First Class County Competition Regulations

Board Discretion

The Board of ECB retains ultimate discretion over these Regulations and the Playing Conditions for ECB Competitions and shall be entitled at any time to amend or vary them on reasonable notice to interested parties as well as in exceptional circumstances when the Board shall be entitled to immediately do so on notice to the interested parties.

1 All Counties to Participate

Each of the 18 First Class Counties listed in Schedule A to the ECB Articles of Association agrees to participate (subject to any applicable suspension(s)) in all the ECB’s Competitions listed in paragraphs 4 to 9 of these Regulations.

2 Full Strength Teams and Arrival of Teams

All Counties shall field a full strength team in all matches in the Specsavers County Championship, The Vitality Blast, and the Royal London One-Day Cup. Both full teams shall arrive at the venue at a time so that the match can commence at the scheduled time. (See also ECB Directives).

In normal circumstances, a maximum of 30 minutes shall be allowed for a late-arriving team to prepare for the match.
3 Competitive County Cricket

The Regulations Governing the Qualification and Registration of Cricketers for Competitive County Cricket and their Qualification for England shall apply in the Competitions specified in these Regulations.

4 The County Championship

4.1 Title

The Competition will be known as the Specsavers County Championship.

4.2 Entrants

The Championship shall be competed for by the 18 First Class Counties. Each County will play 14 matches. In Division 1 there will be 8 teams playing the other 7 teams on a home and away basis. In Division 2 there will be 10 teams, each playing 5 teams home and away and 4 teams home or away, as specified by ECB.

Division 1

Essex, Hampshire, Kent, Nottinghamshire, Somerset, Surrey, Warwickshire, Yorkshire.

Division 2

Derbyshire, Durham, Glamorgan, Gloucestershire, Lancashire, Leicestershire, Middlesex, Northamptonshire, Sussex, Worcestershire.

At the end of the season, the top three teams from the Second Division will be promoted and the bottom team from the First Division will be relegated.

4.3 Umpires

First Class Umpires will be appointed for all matches.

4.4 Status of Matches

Matches in this Competition will be considered First Class.
4.5 Regulations and Playing Conditions

These Regulations and the Playing Conditions shall be decided annually by the ECB.

5 Royal London One-Day Cup

5.1 Title

The Competition will be known as the Royal London One-Day Cup.

5.2 Entrants

The Royal London One-Day Cup shall be competed for by the 18 First Class Counties. The teams will compete in two Groups as below. Each Team shall play the other teams in its Group either home or away.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>North Group</th>
<th>South Group</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Derbyshire</td>
<td>Essex</td>
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<tr>
<td>Durham</td>
<td>Glamorgan</td>
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<td>Lancashire</td>
<td>Gloucestershire</td>
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<td>Leicestershire</td>
<td>Hampshire</td>
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<td>Northamptonshire</td>
<td>Kent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nottinghamshire</td>
<td>Middlesex</td>
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<td>Warwickshire</td>
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<td>Worcestershire</td>
<td>Surrey</td>
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<td>Yorkshire</td>
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The two group winners will immediately qualify for a home draw in semi-finals. The team finishing second in each group will receive a home draw in the play-offs and play against the team finishing third in the opposite group. The play-off winners will play away in the semi-finals. Semi-final ties will be determined by a free draw. The Final shall be played at Lord’s.

5.3 Umpires

First Class Umpires will be appointed for all matches.
5.4 Status of Matches
Matches in this Competition will not be considered First Class.

5.5 Regulations and Playing Conditions
These Regulations and the Playing Conditions shall be decided annually by the ECB.

6 The Vitality Blast

6.1 Title
The Competition will be known as The Vitality Blast.

6.2 Entrants
Entrants to the Competition will be the 18 First Class Counties only. The Competition will be played on a league/knock-out basis.

6.3 Competition Format
The 18 Counties will play the group stage of the Competition in 2 groups of 9 teams as detailed below. Each team will play 6 teams in its group home and away and 2 teams in its group home or away, as specified by ECB.

