**THE WILLOW LEAGUE 2020**

The Willow League was formed to provide recreational cricket for adults, with the emphasis firmly on the social, fun and friendly aspects of the game. It is played mid-week in and around Cardiff.

The Willow League is governed by a committee comprising of one voting member for each full member of the League. The committee will seek to ensure that member clubs operate within the boundaries of the “spirit of cricket” as enshrined by the MCC.

“The Spirit of the Game involves RESPECT for: your opponents; your own captain and team; the role of the umpires; the game and its traditional values.

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:

1. To appeal knowing that the batsman is not out
2. To advance towards an umpire in an aggressive manner when appealing
3. To 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”

There is no player registration process in operation as it is hoped that member clubs would operate within the spirit of the league. If clubs act in contravention of the spirit of the Willow League regarding team selection this may be raised with and debated by the committee.

The Willow League will elect officers annually to fulfil the posts of Chair, Vice Chair, Fixtures Secretary, Webmaster and Treasurer. The officers are not voting members as of right but may be chosen by their respective clubs to be voting representatives of their club.

**WILLOW LEAGUE RULES 2020**

The rules of cricket as approved by the MCC shall apply unless otherwise amended or adapted locally for the league. The following local rules apply:

**GENERAL RULES**

Teams may rearrange games if the date they have been allocated in the original fixtures is not convenient due to widespread unavailability of players, unavailability of designated pitch etc. providing that both teams can reach agreement on an alternative date. However, this does not apply to those games lost to bad weather as such games are not to be rearranged (except in the Cup).

If the weather is particularly bad during the day of the game and there is realistically very little chance of the game being played, representatives from both sides may agree, by telephone, to cancel the game beforehand to avoid players from both sides unnecessarily making the journey to the ground.

The toss for each game should take place no later the 5.55pm irrespective of whether the captains are present or not and each team should be ready to commence the match as soon as the toss has been completed. If the captain of a team is not present by the appointed time to toss up and no other member of the team is prepared to do so, the other team shall be deemed to have won the toss and shall decide whether to bat or bowl. The game then commences without further delay.

If local factors such as traffic hold-ups affect both teams and there is mutual agreement by both captains (or another representative of a team if the captain is absent) to delay the start time then a game comprising a reduced number of overs shall be played.

Where only 1 team, either through their actions or stated wish, causes a delay to the game starting promptly as 6pm then this team shall have the number of overs in their batting innings reduced using the following format: 1 over less in their batting innings after 5 minutes, and then 1 further over less for each subsequent 5 minutes (or part thereof) delay in the start, up to a maximum of 5 overs deduction. If the game has not commenced after a delay of 25 minutes then the team causing the delay shall forfeit the fixture and it is awarded to the other team.

The home team (as designated on the fixture list) must supply the wickets and the match ball in each game. Teams are allowed to use a non-standard colour ball for matches providing that both teams agree beforehand.

The pitch costs are shared on the night between the two teams.

The minimum number of payers in a team to take part in a match should be no less than 7 otherwise the team forfeits the game unless the opposition agree to play it.

**Children/youths:** may only play where they have a familial or other long standing connection to an existing or recent Willow player and/or team. It is the responsibility of each team to ensure that they are fully aware of – and comply with – the regulations, safeguards and requirements of having children/youth players (defined as under 18 years of age) in their team. A web link to the appropriate area provided by the ECB will be uploaded to the League website.

All teams agree to play the game in the spirit intended and resolve to accept that the umpire’s decisions are final and should not be questioned under any circumstances. In line with this all teams should ensure that, wherever possible, they provide individuals to umpire of sufficient competence and familiar with the rules.

**Wides** – As in all forms of limited overs cricket any ball bowled down the leg side is deemed a wide. In the interests of fairness and to avoid contention captains are to remind their team of this at the start of the game.

**No balls** – All full tosses over waist height, at whatever speed, are no balls irrespective of whether the ball is hit or not. Bouncers over shoulder height, when the batsman takes a normal stance should also be called as no balls. Either umpire may call and signal no ball. If the ball bounces more than once or rolls along the ground before it reaches the popping crease (or pitches off the pitch entirely) then the umpire will call and signal no ball. (For the purposes of clarity, if the ball bounces twice before it reaches the popping crease it is a no ball, If it bounces twice on or after the popping crease it is a fair delivery).

