

OFFICIAL TOURNAMENT RULES



# Willow Cricket League 2026 Rule Book

T15 match format, player eligibility, points, playoffs, umpiring, conduct, and playing conditions for WCL 2026.

**League:** Willow Cricket League (WCL)

**Contact:** [support@willowcricketleague.org](mailto:support@willowcricketleague.org)

**Format:** T15, 10-player playing team, 9 fielders on the ground

# Contents

Use the section list below to jump directly to that section. Page numbers are generated from the final layout.

1 Rules and Regulations	3
2 Spirit of the Match	3
3 Terminology	3
4 Tournament Format	4
5 Playoff Structure	4
6 Team Registration	6
7 Equipment	6
8 Clothing and Shoes	6
9 Season Schedule	6
10 Team Roster	6
11 Player Eligibility for Playoffs	7
12 Match Format and Overs	7
13 Points, Ranking and Net Run Rate	8
14 Match Results, Rain-Affected Games and DLS	9
15 Start Time and Duration	10
16 Umpiring	10
17 Toss and Team Readiness	10
18 Delayed Start and Slow Over Rate	11
19 Bad Light and Unsafe Conditions	11
20 Playing Surfaces	11
21 Field Setup	12
22 Cricket Rules	12
23 Boundaries and Catches	15
24 Substitute Players	15
25 Retiring	15
26 Runner / By-Runner	15
27 Misconduct Warning	15
28 Against the Spirit of the Match	16
29 After the Match	16
30 Scoresheets and Match Reports	16
31 Protests and Complaints	16
32 Awards and Trophies	16
33 Disclaimer	17
34 Appendix A - Crease Markings	17
35 Appendix B - Umpire Preparation and Summary	18
36 Appendix C - WCL Ground Rules and Field Diagrams	20

## 1 Rules and Regulations

Willow Cricket League is responsible for formulating and governing all league and tournament rules, including specific circumstances or issues that arise during the season. WCL reserves the right to add, modify, or delete any rule or guideline during the season if deemed necessary to maintain the integrity of the league.

All changes made to the rules during the season will be communicated to participating teams. This document is broadly based on the International Cricket Council rules and adapted to WCL tournament requirements. Any cricketing rule not covered in this document will be processed according to ICC rules and guidelines, unless WCL communicates a specific league rule.

This WCL rule book has been prepared with reference to the Atlanta Cricket League rule framework and adapted for Willow Cricket League tournament requirements.

## 2 Spirit of the Match

**Cricket spirit:** Cricket must be played within the Laws and within the Spirit of the Match. Any action that abuses this spirit causes injury to the match itself and may result in disciplinary action.

**Mutual respect:** WCL expects all players, captains, umpires, organizers, and spectators to respect the rules, the code of conduct, opponents, teammates, match officials, and match results.

**Captain responsibility:** Captains are responsible for ensuring their teams play within the Spirit of the Match, within the Laws, and according to WCL rules. The captain is the primary point of accountability for team conduct and violations.

**Player responsibility:** Players are responsible for upholding the spirit of the match and the integrity of their teams. Individual violations may also count toward team violations.

**Umpire responsibility:** Umpires are responsible for upholding the spirit and integrity of the match. Umpires are expected to apply WCL rules consistently and fairly.

## 3 Terminology

Term	Meaning
WCL	Willow Cricket League.
Written complaint	An email sent to WCL at support@willowcricketleague.org.
Home team	The team responsible for field setup. During the toss, the home team captain calls the coin.
Visiting team	The team that may assist but is not primarily responsible for field setup. During the toss, the visiting team captain flips the coin.
Umpiring team	The team responsible for informing WCL of assigned umpires for upcoming matches by Thursday for weekend games, or two days before non-weekend games.
Umpire	An assigned umpire for the match who does not belong to either playing team.
Round robin / league stage	The stage where teams play scheduled matches to qualify for playoffs.
Playoffs	All knockout, qualifier, eliminator, semi final, final, or ranking-deciding matches after the league stage.
No result	A match that cannot produce an official result under WCL rules.
Wide guideline	A marked line extending 3 feet from the middle stump on either side. The wide line does not change if the batter moves. Refer to Appendix A.

Term	Meaning
Switch hit / reverse sweep	Altering the batting stance from right-handed to left-handed, or vice versa, or switching the grip of the bat to play the shot. For these shots, both sides are considered for wide-ball judgment.

## 4 Tournament Format

The WCL 2026 tournament is played as a T15 format unless WCL communicates a tournament-specific exception before the match.

<b>15 overs per side</b> League-stage matches are T15, with 90 legal balls per innings.	<b>10 players per playing team</b> Each team may name 10 players for the match. Only 9 fielders are allowed on the ground at any time.	<b>No-ball free hit</b> Any no-ball is followed by a free hit on the next legal delivery.
<b>Top 4 per group</b> The top 4 teams from each group advance to the playoffs after the league stage.	<b>2 points per win</b> Wins earn 2 points. Net run rate resolves equal-point ranking situations before further tie-breakers.	<b>Super Over for ties</b> All tied matches use a Super Over to determine a result.

**Playing team rule:** A team may name 10 players. The fielding side may have only 9 players on the ground at any point. The 10th player remains off the field and may rotate in with umpire awareness, provided the match is not delayed and all player eligibility rules are followed.

## 5 Playoff Structure

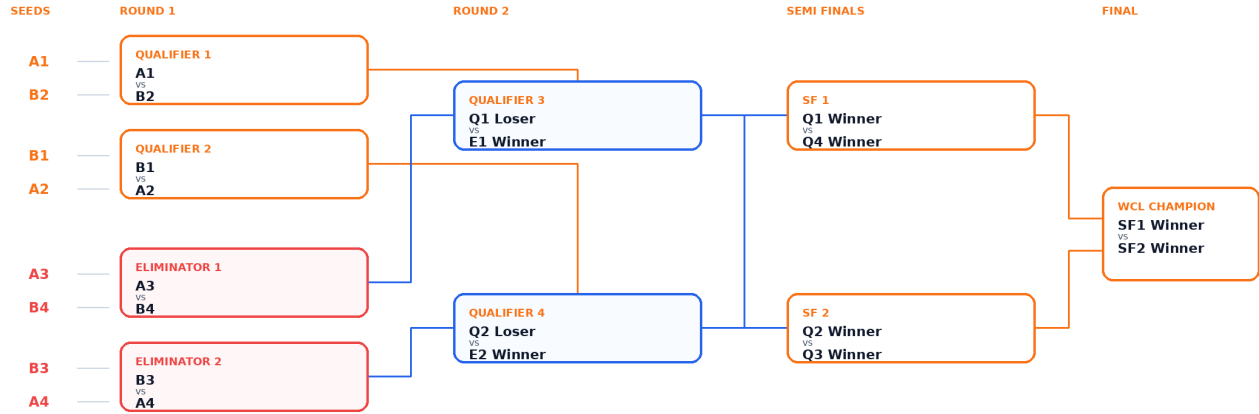
Top 4 teams from each group advance into cross-pool playoffs. Pool leaders face the other pool runners-up. Qualifier winners move directly to the semi finals, while qualifier losers receive a second opportunity against eliminator winners.

