

# Agreement between the Cherwell Cricket League and the Oxford Cricket Association

Dated 20<sup>th</sup> November 2020

## Purpose of the Agreement

This agreement is intended to lay out the terms and structure of a new League which will be created by the clubs of the Oxford Cricket Association (OCA) joining the Cherwell Cricket League (CCL) for the season 2021 and beyond. The principal rules and regulations of the new League (including the Constitution) will be provided as separate documents. This document will cover any issues not dealt with in the aforementioned and in any case of contradiction, this document will take precedence until the date of the GM in November 2021, at which point the League will be governed by the rules and regulations in place at that time.

## Governance of the League

For the purposes of process and clarity, the joining of the 2 Leagues is not to be considered a merger, but an en bloc invitation to the clubs of the OCA to join the Cherwell League.

The League therefore will be governed by the CCL committee as elected at their GM in November 2020. The CCL committee however will extend an invitation to the OCA committee to nominate four (4) representatives to join the CCL committee. The selection of these nominees will be entirely in the gift of the OCA committee and/or their clubs. The 4 nominees will be co-opted onto the CCL committee and will have full voting rights with effect from their first attendance at a League Management Committee (LMC) meeting.

## Club Eligibility

Any and all clubs considered by the OCA to be full members of the OCA, or who would have been accepted to the OCA for 2021 under the normal entry requirements, will be entitled to accept the invitation and join the new League. Any new clubs outside the OCA applying to the CCL for 2021 will be subject to the current (Sept 2020) CCL requirements for entry to join the League.

All clubs will be required to be affiliated to the ECB via their County Board. Clubs not currently affiliated will have the duration of the 2021 season to achieve this but it must be in place by the date of the 2021 General Meeting in November.

## League Identity

The new League will be known as 'The Cherwell Cricket League'. The League will be a not for profit organisation and belong to the member clubs (see finance below).

## Finance

The finances of the 2 Leagues will be pooled by way of a transfer of the OCA funds to the CCL or the opening of a new bank account, whichever is most agreeable to both committees.

The transfer of funds will cover the current OCA clubs subscription for the 2021 season and the balance will be pooled to create a single reserve for the new League. Funds held by the committee will be used solely for the purpose of administering the League for the benefit of the member clubs.

## Subscriptions

For year 1, a subscription of £75 per club 1<sup>st</sup> team (including HCPCL teams) plus £25 for each additional team in each club. Ongoing, the subscription amount will be agreed at the GM in November. Current OCA clubs' subscription for 2021 (only) will be paid from existing OCA funds.

## Registration Fees

For year 1 it is proposed to waive all registration fees for players registered before the start of the season. In season registrations to be charged at £2 per player for Tiers 1-5 (top 80 teams). The default position for 2022 will be as written in the registration rules but will be considered in the light of the finances at the time.

*Subsequent note added Dec 2020. The new committee, taking account of the financial challenges posed to clubs by the Covid 19 pandemic, decided to make the 2021 subscription a nominal £1 and to suspend the requirement to pay for pre-season player registration for 2021. In season registration is reduced from £6 per player to £2 per player.*

## Balls

Tiers 1-5 will use the Tiflex Buckingham ball in all games.

Tiers 6-8 can use either the Buckingham or the Hampton providing the same ball is used in both innings of a match.

Clubs who have an excess of either ball (new) can return them to the League who will act as a brokerage to ensure the right balls are available to all teams. Credits and charges will be made at the prevailing rate being charged by the League at the time of exchange.

## Ball Subsidy

It is likely that the combined funds of the League will be considerably more than is required for the running of the League, plus the League will have an enhanced income with twice as many clubs. It is proposed that the total amount of funds available on the joining of the 2 Leagues be divided into 4 equal parts. 2 parts to be held as a contingency, and the other 2 parts to be used (one part per year) to subsidise the cost of the balls for that year. Balls would be offered at a dual rate. The number of balls required for League matches would be subsidised, but any extras would not.

All of the above would be subject to a thorough and complete understanding of the financial position of the new body.

*Subsequent note added Dec 2020. The new committee considered the financial situation and in particular the significant outlay required for balls (likely in excess of £50,000) and decided to pass on balls as close to cost as was feasible.*

## League Structure

### (a) Divisional Structure

8 Tiers in total

Tiers 1, 2 & 3 will consist of 10 teams each

Tier 4 will consist of 20 teams in 2 divisions. The first priority is to ensure these divisions are equally competitive and once achieved, if there are opportunities to improve regionalisation without compromising the playing level, these will be taken.

Tiers 5, 6, 7 & 8 will consist of 30 teams (see point b for tier 8) in 3 regionalised divisions

### (b) Divisional Composition

Tiers 1, 2 & 3 will be all CCL teams

Tier 4 will consist of 15 CCL teams and 5 OCA teams

Tiers 5, 6, & 7 will each consist of 15 CCL teams and 15 OCA teams

Tier 8 will consist of all remaining teams.

The decision regarding which teams go into each tier will lie with each committee, i.e. the CCL committee will nominate the 15 CCL teams in tier 4 and beyond and the OCA committee will nominate the 5 OCA teams in tier 4 and the 15 OCA teams beyond.