The top four teams from each group will qualify for the Quarter-finals. The team finishing first in each group will receive a home draw and play against the team finishing fourth in the opposite group. The team finishing second in each group will receive a home draw and play against the team finishing third in the opposite group.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>North Group</th>
<th>South Group</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Birmingham Bears</td>
<td>Essex</td>
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<td>Derbyshire</td>
<td>Glamorgan</td>
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<td>Durham</td>
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<td>Nottinghamshire</td>
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<td>Worcestershire</td>
<td>Surrey</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yorkshire</td>
<td>Sussex</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6.4 Semi-final Draw
The draw for the semi-finals will be a free draw.

6.5 Venues
The Semi-finals and the Final will be played at Edgbaston.

6.6 Umpires
First Class Umpires will be appointed for all matches.

6.7 Status of Matches
Matches in this Competition will not be considered First Class.

6.8 Regulations and Playing Conditions
These Regulations and the Playing Conditions shall be decided annually by the ECB.

7 The First Class Counties Second XI Championship

7.1 Title
The Competition will be known as the First Class Counties Second XI Championship.

7.2 Entrants
Entrants to the Competition will be confined to the Second XI of the eighteen First Class Counties and MCC Young Cricketers. Each team will play each other team in its group either home or away. Matches shall be of 3-day duration. The winners of each group shall contest the Final which shall be a 4-day match.

7.2.1 Groups
The groups will comprise the following teams:

**North:** Durham, Derbyshire, Lancashire, Leicestershire, Worcestershire, Yorkshire, Warwickshire, Nottinghamshire, Northamptonshire.
South: Essex, Middlesex, Hampshire, Gloucestershire, Surrey, Kent, Somerset, Sussex, Glamorgan, MCC YCs.

7.2.2 The Final
The venue for the Final will be the headquarters ground of one of the teams in the Final. If both headquarters grounds are available, then the venue shall be decided by a draw. If the headquarters ground of neither team is available the match shall be played at another recognized County ground of the team drawn first in a draw. If no such ground is available, then the match shall be played at a recognized County ground of the team drawn second.

7.3 Qualification of Cricketers
In addition to players registered as Qualified Cricketers under the ECB’s Registration Regulations, teams may play the following:

7.3.1 cricketers who are qualified, but not registered;
7.3.2 one unqualified cricketer in each match
7.3.3 in addition to the one “unqualified” player allowed under 7.3.2, one further “unqualified” player if he is in the course of qualifying for the County.
7.3.4 Players that are neither registered nor contracted with a First Class County are not cup-tied by representing a team in the Competition. MCC Young Cricketers shall be permitted to play for one or more Counties in addition to MCC Young Cricketers in the same season. Permission from MCC Young Cricketers as appropriate must be obtained by any such County.

7.4 Discipline
7.4.1 In the event of any breach of discipline in the Second XI Championship (or 3- or 4-day Second XI friendly matches), the player and his Captain, Coach / Manager (away from home) or Chief Executive / Secretary (at home), shall be advised by the Umpire of the breach
of discipline and this should be done at the end of the particular session of play or at the end of the day's play. Umpires shall apply the ECB fixed penalty discipline system as appropriate.

7.4.2 The ECB Cricket Department should also be advised immediately of the report.

7.5 Umpires
Wherever possible, the ECB will appoint one First Class Umpire and one non-First Class Umpire to each match. Each Captain will complete a report form on both Umpires after each match for submission to the ECB.

7.6 Results of Matches
The match result shall be filed with the Cricket Operations Department of the ECB within 24 hours of the conclusion of each match.

7.7 Regulations and Playing Conditions
These Regulations and the Playing Conditions shall be decided annually by the ECB.