Round	Match	Participants	Advancement
Round 1	Qualifier 1	A1 vs B2	Winner advances to SF 1. Loser plays Qualifier 3.
Round 1	Qualifier 2	B1 vs A2	Winner advances to SF 2. Loser plays Qualifier 4.
Round 1	Eliminator 1	A3 vs B4	Winner advances to Qualifier 3. Loser is eliminated.
Round 1	Eliminator 2	B3 vs A4	Winner advances to Qualifier 4. Loser is eliminated.
Round 2	Qualifier 3	Q1 Loser vs E1 Winner	Winner advances to SF 2.
Round 2	Qualifier 4	Q2 Loser vs E2 Winner	Winner advances to SF 1.
Semi Finals	SF 1	Q1 Winner vs Q4 Winner	Winner advances to Final.
Semi Finals	SF 2	Q2 Winner vs Q3 Winner	Winner advances to Final.
Final	WCL Championship	SF1 Winner vs SF2 Winner	Winner is WCL 2026 Champion.

**Third-place match:** WCL may conduct a match between the losers of the semi-finals to determine 3rd position.

### Cross-Pool Playoff Bracket

Top 4 teams from each group advance. Pool leaders face the other pool's runners-up.



**How it works**

Qualifier 1 and 2 winners advance to Semi Finals. Qualifier losers face Eliminator winners in Round 2.

## 6 Team Registration

**Registration:** WCL organizes tournaments where teams may register to participate. Tournament fees, payment methods, deadlines, and related requirements will be communicated through official WCL announcements.

**Payment:** Payment must be made to Willow Cricket League using the approved payment method and must be received by the specified due date. The registered team name must be included with the payment.

**Team names:** WCL reserves the right to approve or disapprove team names. Multiple teams may not use the same team name in the same tournament.

## 7 Equipment

**Legal equipment:** All WCL teams must use cricket equipment deemed legal under applicable cricket regulations and WCL tournament rules.

**Match balls:** Only WCL-approved match balls may be used for WCL scheduled matches. Each innings must start with a new ball unless WCL or the umpires approve otherwise. A team using an unapproved ball may be subject to penalty, including potential forfeiture if found guilty.

**Stumps:** Each team must carry at least one set of spring-base stumps to the match. The home team and visiting team are responsible for bringing one set each. Only spring stumps may be used where digging is not permitted.

**Measuring tape:** All teams must carry a measuring tape of at least 200 feet.

**Cones:** Teams must carry plastic cones for boundary lines and, where applicable, inner-circle markings.

**First-aid kit:** Teams are strongly recommended to carry a first-aid kit.

**Scoring app:** WCL teams must use the STUMPS app for scoring unless WCL approves a manual scoring exception.

## 8 Clothing and Shoes

**Attire:** Players and umpires must wear proper sporting attire, including long trousers, shirts with sleeves, and sports shoes. Attire must not contain messages or symbols derogatory to WCL, any community, race, or group. Umpires may require a player to change inappropriate attire.

**Shorts and sleeveless shirts:** Players are not allowed to play in shorts or sleeveless shirts.

**Metal spikes:** Players may not wear shoes with metal spikes if they may damage the pitch or playing surface.

## 9 Season Schedule

**Season schedule:** Start dates, end dates, league-stage matches, and playoff schedules will be communicated through official WCL announcements.

**Match schedule:** Scheduled date, time, and ground assignments will be shared by the WCL committee. Any changes must be approved by WCL.

**Grounds:** Teams must play at the scheduled ground on the scheduled date and time. Playing at a different ground or time without WCL approval may result in forfeiture or other disciplinary action.

**Umpiring:** Each team must umpire assigned matches during the tournament and must send two umpires on time unless WCL communicates otherwise.

## 10 Team Roster

**Squad size:** Each team may register up to 20 players for the overall tournament squad.

**Playing team:** Each match may have a playing team of 10 players. Only 9 fielders may be on the ground at any time while fielding.

**New players:** A new player must be added to the roster before the start of the match and must complete all required waivers. New players must not have played for any other team in the same tournament.

**Player representation:** A player may be on the roster of only one team during a tournament. Players may switch teams only for a new tournament, subject to WCL registration rules.

**Roster verification:** Umpires must ensure that players listed on the roster are the players participating in the match. Any player found playing under a different name may face disciplinary action, and the match result may be reversed.

**Releasing players:** A player cannot be released if the player has represented the team in at least one tournament match, whether as part of the playing 10 or as a substitute. If the player has not represented the team in any match, the captain may request release, and the player may join another team only if WCL approves.

### Roster Violations

**Player violation:** A player representing a second team in the same tournament violates WCL rules. That player may be barred from playing for any team for the remainder of the tournament.

**Team violation:** The team for which the player represented second also violates WCL rules. A repeated team violation may result in removal from the tournament, including playoffs. Teams yet to play the violating team may be awarded full points as determined by WCL.

**Discovery before match:** If discovered before the match starts, the player will not be allowed to play. If the captain insists on playing the player, the umpire may call off the match and award the match to the opposition.

**Discovery during match:** If discovered during a match, the umpire may stop play and award the match and corresponding points to the opposition.

**Discovery after match:** If discovered after completion, the opposition team may file a written complaint with evidence. WCL will investigate and decide the outcome.

## 11 Player Eligibility for Playoffs

Every player must play at least 3 league-stage matches to qualify for playoffs.

A match counts toward a player's playoff eligibility only when the player is officially listed as part of the playing 10 for that match. Substitute-only appearances do not count toward playoff eligibility.

A team using an ineligible player in the playoffs will be in violation of WCL rules and may be disqualified from the match or tournament, subject to WCL review.

## 12 Match Format and Overs

All matches will be played as one innings per side. The number of overs per innings must be finalized before the match starts. Once determined, the maximum allotted overs cannot be changed during the match except as allowed by WCL rules and umpire direction.

**T15 maximum overs:** Each innings consists of a maximum of 15 overs.

**T15 minimum overs:** A minimum of 8 overs per innings must be played for a shortened T15 match to be considered valid, unless WCL communicates a tournament-specific exception.

**Incomplete match:** A match is counted as incomplete if it is stopped after the start and both teams cannot complete the required allotted overs for an official result.

Match overs per innings	Maximum bowling allocation	Powerplay overs
15	4, 4, 4, 3	4
14	4, 4, 3, 3	4
13	4, 3, 3, 3	3
12	3, 3, 3, 3	3
11	3, 3, 3, 2	3
10	3, 3, 2, 2	2
9	3, 2, 2, 2	2
8	2, 2, 2, 2	2

**Innings duration:** Each team must bowl the allotted 15 overs in no more than 75 minutes.

**Drink break:** A mandatory 5-minute drink break should be taken after 8 overs are completed. The break must be completed inside the field area and may not be used to delay the match.

**Bio breaks:** Bathroom or medical breaks are allowed during the match, and a substitute may be used to continue play. Breaks cannot delay the start or continuation of the match.

**No last-man batting:** Last-man batting is not allowed. This applies even if a team has fewer than 10 players available on match day.

