

NEW LAWS FOR 2023

a. Law 18 – Batters returning when Caught

First trialled by the ECB in The Hundred at the suggestion of MCC, Law 18.11 has now been changed so that, when a batter is out Caught, the new batter shall come in at the end the striker was at, i.e., to face the next ball (unless it is the end of an over).

b. Law 22.1 – Judging a Wide

In the modern game, batters are, more than ever, moving laterally around the crease before the ball is bowled.

It was felt unfair that a delivery might be called 'Wide' if it passes where the batter had stood as the bowler entered his/her delivery stride. Therefore, Law 22.1 has been amended so that a Wide will apply to where the batter is standing, where the striker has stood at any point since the bowler began their run up, and which would also have passed wide of the striker in a normal batting position.

c. Law 25.8 – striker's right to play the ball

If the ball should land away from the pitch, the new Law 25.8 allows the striker to play the ball so long as some part of their bat or person remains within the pitch. Should they venture beyond that, the umpire will call and signal Dead ball. As recompense to the batter, any ball which would force them to leave the pitch will also be called No ball.

d. Law 38.3 –running out of the non-striker

Law 41.16 – running out the non-striker – has been moved from Law 41 (Unfair play) to Law 38 (Run out). The wording of the Law remains the same. In the Southern Premier Lge a warning is required before running a batter out in this way. Please look at MCC guidance. A run out can be attempted at any time from the start of the bowler's run up (as the ball becomes live) until the moment when the bowler would have been expected to release the ball. This is interpreted as the highest point in the bowler's delivery swing.

e. Law 41.3 – No saliva

When cricket resumed following the onset of Covid-19 playing conditions were written in most forms of the game stating that applying saliva to the ball was no longer permitted. MCC's research found that this had little or no impact on the amount of swing the bowlers were getting. Players were using sweat to polish the ball, and this was equally effective.

The new Laws will not permit the use of saliva on the ball, which also removes any grey areas of fielders eating sugary sweets to alter their saliva to apply to the ball. Using saliva will be treated the same way as any other unfair methods of changing the condition of the ball.

f. Law 21.4 – Bowler throwing towards the striker's end before delivery

The old Law permitted a bowler who sees the striker advancing down the pitch, before the bowler had entered his/her delivery stride, to throw the ball to attempt to run the batter out.

This has caused lots of confusion between whether the bowler is using an illegal action or just attempting a run out.

It is also worth noting that this was extremely rarely, if ever, actually seen in any form of cricket.

Law change provides clarity in these cases. The Law now states that if a bowler throws the ball towards the striker's end before entering his/her delivery stride, it will now be Dead ball under Law 20.4.2.9