

## **Selection and squad policy**

**Revised March 2021**

Given our size, Spencer generally is competitive at all age groups and occasionally can dominate. With the advent of the county wide SJIL, it is likely that all levels will be more competitive than the previous regional leagues.

Whilst we want to compete and win our share, we also have a focus in inclusivity and participation that requires team and squad selections to balance. We also follow ECB guidance.

To the criticism that Spencer leverages its size in order to win, we respond that whilst we have a healthy appreciation for competition and progression, our size does not just mean we are capable of matching the best, it also means we have far more average and poor players than any other club and we provide them with chances denied elsewhere.

Neither do we admit members based on restrictive or ability-based selection criteria nor do we deliberately recruit good players from other junior clubs.

### **SJIL**

Previously in entering teams into both the NEC and MSL leagues we promoted the concept of double A squads rather than A+ and A-. This supported ECB policy:

Junior club cricket is an opportunity for players of differing levels to play together to jointly progress. Lesser players benefit from playing alongside better, whilst the better and best players also benefit from added personal responsibility, learning the merits of team play and leadership. Realistically this means that in a team of 11 of the best players, how many get to be engaged every match, with often 4 or 5 or more players bowling and batting less than in another team where they may be one of the better players themselves? For the same reason we recommend that absence on County or London Schools duty, provides an opportunity for others to step up.

We also understand there are parental and peer pressures and the initial seasons of the SJIL will need flexibility to ensure we get the balance right and there are always crucial matches that require a unique approach.

What is certain is that the most successful age groups, in terms of overall member satisfaction, consistency of membership and progression into Youth and Adult cricket are generally not those who prioritise winning at U9 or U10 above all else, despite the understandable pressures to do so.

### **Age Groups**

1. As stated in our constitution and in the junior AGM manual, all members should have equal opportunities to train and play
2. We do not permit players to play in older age groups other than exceptional circumstances:
  - a) Players playing up years tend to struggle socially and tend to end up moving back down causing disruption to both groups
  - b) Players playing up are denying opportunities to those in older age groups and weakening their own age group.

- c) Advice from Surrey & ECB is that Performance cricket and School cricket provides the correct opportunity for players to play above their age group. They believe it is firmly in the players own interests to also have cricketing opportunities where they can learn to excel and lead.

3. We do not permit Girls to play in Boys age groups:

- a) We are of a size where no girl is missing out on cricket and currently girls benefit from accelerated pathways that can see them playing Academy and Adult cricket at a much earlier age than boys.
- b) ECB / Surrey policy is to focus girls on their own leagues and competitions and are phasing out the ability of girls to enter teams into lower age group boys leagues.
- c) Picking a girl in a boys team will deny an opportunity to a boy that otherwise they would have.
- d) The best girls playing alongside their peers also has all the benefits listed above and is advised by ECB / surrey.

### **Selection in Academy and Adult teams**

Other than below, in all cases, selection of junior members for Academy and Adult teams is subject to the criteria of those sections. Any selection should be with the approval of the relevant Age Group Manager. The Club actively desists exceptions being made for individuals – our size mandates a requirement to be fair and open to all.

The exception to the above is where Surrey Performance coaches recommend appropriate Club selection for members who are part of their squads. e.g. a recommendation that a certain junior member be selected to open the batting for the adult 3<sup>rd</sup> team as part of their development.

### **Fair Play**

In all circumstances, all players are expected to abide by and by their actions promote the spirit of cricket as defined by MCC in the preamble to the Laws of the Game:

- Cricket owes much of its appeal and enjoyment to the fact that it should be played not only according to the Laws, but also within the Spirit of Cricket. The major responsibility for ensuring fair play rests with the captains, but extends to all players, match officials and, especially in junior cricket, teachers, coaches and parents.
- Respect is central to the Spirit of Cricket.
- Respect your captain, team-mates, opponents and the authority of the umpires.
- Play hard and play fair.
- Accept the umpire's decision.
- Create a positive atmosphere by your own conduct and encourage others to do likewise.
- Show self-discipline, even when things go against you.
- Congratulate the opposition on their successes and enjoy those of your own team.
- Thank the officials and your opposition at the end of the match, whatever the result.
- Cricket is an exciting game that encourages leadership, friendship and teamwork, which brings together people from different nationalities, cultures and religions, especially when played within the Spirit of Cricket.