

Middlesex CCC 2025 GM resolutions

The undersigned members of Middlesex County Cricket Club (the Club) require a General Meeting under Rule 22.1 to be called by the Board.

As required by Rule 22.10, the resolutions to be considered at the meeting and the statement to be sent with the meeting notice to all members are set out below.

Domestic schedule review

Club members wish to discuss and vote on these two distinct resolutions before the Club Chair casts any vote on behalf of the Club on any proposals to reduce the amount of county cricket scheduled.

1. The Club shall oppose any proposal reducing the number of County Championship games
2. The Club shall oppose any proposal reducing the number of T20 Blast games

Statement on behalf of the petitioners

1 The Club has promised a members' survey and forum to consider formal proposals for a new schedule. However, these proposals may all involve reducing county cricket and the Board is not bound to follow members' wishes. A General Meeting gives members a chance to vote on the position the Club should take on any proposals to reduce the amount of county cricket. The petition was submitted before proposals have been finalised so there is sufficient time to hold the meeting (requiring 21 days' notice) before county Chairs are asked to vote on them. The Board is asked to hold the meeting before the Chair votes on any proposals that reduce the amount of County Cricket.

Background

2 The ECB and counties are reviewing the county cricket schedule with decisions reported to be expected by the end of June for implementation in 2026. A lead option is reported to be a reduction in Championship matches from 14 to 12 and in T20s from 14 to 10 or 12. This could mean 10-12 fewer days of county cricket. At least 12 counties have to agree to any change to the current schedule.

3 The Board no longer confirm their previously-held position that Middlesex would oppose any reduction in the Championship, a position we were told at the January members' forum shared by the players. This opens the way to the Club agreeing to a reduction. The petitioners believe this issue is so central to members' interests and to the future of the county game that the Board's and members' views must be aligned.

Proposed Resolutions

4 The first resolution requires the Club to vote against proposals to reduce the number of championship matches. The second requires them to vote against proposals to reduce the number of T20 matches. Members vote on each separately. No resolution is proposed on the One Day Cup as no reductions in those games have been suggested.

5 The Resolutions refer to 'any' proposals; because, at the time the petition was drawn up, no firm proposals had been published.

Case for keeping the present number of county matches

6 Currently, excluding play-offs and finals for T20 and 50-overs competitions, each county plays a maximum of 78 days a season: 56 for the Championship, 14 for T20s and 8 for 50-overs matches. This represents only just over one third of days available from April to September and means considerably less county cricket being played than in the late 20th and early 21st centuries. Important concerns raised by the Professional Cricketers Association (PCA) about players' welfare need to be considered against this broad picture.

7 If the Championship and T20 competitions were cut as reported in the media, this could involve a reduction from the present maximum of 78 days to 66 or 68 (13-15%). This would mean significantly fewer opportunities for members and fans to watch and for players to develop their skills. With the entrenchment of the Hundred in August, based in the big cities, it would also risk a sharply reduced visibility for the county game which is played across the wider geography of the country.

8 Some might argue that shrinking the fixture-list is required to cut costs. But that is surely a policy of despair. Where necessary, counties should act to put their finances on a sustainable basis without detriment to their primary activity - to play cricket.

Championship (Resolution 1)

9 Though much is made of England selection now relying less on Championship performances, it remains the case that players' skills, at least initially, are developed in the county system. The England set-up could not survive without the counties' contribution.

10 A reduction in the number of Championship matches from 14 to 12, soon after its reduction from 16 (a 25% reduction overall) severely limits the opportunities available to players, especially younger players, to play first-class cricket. With likely weather interruptions, 12 games can easily shrink to 10.

11 The Championship, as the ECB acknowledges, is our Blue Riband tournament. It is said that it remains the competition which the players are keenest to win, because of the challenge it poses to skills and consistency across the season. For many fans

and members (whether attending or following in the media and online), it remains an important source of interest and enjoyment.

12 It is not clear that concerns regarding players' welfare should arise from the current scheduling. For example, if we take the largest block of 7 matches, at the start of the season, each county has a week off during this period. Data on overs bowled in Division 1 for 2023 and 2024 indicate that quick bowlers with the heaviest workloads for each county averaged just 21-22 overs a week in this period.

T20 Blast (Resolution 2)

13 As with the Championship, T20s are important in providing a pathway for potential England players as well as an opportunity to play in the short-form format actually played in international competitions (unlike the Hundred).

14 T20s are an important source of income for many counties. They also provide an opportunity to watch for members and fans who, for work or other reasons, cannot easily get to a Championship match and for those who prefer the shorter form.

15 The PCA have expressed concerns about the impact of the T20 schedule on players' welfare, especially the effect of travel from one venue to another on back-to-back fixtures. Every effort should be made to address these concerns through schedule changes and travel plans so that there aren't late night finishes followed by a 100 plus mile journey with a game the next day.

Conclusion

16 If proposals are agreed to marginalise the county game further by reducing the number of fixtures, there would be no going back. If the Hundred is expanded in 2029, further reductions can be expected. It is essential that all Club members are given a meaningful say now. It's time for Middlesex members to take a stand!