## 13 Points, Ranking and Net Run Rate

Result	Points
Win	2 points
Loss	0 points
Tie	Super Over to determine result
Forfeit / no-show	-1 point to the forfeiting team
No result	Points split between both teams

**Net Run Rate formula:** Runs scored divided by balls faced, minus runs conceded divided by balls bowled.

If a team is all out before completing its full quota of overs, NRR will be calculated using the full quota of overs, not the number of overs actually faced.

Runs scored in incomplete matches will not be used for NRR calculation.

If a match is awarded because of a rules violation, forfeit, walkover, or no-show, WCL may award the winning team an average positive NRR based on tournament scoring practice.

### Ranking Tie-Breakers

1. Total points, including any penalty points.
2. Higher Net Run Rate, calculated up to three decimal places.
3. Head-to-head result between the tied teams.
4. If more than two teams are tied, the highest win percentage in head-to-head matches among the tied teams.
5. If still tied, the higher number of wickets taken may be used.

6. If teams still cannot be separated, WCL may use a random draw or another published tournament tie-breaker.

## 14 Match Results, Rain-Affected Games and DLS

**Winner:** The team scoring the greater number of total runs in the allotted overs is declared the winner.

**Tie match:** All tied matches proceed to a Super Over.

**Rain-cancelled matches:** All rain-cancelled matches will be rescheduled with reduced overs, 10 overs per innings. If the rescheduled match is cancelled or abandoned for reasons outside teams' control and no official result can be produced, the match is considered No Result. Points will be split and no NRR will be calculated.

### Rain-Affected Games and WCL DLS Rules

If the first innings is completed and at least 8 overs are completed in the second innings, the D/L Method will be implemented to determine the result when rain, bad light, or another interruption prevents normal completion of the match.

In case of rain, bad light, or any other interruptions during play, the Duckworth-Lewis Method will be used to determine the result based on the play completed so far and whether there is still time left to play.

WCL recommends using the DL Calculator mobile app by Tarams Inc. All teams must download the DL Calculator app from Tarams Inc.

For iOS devices, use the Duckworth-Lewis Calculator by Tarams Inc., available at <https://itunes.apple.com/ca/app/duckworth-lewis-calculator/id525417125?mt=8>.

For Android devices, use the Duckworth-Lewis Calculator, available at [https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.tarams.android.duckworthlewis&hl=en\\_US&gl=US&pli=1](https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.tarams.android.duckworthlewis&hl=en_US&gl=US&pli=1).

There may be other scenarios that require the D/L Method to be implemented, and the WCL committee will ensure that the right decision is made for the teams in question.

If the DLS system needs to be used, the umpires must call the weekend coordinators to explain the situation and use the DLS app. Prior approval from the weekend coordinator is mandatory to proceed with any DLS decision. A minimum of 8 overs must be completed in the second innings before DLS can be applied.

### Super Over Rules

1. A Super Over does not require a new toss.
2. The team batting second in the main match bats first in the Super Over.
3. Each team must nominate one bowler and three batters before the Super Over begins. The nominated bowler may also be one of the three batters.
4. One ball used in the match will be used for the Super Over. Umpires decide which match ball to use.
5. No last-man batting is allowed. If two batters are out, the team is all out for the Super Over.
6. Super Over runs do not count toward Net Run Rate.
7. The team scoring more runs in the Super Over is declared winner.

### Second Super Over

1. If both teams score the same number of runs in the first Super Over, a second Super Over will be played.
2. Batters dismissed in the first Super Over may not bat in the second Super Over.
3. The bowler who bowled the first Super Over may not bowl the second Super Over.
4. The team batting second in the first Super Over bats first in the second Super Over.

### If Still Tied After the Second Super Over

1. The team with the highest number of boundaries, fours and sixes combined, from the main match and both Super Overs is declared winner.
2. If still tied, the team with the highest number of boundaries from the main match only is declared winner.
3. If still tied, count back from the final ball of the second Super Over. The team with the higher scoring delivery is declared winner. Runs from illegal deliveries count toward the following legal delivery.
4. If still tied in a playoff match, the higher-ranked team advances.

### 15 Start Time and Duration

WCL matches are scheduled in EST/EDT time zones unless WCL communicates otherwise.

WCL reserves the right to alter the match schedule, including match start time, with or without notice to teams when required for tournament operations.

### 16 Umpiring

All teams must umpire assigned WCL matches. The umpiring team should assign two umpires and communicate details to WCL by Thursday 9:00 PM for weekend matches, or two days before the match for non-weekend matches.

**Umpire authority:** UMPIRE'S DECISION IS FINAL during play. Teams may use WCL protest procedures after the match only where applicable. No misconduct toward umpires is tolerated, and respective players or teams may be penalized.

**No-show penalty:** If the assigned umpires do not show up for the game by the start-time cutoff, WCL may impose a \$100 penalty on the assigned umpiring team. Captains must report the incident to support@willowcricketleague.org with match number, ground, and umpire details.

**Arrival time:** Assigned umpires must arrive at least 15 minutes before scheduled match start time. Late arrival may result in penalty to the umpiring team.

**Umpire rotation:** Assigned umpires are recommended to rotate after every over. If one umpire stands as the main umpire for all overs, that umpire should remain main umpire for the full match, and the same applies to the leg umpire.

**If assigned umpires are absent:** Teams should consult the WCL coordinator and agree on available umpires. If only one assigned umpire arrives, a batting team player may serve as leg umpire in the interest of completing the match. The neutral umpire may reverse a clear error by the leg umpire and may request a replacement if required.

**Bowling guard:** Bowling guard is not mandatory and is separate from mode of delivery. The umpire should confirm whether the bowler wants his guard communicated to the batter. A batter may also ask for the bowler's guard.

**Communication:** Only the captain or vice-captain may approach the umpire. Teams may not crowd, pressure, intimidate, or argue with umpires.

**Umpire misconduct:** No misconduct toward umpires is tolerated. Violations may result in player or team penalties, including suspension, match forfeiture, or disqualification.

### 17 Toss and Team Readiness

**Toss timing:** The toss must be conducted no later than 10 minutes before match start time if both teams are present at the ground.

**Toss process:** The home team captain calls the coin, and the visiting team captain flips the coin.

**Playing 10 submission:** Both teams must submit their playing 10 before the toss, including any players who may be joining late. Teams may not change the playing 10 after the toss is completed.

**Minimum players:** A team must have at least 6 players to start the match. If Team A is not ready or does not have at least 6 players on the field, Team A loses the toss by default, provided Team B is ready with at least 6 players.

**Late joining players:** Umpires must be informed before the toss if any player in the playing 10 is joining late. Late joining players must be at the ground before the start of the 6th over, and umpires must be informed upon arrival. A player in the playing 10 who fails to arrive on time may not bat or bowl but may field as a substitute.

**Decision:** Immediately after the toss, the toss-winning captain must tell the umpires and opposition captain whether the team will bat or bowl.

**Report:** Umpires must document incidents, violations, and match-start delays in the match report.

## 18 Delayed Start and Slow Over Rate

After the toss, if a team is not ready to play at scheduled start time, the defaulting team loses one over for every 5 minutes of delay, up to a maximum delay of 30 minutes.

If the defaulting team does not start the match within 30 minutes of scheduled start time, the match may be considered forfeited and the opposition may be awarded the match after WCL coordinator review.

If both teams are not ready, umpires must apply shortened match rules and confirm with the WCL coordinator.

