



# ECB Under 18 County Championship – Three-Day Competition

## Competition Rules

### 1 **Title**

The title of the competition shall be the ECB Under 18 County Championship.

### 2 **Management**

2.1 All decisions relating to the interpretation of these rules or to matches played in the Competition shall be made by the ECB and will be final and binding on all concerned. The ECB may delegate any of their powers and duties, including (where appropriate) to the Cricket Regulator.

2.2 All potential breaches of these Rules, or disputes arising from the application of interpretation of these Rules, shall be referred to a panel of three members of the ECB Recreational Discipline Panel (the “Panel”), whose decision shall be final and binding. The Panel shall consider any such matter in such manner and following such procedures as it considers appropriate and shall not be bound by rules governing the admissibility of evidence in judicial or other proceedings.

The Cricket Regulator shall confirm the identity of the Panel members to the relevant parties. If any party objects to any member of the Panel on the basis of a conflict of interest, the Cricket Regulator shall consider whether it is necessary to appoint a new member of the Panel.

### 3 **Entry**

3.1 Entry into Under 18 County Championship 3-day competitions is for all Professional Counties and selected National Counties.

3.2 A County wishing to enter or be re-admitted to a Competition must give written notice to that effect to the ECB Competitions Department by 1st September in the year prior to the Competition.

### 4 **Competition Structure**

4.1 The competition will be organised with Professional Counties and selected National Counties playing in the 3-day competition across different groups (with remaining National Counties playing 2-day matches). There will be no knockout element to the competition in 2026.

4.2 Week in which fixtures should take place set by ECB. The dates, start times and venues shall be notified to the ECB Competitions Team via the Play-Cricket website by 28th February. Fixtures may only be changed after this time by mutual consent by the Counties concerned, must be played within the time scale for the Divisional matches laid down and must be sanctioned by the ECB Competitions Team. Fixtures cannot be re-arranged if the originally scheduled fixture is abandoned even if no play has taken place.

## 5 **Qualification of Players**

Please refer to Generic Rule 3.4 (Qualification for Competitive County Cricket and Qualification Criteria for Junior Cricketers).

5.1 Players from the Channel Islands shall be eligible to play for any County in the Competition provided that they only represent one County in the Competition in any one season.

5.2 Up to three U19 players may be selected for all matches.

## 6 **Cricket Balls**

6.1 The ECB will supply new Gunn & Moore Grade 1 County Diamond cricket balls with seams conforming to the specifications laid down by the ECB.

The Home County will be responsible for supplying enough spare balls of equal standard. A new ball must be used at the start of each innings.

6.2 The captain of the fielding side shall have the choice of taking a new ball after 70 overs have been bowled with the old one.

## 7 **Helmets & Faceguards**

Any player under the age of 18 playing in any ECB Competition shall be bound by the ECB Regulations.

## 8 **Umpires**

Umpires for all matches will be appointed by the ACO and ECB Competitions Team.

## 9 **Scorers**

Each team shall provide their own competent, non-playing scorer in all matches. If a team fails to provide a scorer a player has to be nominated from the team to take up the duty for the entire duration of the match.

The use of live electronic scoring is strongly encouraged for all matches.

## 10 **Team Sheets**

Each side must provide the umpires with a team sheet before the start of the match identifying any player who has not reached the age of 19 on the date of the match and showing the specific age of any player who is 19 years old or younger. It is recommended that the ECB Team Sheet card (available from the local County Board) is used whenever possible.

## 11 **Match Results**

It is the responsibility of the HOME side to enter the result and full scorecard details onto the appropriate site on Play-Cricket within 24 hours of the match being completed. The AWAY side should confirm that the summary result has been correctly entered within the next 24 hours. Both sides must ensure that their squad details have been entered into Play-Cricket prior to each match they play.

It is the responsibility of both teams to ensure that the correct number of bonus points are awarded to both sides and included on the Play-Cricket website.

12 **Code of Conduct**

All players, coaches or match officials shall be bound by the MCC Spirit of Cricket and ECB General Conduct Regulations.

13 **Coaching**

Coaching shall not be permitted from the sidelines during a match. In such an event, the umpire shall request the coach/manager/parent/spectator to stop. If this persists, the umpire shall have the power to refer the matter to a Panel in accordance with Rule 2.2.

The above does not apply to coaches during drinks intervals.

