

Neon Cricket Wiltshire County Cricket League

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Circular to NCWCCL Clubs 25th June 2021

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Cancellations due to COVID-19

If cricketers are notified by NHS Test and Trace that they must isolate, then they must not be allowed to play cricket. But this could leave a club without enough players to field a team. As the committee were in the process of discussing what to do in these circumstances, we have been notified of two clubs who are in this situation for this weekend.

The committee's first preference is for the match to be played, even if this means fielding an under-strength team. However, it is understood that this may not be possible, and this must not be achieved by fielding players who are isolating. Some clubs are struggling to fill their sides already, so the loss of a group of players to COVID-19 may leave them with insufficient players, so there will have to be a cancellation.

If a match has to be cancelled, then:

- For clubs who field multiple sides, league rule 34 states that the lowest team must forfeit first. However, in the case of COVID-19 isolation, this rule will not apply – the team which do not play must be the team which contains the majority of the cases. In case of doubt (e.g. if the cases are spread across multiple teams), please consult with the League Fixtures and Results Officer as to which team this is.
- If possible, the match should be rescheduled to a date (usually a Sunday) later in the season. This date must be agreed by both teams, and the date must be agreed within 14 days after the original date of the fixture. The agreed date must be before the final round of fixtures on Saturday 28th August. Both clubs must notify the League Fixtures and Results Officer of the new date. The league understands that this can be difficult, both for player and ground availability. However on the latter, the match can be played at any ground, including the away team's ground or a neutral venue.
- If the match cannot be rescheduled, then the two teams will each be awarded the average number of points per match from their matches prior to the date of the cancelled match. This average will only include matches which are either completed, or won/lost by forfeit – it will not include cancelled or abandoned matches. The average will be rounded to the nearest integer, with exact halves rounded up.
- Any team attempting to cancel a match under the above rules without good cause will be considered to have forfeited the match, and will be charged with the Level 2 offence, “Any attempt to manipulate a match in regard to the result, net run rate, bonus points or otherwise.”

How to avoid COVID-19 cancellations

Unfortunately as the number of cases of COVID-19 in society rise once again, it is inevitable that some cricketers will be affected. However, the fact that a cricketer plays cricket and then tests positive for COVID-

19 does not necessarily mean that the whole team has to isolate. The whole point of the COVID-19-related procedures which have been put in place for cricket, is to make it a safe place to play, where a player who unknowingly has COVID-19 will not pass it on to his team mates, members of the opposition, umpires or spectators.

The ECB have stated that playing a cricket match alongside a player who subsequently tests positive is not cause to have to self-isolate, as long as cricket's COVID-19 procedures are being properly followed. This was confirmed by NHS Test and Trace following a case in Wiltshire last summer. It is expected that when there is a player who subsequently tests positive, only the following will be asked to self-isolate:

- Anybody who car-shared with the person in question to get to or from the match.
- Everybody in the team, if the team are not following the ECB COVID-19 protocols, such as not hand-sanitising every 6 overs, or not following changing room and showering protocols.

Therefore it is in your interests and the interests of your team mates to follow these protocols, as we know is happening in the vast majority of matches.

The ECB have now produced a COVID-19 flow chart of the actions which should be undertaken by clubs when they have a COVID-19 case. A copy will be provided by the league or Wiltshire Cricket when a case is reported.

In addition, you will have to self-isolate if the NHS COVID-19 App says you have to. However, this can happen if you leave your phone in the changing rooms alongside the phone of someone who then tests positive. The NHS COVID-19 App specifically says that “*You should pause contact tracing when you store your phone in a locker or a communal area*”. Therefore when playing, you should either pause the App's contact tracing for the duration of the match (this is in the “Manage Contact Tracing” menu item), or leave your phone in your car, etc.

Obviously these steps will not stop all cancellations due to COVID-19 contacts – we still may get multiple cricketers being required to isolate through contact outside of cricket (e.g. if they have children in the same bubble at school), but let's do all we can to keep instances of team isolation to a minimum.

Standards of behaviour

Onto a different subject... Following a recent letter of complaint from a spectator regarding players using foul and abusive language the League Management Committee wishes to strongly remind Neon Wiltshire County Cricket Clubs that:

- “Using language or a gesture that is obscene, offensive or insulting” is a Level 1 Offence
- “Using language or a gesture that is obscene, offensive or of a seriously insulting nature to another player, umpire, referee, team official, other official or spectator” is a Level 2 Offence.

Clubs, through their on-field captains, are responsible in ensuring that the above two rules are strictly adhered to at all times; this encompasses both on-field and off-field behaviour.

Failure to adhere to the above may result in player suspension and a deduction of points for the offending side.

Scorecard entry – umpire information

We have had a number of instances of the home team entering the result saying that the away team did not provide a non-playing umpire, but then the away team change this to say that they did. On further checking, the home team say that an umpire was provided, but they didn't know his name.

If this is the case, when entering the scorecard, please select *Untrained non-playing umpire* rather than *No non-playing umpire*. It is then clear that an umpire has been provided, and when the away team change it to a specific person, it won't need to be queried further.