



# Mercantile Cricket Association

## Code of Conduct

The MCA adopts **THE SPIRIT OF CRICKET** and the application of **LAW 42 PLAYERS' CONDUCT** (Laws of Cricket 2017 Code – 3<sup>d</sup> Edition 2022). The major responsibility for ensuring fair play rests with the captains, but extends to all players, umpires, coaches & spectators. Traditionally, cricket has been one sport to maintain and exhibit the highest levels of conduct & sportsmanship. While cricket is a competitive game, the strength of the sport has relied upon the acceptance of the umpire's decision and to play within the "spirit of the game".

### BEHAVIOURAL EXPECTATIONS FOR MCA MATCHES

#### Respect is central to the Spirit of Cricket:

- Respect your captain, team-mates, opponents and the authority of the umpires.
- Play hard, play fair and accept the umpire's decision.

#### Expected positive behaviours are:

- Create a positive atmosphere by your own conduct & ask others to do likewise.
- Show self-discipline, even when things go against you.
- Congratulate the opposition on their successes. Acknowledge their captain.
- Thank the officials and your opposition at the end of the match, whatever the result.
- Demonstrate values such as graciousness in defeat and humility in victory.

#### Player Code of Conduct:

- Never argue with an umpire. Approach the umpire in a calm & appropriate manner.
- Verbal abuse of umpires, inappropriate sledging opposition players, deliberately provoking an opponent are not acceptable or permitted behaviours in cricket.
- Do not bully or take unfair advantage of another competitor or an umpire.
- Cooperate with the umpire(s), teammates and opponents. Treat all with respect.
- Respect the rights, dignity and worth of every person regardless of their gender, ability, cultural background or religion.

#### Unacceptable behaviours are:

##### 1. Captains failing to control their players

It is the captain's role to ensure cricket is played with sportsmanship, in a positive & respectful manner. When Umpires request Captains to act regarding a player's behaviour, Captains shall; brief players on the behavioral requirements conforming to the traditional values & spirit of the game.

##### 2. The generation of an unpleasant atmosphere

Occurs when over an extended period. It can be an attempt to intimidate the umpire or opposition players through aggressive behaviour or an ongoing expression of dissatisfaction with the state of the match.

##### 3. The use of offensive language

Generally as a disparaging remark or swearing to an opposition player, an umpire, a member of the public. Also as a loud expression of frustration or self-admonishment.

##### 4. An excessive number of ridiculous appeals

Primarily aimed at pressuring and intimidating the umpire into a favourable decision.

##### 5. Racial and religious slurs

Derogatory comments or acts considered likely to threaten, disparage, vilify, offend, insult, humiliate or intimidate another person or group based on race, religion, descent, colour or national or ethnic origin has no place at a cricket match.

##### 6. Questioning or disputing an umpire's decision or failing to follow the umpire's instructions

This is often in an aggressive, sarcastic, argumentative or in a prolonged manner. This applies equally to dismissals and unsuccessful appeals, and to the judgement of no balls and wides, byes and leg byes, ground and weather and light rulings, the use of covers etc. Members of the batting side acting as umpires, are official umpires and should be treated accordingly.

##### 7. The actions of the dismissed batsman

In failing to leave the crease promptly on being dismissed, dissenting by word or action or equipment abuse on or off the ground.

##### 8. 'Send offs' by word or action to the dismissed batsman

This behaviour is antagonistic, aggressive and can inflame the situation leading to a more serious altercation.



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## THE UMPIRE'S ROLE IN APPLYING THE MCA CODE OF CONDUCT & LAW 42:

THE MCC in response to poor behaviour has created Law 42 which specifically deals with player behaviour. Umpires are the eyes & the ears of the MCA Executive Committee & are obliged under the Laws of Cricket to intervene & report player misbehaviour that contravenes Law 42 or the MCA Code of Conduct (Appendix 1 A) to the MCA Secretary as prescribed in Rule 19 CONDUCT.

