



Input Challenges Faced by Umpires in Conducting and Organization Cricket Matches in Pondicherry

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Abstract

In the current scenario Cricket Mania has pre-occupied not only the youngsters, but also aged ones. Though the game of Hockey is the national game of India, Cricket occupies in the hearts of many and for some it is part and parcel of life. In cricket, an umpire is a person who has the authority to make judgements on the cricket field, according to the laws of Cricket. The good or bad decision of an umpire could change the result of the game. Umpiring is a very critical task. This paper describes the difficulties faced by the umpires and the ways of solving them thro' the managerial skills.

Keywords: Cricket, Umpire, Managing Cricket, Managerial Skills.

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Introduction

An Umpire is an official who watches a game or match closely to enforce the rules and arbitrate on matters arising from the play. Cricket umpiring requires a quality of judgement that is perhaps more demanding than that required in the adjudication of most other sports. Decisions, frequently are based on informed personal judgements rather than precise and foolproof calculations, and one of the effects that replays and reviews and challenges to umpiring decision have had on the game is to expose the accuracy or otherwise of those judgements. Since however, umpiring was never intended to be informed by perfect judgement, the replays often do more to provoke controversy and debate than to challenge the competence of umpires.

Importance of Laws

Laws of Cricket control the game. Applying the laws in an appropriate time is very important. Cricket umpiring, by its very nature, will sometimes throw up flawed decisions and if it is inherent in human nature that the team or individual discommoded by those decisions will feel aggrieved or disadvantaged, the game itself remains subject to laws which make clear the finality of umpiring decisions, flawed or otherwise, and imposes upon the recipient of such decision an obligation to abide by them. To dwell on such occurrences either on or off field and in defiance of the laws and regulations is to cause the game itself to descend into a condition of chaos.

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Before the match, two umpires shall be appointed, one for each end, to control the game as required by the Laws, with absolute impartiality. The umpires shall be the sole judges of fair and unfair play. All disputes shall be determined by the umpires. The umpires shall consult with each other whenever necessary.

Background

The game of Cricket has been governed by a series of Codes of Law for over 250 years. These Codes have been subject to additions and alterations recommended by the governing authorities of the time. Since its formation in 1787, the Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC) has been recognized as the sole authority for drawing up the Code and for all subsequent amendments.

Good Technique for Umpires

Good technique is the ability to cope with all aspects of the game. On the field of play knowledge of the Laws, their intentions and interpretations must be applied to ever changing situations.

Managing Cricket as an Umpire

The handling of conflict situations requires special personnel management skills. Animosity on the field can arise from two sources player(s) vs. player(s) or player(s) vs. umpire(s). Umpires must expect, due to the nature of their decision making role (i.e. making decisions that have implications for others) that conflict or dissent will occur at times. Umpires must not be daunted by this. Rather they should have developed strategies to enable them to meet such a challenge in a positive and confident manner.

Umpire Decision Review System

The Umpire Decision Review System (UDRS) is a new technology based system currently being used for decision making. The system was first introduced in Test matches for the sole purpose of reviewing the controversial decisions made by the on-field umpires in case of a batsman being given out and later in One Day Internationals. This system is not taken into consideration as far as this research paper is concerned, due to non-utilization of this system in the Pondicherry matches.

Matches in Pondicherry

Cricket is being played in many countries. In India, Tamil Nadu Cricket occupies major portion both in Administrative and Playing aspects. More than 30 districts are being participated in various levels of tournaments such as inter-district tournaments, inter-university, etc. conducted by pondicherry Cricket Association. For all these matches, the umpires are posted by pondicherry Cricket Association (PCA).

Scheduling Umpires

Another task which must be undertaken for any cricket league is the scheduling of umpires. The umpires are vital officials in charge of applying the laws of cricket and the rules of the tournament. Two umpires are required for every match. Scheduling umpires for a league can be considered as a combinatorial optimization problem, subject to constraints and objectives.

