

CRICKET VICTORIA INTERIM WEEKLY COVID-19 UPDATE (Oct 25)

Latest update from CV following the press conference from the Premier earlier today (Sunday 25th). Limited news today with more announcements expected in the next 24-48 hours. Further clarity will be sought from SRV at the regular Monday lunchtime meeting and any further immediate updates will be provided at the weekly Peak Bodies COVID-19 meeting scheduled at 2.30pm tomorrow.

Regional Victoria

It is fantastic that cricket training and matches (weather permitting) are underway. Regional Associations and clubs should be congratulated on their efforts to date. This is not only great for the local communities but shows Metropolitan based clubs that cricket can be played safely during a Pandemic with some core protocols in place.

Little River – now classified as fully ‘regional’ from a COVID-19 perspective - allows Little River CC to compete in the BPCA rather than being unable to compete given their previous ½ Metro ½ regional classification. Good news for the club.

Indoor Cricket training and matches (for U/18s) can resume from 11.59pm on Tuesday 27th October, 2020 – based on individual centre COVID-19 plans and density limits.

No other key changes impacting community cricket over recent days – including the State Government announcement today. Regionally based clubs should continue to monitor the increasing density limits for indoor spaces via DHHS to ensure indoor capacity is not breached at each venue.

Metropolitan Melbourne

Training

Announcements on when training can commence this week will likely be made by the Premier either tomorrow morning or Tuesday morning. Of course, local council approval will be required before the 1st session. In preparation for a return soon, Councils will require that clubs have an editable plan – with the 3rd version of the CV template available on the [CV website](#). This now 5 page version replaces earlier longer templates available to clubs on the CV website since mid-September. Several sections from the previous version have been removed and placed as separate resources on the CV website to allow these to be updated as required without the need to update the editable COVID-19 plan itself.

On the same website is the latest [Return to training plan](#) (including advice for clubs before the 1st session is held) plus other useful one page guides – group size guidelines, player commitment statement, QR code poster, safety officer register etc, plus close to 50 FAQs and links to all key webinars. N.B.: The cricket specific roadmap will be updated in the next 48 hours or so following the new State Government roadmap when this is confirmed.

Clubs should use the next two days to finalise preparations with council and finalise communication with players and officials before the 1st session – including scheduling a ‘zoom’ type session with players before the first session to explain the club training protocols.

25km travel restriction soon to be removed

The 25km restrictions on travel within Metro Melbourne may end soon allowing all players located in Melbourne to travel an unlimited distance to training – so long as they start and end in Metropolitan Melbourne.

Matches

Noting bowlers could bowl at home plus use nearby synthetic nets over recent weeks to get some bowling loads in, this should allow Associations to continue to stick with round one commencement as planned (with many looking at a mid to late November start). Those who had been considering November 14 start may potentially consider now starting November 21 to still allow 14 rounds and finals to be held before the end of March. Of course, this is an Association by Association decision. N.B.: Premier Cricket is still currently planned to start on November 21 however a discussion re: Premier Cricket start date will take place in coming days. It is still recommended to arrange an intra-club practice match or a practice match against another club from the same Association on the weekend before round one – not only for player practice, but to practice the COVID-19 protocols. As noted previously maximising the number of matches played this season (even with a short pre-season) is advisable – especially with a likely continued wet spring/summer.

Other immediate matters for noting

“Ring of Steel”

CV is very aware that, like all community sports, clubs and individuals are affected by the inability to currently travel through the ‘ring of steel’ between Metropolitan Melbourne and Regional Victoria – either way. Training/playing sport is currently not an approved reason to travel through the ‘border’. CV will continue to work closely with the State Government to ascertain if players can do this in coming weeks – possibly with a permit for match day. Regionally based players who play at “Metro” clubs could consider training at a local regionally based club (and vice versa for Metro based players when ok to train) until the “Ring of Steel” is removed.

Note – CV is seeking clarity as to whether clubs with paid coaches who need to travel across the “Ring of Steel” for training / matches can now complete the work permit and will confirm when details are supplied from State Government.

Number of groups at each training session

As widely promoted, training groups need to be fully separated from one another at training, Groups can swap areas at a training session but not mix. Training balls should stay with each group for the session. The number of players in each group can be up to the normal team size – i.e. if the normal team numbers are 11, then each group can be 11. If match day is 13, then 13 can train together.

CV is seeking support from the State Government to be able to increase the number of groups at training sessions at the same time. At any one time, this is currently limited to one team in the nets (regardless of how many nets are in the ‘bank’ of nets), plus 2 groups on each ½ of each oval. Additionally, coaches / team managers / COVID-19 Officers can monitor one or more groups (but not be part of the group).

Spectators in “Step 3” restrictions?

Members of the public are permitted to be in public places (like cricket ovals) on match day / training nights, however ideally this is kept to a minimum during “Step 3” restrictions.

An [FAQ](#) on the CV website has been updated – see the ‘general’ section towards the bottom of the FAQs. In essence, the current State Government advice for “Step 3” restrictions is for clubs not to encourage ‘spectators’ to training and ideally limit match day numbers to those who need to be there – people directly involved in staging the training / matches.

Ongoing changes

As noted constantly over recent months, the initial restrictions in place in regional Victoria and to be introduced in Melbourne will likely ease as we get closer to xmas subject to ongoing positive COVID-19 case numbers. Remember - keep updated on the ever-changing rules and keep asking questions if you aren't sure.

Thank you

Peak Bodies, Associations, Clubs and their players / officials are thanked for their patience, persistence and planning to date over recent months. It has been a pre-season like no other, but to have over 3,000 attendees at the various CV COVID-19 webinars, countless planning hours from every cricket organisation right across Victoria, cricket being underway in Regional Victoria and well placed in Melbourne to get underway soon. Not the result that most cricketers in Melbourne wanted to hear today, but fingers crossed that we get the green light inside the next 48 hours.

An exciting season ahead!

Prepared by Paul Milo (CV Head of Member Services) – 25/10/2020