

Northern Ireland Association of Cricket Umpires and Scorers

Founded 1949

Chairman: Gary Blair

President: Harry McCammon

Hon. Secretary: Simon Burrowes

25th January 2021

TO: ALL MEMBERS

Colleagues,

I hope this finds you safe and well.

The Executive of the Association met on Thursday of last week and we wanted to update you on our thoughts and where we are for the 2021 season.

Open Meetings

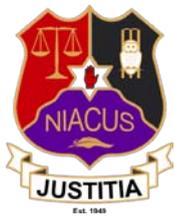
Given the lockdown restrictions imposed from Boxing Day and which are now extended until March (subject to review), it is clear to the Executive that having open meetings during the early part of 2021 will not be possible. We are working on a programme of events which will be conducted over Zoom and will keep you posted. It is unfortunate that this is the case but we have little alternative. We like members to contact either myself, Simon or indeed any member of the Executive with any thoughts or ideas you may have for topics that you would like to be covered at those events. As I have said on many occasions, this is your Association, so help us to make it work for you and vice versa!

Season 2021

The NCU are working hard to plan for season 2021 but, as you can imagine, with the uncertainty over lockdown and when (and how) that may be lifted, it is difficult. At the time of writing, we understand there are three scenarios being considered which include a full season with the T20 competitions run exclusively at the front end of the season and the 50 over competitions (including the Challenge and Junior cups) following later in the season. There is also a scenario where the competition format and regulations will be as last year, but it is hoped that that is very much a last resort.

It is therefore hard to advise on playing regulations and byelaws at the moment, but we would encourage all members to start thinking cricket. There have been no changes to the laws of the game since we last stood so re-familiarising ourselves with those over the coming weeks and months will do no harm along with the regulations as they stand, both for 2019 and 2020. As pubs, restaurants, cinemas and museums among other outlets of entertainment are shut, that re-familiarisation will help focus our minds as we head into the later part of the darkest winter we can remember.

It is intended that one of the Zoom calls coming later in the year will be on match preparation to help us establish good practice in the lead up to a match day, so those of us who have cheat notes for this should get them dusted down and start thinking about them.



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As always, knowledge share and best practice tips that can be shared are always welcome.

Green Card

It is hard to imagine at this point inter-regional club cricket being played in 2021, but it will be played again at some stage. For those of our membership who do stand in “across the border”, whether on the IACUS panels or via an exchange, you will need a Green Card for travel into the EU. If you have not already done so, please contact your car insurance provider to obtain one. This is not solely cricket related, of course, but it is required for all travel whether business or pleasure as a result of Brexit. At least it is something not Covid-19 related!

Covid-19

It remains unclear what regulations and restrictions the Northern Ireland Executive will require to be followed during the coming season. It is highly probable that there will still be restrictions regarding use of premises and changing facilities. Social distancing and hygiene will undoubtedly remain a priority. Testing is also being considered as a requirement by the Public Health Agency. Sharing of transport will probably be prohibited and will probably be policed more rigidly than last season in some areas. We will update everyone nearer the start of the season.

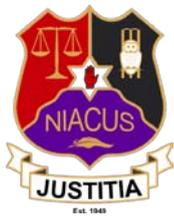
In the meantime, any umpire who is offered vaccination is advised to accept willingly where appropriate. The vaccination card should be safely retained as it is likely that such proof will be a requirement in many circumstances. We hope everyone keeps safe and that we can adapt to deliver a successful season under whatever restrictions are in place.

Observer & Tutor Training

You will have received communication last week regarding an information evening this Thursday (28 January) for any member who wishes to get involved in observations or tutoring in the future. If you are interested, we would ask that you confirm your interest to Mark Hawthorne no later than Wednesday to enable invites to be sent out

ECB ACO Membership Renewal

As always, regardless of the Covid-19 pandemic, when we stand, it is a prerequisite of the Association that we must carry insurance. ECB ACO membership is up for renewal on the 1st January and you no doubt will have received a letter from them to that effect. It would be helpful if you could confirm to Simon once you have renewed so that we can update our records and ensure that your name can be considered for appointments.



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Access NI

A large number of members have been identified as having their Access NI (Child Protection) certification expire prior to or during season 2021. Again, it is a prerequisite of being appointed to any match that you have an up to date Access NI clearance certificate. Simon has written to all those concerned we would encourage you to initiate your renewal ASAP to avoid any last minute panic once the season starts. Remember, no certificate means that you can't be appointed to stand.

In closing, we intend to stay in regular contact over the coming weeks as things become clearer. Last year we got feedback that the Q&A document that was circulated was very helpful and hope to that again. So, if you have any questions, queries or concerns, please feel free to contact me or indeed any member of the Association.

Finally, we are aware of a number of colleagues who have been affected by Covid-19 over the recent weeks and months. The Executive Committee wish to record and express their sincere condolence to all members, their kith and kin and those in the wider cricket community who have suffered bereavement since the end of last season. Similarly, the Executive wished to record and express its best wishes to those who have suffered as a result of the public health situation.

Please, Stay Safe.

Gary

For and on behalf of the Executive Committee of NIACUS