Methodology

Unfortunately in the current world it is common to question authority, and cricket umpiring has not escaped this aspect of society. There are many aspects which go towards attaining good techniques including Preparation, Working as a team, Focus and concentration, dealing with captains and players, self-assessment, coping with pressure, earning respect. Through an extensive literature review, the researcher found some articles that provide answers to the questions: What are the major issues for the umpires with reference to managing the Cricket matches. A few articles were identified through a computer search of databases of published works and various manuals, in the information systems area.

The articles were searched by the title based on the following four criteria: it must contain one of the keywords "Cricket", "Umpiring", "Managing Cricket" and "Managerial Skills". The methodology adopted is to search for the basic components that contribute towards the major issues faced by umpires. The objective of the study is to evaluate what are the major issues and how they are being managed by the umpires. The issues related to Umpiring are very well being experienced by the Umpires, and so the researcher has taken the responses purely from the umpires. The researcher has taken the questionnaire method to gather the details. The questionnaire is divided into three major divisions, such as firstly demography – age, location, level of education,

years of experience in officiating the matches; secondly general problems or challenges faced by the umpires and thirdly important managerial factors required for the umpires before, during and after the match. All the ten factors were supported by different authors in different concepts. The umpires have ranked the challenges they face as well as the important managerial factors required. The questionnaires were gathered from one hundred Umpires from various places of Pondicherry through email, online portal (www.zoho.com) and in person.

The general problems or challenges faced by the umpires before, during and after the match

This section discusses the ten factors that are being faced by the umpires - before, during and after the match. They are also ranked by the umpires based on their experience. Being good to both the captains and their players. The captain may seek clarification on some decisions or aspects of the Laws. The modern game is increasingly demanding on umpires and there is pressure to give some explanation on nearly every decision. Majority (52%) of the respondents has ranked as *sixth*, as they feel that being good to both the captains and their players are difficult.

Getting irritated by player and losing the temperament

If the player becomes rude or abusive during any conversation, remind the player of the reason for the discussion which is to clarify what in the umpire's opinion, have seen and heard, not what the player would have liked to happen. Majority (73%) of the respondents has ranked as fifth, as that they get irritated by players and lose their temperaments.

Lack of body language (signaling) between the umpires (partner)

Aware of all the key features of body language, and the need to control them when communicating with players. More than half (60%) of the respondents have ranked as ninth, regarding the lack of body language, i.e. signaling between the umpires as they are used to it.

Lack of continuous concentration

Regardless of how good the umpire are in a natural sense with the experience and feel for the game, the performance will be diminished if the umpire is not able to maintain the concentration and focus during the game. More than three fourth (78%) of the umpires have ranked as *first*, as they very strongly feel that the most challenging part of umpiring is to keep Continuous Concentration.

Lack of Coordination between the umpires (partner)

Not backing up the colleague is one of the quickest ways to lose respect of not only the colleague but the players as well. Majority (64%) of the respondents have ranked as eighth regarding the lack of coordination between the umpires, as they usually support each other.

Lack of Coordination with the markers & ground authorities

With the colleague the umpire has met the grounds man and has discussed any potential problems e.g. lighting. Nearly three fourth (72%) of the umpires have ranked as fourth, as they feel coordination with the markers and ground authorities are difficult.

Lack of interpersonal skill between the players and umpires

Demonstrates how to project respect by controlling posture, facial expression, and tone of voice when communicating with players. Majority (71%) of the umpires have ranked as seventh, as they feel that the interaction between umpires and players is not that much challenging, as they practice already.

Lack of match controlling ability

Do not indulge in officious posturing and remains in control of emotions when communicating with all in the game. Three fourth (75%) of the umpires

have ranked as second, as they very strongly feel that Match Controlling ability is really a challenging task.

