

## The International Cricket Council bowls a googly at Twenty20 cricket.

---

Friday, March 16, 2018

The International Cricket Council (“**ICC**”) has recently [reported](#) that it is considering a number of radical proposals to address the growing prominence of Twenty20 (“**T20**”) cricket after criticism that it is diminishing the primacy of internationals, especially test cricket.

Short-form tournaments, such as T20s, are growing in popularity with [some players](#) opting to compete only in lucrative T20 tournaments and leagues instead of the longer version of the game.

This has plagued international test cricket more recently but has been an issue for some countries such as the West Indies for a decade. Trevor Bayliss, the England coach, has [urged](#) for international T20 matches to end to alleviate the demanding cricket calendar.

This article considers the problems posed by T20 cricket and the proposals suggested by the ICC, which meets in Kolkata next month to discuss the issue.

### T20s, ODIs and Tests

ICC’s Classification of Official Cricket recognises three formats of official cricket – T20, One Day Internationals (“**ODIs**”) and test cricket.

Having reviewed the ICC’s Regulations (2017) on the playing conditions for each format, the following summary may explain the differences on a basic level.

1. T20 – article 13.6 of the ICC’s Men’s T20 Playing Conditions provides that the duration of a T20 match is one innings per side, limited to a maximum of 20 overs. Matches are played over a single day.
2. ODIs – article 13.6 of the ICC’s Men’s ODI Playing Conditions provides that all ODI matches shall consist of one innings per side, limited to a maximum of 50 overs per innings. Matches are played over a single day with a reserve day scheduled for play to be replayed or continued if necessary.
3. Test – article 13.6 of the ICC’s Men’s Test Match Playing Conditions provides that matches shall last five days whilst article 12.7.1.1 provides that (apart from the last day) play shall consist of a minimum of 90 overs.

### Twenty 20 cricket:

The issue stems from the introduction of T20 cricket, which is growing in popularity – by fans and players alike – at the expense of the more traditional test cricket.

The first official T20 matches took place between English counties in the Twenty20 Cup in 2003. It is a shorter more fast-paced game, which has steadily grown in popularity. It has also garnered popularity from players who seem to receive greater remuneration from these competitions.

The West Indies international test board has raised grievances with T20 cricket for over a decade after a number of its international players opted to compete in T20 competitions instead of international test cricket. The frustration of international boards is swelling and the ICC ought to consider proposals to resolve this conflict

SQUIRE   
PATTON BOGGS

Article By  
[Sports & Entertainment - Squire Patton Boggs](#)  
[Squire Patton Boggs \(US\) LLP](#)  
[Sports Shorts-Entertainment, Art & Sports](#)  
[Global](#)  
[United Kingdom](#)

before a fracture is created between test and T20 cricket.

## Disadvantages of T20s

Many critics of the T20 leagues claim that the short-form version of the game is a hindrance to player development. Michael Holding [suggests](#):

*“you can’t learn the basic technique you need for Test cricket from playing Twenty20”*

and is concerned that the attraction of T20 will pose a threat to player development:

*“if I’m a young man growing up today and you are going to pay me \$800,000 for six weeks work, I am gone. I’m certainly not going to spend time in the nets busting a gut improving my technique to play Test cricket.”*

Former Australian captain [Ricky Ponting](#) believes that T20 is detrimental to a batsman’s scoring skills and concentration whilst his fellow countryman [Greg Chappell](#) has complained that younger players focusing on T20 will not develop their batting skills fully.

Another issue is that the money that is spent on training cricketers by international boards is potentially squandered when the same cricketer stops playing international test matches, focusing on T20 competitions instead. The West Indies [estimates](#) that it invests \$1,000,000 per junior cricketer who reaches international level. This investment is wasted if the player opts to focus on T20 competitions rather than represent their country.

## Advantages of T20s

Other commentators believe that T20 format should be applauded for the money and attention it has brought to a sport that was in desperate need of it.

The money available in T20 cricket is much more lucrative and attractive to cricketers. The Rajasthan Royals paid almost £1,400,000 in an Indian Premier League (“**IPL**”) auction to attain the services of Ben Stokes. Players are able to earn a greater living through T20 cricket. Sir Garfield Sobers states:

*“a lot of [West Indies players] come from very humble backgrounds. The IPL is an opportunity for them to make money so they can help their families”.*

Whilst he does not support the growing prominence of T20 cricket, when you consider it from this perspective, he says *“you can’t really blame them.”* Indeed, Chris Woakes secured an £820,000 deal in the IPL auction whilst Joe Buttler fetched around £488,000.

Others argue that T20 cricket has led to innovations in the sport. Indian fitness coach Ramji Srinivasan believes that T20 has [“raised the bar”](#) in terms of the fitness, strength, speed and agility of its players especially in the field. Michael Holding agrees that the 50-over short-form format does improve a cricketer’s athleticism, stroke play and pursuit of a target but he believes that the 50-over cricketers who came from Test cricket were able to adapt to both styles of play whereas those cricketers who were mainly 50-over players, citing Michael Bevan as an example, could not survive in Test cricket despite being outstanding in the shorter version of the game. This infers that test cricket is regarded amongst professionals as a stronger foundation for cricket players.

## The ICC’s proposals:

The ICC will consider the following recommendations on the possible future landscape of T20 competitions:

- Restricting players under 32 to three domestic T20 leagues per year;
- Regional T20 windows that leave six months of the year clear for international cricket from 2023 onwards;
- All leagues to pay 20% of a player’s contract value to their home board as mandatory compensation;
- Capping the number of overseas players in each domestic league; and
- Standardised conditions that guarantee player welfare and payment.

These recommendations could resolve the issues surrounding T20 cricket.

- A 20% compensation scheme could appease international cricket boards such as the West Indies in instances where it has invested money in developing its junior cricketers who opt to play in T20 competitions elsewhere. This will feed the money back into Test cricket.
- Introducing regional windows will help alleviate the heavy schedule imposed on cricketers who juggle T20 competitions and Test cricket matches.
- Capping the number of overseas players will ensure that homegrown players are still afforded opportunities in their home country to play domestic cricket whilst limiting the number of overseas

cricketers who would otherwise pursue the opportunity of T20 competitions.

This action by the ICC is welcome but must be carefully considered to balance the interests of the game, international boards, the players and fans. There are likely many more overs yet to be played in this chapter.

© Copyright 2019 Squire Patton Boggs (US) LLP

**Source URL:** <https://www.natlawreview.com/article/international-cricket-council-bowls-googly-twenty20-cricket>