

## **Changes to the Laws of Cricket – An Australian View**

I am not aware of any problems caused by the changes to the Laws

The changes that seemed to impact most on matches in Sydney Grade competition were Laws 3.8/3.9 and Law 17

In 3.8/3.9 the Law was altered so that the umpires only suspend play when they consider the ground, weather or light to be unreasonable or dangerous - no longer are the umpires the final judges of the fitness of the ground, weather or light for play - they are the sole judges

One of the major changes in applying this Law is that the umpires no longer offer the light to the batting side as MCC felt previously the decision to stay on or come off the field was often made on tactical grounds based on what best suited the batting side rather than for safety or visibility

So in 2010/11 in bad light (as with ground and weather) the umpires suspended play only when they considered it to be unreasonable or dangerous - the previous term of "unsuitable" has been removed from our thinking and in the way we apply the Law

Law 17.3 (b) (ii) certainly had players, umpires, administrators and club members talking prior to the season so the SCA altered it to read:

"Between the call of Play and the call of Time if a bowler deliberately bowls the ball into the ground it shall not be considered that the condition of the ball has been changed by an isolated instance. Umpires will inform the Captain that such actions are no longer allowed and that Law 42.9 (Time Wasting) could be implemented if the bowler persists with deliberately bowling the ball into the ground."

The SCA felt that strictly applying Law 42.3, as required under Law 17.3 (b) (ii), could have caused problems in matches (and I think they made a good decision!)

Having the umpires on the field for the toss of the coin and exchange of team lists has worked well in my opinion - the SCA varied Law 12.4 slightly to say that both umpires needed to be present for the toss and the toss must take place in SCA matches on the field of play 30 minutes before the scheduled starting time - proved to be a good opportunity for the umpires and captains to meet and greet and for the captains to clarify any playing condition questions they may have had - has caused a change in routine for the umpires pre-match, but the change has been a very good one in establishing lines of communication between captains and umpires before the match

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