

Wednesday 17 September 2025

Dear Chairs of the Professional Counties,

I write to you on behalf of the men's players to express support for the proposed 13-match County Championship season which will improve standards, evolve the world's premier domestic red-ball competition and continue to innovate like our great game always has. From the outset, the goal has been to safeguard player welfare, improve the quality and integrity of competition, and to respond to a growing feeling of ill-health due to the schedule.

Key findings from the 2025 PCA player survey

- **83%** of players raised concerns about their *physical wellbeing*.
- **67%** of players expressed concern about their *mental wellbeing*.
- **72%** believe the current schedule is *not conducive to high-performance*.
- Players have asked for **minimum rest / recovery standards**, including a three-day gap between four-day matches to allow for sufficient preparation and recuperation.

Crucially, when PCA county representatives voted following consultation with their squads, **13 out of 18 reps voted in favour of a 13-match Championship schedule** - a clear majority preferring this option over the status quo of 14 matches.

Why the 13-match proposal helps improve player welfare and fixture integrity

- 1. Protects Player Welfare and Performance**
A slightly reduced schedule makes it possible to provide the three-day preparation and recovery period players have consistently requested. This will reduce injuries, safeguard mental wellbeing, and allow players to prepare appropriately to entertain for each fixture.
- 2. Reduces Fatigue and Travel Pressure**
The current 14-match schedule creates 'pinch points' where teams are forced to play with little rest or after recent travel. A 13-match model eases these pressure points, ensuring players take the field fresher and better prepared.
- 3. Raises the Standard and Integrity of the Competition**
When players are not fatigued, matches are more competitive and decided by quality rather than endurance. A 13-match structure also allows for a better-balanced fixture list, which players have specifically asked for, creating improved integrity across the Championship.
- 4. Provides a Sustainable Path Forward**
Reducing the schedule by one match is a measured step. It acknowledges the overwhelming player feedback while still protecting commercial and traditional interests, helping ensure that the Championship remains both high quality and sustainable into the future.

I wish to note the positive action taken on improving the Vitality Blast, this will no doubt enhance what is already an outstanding competition. However, on its own, this is not enough, and the players are not asking for frivolous change - they are asking to be able to perform, to stay healthy, and to play in matches with integrity. Given the strong and consistent feedback - I ask that you consider voting in favour of the proposed 13-match Championship in your duty of care to your players.

Kind regards,



Daryl Mitchell

PCA Chief Executive