8 Second XI Trophy

8.1 Title
The Competition will be known as the Second XI Trophy.

8.2 Entrants
Entrants to the Competition will be confined to the eighteen First Class Counties and MCC Young Cricketers.

8.3 Form of Competition
The Competition will comprise 19 teams, divided into two groups. Each team will play 6 matches, 3 at home and 3 away, as determined by ECB. The top two teams in each group will qualify for the Semi-finals. The team finishing top of its group will play the team finishing
second in the opposite group. The winning Semi-finalists will play in the Final.

8.3.1 Groups

The groups will comprise the following teams:

**North:** Durham, Derbyshire, Lancashire, Leicestershire, Worcestershire, Yorkshire, Warwickshire, Nottinghamshire, Northamptonshire.

**South:** Essex, Middlesex, Hampshire, Gloucestershire, Surrey, Kent, Somerset, Sussex, MCC YCs, Glamorgan.

8.4 Venues

8.4.1 Semi-finals

To be played on the ‘headquarters’ ground of the group winner or, if not available, on another recognised County ground of that team. If no such ground is available, to be played on the ‘headquarters’ ground, or if not available, another recognised County ground of the away team.

8.4.2 Final

The venue for the Final will be the headquarters ground of one of the teams in the Final. If both headquarters grounds are available, then the venue shall be decided by a draw. If the headquarters ground of neither team is available the match shall be played at another recognized County ground of the team drawn first in a draw. If no such ground is available, then the match shall be played at a recognized County ground of the team drawn second. The Final will have one reserve day allocated.

8.5 Qualification of Players

8.5.1 The Regulations for the Qualification and Registration of Cricketers for Competitive County Cricket and their Qualification for England shall apply. In addition to players registered as Qualified Cricketers under such regulations, the following will be eligible to play:
8.5.1.1 players who are qualified, but not registered

8.5.1.2 one unqualified cricketer in each match

8.5.1.3 In addition to the one unqualified cricketer allowed under 8.5.1.2, one “unqualified” player if he is in the course of qualifying for the County.

8.5.1.4 players on trial (players that are neither registered nor contracted with a First Class County) are not cup-tied by representing a team in the Competition.

8.5.1.5 MCC Young Cricketers are allowed to play a maximum of two unqualified cricketers in any game.

8.5.2 ‘Capped’ cricketers (this includes cricketers capped by a former County or Counties) may only play in the Semi-final or Final if they have played in at least one group match unless dispensation has been granted by the ECB Cricket Department.

8.5.3 MCC Young Cricketers cricketers shall be permitted to play for one or more Counties in addition to MCC Young Cricketers in the same season. Permission from MCC Young Cricketers as appropriate must be obtained by any such County.

8.5.4 The following regulations shall apply in respect of players who are attached to both a First Class County and a Minor County:

8.5.4.1 The First Class County shall have priority where there is a contractual arrangement.

8.5.4.2 Where no contract exists, and where the player is registered for either a First Class or a Minor County, the County for which he is registered shall have priority. Subject to the permission of the Secretary of MCCA being obtained, a First Class County may play a Minor Counties registered player.

8.5.4.3 Where no contract exists, and where a player is registered by both a First Class and a Minor County
(or by neither), the player shall be free to choose whether he wishes to play for the First Class County concerned or for a Minor County team.

8.6 Discipline

8.6.1 In the event of any breach of discipline in this Competition, the player and his Captain, Coach/Manager (away from home) or Chief Executive/Secretary (at home), shall be advised by the Umpires of the breach of discipline and this should be done at the end of the particular session of play or at the end of the day's play. Umpires shall apply the ECB fixed penalty discipline system as appropriate.

8.6.2 The ECB Cricket Department should also be advised by the Umpires immediately of the report.

8.7 Umpires

Where possible, the ECB will appoint one First Class Umpire and one non-First Class Umpire to each group match. Each Captain will complete a report form on both umpires after each match for submission to the ECB. ECB will appoint First Class Umpires for the Final and every endeavour will be made by the ECB to appoint First Class Umpires for the Semi-final matches.