**Non-striker leaving his ground early (Mankad Law)**

If the non-striker is out of his ground from the moment the ball comes into play to the instant when the bowler would normally have been expected to release the ball, the bowler is permitted to attempt to run him out. Whether the attempt is successful or not, the ball shall not count as one in the over. In order to reflect the friendly spirit of the Willow League it is agreed that the bowler must firstly provide a polite warning to the batsman if he considers that he is leaving his ground early, before there is any attempted run out.

In the event of a side starting the game with less than eleven players, any player turning up late will not be allowed to bowl if 10 overs have already been bowled in the match.

Team scores and results (including overs bowled and wickets lost) should be e-mailed or text to the Webmaster by the winning team as soon as possible after the game but by no later than one week after the date the game was played. Any scores and results not submitted in this timescale will be classed as not having been played and shall not count for points or in the season’s calculation of relative positions in the competition to which the game applied.

If the games are not played due to bad weather please inform the Webmaster by e-mail or text so that the League table can be updated accordingly.

**COMPETITIONS**

The format will comprise three competitions: the League, the Cup/Bowl and the WiSP (Willow Shield/Plate).

1. **LEAGUE COMPETITION**

Teams play each other once in the first half of the season, either home or away.

Games comprise 20 overs with a maximum of 4 overs per bowler and a requirement for a batsman to retire as soon as he has scored 50. The batsman may resume his innings if all the other wickets have fallen. In the event of 2 or more batsmen being retired and needing to return, the return is carried out in the order of retirement.

Matches may comprise a reduced number of overs; in the event of rain, bad light or other conditions on the day affecting the number of overs that can be bowled, but this must be by mutual consent between the captains and both teams must have the same number of overs available to them.

In the event of a tie for the League title, it will be decided in favour of the team that won the game(s) played between the two teams. If this fixture was not played due to rain, then the team with the most number of wins is awarded the title. If both teams have the same number of wins, net run rate shall be used to determine the winner.

Points system. 15 points are available per game; 10 for winning and 5 bonus points allocated between the two teams according to the relative closeness of the result (as shown in the table below). If a game is tied, the points are shared equally (7.5 each).

**Wickets victory Runs victory Winners Losers**

**(Wkts remaining\*) (Runs margin)**

 **1 1-5 0 bonus 5 bonus**

 **2 6-10 1 bonus 4 bonus**

 **3-4 11-15 2 bonus 3 bonus**

 **5-6 16-25 3 bonus 2 bonus**

 **7-8 26-35 4 bonus 1 bonus**

 **9-10 36 or more 5 bonus 0 bonus**

* **Where the side batting 2nd wins but has fewer than 11 batsmen available, the wickets result shall be adjusted so that the margin of victory represents the actual number of wickets remaining in the match (e.g. a team winning with 3 wickets lost by only 9 batsmen available shall have won the game by 5 wickets only).**

Positions will be decided on an average points system with win and bonus points divided by the number of games played to give a mean average rounded up to 2 decimal points.

Matches cancelled due to bad weather will not be rearranged – no points will be awarded as the averaging system is used to determine positions.

If a team fails to fulfil a match due to lack of players the opposing team shall be awarded 15 points. The defaulting team receives no points but the game will count in averaging points over the course of the competition.

1. **CUP COMPETITION (optional)**

The Cup competition is optional and is played on a knock out basis.

Unlike league games, if Cup matches are cancelled due to bad weather they will need to be rearranged unless one team forfeits the game.

Cup games comprise 18 overs with a maximum of 2 overs per bowler and a requirement for a batsman to retire as soon as he has scored 25 runs. The batsman may resume his innings if all the other wickets have fallen. In the event of 2 batsmen being retired and needing to return, the return is carried out in the order of retirement.

If a team fields less than 11 players in a Cup match the opposing captain is entitled to choose which bowler(s) must bowl the extra overs if they have less than 9 people to bowl 2 overs each. For example, if a team has 8 players, once they have all bowled 2 overs each the opposing captain can choose the one who has conceded the most runs to bowl the extra 2 overs.

A team may change its wicket-keeper once during the course of a match, except due to injury, and the original wicket-keeper may then bowl a maximum of 2 overs.

If a team cannot raise a side for a scheduled Cup match the tie is awarded to the other team.

