

Dealing with Suspect Bowling Actions

1. Introduction

- a. The laws of cricket state (law 24.2) “for a delivery to be fair in respect of the arm the ball must not be thrown”.
- b. The law defines a fair delivery in respect of the arm. It states that, once the arm has reached the level of the shoulder in the delivery action, the arm must not be straightened at the elbow joint until the ball has left the hand.

2. Suspect bowling action

- 2.1. If there are two non-playing umpires the following shall apply:

If the umpires consider that a bowler’s bowling action is suspect, i.e. something in the delivery action raises doubts about whether the arm has been bent and then straightened, the following procedure is to be followed:

- a. The umpires shall discuss the bowler’s action with the captain of the fielding side and establish whether the action has been questioned in any previous match.
- b. If there has been a previous occurrence of the action being questioned and the matter has been reported to the League then, unless the club is able to confirm that the bowling action has been checked and cleared, the umpires shall instruct the captain to suspend the bowler and not allow him to bowl again in the match. If an over is partly complete it shall be completed by another player.
- c. If there has not been a previous occurrence or the matter has not been referred to the League then the umpires shall inform the captain that the bowler will be reported to the League. The bowler shall not be prevented from bowling unless the umpires together are certain that the action is illegal. If they are certain then the captain shall be instructed to suspend the bowler and not allow him to bowl again in the match. If an over is partly complete it shall be completed by another player.
- d. In the case of (b) or(c) above the umpires shall submit a disciplinary report to the League after the match in accordance with the League’s Disciplinary Regulations.

- 2.2. If there is only one non-playing umpire the following shall apply:

If the umpire considers that a bowler’s bowling action is suspect, i.e. something in the delivery action raises doubts about whether the arm has been bent and then straightened, he shall discuss the matter with the captain of the fielding side and inform him that he will be submitting a report. He shall follow the procedures outlined in the League’s Disciplinary Regulations. No further action shall be taken during the match and, unless the captain of the fielding side agrees otherwise, the bowler shall be permitted to continue to bowl. In particular both sides are expected to meet the standards of behaviour set out in the Spirit of Cricket and in clause 4 below.

- 2.3. If there are no non-playing umpires the following shall apply:

In the event of a concern by a member of the batting side concerning the bowler’s bowling action he shall inform his captain. If the captain agrees that the action is suspect then he shall approach the captain of the fielding side. Any such approach should be made only at the end of an over and under no circumstances whilst the ball is in play. The two captains shall discuss the matter and if the captain of the batting side considers that the bowling action is suspect he shall inform the captain of the bowling side that he will be submitting a report. He shall follow the procedures outlined in the League’s Disciplinary Regulations. No further action shall be taken during the match and, unless the captain of the fielding side agrees otherwise, the bowler shall be permitted to continue to bowl. In particular both sides are expected to

meet the standards of behaviour set out in the Spirit of Cricket and apply the standards set out in 4 below.

- 2.4. When a bowler has been reported to the League under the guidelines in 2.2 or 2.3 he shall be permitted to continue to bowl in League cricket. However, if the League receives a further report concerning the same bowler then until the League has approved the bowling action or interim consent has been given to continue to bowl he shall not be permitted to bowl in League cricket.

3. Illegal bowling action

There may be occasions when it is obvious that a delivery has been thrown and not bowled. If it is clear to the umpires beyond reasonable doubt that a delivery has been bowled that does not conform to the laws then they shall apply the provisions of Law 24, by calling No Ball and applying the following procedures:

- a. On the first occurrence the bowler is to be cautioned and his captain, the batsmen at the wicket and the other umpire informed.
- b. On a second occurrence the bowler is to be given a final warning and his captain, the batsmen at the wicket and the other umpire informed.
- c. If there is a third occurrence the umpires shall instruct the captain to suspend the bowler; the batsmen at the wicket shall be informed and the captain of the batting side as soon as possible. The bowler is to be reported as stated in 4 above.

4. Duty of Care – Young Players

If the player concerned is Under-18 the umpires and both captains are reminded of the guidelines concerning child welfare. In particular both captains are to ensure that an appropriate environment is maintained that avoids any threats, accusations, emotional or other pressure on or off the field of play for the duration of the match. Failure to meet these standards is reportable and will result in disciplinary action against the captain of the team concerned.

5. Duty to inform

If any player in a team has been reported under clause 2 the captain shall inform the umpires and the opposing captain of the relevant details prior to the start of the match.

6. Procedure by the League

- a. Upon receipt of a written report alleging a player has a suspect bowling action the Disciplinary Chairman shall follow the procedure set out in clause 5.3 of the Disciplinary Regulations.
- b. The club concerned shall be required to arrange for the player’s bowling action to be checked by a level 2 (or higher) coach, unconnected with the club.
- c. If only one report has been received then he shall be permitted to continue to bowl unless and until his action is found to be illegal. However, if the League receives any further reports concerning that player’s bowling action then the Disciplinary Secretary shall instruct the club not to permit the player to bowl in any match until his action has been cleared.
- d. In the event that a club permits any player to bowl when he has been banned by the League then the club shall be considered to have played an ineligible player.
- e. All such reports and investigations shall be published on the League’s website.