

2024

FIRST CLASS COUNTY COMPETITION REGULATIONS



**England and Wales Cricket Board, Lord's Cricket Ground
St John's Wood, London, NW8 8QZ
England**

Table of Contents

Clause		Page
1	All Counties to Participate.....	1
2	Full Strength Teams and Arrival of Teams.....	1
3	Competitive County Cricket	1
4	The Vitality County Championship.....	1
5	One-Day Cup	2
6	The Vitality Blast.....	3
7	The First Class Counties Second XI Championship.....	4
8	Second XI T20	5
9	Second XI Friendlies	7
10	Competition Technical Committee	7

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 8 of these Regulations.

2 FULL STRENGTH TEAMS AND ARRIVAL OF TEAMS

All Counties shall field a full strength team in all matches in the Vitality County Championship, The Vitality Blast, and the Metro Bank 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 VITALITY COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIP

4.1 Title

The Competition will be known as the Vitality County Championship.

4.2 Entrants

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

Division 1	Division 2
Durham	Derbyshire
Essex	Glamorgan
Hampshire	Gloucestershire
Kent	Leicestershire
Lancashire	Middlesex
Nottinghamshire	Northamptonshire
Somerset	Sussex

Surrey	Yorkshire
Warwickshire	
Worcestershire	

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

4.3 Umpires

ECB will appoint umpires 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 METRO BANK ONE-DAY CUP

5.1 Title

The Competition will be known as the Metro Bank One-Day Cup.

5.2 Entrants

The Metro Bank 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.

	Group A		Group B
1	Lancashire	1	Essex
2	Worcestershire	2	Leicestershire
3	Kent	3	Warwickshire
4	Middlesex	4	Surrey
5	Durham	5	Glamorgan
6	Hampshire	6	Nottinghamshire
7	Northamptonshire	7	Yorkshire
8	Somerset	8	Gloucestershire
9	Derbyshire	9	Sussex

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 as follows:

Winner of Group A versus winner of 2nd place Group B v 3rd place Group A

Winner of Group B versus winner of 2nd place Group A v 3rd place Group B

The Final shall be played at Trent Bridge.

5.3 Umpires

ECB will appoint umpires for all matches.

5.4 Status of Matches

Matches in this Competition shall be considered List A Limited Overs matches

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.

	North Group		South Group
1	Birmingham Bears	1	Essex
2	Derbyshire	2	Glamorgan
3	Durham	3	Gloucestershire
4	Lancashire	4	Hampshire
5	Leicestershire	5	Kent
6	Northamptonshire	6	Middlesex
7	Nottinghamshire	7	Somerset
8	Worcestershire	8	Surrey

9	Yorkshire	9	Sussex
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6.4 Semi-finals

Semi-final ties shall be as follows:

Winner of 1 North v 4 South versus Winner of 2 South v 3 North

Winner of 1 South v 4 North versus Winner of 2 North v 3 South

6.5 Venues

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

6.6 Umpires

ECB will appoint umpires for all matches.

6.7 Status of Matches

Matches in this Competition shall be considered List A Twenty20 matches.

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 shall be the Second XI of each of the eighteen First Class Counties. Each team shall play a minimum of 8 matches either as a single team or as part of a combined team. Matches shall be of 4 day duration. The Second XI Championship table shall be determined on an average points per match basis.

7.3 Qualification of Cricketers

7.3.1 First-Class Counties may play:

- (a) Cricketers registered or on loan to that First-Class County under the Regulations for the Qualification and Registration of Cricketers for Competitive County Cricket and their Qualification for England.
- (b) Cricketers not registered for any First-Class County but eligible to be registered under the Regulations for the Qualification and Registration of Cricketers for Competitive County Cricket and their Qualification for England who have:

- (i) completed (i) the Anti-Corruption Module, (ii) the Recreational Drugs Module, and (iii) the Anti-Discrimination/Professional Behaviours Module, unless the match is that cricketer's first match in the 2024 season in which case these modules must be completed at the earliest opportunity and in any case before the cricketer plays a new match on a subsequent day for any First-Class County; and
- (ii) in respect of whom the First-Class County has undertaken pre-participation medical screening to identify current and past medical issues that may affect the cricketer's ability to participate safely. This must include, at a minimum, requiring the cricketer to complete and be cleared by an appropriate medical questionnaire which has been approved by the First-Class County's Chief Medical Officer, with appropriate record keeping. As part of their risk assessment, First-Class Counties must also consider whether further additional tests are required, such as an ECG.