Players are not convinced by the decision(s) given

Often the fielding team will feel aggrieved over a decision. To show that the umpire is in control and of good temperament, the umpire should stand by the decision and reject any feeling of guilt. Nearly three fourth (74%) of the umpires have ranked as third, as they strongly feel that players are not convinced by the decision(s) given by them.

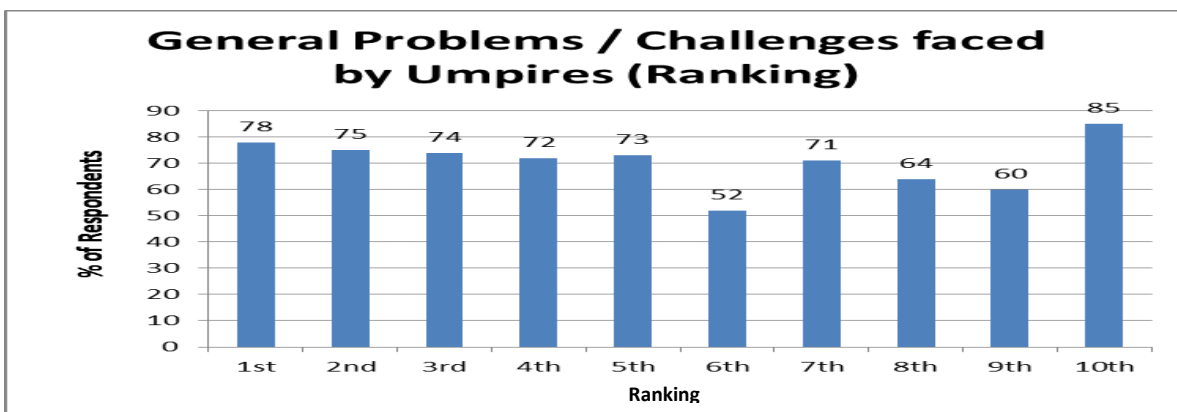
Threatening the umpires for the decision(s) against them

Umpiring is not only character building but exemplifies honesty to the fullest. More than three fourth (85%) of the umpires have ranked as tenth, as the umpires very strongly feel that Threatening the umpires for the decision(s) against them is least bothered.

Table I. General Problems / challenges faced by umpires

Sl. No.	General Problems / challenges faced by umpires	Ranking
1	Lack of continuous concentration	1 st
2	Lack of match controlling ability	2 nd
3	Players are not convinced by the Decision(s) given	3 rd
4	Lack of Coordination with the markers & ground authorities	4 th
5	Getting irritated by players and losing the temperament	5 th
6	Being good to both the captains and their players	6 th
7	Lack of interpersonal skill between the players and umpires	7 th
8	Lack of Coordination between the umpires (partner)	8 th
9	Lack of body language (signaling) between umpires (partner)	9 th
10	Threatening the umpires for the decision against them	10 th

Figure I. General Problems / challenges faced by umpires



Important managerial skills required for the umpires – before, during and after the match

This section discusses the ten managerial skill required for the umpires and ranked by them accordingly.

Body Language

Majority (60%) of the respondents have ranked as tenth, as the umpires feel that body language is not of much important, as they already practice it.

Commitment

Majority (67%) of the respondents have ranked as seventh, as they feel commitment is required.

Communication

Majority (70%) of the umpires have ranked as sixth as they feel communication is one of the managerial factors required.

Concentration

More than three fourth (84%) of the umpires ranked as first as they very strongly feel that concentration is the very important factor required.

Coordination between the umpires (partners)

Majority (70%) of the respondents have ranked as eighth as coordination between umpires is one of the managerial factors required.

Decision making ability

More than three fourth (78%) of the umpires have ranked as third as they strongly feel that Decision making ability is an important managerial factor.

Determination

Nearly three fourth (74%) of the umpires have ranked as fourth, as they feel that Determination for umpires is one of the managerial factors required.

