



Henshalls SCCL 2020 Season

Chairman's Pre Season Statement – Gordon Smith

On behalf of the Henshalls Insurance Brokers SCCL Management Committee I would like to reflect on how things have changed since we finished last season, such as COVID-19, which has been at the forefront of all our minds, as well as the issues raised around "black lives matter", which has also globally touched people's lives.

In line with other leagues around the country the SCCL would like to acknowledge the great work done by NHS workers and other front line staff, and who continue to do so, during this pandemic and with cricket being such a wonderfully diverse sport we are also aware of the issues around racism in sport and "black lives matter" campaign.

The Management Committee respectfully ask clubs to consider coming together, with the umpires, for a minutes applause before this weekend's games in appreciation of the selfless and unrelenting work of the NHS and other key workers during COVID-19 and in recognition of those people who have suffered personal losses during this time. This will be a one-off tribute this weekend and does not need to be repeated before all subsequent matches.

Now, at long last the Henshalls Insurance Brokers SCCL 2020 season is about to start, albeit in a different guise from normal, with regionalised divisions and obviously far less fixtures. This has come about because of the unrelenting work of several of your Management Committee.

I would like to thank Nick Broadbent and his structure group for their great work done, under great pressure, to allocate all our sides to their respective groups, trying to make them as competitive as possible. I think they achieved this and have done a fantastic job. Phil Parker, our fixture secretary, with help from Shaun Southern, also worked quickly and has allocated the fixtures for the best benefit of all teams.

Vice-Chairman Jamie Dowley and his delivery group have also worked tirelessly in amongst other things, adapting the rules to provide a more simplified and uniform game across the league in this unique season.

Brian Kitson, Mike Hall, Jamie Dowley and myself have been holding daily Zoom meetings to try and ensure everything is going in the correct direction and at the correct pace for us to make a start this Saturday (and Sunday) and I want to place on record thanks for all their hard work.

Mike has done a lot of chasing up to get things in order and has actively encouraged clubs to try & help one another. This seems to have been a successful exercise as we now have grounds & best practice being shared, and I would like to thank all clubs for their efforts in helping us achieve this. It would be brilliant if this goodwill between clubs can extend to good behaviour on the field of play so that those who have worked so hard to get cricket played this season do not have to waste their time adjudicating on disciplinary issues. Incidentally, the disciplinary rules have been expanded, by the ECB, to include breaches of the COVID-19 restrictions and clubs and players are reminded to be aware of them as the Disciplinary Sub Committee will be enforcing them rigorously.

Matt Porter, our website wizard, has been exceptional with all his work on the website, Facebook and Twitter keeping everyone informed of information required to get things organised. Matt was also involved in assisting with the formation of the regional groups and without his presentation we would not have completed this work so quickly. Matt has also assisted Mike in getting clubs' risk assessments onto the website as well.

Another reason we waited until the 25th July to start the season was because of issues involving our Welsh based clubs and problems with cross border issues. Thankfully, these were resolved, and this allowed us to move forward. I think it was important that we gave them as much time as possible to be involved as they are an equally important part of our structure.

I know, with all the restrictions in place that there will be teething problems, and I beg you to be patient with each other and to get along as smoothly as is possible. I know it will be difficult but I'm sure with a little bit of effort we can do this. Could you all please be particularly patient and helpful to our umpires and scorers, who never have an easy job under any circumstances and are burdened with ensuring that all restrictions are adhered to. Remember they are giving up their time to ensure your cricket can go ahead as smoothly as possible.

I would finally, like to wish you all the best for a successful 2020 season and hope the weather we had during the early "lockdown" days of the season returns. I will try and see as many of you as possible and remember playing the game, especially this year, is the important thing, so go out and enjoy.

Remember to follow the social distancing measures in place and stay safe.

Gordon – Please remember, it's OK, not to be OK