Lost time	Overs to reduce per innings
1 - 10 minutes	1
11 - 20 minutes	2
21 - 30 minutes	3
31 - 40 minutes	4
41 - 50 minutes	5
51 - 60 minutes	6

If both teams are not ready 60 minutes after scheduled start time, the match may be counted as a loss for both teams, and no points may be awarded.

**Completion of overs:** Under normal circumstances, teams must complete 15 overs in 75 minutes. The last over of the innings must be in progress by the time limit to avoid penalty.

**Second innings:** The second innings must start within 10 minutes after the first innings ends. A team bowling second that fails to complete allotted overs within scheduled time may be penalized by WCL.

## 19 Bad Light and Unsafe Conditions

Umpires have authority to stop, pause, or continue play if conditions create a safety concern. The umpire may direct the match to continue beyond scheduled end time if doing so is safe, operationally possible, and necessary to obtain a valid result.

Umpires are responsible for ensuring no side intentionally or unintentionally causes significant delay. Umpires should consider lost ball, player injury, unsafe light, field condition, and other unavoidable interruptions before deciding on slow-over-rate penalties.

## 20 Playing Surfaces

All matches must be played on WCL-approved surfaces. These may include grass, clay, baseball, softball, or multipurpose fields assigned by WCL.

WCL reserves the right to decide which grounds and fields are used for scheduled matches.

If umpires determine the surface is not fit for play due to safety or surface deterioration, they may stop the match and report the issue to WCL. If WCL reassigns the match to another field, both captains and umpires must consent to play. Any ground change requires a fresh match start, including toss, unless WCL directs otherwise.

Both teams may clean the pitch once, at the start of their respective batting innings, using a broom, bat, wood block, hand, or other permissible method agreed by captains and umpires.

**Not acceptable:** Use of a blower on baseball fields or use of a rake unless WCL or ground authorities allow it.

## 21 Field Setup

The home team is responsible for field setup, including pitch and crease markings, boundary, and inner circle where applicable, according to WCL guidelines before match start time.

Each match schedule will identify home team, visiting team, and umpiring team. Ground category and setup references will be communicated by WCL.

WCL strongly recommends that visiting teams be present during field setup to validate markings if required. Umpires' decision is final in the event of field setup disputes.

For natural obstructions or field restrictions, captains and umpires may agree on declared runs for that match only. Umpires must include details and photos in the match report.

Field setup must be verified by both captains and umpires before match start and cannot be modified after the match starts unless safety requires it.

Batting-side stumps should be placed at least 20 feet and no more than 30 feet from the backside fence where field conditions require such placement.

## 22 Cricket Rules

### 22.1 Fielding Restrictions

**Maximum fielders on ground:** The fielding side may have only 9 players on the field at any time, including the wicketkeeper and bowler.

**Side restriction:** There must not be more than 4 fielders on either side of the field, off side or leg side, excluding the wicketkeeper and bowler. Violation results in a no-ball.

**Outside inner circle:** During non-powerplay overs, a maximum of 5 fielders are permitted outside the inner circle. Violation results in a no-ball.

**Powerplay:** During powerplay overs, only 2 fielders are allowed outside the inner circle. This limit applies regardless of the number of players available to the fielding side. Violation results in a no-ball.

### 22.2 Dead Ball

If the bowler accidentally drops the ball before delivery, or the ball does not leave the bowler's hand for any reason, the umpire must call dead ball.

The ball becomes dead when it is finally settled in the hands of the wicketkeeper or at the bowler's end and no further play is attempted.

### 22.3 Wide Ball

**Wide line:** The wide line does not change even if the batter moves.

**Leg-side wide:** A delivery that passes down the leg side of the wicket and behind the striker shall be called wide. A delivery passing between the striker and leg stump is not wide.

**Off-side wide:** Any delivery passing outside the off-side wide crease line will be called wide, regardless of whether the batter moves toward the off side or remains in position.

**Height wide:** A delivery passing over the head of the batter standing upright at the popping crease, without contact with the bat, shall be called wide. The bowler is also given a warning for the bouncer. The square-leg umpire judges height and signals wide. If unsighted, the main umpire may use best judgment.

**Switch hit and reverse hit:** For a switch hit or reverse hit, both sides are considered for wide-ball judgment. If the batter prepares for but abandons the shot, the expanded wide guidelines still apply.

**Out from a wide ball:** A batter may be out on a wide ball for hit wicket, obstructing the field, run out, or stumped.

### 22.4 No Ball

**General:** When umpires call no-ball, one run is scored as a no-ball extra. Any runs completed by batters or boundary allowances are credited according to scoring rules. The ball is not counted as one of the over. The ball remains in play after a no-ball.

**No-ball overrides wide:** A no-ball call always overrides a wide.

**Out from a no-ball:** A batter is not out from a no-ball except for handling the ball, hitting the ball twice, obstructing the field, or run out.

**New batter after catch:** If a batter is out caught, the new batter faces the next ball unless the over has ended.

**Fair delivery:** The ball must not be thrown. Wrist movement is allowed. In the delivery stride, part of the bowler's front foot must land behind the popping crease. The front foot must not touch or land beyond the imaginary line connecting the middle stump at either end. The back foot must land within and not touch the return crease.

**Mode of delivery:** The umpire shall confirm whether the bowler intends to bowl right-handed or left-handed, over or round the wicket, and shall inform the batter. Changing without notifying the umpire is unfair and results in a no-ball.

**No underarm bowling:** Underarm bowling is illegal and always a no-ball.

### 22.5 Free Hit

All no-balls result in a free hit for the batting team. On a free hit, the batter can only be out by handling the ball, hitting the ball twice, obstructing the field, or run out.

The fielding team may change field positions for a free hit only if batters changed ends or a new batter came to the crease.

### 22.6 Dangerous Delivery No Ball

**Waist-height full toss:** A full toss above the striker's waist while standing upright at the popping crease is a no-ball. First and second occurrences in an innings are warnings. A third occurrence results in the bowler being suspended from bowling for the remainder of the innings.

**Shoulder-height bouncer:** A ball that bounces and passes above the striker's shoulder may be considered dangerous. The first occurrence in an over is a warning. The second and any further occurrence in the same over is a no-ball.

**Above-head bouncer:** A delivery that bounces and passes above the batter's head while standing upright at the crease is wide. If repeated in the same over, it may also be called no-ball. If the batter advances, the umpire judges where the ball would have passed at the batter's original upright position.

### 22.7 Throwing

For a delivery to be fair, the ball must not be thrown. A ball is considered thrown when the bowler's elbow cannot fully straighten after the arm reaches shoulder height in the delivery swing. Wrist movement is allowed.

Occurrence	Action
First throw	Umpire cautions the bowler and informs the fielding captain and both batters.
Second throw	Umpire repeats the warning and cautions the bowler that it is the final warning.
Third throw	Umpire calls no-ball and removes the bowler from the attack. Another bowler completes the over, and the suspended bowler may not bowl again in that innings. The incident must be reported to WCL. Video may be captured and submitted to the WCL committee only after the umpire determines the third throw by the same bowler in the match.