Interpersonal Skill

Majority (84%) of the umpires have ranked as ninth, as they strongly feel that interpersonal skill is one of the managerial factors required.

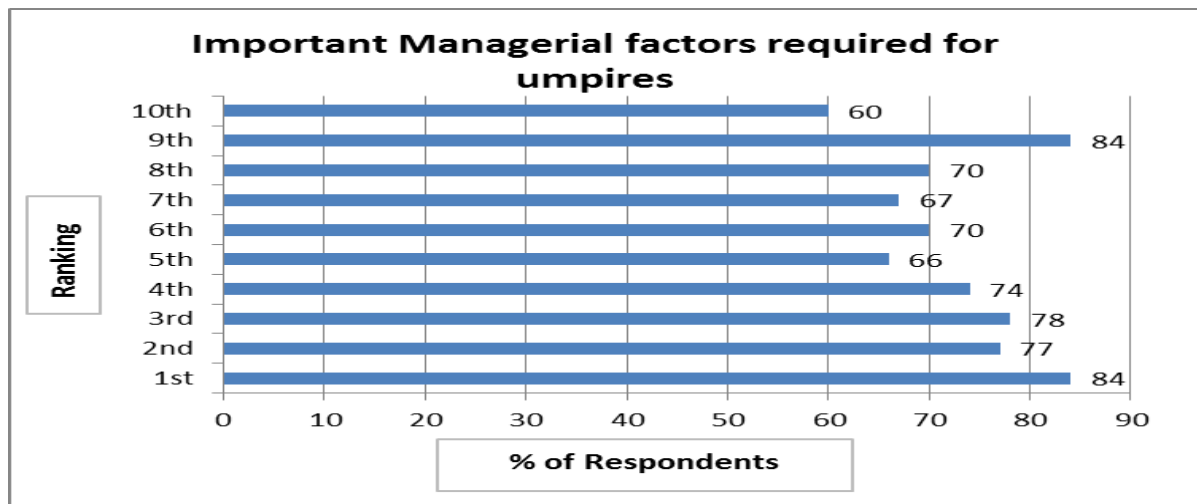
Presence of mind

More than three fourth (77%) of the umpires have ranked as second as they very strongly feel that Presence of mind is an important managerial factor.

Proper Planning

66% of the umpires have ranked as *fifth* as they feel that proper planning is required at all times.

Sl. No.	Important Managerial factors required for umpires	Ranking
1	Concentration	1 st
2	Presence of Mind	2 nd
3	Decision Making ability	3 rd
4	Determination	4 th
5	Proper Planning	5 th
6	Communication	6 th
7	Commitment	7 th
8	Coordination between the umpires (partner)	8 th
9	Interpersonal Skill	9 th
10	Body Language	10 th

Figure II. Important Managerial Factors Required for Umpires

Discussion on Findings

The present study is an attempt to know the responses from the umpires of various place in pondicherry regarding their general problems or challenges faced by them and important managerial factors required to manage the game. A total of 10 general problem or challenges faced by the umpires had been identified, based on the review of the Cricket and Umpire literature. This study has also taken 10 important managerial factors to manage the game. This research study has gone in depth to know the ways and means of managing the game before, during and after the match. Based on the information gathered from the umpires the following are the findings through ranking method: As far as challenges are concerned - lack of continuous concentration, match controlling ability and players are not convinced by the decisions given by them were ranked 1, 2, and 3 respectively. As far the important factors required for umpires are concerned - Concentration, Presence of Mind, Decision Making ability are ranked 1, 2, 3 respectively.

Conclusion

A few common factors interrelated with the challenges faced by the umpires and managerial factors are – Concentration, Decision making, Coordination between umpires, Interpersonal skills and Body language. Unfortunately, getting a good name from both the teams is very difficult for an umpire, though he was neutral by law and his conscious, looser team normally blames the umpire(s). Thus concentrating on the above major factors will have a smooth conduct of the match for the umpires.

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