



Yorkshire Cricket Southern Premier League

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Premier Section Cricket Committee

16th meeting – Wednesday 24th January 2024 – 7.30pm by Zoom

Note of Meeting

Present: Roger Pugh (chair), Jason Booth, Chris Froggett, Mick Forrester, Alex Fletcher, Bryan Lowe, Steve Ward

Apologies: Mark Beardshall, Nick Kendall

1. **Welcome & apologies.** Apologies were received from Mark Beardshall (delayed at work) and Nick Kendall (conflicting club meeting).
2. **Matters arising from last meeting.** RP said that there were no matters arising not already covered by the agenda.
3. **Equity & Diversity update.** JB gave an update as follows:
 - the work of the group had paused recently, due in part to changes in his personal circumstances
 - over the period in which the group had been in operation, Milton Samuels, Nelson Windle and himself have shouldered most of the work and have been largely disappointed with the lack of response from others; they felt that some of the others have wanted to be members of the group without the realisation of what it really entailed and the commitment required
 - the plan now is to advertise for new membership, to ensure representation not just from the race perspective, but the other diversity characteristics within the League; an advert is being prepared
 - the group will then work with Gareth Davis and Mo Mohammed at the YCB, to align the group's work with the response to the ICEC report
 - one issue being considered is the recommendation that there should be an E&D lead in each of the clubs, in order to improve accountability
4. **Overseas players.** CF followed up on two issues raised at the last meeting:
 - i. The promised rule amendment on asylum seekers has been made, in line with new ECB guidance that an asylum seeker, who has in the last four years played as a professional, can now be treated as an amateur. CF also clarified that once an asylum seeker was given refugee status, they were deemed ordinarily resident in the country and would no longer be treated as an overseas player.
 - ii. The promised rule change to permit a replacement overseas player when the contracted overseas player unexpectedly returns home early has been included in circumstances as follows:
 - where a team's registered overseas player has to return home earlier than had originally been agreed between the player and the relevant club at the time when he was registered;
 - where the return was requested by his club in the country in which he normally plays, in order to play or prepare for a first class, A List or T20 competition sanctioned by the governing body in an ICC Full member country;
 - where the replacement player will be registered by the end of business on 14 August; *and*
 - satisfactory supporting evidence of the above is provided to the Compliance Manager and approved by the Head of Premier Section.

5. **Officials recruitment.** RP said that a letter has now gone to all clubs, asking them to nominate a contact person within their club with whom we can liaise on officials' recruitment activity. In order to support activity, a recruitment video has been produced, a flyer for reproduction or use on electronic media is being prepared, and a menu of recommended recruitment activity will be made available prior to the start of the season. RP stressed the importance of this activity against a background of Premier Section clubs being accused of lack of interest in recruitment of officials, and the need for club recruitment activity to be assessed.
6. **Play-Cricket checking.** MF has volunteered to take on the responsibility of checking Premier Section results on Play-Cricket, following the sad passing of Kevin Motley, who had previously undertaken this work. RP thanked MF for agreeing to take on this important role. **RP to advise Melvyn Bond.**
7. **Finals days.** SW confirmed the arrangements for Premier Section finals days as below, and said that discussions have now been opened with the host clubs:
 - Area T20 Blast finals – Doncaster Town CC
 - K3 Dental KO Cup final – Barnsley Woolley Miners CC
 - Whitworth Cup final – Sprotbrough CC
 - T20 finals – Cawthorne CC
8. **Cup-tie start times.** RP said that there had been an approach from the W&GL to allow start times in Sunday cup-ties to be put back to accommodate morning W&GL games. DW and RP had discussed and were of the view that this could be done by agreement with both clubs for Senior Section cup-ties, but not for the K3 Dental or Whitworth Cup games, which are our most prestigious cup games, save that Whitworth games could be put back to 12.30 in line with the K3 Dental. This was agreed. **RP to include in forthcoming bulletin.**
9. **Cup-ties interrupted by the weather.** SW had asked RP to produce a simple guide to DLS for scorers and umpires who will have to deal with it for the first time this season. RP had noted that the rules on deducting overs in the ECB generic 40-over playing conditions was very loose, and needed clarification. He had suggested to DW that we should align cup-ties with what we do in league games, which would be simpler for all concerned. DW agreed in principle subject to LEB approval. The committee agreed this approach. **RP to take proposal to LEB.**
10. **Premier Leagues Management Board.** RP reported that DW & MB went to the PLMB AGM last week and fed back as follows:
 - i. There is a proposal to discontinue the championship play-offs at the end of the season, and leagues were asked to consider and report their wishes back to Alan Birkinshaw. Asked about the rationale behind this, RP said that he understood that the relevance of the play-offs had been questioned, and there was a feeling that the September Saturdays could be used for league games, to the benefit of all clubs. AF said that he had spoken to a prominent player in one of the other leagues, who knew nothing of this, and was keen that the play-offs continue. The committees' view was that since we canvassed our clubs on this issue a year ago, and they wanted the play-offs to continue, that should remain our position. The committee felt that the other leagues should also consult their players.
 - ii. RP reported that it is the intention to disband the PLMB, its role being taken over by the YCB. RP said that it has not met since the previous AGM in early 2023, and that its primary role is to manage the play-offs. It was agreed that if the play-offs continue, and there is no PLMB, there needs to be a small committee to manage them in as transparent way, with representation from each league.
 - iii. SW asked about the balance of the funds paid by leagues to the PLMB, and whether with would be shared out. **RP to feed back on above at next week's LEB.**
11. **Premier Section restructure.** RP referred to the proposals to restructure the Premier Section made in 2023. He said that there was clearly some division on this issue, so he wanted to flag it up as an issue for full debate at our next meeting. The following comments were made:
 - i. RP explained the rationale behind the proposals as being to improve playing standards and competitiveness amongst our top clubs, to put them on par with the top clubs in the country. CF added that reduction to ten-club divisions would also enable other formats, in particular T20, to be played on Saturdays, thereby responding to the wishes of players for less Sunday cricket.

- ii. MF said that he knew that players from another Premier League had said they were envious of the competitiveness in our league, and that he inclined to the 'if it ain't broke, don't fix it' view. This was supported by JB and AF.
 - iii. CF said that he believed that there were a number of other things that we can do in order to improve standards.
 - iv. **RP asked members to think and talk to others about the issue, and agreed to table a full discussion at our next meeting.**
12. **Umpires fees.** MF asked about umpires' fees and RP undertook to clarify. **RP to include in feedback from the meeting.**
 13. **DBS for scorers.** SW raised his concerns that DBS checks for scorers were to be discontinued. This is an ECB decision, following legal advice. He had spoken to Lindsay Pepper, as League Safeguarding Officer, who shared his concerns, and who would raise the issue at next week's LEB.
 14. **Umpires' refresher courses.** BL said that three courses had been arranged, for all South Yorkshire umpires, as follows:
 - 27 January (10.00-15.00) at Elsecar CC
 - 18 February (10.00-15.00) at Elsecar CC
 - 2 March (10.00-15.00) at Tickhill CC
 15. **Close.** The meeting closed at 9.00pm. The next meeting is arranged for Wednesday 20 March, face-to-face at Shaw Lane Sports Club, Barnsley (7.30pm).