## 22.8 Additional No-Ball Situations

**Bowler hits wicket:** No-ball if the bowler breaks the wicket at the bowler's end during delivery.

**Ball bounces more than once:** Dead ball if the ball bounces more than once or rolls along the ground before reaching the popping crease.

**Ball pitches off the pitch area:** No-ball if the ball pitches completely off the pitch or on the edge of turf or mat before reaching the striker's wicket.

**Wicketkeeper movement:** No-ball if a wicketkeeper standing back moves forward before the ball reaches the striker.

**Fielding restriction violation:** Umpires at either end may call no-ball if fielding restrictions are violated.

## 22.9 LBW and Byes

There is no provision for leg before wicket dismissals in WCL matches.

If the batsman's shot is not offered and the ball hits the batsman, the batsmen may still run, and such runs are considered byes.

## 22.10 Non-Striker Leaving Ground Early

**Mankad warning:** Each team is allowed one warning per match for the non-striker leaving the crease early. After a team warning has been issued, any further instance by that team may be run out after a valid appeal.

## 22.11 Run Out - Wickets Down or Moved

Regular ICC run-out rules apply. When executing a run out, stumps should remain in their usual position. If spring-base stumps are knocked over or the base is moved during play, the stumps must be raised back upright and the run-out attempt repeated. Alternatively, the entire set of stumps, along with the ball, may be hand-carried during the run-out attempt.

## 22.12 Recalling a Batter

After an umpire declares a batter out, the umpire may reverse the decision before the batter leaves the field, or the fielding captain may request the batter's return by notifying the umpire.

## 22.13 Fair and Unfair Play

The neutral umpire is the sole judge of fair and unfair play. Umpires may intervene at any time, and captains are responsible for acting when required.

- Deliberate wasting of time by either team.
- Damaging the pitch by either team.
- Dangerous or unfair bowling by either team.
- Tampering with the ball by either team.
- Any other action the umpire considers unfair.

Umpire calls are final during the match. Teams may use complaint and protest procedures after the match if needed.

## 23 Boundaries and Catches

**Touching fence:** Any catch taken while touching a fence in an area where declared runs apply may be considered valid if the ball directly hits the fence or goes over the fence according to declared-run rules. For regular boundaries, leaning on the fence while taking a catch is not allowed.

**Boundary disputes:** In a potential dispute regarding four runs, six runs, or a catch at the boundary, fielders are advised to hold their ground and help the umpire make the decision. Benefit of doubt goes to the batter.

**Rebounds:** A catch taken as a rebound from a natural element such as a tree, fence, or bench is not considered valid, but a batter may still be run out during play.

## 24 Substitute Players

A team may use up to two substitute players if approved by the umpires. Approval from the opposition captain is not required.

A substitute may field only. A substitute may not bat, bowl, or act as captain, but may keep wicket.

A substitute may join at any time during the match with umpire awareness.

A substitute player must be from the same team roster and must be listed in the scoring app. A substitute-only appearance does not count toward playoff eligibility.

A player returning to the field after a break while the team is bowling may bowl only after being on the field for one full over in that match.

Players may not use a substitute in a WCL match while playing another match in another league at the same time. Violations may result in disciplinary action.

## 25 Retiring

**General:** A batter may retire at any time during an innings. Umpires may allow a batter to retire hurt due to illness, on-field injury, or other unavoidable cause.

**Retired hurt:** A retired hurt batter may resume the innings at the fall of a wicket or retirement of another batter. If the batter does not resume, the innings is recorded as retired hurt or retired not out.

**RETIRED OUT:** If a batsman retires for convenience, the batsman cannot resume his innings and will be declared as "Retired OUT".

## 26 Runner / By-Runner

**No runner / by-runner:** No runner or by-runner is allowed in any context of the match.

## 27 Misconduct Warning

Neutral umpires are empowered to oversee team behavior during the match. Dissent, abusive language, fighting, excessive appealing, or strongly disagreeing with an umpire's decision may result in warnings and penalties.

If an umpire gives two warnings to a player and the behavior occurs a third time, the player may be sent out of the match and may not be replaced by a substitute. If the player has not batted, the player may not bat. If the player has already batted, additional match or next-match penalties may apply as determined by WCL.

**No smoking or alcohol:** Smoking or consumption of alcohol on the field, premises, parking lots, or areas surrounding the fields is prohibited. Park rules apply while playing. Violations may result in severe penalty or match ban.

## 28 Against the Spirit of the Match

---

The following actions are against the spirit of the match:

- Disputing an umpire's decision by word, action, or gesture.
- Using abusive language toward an opponent, teammate, umpire, or organizer.
- Cheating or appealing while knowing the batter is not out.
- Advancing aggressively toward an umpire while appealing.
- Distracting an opponent verbally or through harassment.
- Any act of violence or threat of violence.

There is no place for violence on the field of play. WCL reserves the right to decide penalties against teams, players, or umpires.

## 29 After the Match

---

**Trash cleanup:** Each team must clean up all water bottles and trash near its dugout. Grounds, dugouts, and seating areas must be left in the condition in which they were found. WCL may take disciplinary action for failure to clean up.

**Fixtures at ground:** Any equipment or fixtures disturbed during the match must be put back in place. Teams are not allowed to remove bases in baseball grounds unless authorized.

## 30 Scoresheets and Match Reports

---

The STUMPS scoring app must be used for all scoring unless manual scoring is approved.

Manual scoresheets must include team names, toss details, complete batting, bowling, and fielding records. Names of fielders involved in dismissals must be captured.

For manual scoring, umpires must sign completed scoresheets and ensure both captains sign them. Umpires are responsible for sending scoresheets to WCL no later than the Monday after the match.

Match reports should include delays, player misconduct, rule violations, and significant incidents. If a match is played under protest, that must be noted on the scoresheet or match report.

## 31 Protests and Complaints

---

All protests and complaints must be emailed to WCL no later than Monday following the match day. Late complaints may be accepted or rejected at the discretion of the Disciplinary Committee.

Copies of the complaint should also be sent to the officiating umpires and the team involved in due course.

No protest or complaint will be considered unless proper procedures are followed. The decision of the WCL committee or Disciplinary Committee is final.

## 32 Awards and Trophies

---

**Tournament trophies:** Winners and runners-up of each tournament will receive WCL trophies.

**Winners:** A team champions trophy and individual champion trophies for registered players, up to the 20-player squad limit.

**Runners:** A team runners-up trophy and individual runner-up trophies for registered players, up to the 20-player squad limit.

**Playoff awards:** WCL may present Player of the Match, Player of the Series, Best Batter, Best Bowler, and other awards as determined by WCL.

