a Level 4 offence.

Failure to comply with the provisions of the Code of Conduct may lead to disciplinary action by the League, Middlesex Cricket or any other authorised body, irrespective of a proven breach being related to a match not under the jurisdiction of the League.

#### 3. Breaches & Reporting

- 3.1. A breach of these Disciplinary Regulations occurs when:-
  - A. A 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 League .
  - B. A club fails properly to control or discipline its players or acts in a manner prejudicial to the good name or interests of the League.

- 3.2. A player or club committing such a breach shall be liable to penalties in the manner prescribed in this document.
- 3.3. A breach of the Code of Conduct will normally be categorised as Level 1, 2, 3 or 4, as set out in Appendix 1.
- 3.4. Reporting of Breaches by umpires
  - 3.4.1. Subject to paragraph 2.4.5, for a first offence of a Level 1 breach of the Code of Conduct in a match, the independent umpire(s) (referred to as "umpire" hereafter) should warn the player as to his future conduct and advise him and his captain that they will be submitting a formal disciplinary report. The player and his captain that any further Level 1 breach by that or any other player from the same team will also result in a 5 run penalty as per Law 42.2.4.
  - 3.4.2.If any player receiving such a warning commits a further Level 1 breach in the match or any other player on the same team subsequently commits a Level 1 breach in the same match, the umpires should advise him and his captain that they will be submitting a formal report. In first eleven matches, the umpires should also award five penalty runs to the other side
  - 3.4.3.In all instances of any perceived Level 1, 2, 3 or 4 breach, the umpires should complete a formal discipline report. The umpires should also apply the appropriate on-field sanctions as set out in Law 42.
  - 3.4.4.Notification that a report is to be submitted following any alleged breach of the Code of Conduct must first be advised, whenever practicable, by the umpire(s), to the player and his captain or an executive of the player's club, on the day of the alleged offence, prior to leaving the ground.
  - 3.4.5.Any such alleged breach of the Code of Conduct subject to a report (to be known as 'a complaint') will then be notified by telephone by the complainant to the League Secretary (as defined above) within 24 hours of the end of the match. The written report should be sent, preferably by email, to the League Secretary and be received within 72 hours of the end of the match.
  - 3.4.6. This paragraph 2.4 only applies where at least one of the umpires is a League Umpire
  - 3.4.7.In these Regulations, a League Umpire is a Member of the League's Panel of Umpires A Recognised Umpire is (i) any other umpire who (a) has any form of ACO accreditation and (b) has an ACO membership current at the time of the match; or (ii) any other umpire who has applied to and been recognised by the League's Management Committee as an experienced umpire.
- 3.5. Reporting of Breaches by Players
  - 3.5.1.In any match where a League or Recognised Umpire is standing any allegation of a breach of the Code of Conduct by a player made against another player which arises from an incident during a match or on the field of play should be reported by a team's captain to the League or Recognised Umpire(s).
  - 3.5.2.Any allegation of a breach of the Code of Conduct by a player/club made against another player/ club which does not fall within paragraph 2.5.1 should, Secretary of the League promptly after the incident giving rise to the allegation. Subject to any direction from the League Secretary, a written report should be produced, which should allow the League Secretary to understand i) the background to the alleged incident, ii) why a breach of the

Code of Conduct is alleged and iii) the Level of breach alleged. Where possible, notifications and reports should be submitted to the League Secretary by a club secretary (or in such other manner as may be directed by the League Secretary).

- 3.5.3.The League Secretary shall accept reports submitted under paragraph 2.5.2. and confirm receipt
- 3.5.4.Any complaints submitted under paragraph 2.5.2 must be made in good faith. The submission of a report which is trivial, vexatious, made for tactical reasons or otherwise improper may itself be treated as a breach of the Code of Conduct.