Umpires are instructed

- To take appropriate action regarding any mis-conduct in MCA matches.
- To report all breaches of Law 42 & the MCA Code of Conduct.
- To apply on-field penalties in accordance with law 42.
- To follow protocols for conduct reports including timelines and notifications.

## CONDUCT REPORT PROCEDURES

### Reporting Procures Required Under Law 42

- Where an umpire(s) speaks to a captain regarding a player(s) or his own behaviour, a written report detailing the incident will be forwarded to MCA Secretary within 48 hours of the conclusion of the match.
- The MCA Secretary will forward a copy of the report to the club with the prescribed sanction instructing the club to respond within 24 hours from receiving the report to either plead guilty & accept the set penalty or challenge the report resulting in a tribunal hearing.

### Record Of Player Mis-Behaviour

A database maintained by the MCA Secretary will record all Conduct Reports. It will detail player's name, club, offence, date and penalties applied.

### Set Penalties for Players

If a player accumulates 5 demerit points while playing in MCA matches then an immediate 1 match suspension is applied.

### Set Penalties for Teams

Teams will lose 1 match point if they accumulate more than 5 demerit points in a single season and 1 match point for every subsequent demerit point accrued during that season.

### Double demerit points will apply for finals

Finals matches will accrue double demerit points.

## SET PENALTIES & OFFENCES

When assessing the seriousness of any breaches of Law 42 or the MCA Code of Conduct, the Umpire shall be required to take into account the context of the particular situation. Behaviour that is contrary to the spirit of the game, is unbecoming of a representative or official or does or could bring the game of cricket into disrepute is considered reportable conduct.

### SET PENALTIES FOR GUILTY PLEAS

Once a player accumulates 5 demerit points a minimum 1 match suspension will be applied.

**All reported Level 1 – Offences** incur 1 demerit point for a guilty plea.

**All reported Level 2 – Offences** incur 2 demerit point for a guilty plea.

**All reported Level 3 – Offences** incur a minimum 3 demerit points for a guilty plea plus any further sanctions determined by the MCA Executive Committee.

**All reported Level 4 – Offences** may result in an offer an amount of demerit points as determined by MCA Executive for a guilty plea.

### LEVEL 1 OFFENCES (Level 1 offences will incur 1 Demerit Point and a written apology if requested)

Any of the following actions by a player shall constitute a Level 1 offence:

1. **Wilfully mistreating any part of the cricket ground, equipment or implements used in the match** which includes any action such as
  - banging the bat into the ground/pad or against the fence or race, etc.
  - throwing the bat or equipment during or after the batsman's return to the boundary/pavilion
  - hitting the stumps upon dismissal
  - kicking/hitting the ball away upon dismissal



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**2. Showing dissent at an umpire's decision by word or action** which includes excessive, obvious or inappropriate disappointment (dissent) with an Umpire's decision such as

- an obvious delay in resuming play by the fielding team
- batsman not leaving the wicket promptly or shaking the head
- batsman pointing or looking at the bat when given out lbw
- batsman pointing/touching the pad or rubbing shoulder/body when given out caught behind
- a bowler snatching a cap from umpire
- fielders requesting a referral to a "TV Umpire"
- arguing or entering into a prolonged discussion with the Umpire about their decision

It shall not be a defence that the Umpire might have, or in fact did, get any decision wrong.

**3. Using language that, is obscene, offensive or insulting or making an obscene gesture**

- audible swearing (which can be heard beyond the boundary) or repetitious swearing
- obscene gestures which are directed at another person
- swearing in frustration at one's own poor play or misfortune
- insulting/abusive comments to opposition players designed to distract or intimidate

The Umpire shall take into account the context of the particular situation & whether the words or gesture are obscene; give offence; or insult another person.

**4. Appealing excessively** - include

- advancing towards an umpire in an aggressive manner when appealing
- repeated appealing with the intention of placing the umpire under pressure
- celebrating or assuming a dismissal before the decision has been given

This offence is not intended to prevent appealing but appealing that is intimidating.