8.8 Results of Matches

The match result shall be filed with the Cricket Operations Department of the ECB within 24 hours of the conclusion of each match.

8.9 Regulations and Playing Conditions

These Regulations and the Playing Conditions shall be decided annually by the ECB.

9 Second XI T20

9.1 Title

The Competition will be known as the Second XI T20.

9.2 Entrants

Entrants to the Competition will be confined to the
eighteen First Class Counties and MCC Young Cricketers.

9.3 Form of Competition
The Competition will comprise 19 teams, divided into two groups. Each team will play 6 fixtures, 3 at home and 3 away, as determined by ECB. Each fixture will comprise two separate matches between the same teams on that day.

The top two teams in each group will qualify for the Semi-finals. The team finishing top of its group will play the team finishing second in the opposite group. The winning Semi-finalists will play in the Final. The Semi-finals and the Final will be played on the same day.

9.3.1 Groups
The groups will comprise the following teams:

**North:** Durham, Derbyshire, Lancashire, Leicestershire, Worcestershire, Yorkshire, Warwickshire, Nottinghamshire, Northamptonshire.

**South:** Essex, Middlesex, Hampshire, Gloucestershire, Surrey, Kent, Somerset, Sussex, MCC YCs, Glamorgan.

9.4 Qualification of Players
9.4.1 The Regulations for the Qualification and Registration of Cricketers for Competitive County Cricket and their Qualification for England shall apply. In addition to players registered as Qualified Cricketers under such regulations, the following will be eligible to play:

9.4.1.1 players who are qualified, but not registered

9.4.1.2 one unqualified cricketer in each match

9.4.1.3 In addition to the one unqualified cricketer allowed under 9.4.1.2, one “unqualified” player if he is in the course of qualifying for the County.

9.4.1.4 players on trial (players that are neither registered nor contracted with a First Class County) are not cup-tied by representing a team in the Competition.
9.4.1.5 MCC Young Cricketers are allowed to play a maximum of two unqualified cricketers in any game.

9.4.2 ‘Capped’ cricketers (this includes cricketers capped by a former County or Counties) may only play in the Semi-final or Final if they have played in at least one group match unless dispensation has been granted by the ECB Cricket Department.

9.4.3 MCC Young Cricketers shall be permitted to play for one or more Counties in addition to MCC Young Cricketers in the same season. Permission from MCC Young Cricketers must be obtained by any such County.

9.4.4 The following regulations shall apply in respect of players who are attached to both a First Class County and a Minor County:

9.4.4.1 The First Class County shall have priority where there is a contractual arrangement.

9.4.4.2 Where no contract exists, and where the player is registered for either a First Class or a Minor County, the County for which he is registered shall have priority. Subject to the permission of the Secretary of MCCA being obtained, a First Class County may play a Minor Counties registered player.

9.4.4.3 Where no contract exists, and where a player is registered by both a First Class and a Minor County (or by neither), the player shall be free to choose whether he wishes to play for the First Class County concerned or for the Minor County team.

9.5 Discipline

9.5.1 In the event of any breach of discipline in this Competition, the player and his Captain, Coach/Manager (away from home) or Chief Executive/Secretary (at home), shall be advised by the Umpires of the breach of discipline and this should be done at the
end of the particular session of play or at the end of the day’s play. Umpires shall apply the ECB fixed penalty discipline system as appropriate.

9.5.2 The ECB Cricket Department should also be advised by the Umpires immediately of the report.

9.6 Umpires
Where possible, the ECB will appoint one First Class Umpire and one non-First Class Umpire to each group match. Each Captain will complete a report form on both umpires after each match for submission to the ECB. ECB will appoint First Class Umpires for Finals Day.

9.7 Results of Matches
The match result shall be filed with the Cricket Operations Department of the ECB within 24 hours of the conclusion of each match.

9.8 Regulations and Playing Conditions
These Regulations and the Playing Conditions shall be decided annually by the ECB.