**Award changes:** Awards are subject to change at the sole discretion of WCL.

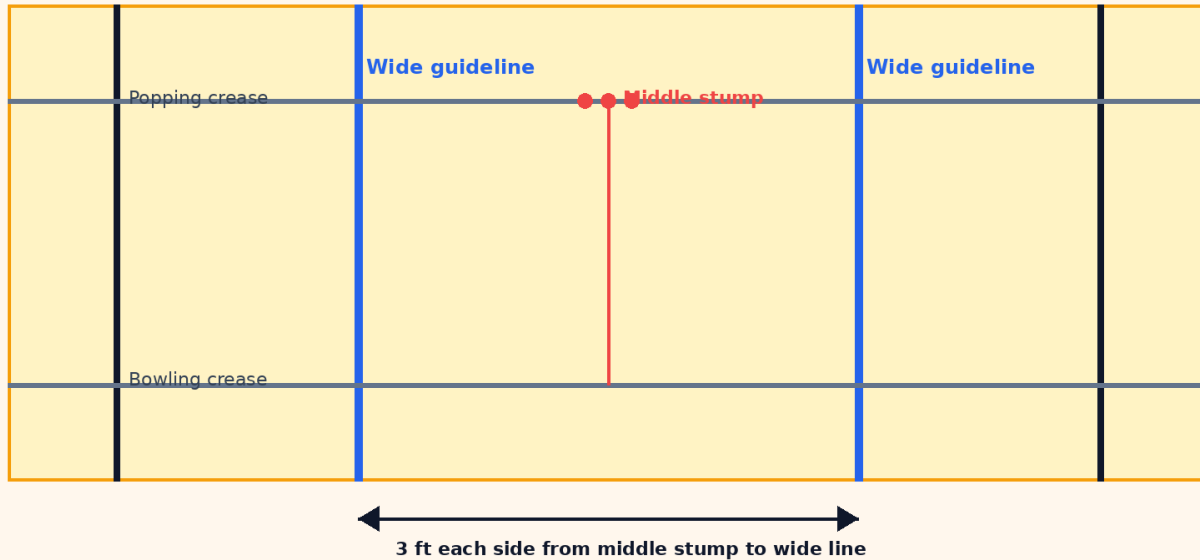
### 33 Disclaimer

The rules and regulations may be changed by WCL at any time. Rule changes will be communicated to teams through official WCL updates. WCL reserves the right to modify, add, or delete rules and rule addenda at its discretion.

### 34 Appendix A - Crease Markings

The diagram below is a reference for crease and wide guideline markings. Captains and umpires should verify field markings before the toss.

**Crease markings - reference dimensions**



Note: Drawing is not to scale. Markings should be verified before the toss.

Dimension	Rule
Distance from wicket to wicket	66 feet.
Striker's end wide line	3 feet from middle stump to wide line.
Crease width	4 feet.
Non-striker's end markings	All markings are 4 feet from the middle wicket unless field setup requires WCL-approved adjustment.
Inner circle radius	80 feet.
Boundary circle	165 feet from the center of the pitch unless WCL ground rules specify otherwise.

## 35 Appendix B - Umpire Preparation and Summary

### Preparation resources

- No-ball rules - NO BALL Cricket Rules 2023 | Back Foot No ball Rule Explained
- Wide rules - Cricket Wide Ball Rule Number 22 Explained - Animation

### Summary Points

1. Video recordings will not be used to make or reverse decisions during the match. Match results remain final unless WCL procedures determine otherwise.
2. Each team must bring one set of spring-base stumps. The home team is responsible for ground setup.
3. Matches are limited to 15 overs per side, with a maximum of 4 overs per bowler in a full 15-over innings.
4. The first 4 overs of a full innings are Powerplay overs.
5. The inner circle radius is 80 feet.
- 6: Bowling guard is not mandatory and is separate from mode of delivery. Umpires should confirm whether the bowler wants his guard communicated to the batter. A batter may also ask.
7. All ties are decided by Super Over.
8. Rain-affected games may use DLS only after the first innings is completed and at least 8 overs are completed in the second innings, with required coordinator approval.
9. Shorts and sleeveless jerseys are not permitted. Proper cricket attire is mandatory.
10. Smoking is strictly prohibited on the field and premises.
11. Abusive language may result in team or player penalties at umpire discretion.
12. Teams must ensure all players are registered and have signed waiver forms. Unsigned players are not permitted to participate.
13. Matches must start on time. Overs may be reduced for delays as described in this rule book.

### Summary Points, continued

14. A \$100 penalty may apply for umpire no-shows.
15. The umpire's decision is final and binding during the match.
16. Only the captain or vice-captain may approach the umpire for discussions. If the full team approaches, the umpire may impose a penalty.
17. Once a match is completed, the result will not be altered except through WCL review procedures.
18. When a fielder takes a catch near the boundary, the fielder should remain in position until the umpire's decision is final.
19. The captain or vice-captain may refer to the WCL rule book if they believe an umpire's decision conflicts with it.
20. Intentional time-wasting or match delay can result in a penalty as decided by the umpire and WCL.
- 21: No runner or by-runner is allowed in any context of the match.
22. If a situation arises that is not covered in the rule book, the umpire may issue a warning and WCL may decide the final interpretation.
23. Any delivery passing outside the off-side wide crease line will be called wide, regardless of whether the batter moves toward the off side or remains in position.
24. For switch hit and reverse hit, both sides are considered for wide-ball judgment.
25. If the batsman's shot is not offered and the ball hits the batsman, the batsmen may still run, and such runs are considered byes.

**Contact WCL:** [support@willowcricketleague.org](mailto:support@willowcricketleague.org)

## 36 Appendix C - WCL Ground Rules and Field Diagrams

WCL reserves the right to amend ground rules from time to time without advanced notice.

### WCL Ground Rules

- All teams must follow WCL ground rules, field categories, and field setup specifications.
- Umpires should enforce these rules and should report any violation.
- No smoking is allowed on the field or premises. Park and recreation department rules apply.
- Teams must use spring-base stumps. Each team should carry at least one set of stumps to the match.
- Teams should not dig stumps into the ground to prevent damage to the surface.
- Home team: Responsible for setting up the pitch and boundaries according to WCL specifications, field categories, and applicable field diagrams.
- The home team should carry at least one set of spring stumps, cones or flags, measuring tape for pitch and boundary, and score sheets if manual scoring is needed.
- The visiting team should provide one set of spring-base stumps for the match.
- If baseball bases, pitching mounds, or nets are removed during the game with approval, they must be replaced after completion of the match.
- Teams must clean up trash after the match and leave dugouts clean. Park authorities may assess charges or penalties if facilities are not cleaned up.

### Field setup note

The boundary and field setup remain the same for right-handed and left-handed batters. Captains and umpires must confirm the applicable declared-run rules and field category before the match starts.

### 36.1 WCL Field Categories

Grounds are divided into categories based on field size and off-side obstruction, including metal fences. The boundary and field remain the same for right-handed and left-handed batters.

Category	Off Side Requirement*	Rules
Cat 1	Off-side fence / boundary more than 140 ft.	Regular boundary.
Cat 2	Off-side fence more than 110 ft and less than 140 ft.	Direct hit is 4D. Over the fence is 4D. Pitching and going over the fence is 4D.
Cat 3	Off-side fence between 90 ft and 110 ft.	Direct hit is 2D. Over the fence is 4D. Pitching and going over the fence is 2D.
Cat 4	Off-side fence less than 90 ft.	Direct hit is 2D. Over the fence is 2D.

\*Off side in this context is based on a right-hand batter (RHB), unless WCL communicates a field-specific exception before the match.

