

**HCL Guidance regarding Poor Spectator Behaviour**

ECB’s new General Conduct Regulations confirms that Clubs, not umpires, have a general responsibility for all persons on their ground/premises, especially spectators and all other persons who are not participants.

Whilst Umpires have responsibility for the players and events on the field of play, Clubs have a clear obligation to manage and control all other persons on their ground/premises. This is further reinforced by the terms of their premises and alcohol licenses.

ECB GCR’s state that racist, violent, threatening, abusive, obscene, offensive or provocative conduct, behaviour or language directed towards participants or other persons on a cricket ground is not allowed and should not be tolerated. Furthermore spectators must not encroach onto the field of play or throw anything onto it.

Players may have to live and cope with sarcasm, banter and even goading, but when behaviour, conduct or language cross the line into abuse, especially if it is of a racist nature, those things are not acceptable and must not be tolerated.

**Guidance**

Through the Captain players should report matters to the Umpires. It is essential, when events of this nature occur, that the two umpires and two Captains work together and liaise with officials of the hosting Club who are responsible for and must manage and control events off the field of play.

A team Captain is not obliged to move or exchange players from the vicinity of spectators.

Players are strongly advised not to engage with spectators or respond or argue or inflame matters, even when provoked. Players must not use foul, obscene, insulting or provocative language in any interactions with spectators.

The home Club must steward spectator areas when necessary and be prepared to issue warnings to spectators or, in more serious cases, eject them.

Any frogbox style camera available should be re-directed onto a spectator area where a problem appears to exist. Footage and audio to be made available as part of any investigation.

In very serious situations matches may be paused or even players taken off the field of play. In extreme circumstances games may be abandoned.

Subsequent to a match the Umpires can raise an HCL Incident Report.

A home or away Captain/Club can raise an official complaint under HCL rules (L11) and also raise a complaint directly to a Club. All Clubmark Clubs have a procedure for handling complaints.

Follow up action can include warnings, ejection, bans, life bans, financial penalties, deduction of points, bans from the League.

**Further Possible Actions:**

* ‘Spectator Behaviour’ signage to be displayed by all Clubs (using words and content similar to the example below)
* Where a tannoy/PA is in use (such as at big Finals) then spectator announcements should be made before the game, during the tea interval and at any time when the crowd need to be reminded
* Spectator Behaviour to be made a condition of ground admission. A Reminder should be printed in the Programme/Entrance Ticket

**Possible/suggested wording on ground admission:**

*“It goes without saying that mutual respect between players, staff, members and spectators in line with the spirit of cricket is acknowledged as a cherished standard.*

*“Anti-social behaviour or abuse, especially when directed at another person or of a racist nature, is totally unacceptable and will not be tolerated.*

*“Any breach of this condition may result in a person being subject to disciplinary action or a Member having their membership suspended or being expelled, or a spectator being ejected from the ground or a person being banned from entering our premises.*

***“WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I WITNESS ABUSIVE, RACIST OR ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR?***

*“Anti-social behaviour ruins the cricket experience for everyone involved and XX CC does not tolerate this. Please report the incident to the nearest Club Official who will take the necessary action”.*

**Possible signage example:**

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**SPECTATOR BEHAVIOUR**

You are here to watch cricket, not to

abuse others or be obnoxious

Respect players, Umpires and other fans

Goading, foul language or

abusing others is not allowed

Racism will not be tolerated

Enjoy the cricket