## Playing Conditions

The Laws of Cricket (2017 Code 3rd Edition - 2022) shall apply with the following exceptions:

### **1 Hours of Play**

1.1 All matches shall be of three days duration and normal timings will be:

#### **All days**

Start - 11:00am

Lunch - 1:00pm to 1:40pm

Tea - 3:40pm to 4:00pm

Scheduled Close of Play - 6:00pm

Play shall normally commence at 11:00am on each day unless otherwise agreed by the two teams (and umpires informed) who can delay the start up to 12:30pm. In this case all subsequent timings will be moved on as appropriate (i.e. for an uninterrupted game starting at 11:30am, lunch will normally be at 1:30pm, tea at 4:10pm and Close of Play at 6:30pm).

1.2 Lunch may be varied if, owing to the weather or state of the ground, an alteration has been agreed upon by the captains and the umpires.

1.3 In a match where play is delayed or suspended, the tea interval may be altered or waived altogether with the agreement of both captains.

1.4 The Scheduled Close of Play on each day shall be 6.00pm. The playing time on each day shall be extended by the amount of time lost on that day and/or on previous days (this does not include any playing time lost in the final hour of the match on the 3rd day) up to a maximum of 1 hour. For the 2nd and 3rd days, time lost on previous day(s) may be made up at the start and/or end of a day's play. A maximum of 1 hour may be added each day. Where time lost has been added to the start of the day (up to a maximum of 30 minutes), this time must be deducted from the maximum amount of time permitted to be added at the end of the day i.e. if 30 minutes have been added to the start of play, a maximum of 30 minutes may be added to the end of play (a total of 1 hour in the day).

1.5 On the last day there will be a minimum of 80 overs (or 16 overs per hour) for playing time other than the last hour. If any of the minimum of 80 overs, or as recalculated, have not been bowled when one hour of scheduled playing time remains, the last hour of the match shall be the hour immediately following the completion of those overs. Law 12.6 and 12.7 will apply except that a minimum of 16 six ball overs shall be bowled in the last hour, and all calculations with regard to suspensions of play or the start of a new innings shall be based on one over for each full 3 minutes 45 seconds.

1.6 If however both captains (the batters at the wicket may act for their captain) accept that there is no prospect of either side achieving a victory, they may agree to finish the match at any time after the time for the commencement of the last hour has been reached (regardless of the number of overs remaining to be bowled).

- 1.7 In the event of play being delayed or interrupted on the first and/or second day for any reason other than normal intervals or one or more changes of innings, the umpires will not deduct any overs from the day's minimum requirement until 60 minutes or more has been lost.

After that, the number of overs will be reduced by one over for each 3 minutes 45 seconds or part thereof of the aggregate playing time lost. When extra time is played in these circumstances, play shall cease when the minimum number of overs for the day have been bowled.

## 2 **Divisional Matches**

### 2.1 **Duration of Innings**

2.1.1 In an uninterrupted match: There will be a minimum of 96 overs bowled in a day. The required over rate shall be 16 an hour (one over per 3 minutes 45 seconds approximately). Play will continue, subject to conditions of light, ground and weather, beyond the scheduled Close of Play until the minimum number of overs have been bowled for that day. There will be no reduction in overs for a change of innings. Allowances of 2 minutes given for each wicket taken, unless the fall of wicket is at the end of a session and/or innings.

2.1.2 Only matches in which a team has bowled for 3 hours or more (net of time allowed for wickets taken and Umpires' allowances) in the match will be subject to over rate penalties. (subject to 2.2.7):

<16 >15 overs per hour - **1 point** penalty

<15 >14 overs per hour - **2 points** etc.

Any over rate penalty shall be calculated at the end of the match.

2.1.3 In matches where the start is delayed or play suspended:

If less than a total of 60 minutes play is lost on any day the minimum requirement of 96 overs in a day shall remain. Once a total of 60 minutes play has been lost, one over per 3 minutes 45 seconds lost will be deducted from the day's minimum allocation of overs (see 1.4).

2.1.4 Law 14 will apply for all matches, the follow-on figure for a 3-day match will be 150 runs, for a match where the first days play is lost completely, the follow on figure will be 100 runs.

### 2.2 **The Result**

2.2.1 For a win, **16 points**, plus any points scored in the first innings.

2.2.2 In a tie, each side to score **8 points**, plus any points scored in the first innings.

2.2.3 In a drawn match, each side to score **5 points**, plus any points scored in the first innings.

2.2.4 If the scores are equal in a drawn match, the side batting in the fourth innings to score **8 points**, plus any points scored in the first innings and the opposing side to score **5 points** plus any points scored in the first innings.

2.2.5 First Innings Points (awarded only for performances in the first 100 overs of each first innings and retained whatever the result of the match).

