

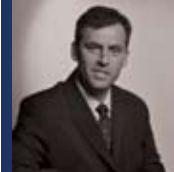


Strategies for Maximising Use of Cricket Facilities

CRICKET VICTORIA^{*}

Maximise the Victorian community's participation in cricket





INTRODUCTION

Participation in cricket for both males and females is expanding in all areas of Victoria, from the backyard and schools through to junior and senior clubs.

Cricket Victoria's 2007-2011 Strategic Plan, released in August 2007, challenged staff and stakeholders to identify strategies and opportunities to achieve in six key strategic areas, two of which focused directly on maximising involvement at all levels of cricket. Those specific goals are:

- **Maximise the Victorian community's participation in cricket**
- **Maximise the Victorian community's interest in cricket**

A key performance target under the first goal is that **"All cricketers have access to appropriate facilities throughout the season"**.

With Victoria in the midst of a prolonged drought, this target was of particular significance, and so a Steering Committee was established in December 2007 to consider the relevant issues. The Committee consists of representatives from Cricket Victoria, Victorian Metropolitan Cricket Union, Victorian Country Cricket League, Victorian Women's Cricket Association, Victorian Turf Cricket Association, Victorian Sub-District Cricket Association and Cricket Victoria's Local Government Consultant. It is a consultative group formed to investigate and provide recommendations for better managing cricket facilities, including the use of turf and synthetic wickets to allow cricket to maximise ground usage and participation opportunities whilst recognising the partnership with councils and the needs of other sports users.

Numerous discussions and meetings resulted in a total of thirty-seven specific strategies in three broad categories: preserving existing grounds and wickets (including maximising their usage), providing direction for sustainable growth in developing areas, and improving the management of current facilities.

Cricket Victoria recognises the crucial partnership with local government, who provide access and management of facilities for clubs and associations. Cricket is indebted to councils for the role they play in supporting our game and continuing to recognise the important social and health benefits participation in our sport brings to their communities.

This booklet provides guidelines for cricket clubs, associations and councils to work collaboratively in addressing current and future turf and synthetic wicket and ground usage challenges, and I commend its contents to you. The guidelines are reflective of the knowledge, opinions and trends within grassroots cricket and the up-to-date experience of local government.

We trust that the guidelines in this booklet provide practical assistance to clubs, associations and councils in their decision-making and planning processes.

Tony Dodemaide
Chief Executive Officer
Cricket Victoria

The following 18 strategies have been identified to assist all parties in preserving existing grounds and wickets and maximise their usage:

1. Adherence to the Ministerial Lands Determination on seasonal use of grounds - October to March for cricket and April to September for football.
2. Clubs and associations to establish a bookings calendar with councils for all required playing days falling within the Ministerial Determination including regular fixtures, representative matches, finals, mid-week and Sunday matches.
3. Cricket Victoria to implement a bookings calendar to provide an overall picture of all representative matches, especially for turf access (eg. Hatch, Country Week, Pathways) to ensure ongoing sustainable use of key turf cricket venues for the future.
4. Councils and clubs to consider rescheduling junior times (eg. Sundays U12s 8-11am, U16s 3-6pm).
5. Encourage associations to play juniors on days other than Saturdays.
6. Where current ground usage with turf wickets is not being maximised, a synthetic wicket may be installed adjacent to turf tables to increase ground usage. (Alternatively, encourage clubs to allow juniors to play morning games on turf before senior games.)
7. Ensure turf wickets between junior and senior competitions are being shared effectively.
8. Implement 12-a-side cricket with 2 balls (once the first ball is dead the 2nd bowler delivers the second ball). All the down-time is lost and generally you can bowl 30 overs from one end in one hour.



9. Identify where grounds are not at full capacity (eg. midweek junior fixtures, weekend junior fixtures, senior midweek twenty20 fixtures, senior weekend fixtures).
10. Consider measuring actual hours of facility usage per week at club and association level to highlight the amount of community engagement in the sport.
11. Greater cooperation between associations could provide benefits in ground utilisation.
12. Encourage cooperation between councils and clubs to ensure that necessary maintenance and rehabilitation of grounds is completed.
13. Increase synthetic off-ground training facilities for clubs who are unable to access turf practice wickets and to preserve all centre wickets areas.
14. Consider over-sowing grounds with winter grasses at the end of cricket season and summer grasses at the end of football season.
15. Prepare a Memorandum Of Understanding, or part of any Lease or Licence Agreement between clubs and councils, to provide an action plan to protect facilities. Clubs and associations to adhere to council Parks and Gardens departments' needs to prepare grounds.
16. Councils to acknowledge clubs and associations who provide flexible rescheduling of competitions (eg. junior comps, twenty20 alternatives and midweek comps).
17. Associations to ensure a representative on council task forces committees or forums to work through current issues such as planning, facilities and ground access.
18. Establish good designs for safe and effective cricket training.



The following 10 strategies have been identified to provide direction for sustainable growth in developing communities:

1. Install turf squares of preferably five wickets width. Some may have to be up to seven to cater for extra workload.
2. Install or add synthetic wickets next to a turf table on-ground.
3. Create three-way partnerships between councils, Cricket Victoria and clubs to access the Cricket Victoria Facilities Grants program.
4. Investigate installing water tanks and equipment to allow clubs to maintain their own turf wickets or source alternative water supplies (ie. bore water, recycled water).
5. Recommend 'best practice' turf management guidelines for councils creating and managing new ovals to be shared between cricket and other sports.
6. Appoint a Cricket Victoria staff member to liaise with Sport and Recreation Victoria to access grants (eg. for water tanks).
7. Work in partnership with councils to seek funding from Sport and Recreation Victoria through the Community Facility Funding program.
8. Encourage clubs to access community and other available grants from councils.
9. Encourage councils to install water tanks.
10. Encourage councils to seek State Government funding to sow winter and summer grasses.

The following 9 strategies have been identified to assist in improving the management of current facilities:

1. On occasions, due to rehabilitation of grounds, stagger the commencement of seasons for lower elevens to assist clubs and associations in conjunction with councils to prepare wickets and grounds.
2. Cricket Victoria to design (in conjunction with the relevant TAFEs and turf industry association) and offer Level 1 Curator courses or endorse existing courses. Cricket Victoria to investigate with councils the prospect of certificate courses for volunteers. This could be created, developed and presented in consultation with turf industry associations.
3. Cricket Victoria to undertake an audit of all turf wickets in Melbourne and their actual seasonal usage.
4. Cricket Victoria to survey councils to quantify turf wickets lost or installed in the last five years.
5. Associations to form a task group to discuss local issues.
6. Clubs and associations should access councils' available community courses for volunteers, OH&S and equipment training.
7. Improve communication between associations, clubs and councils regarding availability of grounds during finals series to enable councils access for ground maintenance.
8. Any new synthetic outfield surfaces to be installed using the Australian Football League / Cricket Australia synthetic surface accreditation.
9. Any new synthetic wicket surfaces should be installed with reference to Cricket Victoria's approved surface types and suppliers.

**Suggested course of action for councils and
cricket associations/clubs:**

- **Convene joint meeting of stakeholders**
- **Invite Regional Cricket Managers to attend**
- **Develop an action plan**
- **Implement the action plan**

**For further information on drought response strategies, grants
available to Victorian cricket clubs and associations and general
club information please visit:
www.cricketvictoria.com.au**


BRINGING CRICKET TO ALL VICTORIANS