

Safety Measures for Helmets within Recreational Cricket

The ECB has recently announced new helmet safety measures, which are being introduced with a view to reducing the risk of head and facial injuries within the game. The purpose of this brief note is to assist Leagues and Clubs at the recreational level to understand the key elements of these changes and what they mean.

Players over the age of 18

The ECB strongly recommends that all adult recreational cricketers should wear helmets for certain activities, preferably which meet the most recent British Safety Standard (see below). This recommendation applies to batting against all types of bowling, wicket-keepers standing up to the wicket (who may as an alternative wear face protectors) and fielders fielding closer than eight yards from the batsman's middle stump, except behind the wicket on the off side.

Under 18s

The position in relation to Under 18s currently remains unchanged, and is governed by the 'ECB Guidance on the Wearing of Cricket Helmets by Young Players' (www.ecb.co.uk/youngplayershelmetguidance). In essence, batsmen and wicket-keepers standing up to the stumps must wear head protection when playing or practising. That Guidance should be referred to in full for the position in relation to Under 18s.

British Safety Standard

The latest British Safety Standard is BS7928:2013 (for both adults and juniors). The full list of helmets meeting this standard is available at www.ecb.co.uk/helmets. For wicket-keeping face protectors the relevant British Safety Standard is BS7929-2:2009 (again, for both adults and juniors).

The ECB understands that there is currently no specific women's helmet and as a consequence no specific standard for women's cricket helmets. As the size of the standard women's cricket ball is between the standard men and junior balls, it is recommended that women use helmets that have been tested against both the men's and junior sized ball, or at least against the junior size ball (as that could potentially get through the gap above the face guard on a men's helmet).

What do Leagues and Clubs need to do?

Whilst it is strongly recommended that all adult recreational cricketers wear helmets in the on-field circumstances detailed above, it is not mandatory for them to do so. For the avoidance of doubt, Leagues or Clubs do not need to go above and beyond the ECB's recommendation by forcing their cricketers to wear helmets.

However, Leagues and Clubs in recreational cricket should ensure that their cricketers are made aware of the ECB's above recommendation in relation to helmets, including the need to check that any newly purchased helmets meet the latest British Safety Standard. The ECB recommends that Leagues and Clubs bring the link above i.e. (www.ecb.co.uk/helmets) to the attention of their cricketers and encourage all cricketers to carefully consider their own health and safety regarding helmet use.

Leagues and Clubs should always ensure that they have adequate public liability insurance.