2.2.5.1 A maximum of four batting points to be available as under:

150 to 199 runs	<b>1 point</b>
200 to 249 runs	<b>2 points</b>
250 to 299 runs	<b>3 points</b>
300 runs or over	<b>4 points</b>

2.2.5.2 A maximum of four bowling points to be available as under:

3 to 4 wickets taken	<b>1 point</b>
5 to 6 wickets taken	<b>2 points</b>
7 to 8 wickets taken	<b>3 points</b>
9 to 10 wickets taken	<b>4 points</b>

2.2.6 If a match is abandoned without a ball being bowled, each side to score **5 points**.

2.2.7 A County cannot return a negative value in points in a match. In any such cases, the return will be **0 points**.

### 2.3 **Number of Overs per Bowler**

The ECB Fast Bowling Regulations will apply to all matches in this Competition.

2.3.1 Maximum Number of Overs to be Bowled in a Day

No bowler shall bowl more than 30 overs in any one day's play.

### 2.4 **Intervals for Drinks**

One interval for drinks per session will be taken halfway through each session unless a wicket falls in the over before a scheduled drinks break, in which case the interval will be taken immediately. If a new innings has commenced before the scheduled interval there will only be one drinks interval which will be taken at the end of the over when half of the overs remaining to be bowled after the scheduled interval have been completed.

An individual player may be given a drink either on the boundary edge or, at the fall of a wicket, on the field providing that no playing time is wasted. No other drinks shall be taken on to the field without the permission of the umpires except that under conditions of extreme heat the umpires may permit extra intervals for drinks. Any player taking drinks on to the field shall be dressed in proper cricket attire.

### 3 **Divisional Placings**

Points shall be awarded in accordance with 2.2 above. The following shall determine the positions in each Division:

3.1 The side gaining the most number of points shall be the winner.

3.2 If two or more counties have the same number of points, their positions in the Divisional table shall be based on the result of the matches between them, the one gaining most points in these matches being placed higher. If the points are equal then the team with the highest net run-rate shall be placed higher.

3.3 In the event of the sides still being equal, then a toss of a coin shall determine the positions.

#### 4 **One-Day Regulations**

To apply when No Play is possible on Day 1 and 2 of an Under 18 Divisional Match

##### 4.1 **Hours of Play**

Start 11.00am	Lunch 1.20pm
Resume 2.00pm	Tea 4.30pm
Resume 4.50pm	Close of Play 7.10pm

##### 4.2 **Overs**

120 overs minimum requirement for the day. Play will finish at 7.10pm or when the overs for the day have been bowled, whichever is the later. Play will finish when the overs for the day have been bowled.

The required over-rate is 17 overs an hour with one over deducted for each full 3 minutes 30 seconds playing time lost.

No overs should be deducted for the 10 minutes between innings as this is built into the Hours of Play (above).

Each team shall bat for 60 overs unless all out earlier. The object in matches where the start is delayed or play is suspended shall always be to re-arrange the number of overs so that both teams have the opportunity of batting for the same number of overs. If the team batting first is all out before their allocated overs, the unused overs are not added to the innings of the team batting second.

##### 4.3 **Bowlers**

4.3.1 Where possible, the number of overs bowled by each individual bowler shall be indicated on the scoreboard from the commencement of an innings.

4.3.2 The ECB Fast Bowling Regulations will apply.

##### 4.4 **Result**

Winning team ( <i>in matches of 80 or more overs</i> )	<b>10 points</b>
Winning team ( <i>in matches of less than 80 overs</i> )	<b>8 points</b>
Tie	<b>5 points</b>
Losing team	<b>0 points</b>
Draw/Abandoned Games	<b>3 points</b>

##### 4.5 **Bonus Points**

1 for reaching 100, 150, 200, 250 runs (available for the 1<sup>st</sup> 60 overs or 50% of the available overs).

1 for taking 3, 5, 7, 9 (or all available if less than 9) wickets (available throughout the innings).

#### 4.6 **Delayed Start**

When the match does not commence until there are 80 overs or less remaining, the match will become a limited over contest with the aim for the two sides to bat for the same number of overs. No additional fielding restrictions will apply but the bowlers are limited to one-fifth of the overs, rounded-up as necessary.

Bonus points will still be available as outlined above.

The side batting second must face at least 20 overs to constitute a match.

#### 4.7 **Wide Ball - Judging a Wide - Delayed Start Matches only**

In addition to Law 22 the following will apply:

Umpires are instructed to apply a very strict and consistent interpretation in regard to this Law in order to prevent negative bowling wide of the wicket.

