

## **IOMCA Mens senior cricket leagues review 2021**

This review was set up after concerns were raised by certain clubs around the current structures on the mens midweek and weekend leagues. The purpose of league cricket is to encourage people to play cricket in an environment where they can experience inclusive and competitive opportunities.

Recent years have seen an increased number of teams entering leagues which is of significant importance to the game, it needs to be highlighted here that the growth in the number of teams will only see the advances we are looking for in both sustainability and opportunities will be with unique individual players not the same players playing everyday.

The position of league cricket was raised initially by certain clubs and reviewed by the IOMCA and the ICC european development department and they agreed there were significant changes needed.

There is no date available for the last review of senior league cricket although 2015 did see relaxations on player registrations and eligibility, the growth in number of teams and players has brought a need to look at this and devise a structure and set of guidelines which will help achieve the purpose of league cricket.

Currently teams enter leagues based on the remit of they are a unique club and are allowed to enter at the top level unless they choose not to, then they choose what level they play.

A working group set up of players and officials of 6 clubs (the IOMCA would like to thank those individuals for agreeing to be part of the review and their time and efforts on coming up with the proposal) met to discuss the current position and put forward proposals to the IOMCA exec on how to align leagues for the future. These were then discussed at exec committee level.

The following gives an overview of the current position and the future structure as agreed between the chair of the review committee and the IOMCA exec along with timeframes for introduction and also considerations for junior players playing in senior leagues (open age cricket).

### **2021 Leagues structure**

Midweek Cricket.

Current: T20 cricket is played across 2 evenings Monday being Forrester 1 and Wednesday Cain and Forrester 2.

Concerns: Players playing across 2 evenings in higher and lower leagues, number of competitive matches, opportunities for all. No promotion and relegation.

Weekend Cricket.

Current: Premier league consisting of 7 teams and Division 1 consisting of 8 teams.

Concerns: Uneven number of teams in Premier means a week off every 6, huge disparity in ability levels top to bottom in both leagues, no promotion or relegation

One area highlighted from the review which needs to be addressed is the amount of cricket being played at present by juniors. It is essential younger players have adequate match, training and rest time to develop as a player and to maintain a healthy approach to the sport and other outside activities like school and social life. The IOM is unique in the amount of organised competitions per week it offers not just in relation to other sports but also in cricket compared to other countries. It is possible for a young player to play 6 times per week and sometimes twice in a day. This will result in injury, burnout or both. The IOMCA looked at the ECB and ACB directives and from 2022 will be introducing a 7-4-2 model where a player in a 7 day period cannot play or train more than 4 times per week and no more than 2 days in succession. This will also impact on the evenings matches are played and training nights.

## **Structure 2022 onwards**

### Midweek Cricket.

Leagues will be split into divisions of 6 teams, these will be known as Midweek Premier League Cain, Midweek Division 1 Forrester, Midweek Division 2 and if there are sufficient teams Midweek Division 3. Divisions will contain 6 teams unless there is a need to review the leagues based on numbers which aren't consistent to allow this, any amendments form 6 teams will be reflected in the bottom 2 divisions.

Promotion and relegation 1 down and 1 up will be introduced in 2022 and leagues will reflect this for the 2023 season.

All senior midweek games to be played on one evening unless it is not possible to accommodate the number of teams at the grounds available in which case an alternative will be arranged. Players will be restricted to play one midweek game per week. The potential reduction in the number of games available to players will make it possible to introduce new players to the game and allow facility access for Women's cricket and to train more as clubs which are priorities to the IOMCA, ICC and IOM Sport.

Clubs will be asked to decide on number of teams they are looking to enter by **28th February 2022** and leagues will be arranged based on 2021 league positions. Clubs will need to factor in the 7-4-2 which will see fewer juniors available to play senior T20 cricket. Examples will be released to assist clubs with this planning.

### Weekend Cricket.

It was agreed there will be a transition year for the 2022 season. The existing league structure will remain in place and at the end of the 2022 season the following will take place:

At the end of the 2022 season the team finishing bottom of the Premier Division will be automatically relegated to Division 1. The team finishing 6th in the Premier league will play off in a 40 over game against the team who finished top of Division 1 to determine the 6th team for the Premier league in 2023.

For the 2023 season the league structure will have 3 weekend leagues:

- Premier division – 6 teams, 40 over matches
- First division – 4 teams, 35 over matches
- Second division – 6 teams, 30 over matches

Other significant decisions were for the 2022 season and onwards it was agreed that there would be no rescheduling of games in any of the Junior or Senior leagues both midweek and weekend fixtures. This will enable league positions to be decided consistently. League rules will be updated for start times to reflect flexibility for clubs and consistency for leagues, further updates to follow.