



Mercantile Cricket Umpires' Association: Newsletter 2

ASSOCIATION ALERTS

Meetings (Tuesdays at St Kilda Sports Club)

13th January 2026, 7pm

10th February 2026, 7pm

10th March 2026 – Finals Meeting & BBQ, 6.30pm

Ice Cream provided



Australia Day match: Monday 26th January 2026

MCA Saturday Versus MCA Sunday

MCA Under 21 Versus MCA Over 40



Paul
Hocking

GUESS WHO?



ROCKET ROD

Rodney Bates is a specialist Sunday umpire in the MCA and an all-round good bloke. Next time you see “Rocket Rod” congratulate him as he is an acknowledged world champion in the world of lawn bowls. Rodney served as a marker dubbed **International Technical Officer** for the **2025 World Champion of Champions**. In a recent interview, Rocket states he loves acting as a marker as he has “the best view of the game”.



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Mutual Cup

DEEP DIVE



Basics

Umpire	Paul Grant
Suburb	Mont Albert
Country supported	Australia
Years umpiring MCA	11 years
Mode of travel	Car

Getting personal

Favourite MCA umpire	All my Colleagues
Most admired international cricketer	Steve Smith
Most desired snack at MCA umpire meetings	Ice-cream (sometimes consumes 2 per meeting!)
Cricket clubs played for	Aberfeldie, Brighton East & Canterbury (still play a few Vets games with Canterbury including played Vets Cricket in England in 2023)
Plays like	Adam Gilchrist

Umpire Attire

Brand of white cricket shoes worn	Nike
Umpire's white shirt tucked in or out?	Tucked in
Black pants or pin striped?	Black pants only
Colour belt to be worn?	Black only

Decision making

Ball bounces off pitch and goes for 4	Call No ball, byes and then signal 4
Ball bounces over head of batsman in MCA match	No Ball – as per MCC laws of cricket
Bowler knocks out bail whilst delivering ball	No Ball

COVID CALAMITY

We all love the fact that the MCA committee love to get a game of cricket going, rain, hail or shine. However, back in March 2020 the world was facing the global COVID-19 pandemic, which presented a major health threat.

All competitions within the country cancelled their seasons, but the MCA defied all health advice and continued to play cricket! Grand finals were held with three teams from two different clubs withdrawing from the finals due to safety concerns, with replacement teams stepping in.



Mercantile Cricket Association match secretary Alec Khan said cricket's state and national governing bodies may have "overreacted" to the threat of coronavirus. (ABC News)

FAMOUS FACE

Brody Mihocek is an AFL premiership player with the Collingwood Football Club. A less known fact is that he is also a former player of the Sacred Heart Cricket Club. Brody played 2 games for the “Hearters” in 2022-23 and 2023-24 season. For the record, he played against Power House in C Grade on both occasions (at Fawkner Park 5) and in one of the matches was dismissed for a duck (LBW) by MCA Fawkner Park match secretary Gurav Gupta!



EAR TO THE GROUND

Como Park is a beautiful ground to umpire at, with the massive over hanging pavilion and large scoreboard. However, for players, Como Park presents an inherent risk, with 2 cricket matches often being played simultaneously on slightly overlapping ovals. This issue came to fruition in 2019 when Stonnington Council banned this practice of 2 grounds sharing space, for safety reasons, much to South Yarra Cricket Club's dismay.

The Club protested arguing that there had been 50 years of incident free play, despite outfielders sometimes being in another game's playing area. The ban had the potential to split the club and eventually a comprise was reached. Como Park was redeveloped and the cricket ovals resized to meet safety standards.

Today, umpires will have noticed that the 2 grounds still slightly overlap, and a risk still exists, but the Council have accepted this as an acceptable risk, so play on!



RULES RECAP

Can play be from one end only, if ground/pitch is unreasonable from one end? Yes.

Umpires can rule that play can occur with bowling from one end only. Umpires and batsmen shall change ends after each over. Important: Bowling shall continue from the one end for the rest of the day. **Rule 8.5**

What is the latest time, by agreement between the captains, can a match be delayed to as a T20? 3.30pm **Rule 14.7 (b)**

T20: How long is the first power play – 2 fielders allowed outside circle. 6 overs. **Rule 16.6 b (i)**

Can the tea break be reduced from the standard 30 minutes? Yes. Umpires may reduce to 25 minutes at their discretion. If both captains agree, the time for the tea interval can also be reduced by up to 15 minutes. **Rule 14.3 (a) and (b)**

Which type of balls can be used in MCA matches? 4-piece balls only **Rule 6.1**