

**Thank you to those** who responded to our end of season consultation. All but two of the twenty three clubs who played in the leagues last summer provided their feedback.

**Almost all clubs agreed** that the start time of the competition and amount of fixtures were appropriate although a substantial minority did voice their view that the season finished too late. While The League accepts that this may be an issue for some, one of the original objectives of the competition was to provide organised games in the school summer holidays and, with this in mind, no change is proposed for 2018. Some clubs address this concern by completing their programme early to avoid having to raise sides for the few games (often as little as two) scheduled during the school break.

**The participation of county players** in league fixtures has always been one of the most controversial subjects and the rules regarding this have been modified over the years. Opinions regarding their use inevitably brought subjective responses but of the twenty replies, sixteen voted either to retain the current system (13) or to banish county players altogether (3). Two clubs believed that there should be no restrictions and two others suggested options where boys would be allowed to play above their age group. Again, no changes are intended to these rules next summer.

**Evidence and feedback highlighted the greater number of no result games** this year almost entirely owing to clubs being unable to raise sides. This is an increasing worry across all youth leagues and although the SNCL fared reasonably well with 71% games completed against the Alliance (64%) and West Norfolk (66%), almost one in three fixtures lost represents huge inroads into the already limited amount of games offered to our youth cricketers. When asked whether defaulting teams should be penalised, ten clubs felt that no result games were inevitable and should therefore be tolerated, five expressed that penalties should only be levied in extreme cases and at the discretion of The League with six favouring automatic punishment in all cases.

**The proposal to schedule all U13 fixtures on Sunday mornings** certainly provoked a vigorous response. It is well known that the SNCL considers the haphazard and chaotic approach to fixture arrangement provides a huge amount of additional work regarding timetabling and also impacts on player availability. All other youth sports generally schedule their programmes on regular days of the week and we believe cricket should do the same with the generally higher proportion of completed games in the U11 Sunday League supporting this. Sixteen clubs provided their opinion of this proposal with eleven voting in favour and five against. The SNCL believes that youth cricket should be played every Sunday throughout the season and with careful organisation all games; U9 (both Alliance & SNCL), U11 & U13 SNCL fixtures could be accommodated with rain affected matches simply considered no results.

**The U17 League continues to provide its own unique challenges** and this season was no different. Despite constant tinkering initiated democratically by the clubs themselves, no format has proved particularly successful. There was certainly no clear consensus this year with clubs equally split between regional leagues with a winner's day, larger leagues or no preference. Whatever happens next year, some clubs need to be slightly more proactive in their approach to fixture arrangement.

**An overwhelming number of clubs indicated a rise** in their youth membership last summer although this was not mirrored by their comments regarding the future of junior cricket. Here only a third felt they had sufficient numbers of members and/or coaches to adequately manage their development opportunities. At senior level the positive response was marginally higher but it is clear that for many getting sides out every weekend is becoming an increasing challenge.

### Proposals for 2018

- No changes will be made to the competition format, county player rules, or penalties for no result games.
- The League will investigate and may canvass further regarding the introduction of an U13 Sunday only league.
- The U17 competition will run as regional leagues with or without a winners' day depending on the number of entries.