Any offside or legside delivery which in the opinion of the umpire does not give the batter a reasonable opportunity to score shall be called a wide. For guidance purposes, a legside wide shall be called if a ball passes on the legside outside the pads of the batter standing in a normal batting position.

#### 4.8 **No Ball - Delayed Start Matches only**

Law 41.6 (Bowling of dangerous and unfair short pitched deliveries) shall apply with the following additions:

4.8.1 Regardless of how wide of the striker a delivery is, there shall be no more than two deliveries per over that after pitching pass or would have passed clearly over shoulder height of the striker standing upright at the popping crease.

4.8.2 The umpire shall make it clear to the bowler (and any bowler called upon to complete an over) and the batters at the wicket when a delivery within the limit in 4.8.1 has been bowled. It is unfair if the limit is exceeded and the umpire shall call and signal No ball on each such occasion and consider it as part of the warning sequence in Laws 41.6.3 and 41.6.4.

4.8.3 If a bowler is No Balled a second time in the innings for the same offence the Umpire is to invoke Law 41.6.4 and the bowler shall be removed forthwith and shall not be allowed to bowl again in that innings.

**Note:** For the avoidance of doubt the warnings detailed in Laws 41.6.1, 41.6.2 and those above in 4.8.1 are cumulative.

4.8.4 Law 41.7 (Bowling of dangerous and unfair non-pitching deliveries) shall apply.

### 5 **General Provisions**

#### 5.1 **Mode of Delivery**

Law 41.6 (Bowling of dangerous and unfair short pitched deliveries) shall apply with the following additions:

- 5.1.1 Regardless of how wide of the striker a delivery is, there shall be no more than two deliveries per over that after pitching pass or would have passed clearly over shoulder height of the striker standing upright at the popping crease.
- 5.1.2 The umpire shall make it clear to the bowler (and any bowler called upon to complete an over) and the batters at the wicket when a delivery within the limit in 5.1.1 has been bowled. It is unfair if the limit is exceeded and the umpire shall call and signal No ball on each such occasion and consider it as part of the warning sequence in Laws 41.6.3 and 41.6.4.
- 5.1.3 If the bowler exceeds their limit of short pitched deliveries in an over not only must the Umpire call No Ball but they must invoke the procedures of Law 41.6.3 in regard to cautioning the bowler.  
If a bowler is No Balled a second time in the innings for the same offence the Umpire is to invoke Law 41.6.4 and the bowler shall be removed forthwith and shall not be allowed to bowl again in that innings.  
**Note:** For the avoidance of doubt the warnings detailed in Laws 41.6.1, 41.6.2 and those above in 5.1.1 and 5.1.2 are cumulative.
- 5.1.4 Law 41.7 (Bowling of dangerous and unfair non-pitching deliveries) shall apply.

## 5.2 **Number of Players**

- 5.2.1 Each team can consist of up to 12 players. No more than 11 players can bat or be on the field at any time. All players must be nominated to the umpires in writing before the toss is made. There is no requirement to nominate which 11 players will bat. Any replacement/substitution of a member of the fielding side can only be made with the approval of the umpires and only at the end of an over, the fall of a wicket or during an interval. Once a player has taken the field they can play a full part in the match, subject to the provisions of Law 17.6 (Bowler changing ends).
- 5.3.2 If more than one player is called up to a Higher Level cricket match i.e. 2nd XI, during a match, a County may call up a replacement player for the match subject to the approval of the Competition Manager. Any replacement player may be permitted to bat and bowl in that match. If the called up player was batting at the time they are required to leave the match they shall retire 'not out' and their replacement may be permitted to bat later in the innings.

## 5.3 **Covering of the Pitch**

- 5.3.1 The pitch and run-ups must be covered as below except in exceptional circumstances, which must be notified to the umpires, the opposing team and the ECB Competitions Team.
- 5.3.2 The whole pitch, plus ten yards behind the stumps at each end, shall be covered as follows:

- 5.3.3 The night before the match and, if necessary, until the first ball is bowled, and whenever necessary at any time prior to that during the preparation of the pitch.
- 5.3.4 After cessation of play on the first and second day the Umpires shall ensure that the minimum covering of the pitch and surrounding areas, as laid down in this Playing Condition, and any necessary renovation of foot holes, has been carried out to their satisfaction. Such renovation may also take place wherever possible and whenever it is considered necessary during any interval in play.
- 5.3.5 The covers to be a minimum of 12 feet wide.
- 5.3.6 Once play has ceased on the night of the first/second day no further activity or play is to be allowed on any part of the square until the match re-commences on the second/third morning except by players involved in the match as under the provisions of Law 26.1.