

CRICKET VICTORIA WEEKLY COVID-19 UPDATE (Nov 16)

More cricket back now with regional comps well underway and most metro comps now started which is very exciting to see. It is great to report two immediate opportunities are available now and more expected from next week – plus some learnings from more cricket being back are outlined in this update.

Immediate match day changes possible - now

Frequency change for sanitiser / ball cleaning

Following learnings from early rounds in regional Victoria and commencement of most comps in Melbourne (but particularly the extremely low COVID-19 cases over the past 3 weeks in Victoria), the frequency recommendations from CV for Association consideration effective immediately are as follows:

	➤ Sanitise / drinks timing during play - Bowlers, fielders, umpires & match ball
20 over innings	Before & after the innings
21-40 over innings	At least one break during the innings
41-50 over innings	At least two breaks during the innings
50+ over innings	At least once every 15-20 overs

- Associations continue to set the specific local directions (but they must occur at least once per 20 overs)
- All players / umpires should sanitise their hands before and after the innings (plus during play as above)
- Sanitiser break should coincide with drinks break. All players should have their own drink bottle and 2 bottles of sanitiser should be used to minimise downtime e.g. All drink bottles should be quickly accessible, and sanitiser is used by the fielders & umpires from 2 bottles (e.g. ½ the fielding team and 1 umpire per bottle). N.B.: keeper & batters do not need to sanitise at breaks.
- At each break the ball should also be wiped with an antibacterial wipe/spray. The ball should also be wiped with an antibacterial wipe/spray whenever touched by someone not on the field of play (e.g. by a spectator after a 4 or 6). Associations will decide who holds the wipes on the field in a zip lock bag or the soft packaging it comes in (e.g. umpires or bowling team captain). Ideally these are supplied by the home team and kept on-field during play
- Common sense should continue re: having the break immediately if a wicket is taken within 1-2 overs of a scheduled break
- Documents on the CV website and the FAQs will be updated over coming days to reflect this change

Immediate training changes possible – now

Group sizes

This week (confirmed by SRV): An opportunity exists to increase the amount of people in the nets at the same time by having groups / teams separated by only 1 net (rather than the current 10m ~ around 2 net gap). The 'gap' net between groups cannot have anyone in it at the time (no throw downs, bowling machine etc.). It will require a temporary barrier (e.g. traffic management cone / rope) from the top of the bowlers run-up to the start of the nets to help separate groups. Groups / teams still need separation before, during and after training. Noting that further easing is expected after this weekend to groups of up to 50, clubs may stick to current plans for this week – the 10m (effectively leaving 2+ nets free between group) – but clubs now have the option.

Planning for post Sunday 22nd – subject to potential easing of State Government restrictions later this week

1. Group Sizes – Highly likely

Subject to the next major announcement from the Premier, it is highly likely that group sizes will be increased to 50 per group from after Sunday 22nd. As flagged previously, clubs are welcome to have all teams (up to 50 players) training together in a single group or keep training in smaller groups. If someone is diagnosed with COVID, all people in their training 'group' may be required by DHHS to isolate for 14 days.

2. Mask use by Umpires (& players over 12 years of age who are off the field)

This remains as an ongoing discussion item with the State Government and we will confirm when any change to the State Government regulations would allow mask use to move from 'required' to 'recommended'. It should be reminded that people not wearing masks when required face a \$200 fine and organisations face an on the spot fine of around \$10,000 for encouraging / supporting people to not wear masks.

3. Spectators can be encouraged soon

At present, the advice from the State Government is to focus on getting protocols right from players and officials before focusing on encouraging spectators to attend matches. This is likely to change after Sunday 22nd to allow clubs to encourage spectators to attend up to significant limits (e.g. 500 patrons).

N.B.: Other languages – key documents

As advised last week, Cricket Victoria is expected to receive 2 key documents in different languages for sharing widely for players & their families who require this in Hindi, Urdu, Sinhalese, Bengali, Pashto. These will be located under the [resources section of the COVID section of CV website](#) in coming days.

N.B.: Learnings from matches to date

Firstly, a big congratulations to the overwhelming number of club volunteers who took the COVID-19 protocols on board. Feedback to date is that most clubs were actively seeking to ensure cricket was played in a COVID-19 safe way which is both great to see but also very important – to ensure we do our part in providing an opportunity for people to enjoy our great game – but keep the community safe. The State Government and local councils are not expecting perfection from club volunteers but trying to get it as right as possible is critical.

A summary of the key elements by way of a reminder are as follows:

- Associations to have clear instructions to umpires and clubs about Association specific protocols – sanitise / drinks break timing & protocols – on-field / off-field, where bowlers cap/jumper can be left, [sweat/saliva procedures ruling](#) and reminders to go out regularly etc.
- Associations to consider time saving options – e.g. bowling multiple overs from one end, bowlers cap, sunnies etc can be left at the bowlers end behind the umpire (not handed to umpire or other players), combine sanitiser & drinks break (with timings as per page 1), ensure all players have their own drink bottle that is quickly & readily available at breaks and multiple sanitiser bottles are used
- Clubs to have regular ongoing dialogue with your local council & other relevant authorities to make sure you are aware of current local protocols
- Communicate with your opposition in advance – QR code location, changerooms / canteen status etc
- Have ample reminder signage up to help players, officials & spectators re: masks, social distancing etc
- As part of complying with COVID-19 plans, clubs are to ensure that they don't exceed the maximum number of people indoors. Failure to adhere to this may see councils denying access to rooms. A typical changeroom is usually not large enough for all players to in there at once. The density limits for each room can be easily assessed using the 4m² rule and via [the simple poster](#) for all to observe
- The only current exemptions for mask use is those Under 13 and players whilst actively on the field – whilst batting, bowling & fielding. Everyone else needs to wear a mask unless they have an exemption.
- No sharing of food (communal afternoon tea) or drinks (single drink container)
- Compliance is everyone's responsibility – it is not just up to umpires / COVID-19 Officers. Councils, DHHS, Police etc will continue to be doing spot checks
- Cricket is somewhat lucky to be playing already – as it is a sport where people can maintain a COVID-19 safe 1.5m throughout. This needs to be maintained both on-field and off-field by all.
- Check out the [CV resources](#) if unsure – up to 50 FAQs, several documents, webinars (including the latest [40 minute refresher webinar session](#) held last week) etc.

Whilst COVID-19 case numbers in Victoria are currently at zero as we have seen from South Australia and from the second wave in Melbourne, it can flare back up after looking good. It is important that we don't relax our efforts. We need to stick to the protocols in place that are not only helping us continue to play the game that we all love – we are also doing our part to help keep the community safe. Long Live Cricket & Stay Safe.

Prepared by Paul Milo (CV Head of Member Services) – 16/11/2020