



MIDDLESEX DEVELOPMENT LEAGUE (MDL): FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)

Q. What is the Middlesex Development League (“The MDL”)?

A. Setup by Middlesex Cricket in 2012, The MDL exists to assist clubs in the retention & development of younger players. Namely: to bridge the gap between age group and open age cricket; provide an additional platform for players to express their ability in a longer format; integrate players into an adult environment effectively.

Q. How many teams enter The MDL?

In 2017, 32 teams competed and we’ve a number of new entries confirmed for 2018.

Q. How does a club become eligible to enter?

A. Entry is open to any club that is affiliated to Middlesex Cricket and holds, or is actively working towards, ECB Clubmark accreditation. Email james.lark@middlesexccc.com to confirm your entry, including the following contact details: Lead Contact; Team Coach/Manager; Fixture Secretary.

Q. Is there an entry deadline?

A. Yes, all new entries for The MDL must be confirmed by 30th November.

Q. When do Development League matches take place?

A. On Sundays, once school/college/university exams are out the way. The first MDL 7 Group stage matches are scheduled to take place on Sunday 24th June 2018 (1.30pm start).

Q. What is the make-up of a team?

A. A minimum 7 (resident) players must be Under 21 or below. The other four are not age-restricted.

Q. Are overseas players eligible to play?

A. A maximum of one registered “overseas” player is currently eligible to play in The MDL (however, Batting and Bowling Restrictions apply – see below). If an overseas player is selected, he must be done so instead of an over 21, even if an Under 21 himself. County-contracted players are ineligible.

Q. If we don’t have enough U16-U21 players, can we field a combined XI with another club?

A. Yes. Please contact us to discuss further, and we will advise on potential partners.

Q. How much does it cost to enter?

A. In 2017, the entry fee was set at £39. This is expected to remain the same for MDL 7.

Q. What clothing do players wear?

A. All players must wear a minimum of a coloured shirt (not pink, red or white), ideally with coloured trousers, too (though these are not mandatory). This has proven very popular with young players.

Q. What other equipment is required?

A. Matches are played with a pink Tiflex ball (supplied at best prices). **Note:** black sightscreens are NOT required.

Q. What is the points system in the Group Stage?

A. Win, 10pts; Tie, 5pts; Winning Draw, 4pts; Losing Draw, 1pt; Loss, 0pts. Abandoned games score 1pt.

Q. How are Groups allocated?

A. Groups are allocated primarily on geographic proximity to one another, to minimise travelling time. However, a club’s expected playing standard can also be taken into account.



Q. What is the format of cricket?

A. Age group cricket such as that organised by the MCA is all 20 overs. This competition seeks to expose young players to a longer form of the game than what they may be used to. In the Group Stage, matches last 80 overs, with the first innings replicating the MCCL principle of batting a maximum 55% of the overs available (44 overs).

In the Knockout Phase (Quarter-finals onwards), teams play full limited overs format (40 overs each).

Q. Why is the Group Stage match format “declaration” cricket?

A. To replicate both formats of Saturday league cricket: to educate young players not only in how to construct an innings/bowl in a similar fashion to that required on Saturdays; but also to encourage tactical awareness so that teams can maximise their performance on any given day (see **points system**).

Additionally, other purely overs-based Sunday leagues have often suffered with the quality of the matchday experience when one side is stronger than the other, since the game is effectively over at halfway: this competition retains the principal challenge of taking 10 wickets to win the game when bowling second.

The Knockout Phase provides experience of overs cricket.

Q. Batting and Bowling restrictions

A. The competition’s first principle is the development of young players. Therefore, restrictions are placed on the involvement of the overseas and over 21 players. For example, only two batsmen from the maximum of four Over 21s/Overseas player may bat in the top six.

Equally, ECB Fast Bowling directives apply to protect young players from injury. The maximum overs per spell and per day for each age group are given in the following table:

Age / Max. Overs	Per spell	Per day
Up to U13	5	10
U14 – U15	6	12
U16 – U19	7	18
U20 – U21	7	18
Overseas/Over 21	5	5

For the purpose of these Directives, a fast bowler is defined as a bowler to whom a wicketkeeper in the same age group would in normal circumstances stand back to take the ball. In the Knockout Phase, all U21s are limited to bowling a maximum 8 overs in the game.

Q. With only 6 league matches, what happens if matches are rained off?

A. Clubs are permitted to re-arrange Abandoned/Cancelled fixtures on a midweek day, provided they are completed a minimum of 3 days before the end of the Group Stage.

Q. Do we need to provide officials?

A. Yes. Clubs provide a non-playing Scorer for all matches, plus a non-playing umpire for Home games. It is also the home team’s responsibility to upload the full scorecard to play-cricket. A panel umpire is provided by Middlesex ACO. Umpire assessors sometimes attend to mentor panel umpires.

Q. How does the The MDL view ‘the spirit of the game’?

A. The ECB National Playing Survey has been answered by more than 50,000 individuals since 2013. The ‘Spirit of the Game’ is identified by players as the most important game day factor that contributes to a great game of cricket. The major responsibility for ensuring the spirit of fair play rests with the captains. Umpires are present to assist with upholding this principle.