

Applicability of sanctions between competitions in recreational cricket

Introduction

The ECB has introduced the General Conduct Regulations (“**GCR**”), Recreational Conduct Regulations (“**RCR**”) and the GCR for ECB Competitions (“**ECB GCR**”) with the purpose of creating greater consistency in disciplinary processes and sanctions across the recreational game. Where teams in ECB competitions (such as County Age Group competitions) are organised by Recreational Cricket Boards (“RCBs”), the term ‘Club’ below includes the RCB.

Each of the GCR, RCR and the ECB GCR (the “**Regulations**”) state as follows:

1. Any bans imposed under the Regulations shall apply to all cricket (including professional cricket), be effective immediately after being notified and will remain on the Respondent’s record for 24 calendar months from the date of the breach.
2. A Respondent should receive a more significant sanction in respect of repeated breaches within a 24-month period.
3. Cricket organisations must recognise, give effect to and fully enforce any sanction imposed by another cricket organisation under the Regulations (including sanctions imposed within professional cricket) and communicate sanctions that they have imposed under the Regulations with other relevant competition organisers.
4. A Club will be in breach of the Regulations if it knowingly permits a cricketer who is suspended as a result of a breach of the Regulations to play in any match or competition.

In addition, where a Club withdraws a player from a match before a ban has been communicated, this match should not be considered towards serving the ban. Further, if a ban is inadvertently missed by a competition organiser/club/player it should be served in the next match the player is due to play.

In practice, the application of playing bans to all cricket means that a suspension may be imposed in accordance with a disciplinary process for one competition but served by the player/applied in a different competition if the player participates in a different competition during the period in which the ban applies.

By way of example:

1. A one match suspension, which is stated to be effective immediately, is imposed by a Premier League on a Monday under the GCR and in respect of conduct in a Premier League match.
2. The player is due to participate in (i) a midweek Cup match and (ii) a Premier League match on a Saturday.
3. The player’s suspension will be served in the midweek match (on the basis that it is played first), which means the player is eligible to play in the Premier League match on the Saturday.

In order to comply with and give effect to these provisions of the Regulations, cricket organisations will need to know whether a Participant has received a sanction under the Regulations. We are aware that cricket organisations may already have systems in place to facilitate these provisions but have prepared this document to assist cricket organisations and provide details of the systems which can be used to facilitate this and apply these provisions.

Play-Cricket

Play-Cricket is an online system for the recreational game which, amongst other things, assists cricket organisations in the administration of their competitions. Play-Cricket is currently used by more than 6,000 clubs within England and Wales.

Within Play-Cricket is a 'Suspensions' tab, which allows cricket organisations to record player suspensions (clubs may add suspensions which are then authorised by the League). Players who have received a suspension are then 'greyed out' on the system for the period of the suspension. This allows:

1. Clubs to easily identify whether their players are eligible to participate in a match for the Club;
2. Leagues to easily identify whether players are eligible to participate in a match in their competition; and
3. Other cricket organisations with whom a player is registered to easily identify whether players are currently subject to a suspension or have received a suspension within the relevant time period stipulated in the Regulations.

When a case is received by a Relevant Disciplinary Body / Relevant Cricket League under the GCR or RCR respectively, the Disciplinary Officer can check the player's status within Play-Cricket before a sanction is imposed. This will allow the decision-maker to identify whether a player should receive a higher sanction under the "totting-up" provisions in the Regulations. The Relevant Disciplinary Body can also use Play-Cricket to record the player suspension imposed under their disciplinary process. However, we recommend that this is also confirmed separately/directly to the player's Club and other relevant competition organisers (where known) in accordance with the GCR and RCR. Leagues are encouraged to communicate effectively with other leagues and RCBs in the surrounding area when imposing penalties. As part of the disciplinary process, Respondents should be asked to declare any other competitions/clubs in which they play and any previous breaches, to help identify necessary communications and where other records need checking to determine if a "totting-up" penalty is required.

ECB Premier Leagues are already using this facility and for the reasons set out in this guidance note, the ECB recommends that other cricket leagues use this facility on Play-Cricket to record suspensions.