### Field Category Rules

- The stumps should be placed as far as possible from the off-side fence while preserving safe wicketkeeper and bowler space.
- If the off-side fence is less than 140 ft, the regular off-side boundary starts from 140 ft, measured from the center of the pitch. Refer to the field diagram section.
- Over the fence: Fence refers to the metal fence. Any soft net over the metal fence is considered over the fence.
- Backside fence: On the leg side, 2D starts at 80 ft from the wickets on the batting side. A cone or flag must mark this spot.
- There is no off-side 2D for Category 2, Category 3, and Category 4 fields unless WCL communicates otherwise.

- An off-side 2D mark starting at 80 ft may be used for soccer fields or when playing on grass surfaces of regular baseball fields, subject to WCL direction.

### **36.2 WCL Field Setup Specifications**

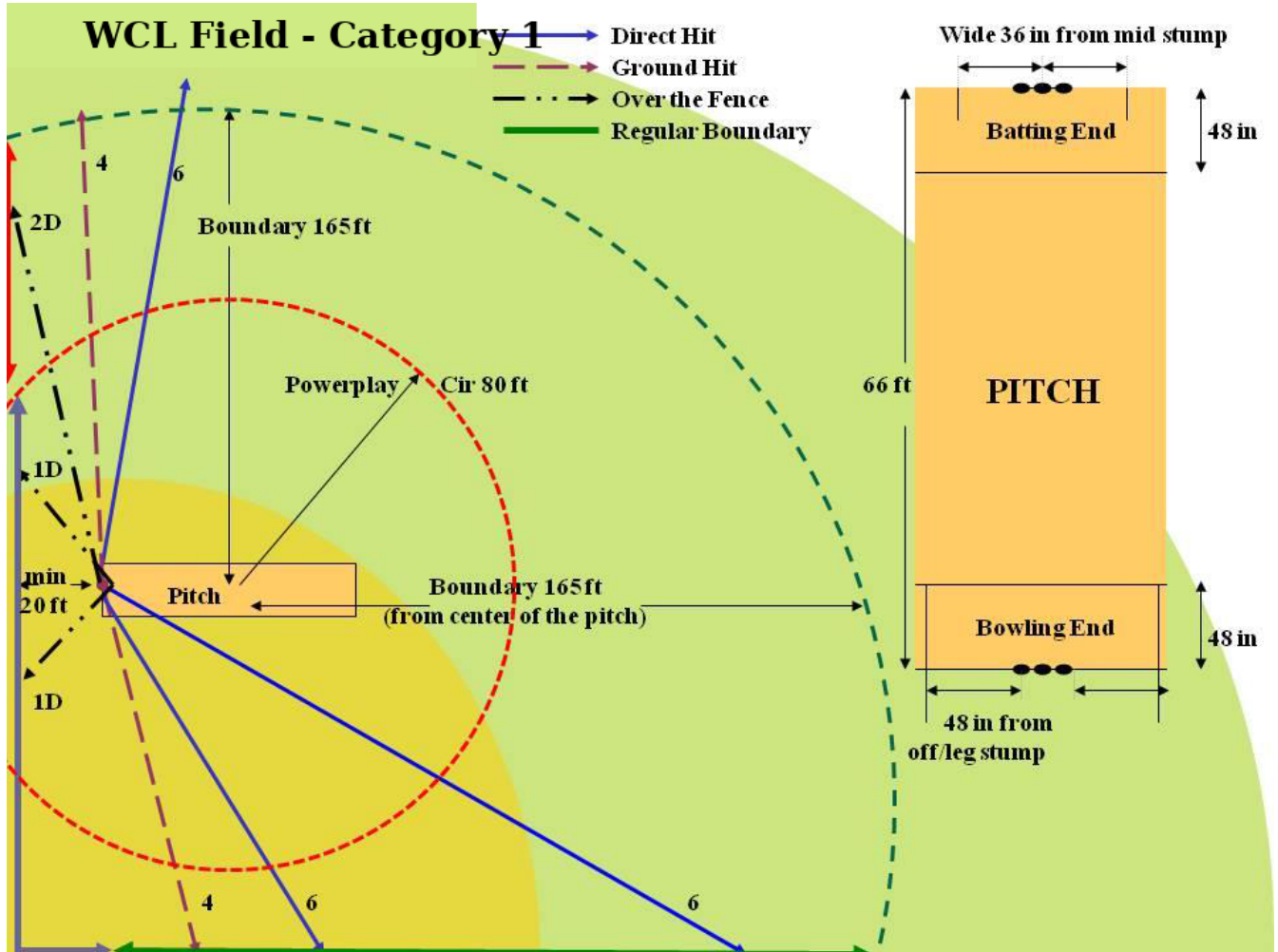
- Fence catch: A fielder may take a catch while leaning on or touching the fence in a declared-run area if the ball otherwise would have been a direct hit or over-the-fence declared run. This catch is valid.
- Regular boundary catch: For a regular boundary, if the fielder touches the fence while taking the catch, it is not a valid catch.
- Ball stuck in fence: If the ball bounces and then gets stuck in, passes through, or goes under the fence or gate, declared-run rules apply as explained by the umpires before the match.
- For the off-side fence from the point area to the 140-ft mark, or after the leg-side 80-ft mark, 2 runs will be declared when applicable. Behind the wicketkeeper, from the point area to the leg-side 80-ft mark, 1 run will be declared when applicable.
- If the ball pitches and then bounces over the off-side fence from the point area to the 140-ft mark, the declared result is 4D for Category 2 fields and 2D for Category 3 fields, unless WCL specifies otherwise.

### **Pitch, Crease, Boundary, and Circle Specifications**

Specification	WCL Rule
Pitch length	66 ft / 22 yards.
Wide mark	3 ft from middle stump.
Batting and bowling popping crease	4 ft.
Return crease	4 ft 4 in from middle stump.
Crease length	Drawn for at least 8 ft from the popping crease.
Batting-side stumps	At least 20 ft from the fence to allow room for the wicketkeeper.
Bowler safety space	At least 10 ft gap between bowling-side stumps and grass/transition area where applicable.
Regular boundary	165 ft / 55 yards from the center of the pitch.
Off-side regular boundary	For restricted field categories, the off-side regular boundary for 4s and 6s starts at 140 ft from the center of the pitch.
Inner circle / powerplay circle	80 ft radius from the center of the pitch.