### (c) Promotion and Relegation

The 'pyramid' structure of the divisions requires that promotion and relegation will have to be adapted where the tiers concerned have a different number of divisions. The default position will be that a minimum of 2 teams will be promoted from each division but in season 21 and 22, the committee will commit to promoting 3 in the lower tiers in order to provide a natural remedy to any misplacements. The details for the first 2 seasons are shown below with the possible default for 2023 and beyond in (blue):

Tier	Promoted	Relegation will be dependent on factors such as new teams joining the League and the number of teams relegated from the HCPCL.
1	1 to HCPCL	
2	2 to tier 1	
3	2 to tier 2	
4	4 (2or 3) to tier 3 (2 from each division)	
5	4 to tier 4. (Top team in each division plus best placed 2 <sup>nd</sup> place team)	

6 & 7	3 (2) from each division	
8	3 (2) from each division	Not applicable

Note 1: To prevent avoidable mismatches, teams will be placed in their tier initially based entirely on their playing strength. Each tier will then be regionalised based on that mix of teams. The tier that teams will be promoted or relegated into will reflect their playing ability, but the division will be more focussed on location. For example, a team promoted from 6A, could go into 5A, 5B or 5C depending on the best fit.

Note 2: In a year when relegation from the HCPCL involves 0 or 2 teams coming down, adjustments will be required to be made and will normally be reconciled between tiers 3 and 4 and/or 4 and 5. The final decisions on all promotions and relegations will lie with the LMC.

Note 3: Clubs with only 1 team in the CCL (and no 2<sup>nd</sup> team playing officially in any other League) will be restricted to Tier 5 as the highest Tier they can play in. For the purpose of Rules 3.1 and 3.2 in the Standard Playing Rules only (Forfeits and Number of Players), such teams will be considered as 2<sup>nd</sup> teams.

Note 3.1: Fines and points deductions for forfeiture will not automatically be levied in line with the current Playing Rules but will be at the LMC's discretion depending on the circumstances at the time (in particular with regard to Covid 19). If levied, fines will not exceed £50 per match and points deductions will not exceed 10 points per match. Rules on multiple forfeits will stand as written.

#### Playing Formats, Duration and Start Times

Throughout all tiers and all divisions, teams will play a split season with games 1-5 being played in the Win/Lose (W/L) format, games 6-14 in the Win/Lose/Draw (W/L/D) format and games 15-18 in W/L again.

##### Duration and start times

Tiers 1-5	100 overs	Start time 12.30
Tiers 6 & 7	90 overs	Start time 1.00pm
Tier 8	80 overs	Start time 1.00pm

#### Playing Rules

The current Playing Rules are available for inspection on the CCL website but will be examined in more detail by the new committee to ensure consistency and compliance with the Laws of Cricket and the changes to the structure of the League should the joining of the Leagues go ahead.

#### Umpires

Note: At time of writing it is unclear what umpiring resources are likely to be available at the start of the 2021 season given that we may still be under some form of Covid restriction. As such, it does not

make sense to put ourselves in a corner that we cannot get out of without major alterations to the structure and so the outline below should be regarded as a basic framework from which to develop.

The longer-term goal is to have neutral/panel umpires as far down the divisions as is feasible and the Umpires' Secretary will be charged with looking at different ways this can be achieved. 2021 will however be a consolidation season while we assess the available resources and the structure will be as follows:

Teams in tiers 1-3 (top 30 teams) will be required to nominate an umpire to the panel, who will be appointed as a neutral umpire. Umpires at this level are required to be Stage 2 (or equivalent) qualified, however at the Umpires' Secretary's discretion may be allowed onto the panel with a Stage 1 qualification for 1 year.

Teams in tiers 4-5 (teams 31-80) will be required to nominate an umpire to the panel OR provide a non-playing umpire. If they nominate to the panel, they will be entitled to receive a panel umpire in return. Umpires at this level are required to be Stage 2 (or equivalent) qualified (whether standing as a panel or club umpire).

For season 2021, the Umpires' Secretary may at his/her discretion, appoint umpires not qualified to the levels described above and club umpires will be similarly allowed to stand with a view to all umpires being appropriately qualified for season 2022.

Failure to comply with the above will incur a penalty of 5 points

In all other tiers, clubs are encouraged to use a non-playing umpire and if they do so (for either their own game, or as a panel nomination) will receive one bonus point. A team can only receive 1 point per week, irrespective of how many umpires they may nominate.

All standing umpires at all levels are required to be DBS checked and requested and strongly advised to become members of the ECB ACO (Association of Cricket Officials). This is of particular relevance to former OCA umpires as the CCL does not provide insurance as the OCA does. The simplest and cheapest way to get insurance is by becoming a member of ECB ACO which also provides DBS checks.

The objective is to ensure that anyone making themselves available to umpire, from any club at any level, will have the opportunity to do so in their preferred method (club or panel). In a week where there are sufficient neutral umpires available to umpire every game in the League, the Umpires' secretary will appoint to every game and the neutral umpire will stand in preference to the club umpire.

Umpires' match fees will be set at £45 per match. Clubs receiving panel umpires will be required to pay the fee to the umpire in cash on the day of the match. In the case of there being only one umpire (panel) the umpire will stand at both ends and should receive a fee of £60 (£30 from each club). In the case of there being only one umpire (club) the umpire will stand at both ends and should receive a fee of £15 from the team that does not have an umpire, plus whatever their own arrangement is with their club.

### Ground Standards

A tiered guide will be produced to outline the desired and mandatory requirements for teams at each tier. This will be worked out jointly by Jim Howe from the CCL and Owen Lewis from the OCA.

This will take a little more time to complete, but it is already apparent that there are no insurmountable issues.

The policy for placement of teams will be that they will be placed in the tier appropriate to their playing ability as informed by the 2019 finishing positions and the input of both committees. No club will be relegated or placed lower because of ground facilities. In extreme cases, it is possible that clubs may be given a time frame to achieve the required standards and if there is a significant disparity between their actual ground standards and the requirements for the tier above, they **may** be denied promotion.

### Review

The LMC elected at the 2021 GM will undertake a full review of the playing conditions, league structure and all other issues mentioned in this document or relative to the running of the League, starting in June 2022. This will not affect the ability of the LMC or clubs to make changes at the 2021 General Meeting as required or appropriate.