#### 4. Procedure

- 4.1. The League Secretary shall, as soon as reasonably practicable (within 72 hours), inform the Secretary of the club against whom the complaint has been made.
- 4.2. Any action the Committee may take in respect of complaints shall be in addition to the on-field action taken by the umpires under Law 42. There is no power to rescind such an on-field sanction.
- 4.3. Any Level 1 or Level 2 breach of the Code of Conduct shall in the first instance be dealt with by the League Committee. In the case of Level 1 and Level 2 breaches, this shall as an indicator, be a minimum of a final warning (Level 1) or two matches (Level 2) ban to be served with immediate effect.
- 4.4. Within 10 working days of receipt of the written complaint, the League Committee shall consider the complaint and resolve:
- A. To impose a penalty; or
- B. To take no action except to record the complaint and notify the club; or
- C. To refer the matter for a Disciplinary Hearing. Level 3 or 4 complaints will automatically be subject to a Disciplinary Hearing with the League Committee.
- 4.5. Any match/time sanctions imposed under paragraph 3.4. above, shall be advised in writing by the League Secretary Players should understand that match/time bans will normally apply to all cricket played under the auspices of ECB. Any player banned by the league must not be present at the venues of their club MPCL matches; failure to abide by this requirement will lead to increase in level of ban.
- 4.6. In the case of an incident involving a player under the age of 18 years old, the Middlesex Cricket 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 Safeguarding Department) 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 Secretary shall convene the hearing within 10-15 working days of the decision to refer.
- 5.2. 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 the Code of Conduct above.
- 5.3. 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(es) of the Code of Conduct above.

- 5.4. The accused player or club shall be entitled:
- A. To submit written statements ahead of the hearing
- B. To attend the hearing
- C. To state his case (in the case of a club, by its Secretary or other official)
- D. To be supported by a colleague and
- E. To call witnesses.
- 5.5. 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 Secretary not less than 48 hours before the date of the hearing.
- 5.6. The Hearing shall be conducted by a League Committee and shall consist of not less than three persons. None of the Panel should relate to 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.
- 5.7. A club or player involved in disciplinary proceedings will be solely responsible for meeting such costs or expenses as it or they may incur.
- 5.8. The standard of proof shall be on the 'balance of probabilities' rather than the criminal standard of 'beyond reasonable doubt'.

#### 6. Penalties

- 6.1. As a guideline, the following indicative penalties should be expected to be imposed for any complaint referred and, if appropriate. The higher end of the tariff band is most likely to be reserved for serial offences/offenders:-
  - Level 1-Final warning to 2 matches and/or appropriate/equivalent time ban
  - Level 2-2 to 4 matches and/or appropriate/equivalent time ban
  - Level 3-4 to 8 matches and/or appropriate/equivalent time ban
  - Level 4 A minimum of 10 matches and/or appropriate/equivalent time ban

These sanctions apply to all cricket played under the auspices of ECB.

- 6.2. Where applicable, penalties will be carried over to apply in the following season.
- 6.3. Where the complaint is decided by the League Committee and not referred to a Disciplinary Hearing, repeated infringements, listed on umpires' reports, by the individual player or Club which is the subject of the relevant complaint may still result in additional penalties as laid out in 6.6 below.
- 6.4. If at a hearing a breach of the Code of Conduct is proven, 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, not to exceed £100
- To ban the player for one or more matches, or for a stated period
- 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
- 6.5. The League Committee will take the following factors into account when determining the penalties to be imposed:
- If the accused player/club has pleaded guilty
- The player's previous disciplinary record
- If the player is also the captain, the conduct of the player subsequent to him being warned and told that he will be reported
- in the case of an appeal, if that appeal is spurious
- 6.6. In addition, where an individual behaves inappropriately or fails to respect the formality at any level during a Disciplinary Hearing, the Committee assumes the right to impose further corrective actions or penalties as it sees fit.
- 6.7. Where a representative and/or witness(es) behaves inappropriately or fails to respect the formality at any level during a Disciplinary Hearing this can be dealt with under the code by having a separate hearing.
- 6.8. The Committee 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.
- 6.9. Decisions of the League Committee (a finding that a complaint is proved or not proved or a decision on penalty) shall be by majority vote; where necessary the League Committee Chairman shall have a casting vote.

# 7. Appeals

- 7.1. where either the League Committee has imposed a penalty pursuant to paragraph 4.4 a) above or a breach of the Code of Conduct 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.
- 7.2. There shall be no right of appeal against a minimum ban imposed by the League Committee for a Level 1 or 2 offence save on the grounds of mistaken identity, misrepresentation or (where the breach was reported by the umpire(s) under 2 above) failure of the umpire(s) to follow the procedures in Paragraph 2 above.
- 7.3. A notice of appeal setting out the grounds must be given in within seven days of the decision of the League Secretary, together with a deposit of £100 if the appeal is by a player or £150 if the appeal is by a club. Where no grounds of appeal are set out (i.e. failure to follow process), the League Secretary (or deputy) will reject such appeals. No new evidence can be introduced by clubs.
- 7.4. 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.