7.3.2 First-Class Counties may only play one Unqualified Cricketer in each match.

7.3.3 Players are not cup-tied by representing a team in the Competition.

7.4 Discipline

7.4.1 In the event of any breach of discipline in the Second XI Championship (or 2, 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 system as appropriate.

7.4.2 ECB Domestic Cricket Operations should also be advised immediately of the report.

7.5 Umpires

ECB will appoint umpires to all matches.

7.6 Results of Matches

All matches shall be scored live via the ECB PCS Pro scoring platform, providing real time results. In the event the match is not scored live, the match result shall be filed with the Domestic 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 T20

8.1 Title

The Competition will be known as the Second XI T20.

8.2 Entrants

Entrants to the Competition shall be the eighteen First Class Counties.

8.3 Form of Competition

The Competition will comprise 18 teams, divided into three groups as detailed below. Each team will play the other teams in its group twice.

The three group winners and the best second placed team will progress to the semi-finals. See Playing Conditions regarding tie breakers.

The semi-final ties shall be determined as follows:

Best group winner v Best second place

Second best group winner v Third best group winner

The winning Semi-finalists will play in the Final. The Semi-finals and the Final will be played on the same day.

8.3.1 Groups

The groups will comprise the following teams:

North Group	Central Group	South Group
Derbyshire	Glamorgan	Essex
Durham	Gloucestershire	Hampshire
Lancashire	Northamptonshire	Kent
Leicestershire	Somerset	Middlesex
Nottinghamshire	Warwickshire	Surrey
Yorkshire	Worcestershire	Sussex

8.4 Qualification of Players

8.4.1 First-Class Counties may play:

- (a) Cricketers registered or on loan to that First-Class County under the Regulations for the Qualification and Registration of Cricketers for Competitive County Cricket and their Qualification for England.
- (b) Cricketers not registered for any First-Class County but eligible to be registered under the Regulations for the Qualification and Registration of Cricketers for Competitive County Cricket and their Qualification for England who have:
 - (i) completed the Anti-Corruption Module, (ii) the Recreational Drugs Module, and (iii) the Anti-Discrimination/Professional Behaviours Module, unless the match is that cricketer's first match in the 2024

season in which case these modules must be completed at the earliest opportunity and in any case before the cricketer plays a new match on a subsequent day for any First-Class County; and

- (ii) in respect of whom the First-Class County has undertaken pre-participation medical screening to identify current and past medical issues that may affect the cricketer's ability to participate safely. This must include, at a minimum, requiring the cricketer to complete and be cleared by an appropriate medical questionnaire which has been approved by the First-Class County's Chief Medical Officer, with appropriate record keeping. As part of their risk assessment, First-Class Counties must also consider whether further additional tests are required, such as an ECG.

8.4.2 First-Class Counties may only play one Unqualified Cricketer in each match.

8.4.3 Players are not cup-tied by representing a team in the Competition.

8.5 Discipline

8.5.1 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 system as appropriate.

8.5.2 ECB Domestic Cricket Operations should also be advised by the Umpires immediately of the report.

8.6 Umpires

ECB will appoint umpires to all matches.

8.7 Results of Matches

All matches shall be scored live via the ECB PCS Pro scoring platform, providing real time results. In the event the match is not scored live, the match result shall be filed with the Domestic Cricket Operations Department of the ECB within 24 hours of the conclusion of each match.

8.8 Regulations and Playing Conditions

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

9 SECOND XI FRIENDLIES

9.1 Regulations 7.3 and 7.4 shall also apply to Cricketers playing for a First-Class County Team in Second XI friendly matches organised as part of the ECB Second XI fixture list

10 COMPETITION TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

A Competition Technical Committee appointed by the Board of the ECB shall be responsible for:

- 10.1 making recommendations to the Board of the ECB on Curtailment Decisions (as defined below);
- 10.2 considering challenges under the Playing Conditions that relate to not being able to field a team;
- 10.3 determining whether a match can continue due to the reduced availability of a County's players taking into account the welfare of the players and the best interests of the match and competition.

Curtailment Decisions shall mean decisions which the Board of the ECB is required to take in connection with the competitions in Clauses 4 - 8 above and/or a match in those competitions not taking place as originally planned.