2027 Season Rule Changes

Dear Clubs,

Following a comprehensive review by the Shropshire County Cricket League Rules Sub-Committee and Executive Committee, we are pleased to confirm a number of significant rule changes for the 2027 season.

These changes represent one of the most substantial updates to our playing regulations in recent years. They are designed to introduce greater consistency across divisions, simplify regulations for players and captains, improve disciplinary procedures and ensure a fair and competitive environment for all clubs.

Please take time to familiarise yourselves with the following changes.

1. Season Dates and Playing Formats

The 2027 Saturday league season will commence on Saturday 17th April and conclude on Saturday 11th September, with no scheduled Bank Holiday fixtures.

All Saturday divisions will adopt the same structure:

- First 11 matches: Win/Lose (WL) cricket.
- Final 11 matches: Win/Lose/Draw (WLD) cricket.

The Sunday league dates will be confirmed separately; however, all games will remain Win/Lose.

2. Overs per Division

Division	Overs per innings
Premier Division	50
Division 1	50
Divisions 2, 3 and 4	45
Divisions 5, 6, 7 and 8	40
Sunday Divisions	40

Important change: Division 4 increases from 40 to 45 overs per innings.

The existing DLS and rain regulations will continue to apply in the Premier Division and Division 1.

3. New Bonus Points System

A single bonus points system will apply across all divisions, including Sunday cricket, and in both WL and WLD formats.

Batting bonus points - maximum 5

Batting points will be awarded based on the team's scoring rate across its completed innings:

Run rate	Points
2 runs per over	1

3 runs per over	2
4 runs per over	3
5 runs per over	4
6 runs per over	5

A minimum of 20 overs must be bowled for batting bonus points to apply.

Where a team is bowled out, its run rate will be calculated using the overs available to it, rather than the number of overs actually faced.

Bowling bonus points - maximum 5

Teams will receive one bowling bonus point for every two wickets taken.

Wickets	Points
2	1
4	2
6	3
8	4
10	5

This system applies regardless of the number of overs played, including reduced-over fixtures.

4. New Draw Points System

All Saturday divisions will adopt the same draw points structure during WLD cricket.

Points will be determined by the percentage of the first innings score achieved by the team batting second.

Second innings score	Points (batting 1st / batting 2nd)
Less than 60%	10-0
60% to 79.99%	9-1
80% or more	7-3

This replaces the different draw points systems previously operated across the divisions.

5. WLD Winning Points

The points awarded for winning a WLD fixture will be standardised across all Saturday divisions.

- 25 points for a victory where the winning team has not elected to bowl first.
- 20 points where the winning team elects to bowl first.

This increases the previous 24-point award to 25 points where applicable.

6. Bowling Restrictions in WLD Cricket

All Saturday divisions will now follow the same bowling restrictions.

No individual bowler may bowl more than 30% of the applicable innings overs, subject to the rules below.

The previous requirement in Divisions 2-8 for five bowlers to bowl a minimum of five overs each has been removed.

Where the team batting first is bowled out

The team batting second receives the unused overs, but the bowling restrictions remain based on the original scheduled innings length.

Example: In a 45-over match, Team A is bowled out after 37 overs. Team B receives 53 overs to bat, but Team A's bowlers remain restricted to a maximum of 14 overs each.

Where the team batting first declares

The team batting second receives the additional overs, and the bowling restrictions are recalculated using the revised innings length.

Example: In a 45-over match, Team A declares after 37 overs. Team B receives 53 overs to bat, and Team A's bowlers may bowl a maximum of 18 overs each.

These changes are intended to make WLD cricket tactically different from WL cricket while providing consistent rules across all divisions.

7. Divisions 2/3/4 – Alignment

Alongside the increase to 45 overs, Division 4 will introduce the following changes and be aligned with Divisions 2 and 3:

- Pink cricket balls will be used in all Win/Lose fixtures from 2027.
- Coloured clothing will remain optional in Divisions 3 and 4 during 2027.
- Coloured clothing will become mandatory in Divisions 3 and 4 Win/Lose fixtures from 2028.

Clubs are encouraged to begin planning for the clothing requirements ahead of the 2028 season.

8. Overseas Player Eligibility

The League has approved changes to the eligibility of Category 3 overseas players.

Visitor visa holders will no longer be permitted under the League's Category 3 eligibility provisions.

Eligibility will instead be restricted to players holding qualifying visa types, including relevant Tier 5, Youth Mobility/Young Person and Student visas, subject to current ECB and UK immigration requirements.

This change is intended to protect clubs and the League from potential immigration, employment and HMRC compliance issues.

Clubs considering recruiting overseas players should ensure their eligibility is established before making commitments or arrangements.

Further guidance will be circulated separately.

9. New Disciplinary System

For 2027, the League will introduce a revised disciplinary framework, replacing the previous approach that relied heavily on substantial league points deductions.

The new system will consist of three elements:

Player suspensions: Individual player bans will continue in accordance with the applicable disciplinary regulations.

Financial penalties: Fines will form part of the revised disciplinary framework.

Demerit points: A new demerit points system will provide a consistent and proportionate approach to disciplinary offences.

The aim is to ensure that disciplinary action remains robust while reducing the impact of lengthy appeals, inconsistent sanctions and significant distortions to league tables.

A separate, detailed disciplinary policy will be circulated to all clubs, explaining the demerit points system, financial penalties and how offences will be dealt with.

The League remains committed to maintaining the highest standards of behaviour and the Spirit of Cricket.

10. 2nd XI Teams in Premier Division

In order to protect the integrity and competitive standing of the SCCL Premier Division, the League has determined that, other than in exceptional or extenuating circumstances, no club's 2nd XI will be eligible for promotion to the Premier Division. Any such circumstances will be considered on an individual basis by the League Membership and Structure Committee.

Further Guidance and Communication

We recognise that these changes are significant and that clubs, captains and players will need time to familiarise themselves with the new regulations.

The changes will be discussed at the pre-season Captains' Meeting, with particular attention given to the new points systems, bowling restrictions and disciplinary procedures.

Further reminders and guidance will also be issued ahead of the commencement of WLD cricket in July.

Final Message to Clubs

The League's objective is to provide a consistent, competitive and enjoyable cricket environment across Shropshire.

By bringing together playing regulations that have differed between divisions for many years, we believe these changes will make the League easier to understand and administer while maintaining the different levels of cricket that our clubs provide.

We ask all clubs to ensure that this information is shared with their captains, players and relevant committee members ahead of the 2027 season.

Thank you for your continued cooperation and support. We look forward to another successful season of cricket in 2027.