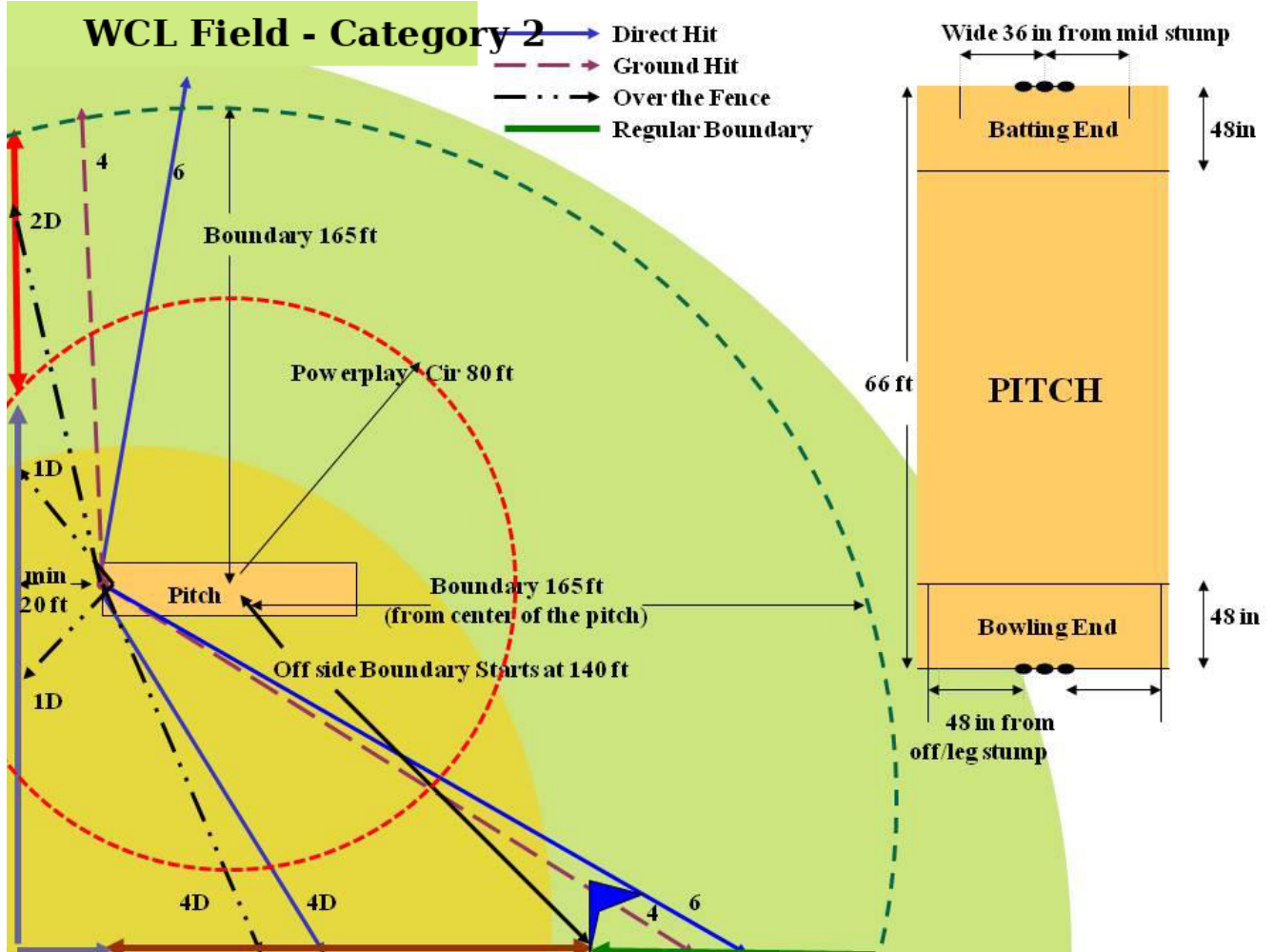
### 36.3 WCL Field Diagram - Category 1

Reference diagram for WCL field setup. Captains and umpires should verify markings before the toss.



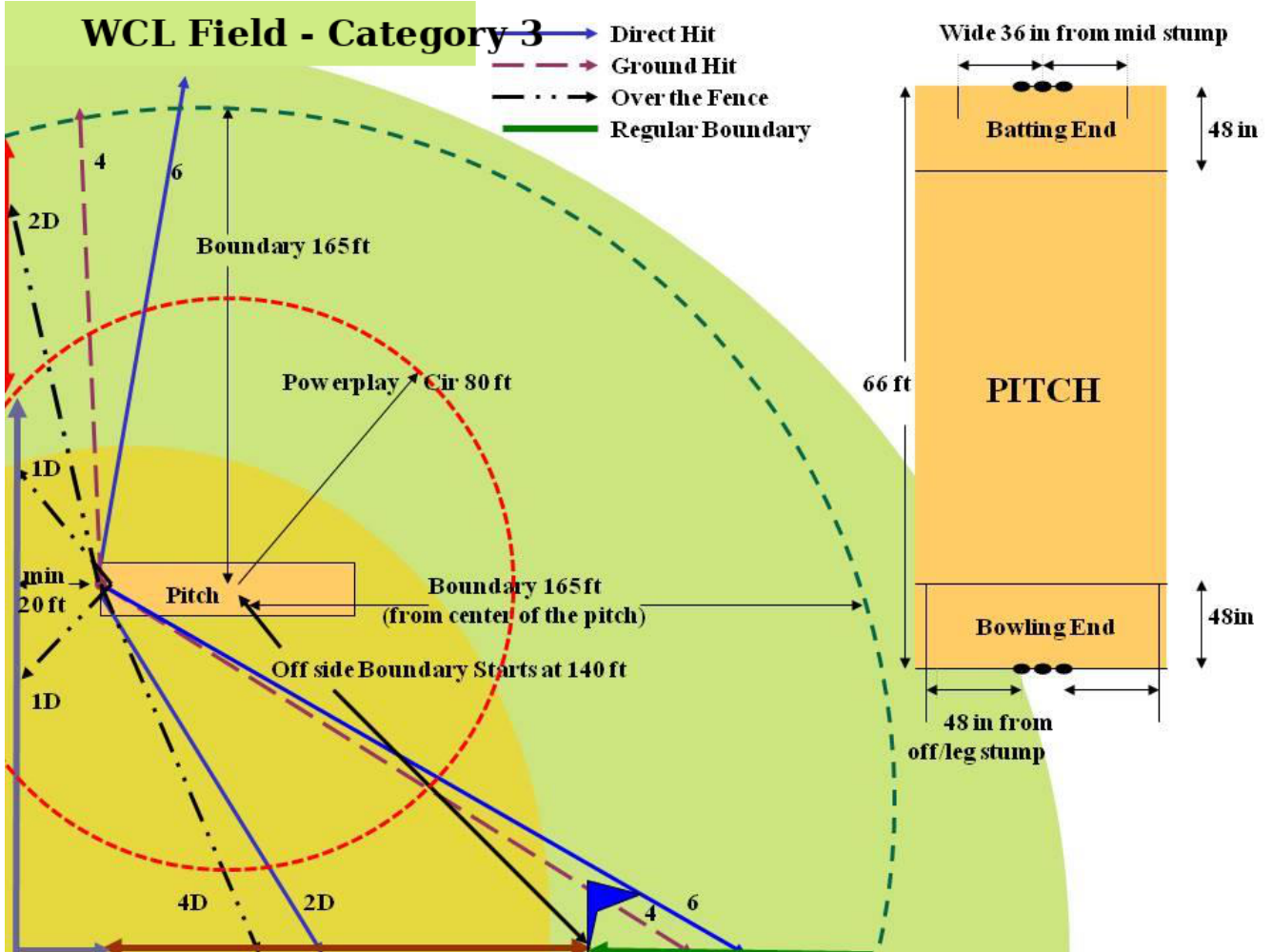
**36.4 WCL Field Diagram - Category 2**

Reference diagram for WCL field setup. Captains and umpires should verify markings before the toss.



**36.5 WCL Field Diagram - Category 3**

Reference diagram for WCL field setup. Captains and umpires should verify markings before the toss.



**36.6 WCL Field Diagram - Category 4**

Reference diagram for WCL field setup. Captains and umpires should verify markings before the toss.