**5. Pointing or gesturing towards the pavilion by a bowler or other member of the fielding side upon the dismissal of a batsman** e.g. verbal send off or a visual send off

**6. Any other misconduct, the nature of which is, in the opinion of the umpires, equivalent to a Level 1 offence.** This includes creating an unpleasant atmosphere over time, failing to follow umpire's instructions, deliberate time wasting etc...

**LEVEL 2 OFFENCES** (Level 2 offences will incur 2 Demerit Points and a written apology if requested)

Any of the following actions by a player shall constitute a Level 2 offence:

**1. Showing serious dissent at an umpire's decision by word or action**

Dissent – including those in Level 1 - will be classified as serious when

- the conduct contains anger or abuse that is directed at the Umpire or the Umpire's decision
- there is an excessive delay in resuming play or leaving the wicket
- there is persistent reference to the incident over time

It shall not be a defence that the Umpire might have, or in fact did, get any decision wrong

**2. Making inappropriate and deliberate physical contact with another player.**

Cricket is a non-contact sport and, as such, inappropriate physical contact of a serious nature will not be tolerated. Without limitation, Players will breach this regulation

- if they deliberately touch another player by walking or running into the player's personal space
- if they deliberately brush past a player

Accidental or genuinely unavoidable physical contact which occurs during the course of play shall not be considered an offence under this Level

**3. Throwing the ball (or any other item of cricket equipment) at a player, umpire or another person in an inappropriate and dangerous manner** such as

- throwing at the stumps in a mock run out attempt or any unnecessary throw near a batsman or umpire. This offence will not prohibit a fielder or bowler from returning the ball to the stumps in the normal fashion.



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## **4. Using language or gesture to another player, umpire, team official or spectator that, in the circumstances, is obscene or of a serious insulting nature**

It is acknowledged that there will be verbal exchanges between players occur in the course of play. Umpires will be required to assess the seriousness of the breach & report conduct regarded as being obscene, insulting, abusive, harassing or personal in nature.

## **5. Or any other misconduct, the nature of which is, in the opinion of the umpires, equivalent to a Level 2 offence such as comments directed at a player about his bowling action.**

**LEVEL 3 OFFENCES** (Level 3 offences will incur a minimum 3 Demerit Points and any further sanctions imposed by the MCA Executive)

Any of the following actions by a player shall constitute a Level 3 offence:

- 1. Intimidation or attempted intimidation an umpire by language, behaviour or gesture**
- 2. Threatening to assault a player or any other person except an umpire.**
- 3. Use language or gestures that offend, insult, humiliate, intimidate, threaten, disparage or vilify another person on the basis of that person's race, religion, gender, colour, descent, sexuality or national or ethnic origin.**

### **LEVEL 3: Immediate On-field Sanctions/Penalties**

- Offending player is immediately suspended for a number of overs. Either 10 overs or 1/5<sup>th</sup> of the overs in a limited overs match. (This may be less than 10 overs)
- 5 Penalty runs awarded to the opposition & a Conduct Report being made to the MCA
- If the offending player is a fielder, no substitute shall be allowed for him/her
- If the offending player is a batter they may return to bat after serving the suspension BUT only at the fall of a wicket.

**LEVEL 4** (Level 4 offences will incur a level of sanctions as determined by the MCA Executive)

The following actions by a player shall constitute a Level 4 offence: These offences are self-explanatory

- 1. Threatening to assault an umpire**
- 2. Making inappropriate and deliberate physical contact with an umpire**
- 3. Physically assaulting a player or any other person**
- 4. Committing any other act of violence**

### **LEVEL 4: Immediate On-field Sanctions/Penalties**

Offending player is removed from the field for the rest of the match. 5 Penalty runs awarded to the opposition & a Conduct Report being made to the MCA.

### **ALL LEVEL 3 & LEVEL 4 OFFENCES MAY BE DIRECTLY REFERRED TO A TRIBUNAL.**

The reported player may be requested to appear before the MCA Tribunal or an offer of a guilty plea will result in an amount of demerit points as determined by MCA Executive.