In the event of a tie in a Cup match the game will be decided by a bowl out (the number of wickets lost is not used to decide the winners). The bowl out is by over arm bowling and is administered as follows:

* A wicket is set at each end and the match ball is used for bowling.
* Normal no ball rules concerning feet and number of bounces before reaching the wicket shall apply.
* Six players from each team bowl one delivery each
* The team that batted first starts the bowl out, and then alternates between the two teams
* The team with the most number of wickets hit (i.e. the bails are removed from the stumps wins
* If the bowl out is undecided after these 12 deliveries, the bowl out switches to a sudden death basis, with the remaining players from each side alternating. If required, the original 6 players who started the bowl out shall again until one team has one more hit than the other once both teams have bowled the same number of times.

**POLICY FOR ENSURING CUP GAMES ARE PLAYED ON TIME**

If a cup match cannot be played on its scheduled date it should be rearranged as soon as possible thereafter to ensure that the game is played by the date of the next round. If a cup match is cancelled on two separate occasions due to bad weather and it cannot be played by the date of the next round then the tie should be decided on the toss of a coin. This is by no means ideal but otherwise games will not be played by the date of the next round. If the Final (Cup or Bowl) is unable to be played due to bad weather then, after two further attempts have been made to play the game, the two teams shall agree a mutually acceptable way of settling or sharing the competition. In the event that agreement cannot be reached, the matter shall be referred to the League Fixtures Secretary, the League Chairman if there is a conflict of interest or another League officer is there continues to be a conflict of interest. In the event of the finalist disagreeing over whether a game should proceed on a previously agreed date due to the weather, then one or both of the independent umpires may be called upon to decide whether the game is to be played.

Any disputes relating to the rearranging of Cup matches should be referred to the Chairman as soon as possible for a decision. If the dispute involves the Chairman’s club, then it is referred to either the Vice Chairman or the Treasurer. If the dispute also involves the club of one of these individuals then it shall be referred to one of the others.

Where a League or WiSP fixture between two clubs is used to play a rescheduled Cup game then the teams either need to agree that the League or WiSP fixture shall be recorded as “no result” or to arrange a new date to play it – a rearranged date shall not be after the week of the final fixtures in each respective competition.

1. **WiSP (WillowShield/Plate) COMPETITION**
* Teams play each other once in the second half of the season, with the home or away being inverse to the respective fixture in the League earlier in the season
* Games comprise 18 overs with a maximum of 3 overs per bowler and a requirement for the batsman to retire as soon as he has scored 25 runs. The batsman may resume his innings if all the other wickets have fallen. In the event of 2 or more batsmen being retired and needing to return, the return is carried out in the order of retirement.
* Matches may comprise a reduced number of overs; in the event of rain, bad light or other conditions on the day affecting the number of overs that can be bowled, but this must be by mutual consent between the captains and both teams must have the same number of overs available to them.
* In the event of a tie for the WiSP title, it will be decided in favour of the team that won the game(s) played between the two teams. If this fixture was not played due to rain, then the team with the most number of wins is awarded the title. If both teams have the same number of wins, net run rate shall be used to determine the winner.
* Points system. A simple win/loss/tie/cancelled format shall operate. Win = 2 points. Loss = 0 points. Tied = 1 point. Table positions will be decided on an absolute points system.
* Matches cancelled due to bad weather will not be rearranged and no points are awarded. If a game is tied then 1 point is awarded to each team.
* If a team fails to fulfil the match due to lack of players the opposing team shall be awarded the win and the defaulting team received no points.

**SUMMARY TABLE OF RULES FOR ALL COMPETITIONS**

Competition No. of Max. overs Points Game off due Game off

 Overs per bowler System to weather due to forfeit

LEAGUE 20 4 Win, bonus 0 points each 15 points

 & average

WiSP 18 3 Win 2, Tie1 1 point each 2 points

 Loss 0

CUP 18 2 Result Rearrange Game awarded

 Game

**SUMMARY TABLE FOR BOWLER ALLOCATIONS IN REDUCED OVER GAMES**

League – minimum of 5 bowlers to be used

No. of overs 20 18 16 14 12

Bowler allocation 4ovs 3x4ovs; 1x4ovs; 4x3ovs; 2x3ovs;

 2x3ovs 4x3ovs 1x2ovs 3x2ovs

WiSP – minimum of 6 bowlers to be used

No. of overs 18 16 14 12 10

Bowler allocation 3ovs 4x3ovs; 2x3ovs; 6x2ovs 4x2ovs;

 2x2ovs 4x2ovs 2x1ovs