

## Chuckling in Calgary: Lessons from the C&DCL Final

=====

This summer's Calgary & District Cricket League (C&DCL) elite final sparked heated debate. A bowler who had gone through the entire season without incident was suddenly called for chucking in the final match.

Players and the wider cricket community were left wondering: how can someone be fine all summer, only to be pulled up in the championship game?

When I spoke with C&DCL president Sabeel, his response was clear: "It is up to the umpire to take that call." That is true under the Laws of Cricket — on-field umpires are empowered to call illegal actions. But then the question arises: why did only one umpire show that judgment, while others in Calgary did not flag it throughout the season?

This inconsistency has fueled allegations of favoritism, bias, even match-fixing. The problem isn't just about one bowler or one final — it's about the lack of alignment in enforcement.

The ICC's rule on illegal bowling actions is clear: an elbow can't extend more than 15 degrees during delivery. At the elite level, bowlers are referred to ICC-accredited biomechanics labs in the UK, Asia, Africa, or Australia for 3D testing. Fail the test and you're suspended until you remodel your action.

But in Canada, that infrastructure simply doesn't exist. No ICC labs are based here. Sending community players abroad for testing is unrealistic, and while ICC allows "expert panel" reviews, the costs fall on local boards. In an amateur environment like C&DCL, that's a steep burden.

So what's the solution? Canada needs a tiered approach:

On-field enforcement. Umpires must apply the Laws consistently during the season, not just in finals. Calling No balls early prevents controversy later.

Local screening. Partner with universities or sports science labs for video or motion analysis clinics. Not ICC-accredited, but enough to give players feedback and time to adjust.

Coach-led remediation. Give reported bowlers structured chances to correct their action before high-stakes matches.

The Calgary controversy shows why we can't just copy the ICC's system. Canadian cricket needs processes that are aligned but realistic — fair enforcement on the field, affordable screening off it, and clear communication across the season. Only then will players and fans trust that finals are decided by skill, not by sudden interpretations.