

# Neon Cricket Wiltshire County Cricket League

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## Circular to NCWCCL Clubs 17<sup>th</sup> June 2021

### Disputes – Providing Evidence

So far this season, the league has already received three dispute claims. The following guidance is to help clubs to assist the league in resolving disputes, as covered in rules 44 and 45 of the league rules. Most such disputes relate to whether the pitch is playable following bad weather, so this document focuses on this area. However, the advice it contains relates to any disputes between the two teams.

Most disputes occur in matches where there are no non-playing umpires. This results in the league receiving reports from the two captains which don't just contain a difference of opinion, they contain conflicting statements of fact. To exaggerate only slightly, one captain will write that it was pouring with rain while the other writes that it hadn't rained in the last hour. One will write that the wicket was bone dry, while the other writes that there were ducks swimming on it!

This puts the league in a difficult position. But with modern technology, it shouldn't be like this. When you're considering raising a dispute, think not just about what you are going to write in your report, but how you can provide evidence to back up your statements. For instance:

- To show whether it's raining, put a bowl of water out and video the raindrops hitting it.
- If it's sunny, take a photo of the stumps and their shadows.
- If the ground is bone dry, push something down onto the ground which will show up moisture (e.g. a t-shirt) and show that it's still dry when you pick it up again. Video it.
- If there are ducks swimming on the square, send us a photo!

Be inventive, and think about what will show up well on a photo/video. In all cases, make sure the time and date is on the photo/video, to verify it was taken at the time claimed.

The other form of dispute we regularly get, is issues such as that one captain raises a dispute writing that the other captain refused to play while unreasonably claiming the wicket was too wet, but the other captain's report says the match couldn't continue because of the state of the outfield. At this point, 100 photos of the wicket won't provide the evidence the league needs. So make sure you have clear evidence as to the reason why the match is being called off. Video the pitch inspection, and make sure the conversation between the two captains is picked up by the mic. This will also show that the captains did not call the match off by mutual agreement.

Finally, if you can, get an independent person to confirm the information in your report. Ideally this would be a cricketer from another club – is there someone watching the match who is neutral? Or another match going on nearby where a neutral umpire or a member of the away team could help? If they can write a report, then great, but if not, a video recording of their statement will suffice.

The league will always rule that there has been no wrongdoing unless there is a strong case to the contrary, so providing evidence is crucial in the league being able to uphold a dispute claim.