- 7.5. The Appeal shall be by way of a new hearing before the Appeal Panel (Trustees and League Chairman). None of the Panel should relate to 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 decision makers.
- 7.6. The player or club shall have the same entitlements as set out in 5.4 above.
- 7.7. 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 Secretary not less than 7 days before the date of the hearing.
- 7.8. Non-attendance at a hearing of the Appeals Panel by the appellant club or person without good and valid reason for such non-attendance will automatically result in forfeiture of their right of appeal and of their deposit.
- 7.9. The Appeals Panel may confirm, vary or reverse the decision of the disciplinary hearing outcome 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.
- 7.10. The decision of the Appeals Panel hearing is final and binding unless a motion to call an EGM is received with 5 days of receipt of decision and will be accompanied by a deposit of £150.

# 8. Non-Payment of Fines

- 8.1. 7.1. 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 fourteen days of the Club being notified of such fine.
- 8.2. 7.2. 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.

# **Appendix-1** – Breach of Discipline

Certain conduct, whether on or off the field 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 which in first eleven matches may result in a 5 run penalty or the bowler being disallowed from bowling any further in that innings in accordance with Laws 41.9 and 41.10
- B. wilfully mistreating any part of the cricket ground, equipment or implements used in the match\*
- C. showing dissent at an umpire's decision by word or action\*
- D. using language that, in the circumstances, is obscene, offensive or insulting\*

- E. making an obscene gesture\*
- F. appealing excessively\*
- G. advancing towards an umpire in an aggressive manner when appealing\*
- H. bowling a dangerous or unfair short-pitched delivery and/or an accidental non-pitching delivery that results in the bowler being disallowed from bowling any further in that innings in accordance with Laws 41.6 and 41.7.
- I. any other misconduct, the nature of which is, in the opinion of the umpires, equivalent to a Level 1 offence\*.

# Level 2

- A. showing serious dissent at an umpire's decision by word or action\*
- B. making inappropriate and deliberate physical contact with another player\*
- C. deliberate distraction, deception or obstruction on the field of play under Law 41.4 or 41.5.
- D. throwing the ball at a player, umpire or another person in an inappropriate and dangerous manner\*
- E. using language or gesture to another player, umpire, team official or spectator that, in the circumstances, is obscene or of a seriously insulting nature\*
- F. causing avoidable damage to the pitch which in first eleven may result in a 5 run penalty being awarded under Laws 41.12.3, 41.14.3 and 41.15.3.
- G. any other misconduct, the nature of which is, in the opinion of the umpires, equivalent to a Level 2 offence\*.

#### Level 3

- A. intimidating an umpire by language or gesture\*
- B. threatening to assault a player or any other person except an umpire\*.
- C. using language or gesture that offends, insults, humiliates, intimidates, threatens, disparages or vilifies another person based on that person's race, religion or belief, colour, descent, national or ethnic origin, age, disability, gender, sexual orientation or background.
- D. Deliberately bowling a non-pitching delivery which is deemed dangerous and unfair in accordance with Law 41.7

## Level 4

- A. threatening to assault an umpire\*
- B. making inappropriate and deliberate physical contact with an umpire\*
- C. physically assaulting a player or any other person\*
- D. committing any other act of violence\*.
- E. using language or gesture that seriously offends, insults, humiliates, intimidates, threatens, disparages or vilifies another person based on that person's race, religion or belief, colour, descent, national or ethnic origin, age, disability, gender, sexual orientation or background. In Levels 1 to 4, offences marked with an asterisk are in first eleven matches capable of attracting on-field sanctions under Law 42. The conduct listed in Level 1 to Level 4 above cannot be exhaustive.

#### Social media

For the avoidance of doubt, any postings online and/or on social media (Twitter, Facebook or similar/equivalent platforms) also fall to be determined in accordance with the factors above. In relation to such cases, it should be noted:

- A. Players are to be considered responsible for any posting(s) on their social media account(s) which are caught by the factors detailed above (the fact that a posting may have been made by someone else in the Player's name will not necessarily prevent disciplinary action being taken);
- B. Disciplinary action may result from repeating comments made on social media by others (e.g. 'retweeting') which are caught by the factors detailed above; and
- C. The deleting of any inappropriate content, whilst advisable, does not of itself prevent disciplinary action being taken.

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