

2019 SM T20 League Details

The current strategy of the FCA has again been a driving force in planning the 2019 season, however we have also tried to take into consideration the considerable amount of feedback received from those members of the Finnish cricket community who responded to the 2018 end-of-season survey, and from the clubs who attended the Feedback Day held on 14th October.

A major priority for 2019 has been to increase the amount of T20 cricket in Finland, while improving the quality and enjoyment of the T20 cricket played at the top level. As part of this goal we have decided to give a financial prize to the winning team of each division at the end-of-season Awards Dinner. Furthermore, we have tried to make entry into the sport more attractive and economical, and to therefore encourage clubs to continue growing, which is also a major strategic objective for the FCA.

In 2019 there will be several key changes to the T20 competition structure. There will be three division levels, or more if many extra teams are entered, with the top level aiming for the highest quality T20 cricket, while the bottom level will be more economical and more suitable for those players who have less time available or who are trying to enter the sport.

As well as having a three-division structure, we shall introduce playoffs in each division, in order to determine promotions and relegations, and with the possibility of two teams from each of the lower divisions being promoted at the end of the season. The end-of-season survey showed a demand for T20 playoffs, and we also believe they will increase the enjoyment and excitement of the competition. We have decided to make it possible for two teams to be promoted/relegated from each division, in order to give better chances to lower division teams to progress to the higher levels of the sport.

Calculation of entry fees

In each division the fees calculated include only the following cost items:

- Umpire travel expenses and day money
- Two balls per match
- Awards at the end of the season

The total costs for each division during the season are equally divided among the participating teams.

As with previous years the FCA is still subsidizing the league operating costs, however in line with the FCA Board's approved strategy the size of the subsidy has again been reduced. The coming season will be the last when the FCA subsidizes the league costs, so clubs should expect a further cost increase for the 2020 season.

As with previous seasons the travel fund system will continue to be used in 2019 to try to balance out the travel expenses between the clubs during the summer season.

General Rules

To remind everyone, the following general rules apply to all divisions and formats of cricket formats organized by the FCA:

- Players may only play for one club across all FCA competition formats during the season.
- All FCA organized league and competition cricket may only be played on LSC approved grounds.
- All mats used for FCA organized league and competition cricket must be in good condition and of a type approved by the LSC.
- Due to our intentions of live streaming and marketing of match activities, if club coloured clothing outfits are not sourced via CF partner SurrIDGE Online Webshop, then without exception all other club coloured clothing must be approved by LSC in advance of being

ordered (including anything used in 2018). The use of the CF logo is not permitted to be used by clubs outside of approved Surridge partner clothing.

T20 Divisional Structure

Assuming we have at least as many entries as for 2018, the structure described below is expected. However, if there is an increase or decrease in the number of teams, the LSC reserves the right to adjust the competition structure accordingly.

T20 Premier League – 8 teams

Division 1 – 8 teams

Division 2 – Maximum 8 teams

Division 3 – Will be added if more teams are entered (same format as Div.2)

Each of the divisions is described on the following pages in more detail.

T20 Premier League - the new top level for Finnish T20 league cricket

- The competing clubs will all have to conform to new licensing regulations that will also be introduced in 2019. Entry is by approved application only.
- Maximum eight (8) teams.
- Each club may only enter one (1) team in this division.
- Priority for entries will be according to the 2018 end-of-season T20 standings.
- A minimum squad size of 16 registered hard-ball license holders will be required. These persons are forbidden from competing in T20 Division 2, and lower divisions if they exist.
- All matches will be played on grass, in KNCG and TCG
- No triangular match days
- The matches of non-metropolitan teams will be scheduled on weekends, with normally two matches being played back-to-back in a single day.
- Full colour team kit will be compulsory
- We aim to have at least one Elite Panel Umpire in every match
- Umpires will be allowed to apply for travel expense and daily allowance for all matches as per the Finnish tax authority regulations.

Competition Format

- Double-Round-Robin format (so 14 matches per team if eight teams compete, plus a chance to play in up to 3 additional playoff matches).
- Top four teams then playoff to determine end-of-season standings. A Page-Playoff format will be used for the playoffs, as described below.
 - o In Game 1, the third- and fourth-placed teams play against each other. The loser is eliminated.
 - o In Game 2, the first- and second-placed teams play against each other. The winner qualifies directly for the Final.
 - o In Game 3, the winner of Game 1 plays against the loser of Game 2. The loser is eliminated.
 - o Game 4 (the Final) is then played between the winners of Games 2 and 3.
- The bottom team after the Round-Robin phase will be automatically relegated to Division 1 (unless the winner of Division 1 is not "licensed").
- The 2nd bottom team after the Round-Robin phase will playoff against the 2nd placed team in Division 1, in a single match. The winner will gain eligibility to enter the 2020 Premier League, and the loser will be relegated to Division 1.

Main changes to the Playing Conditions (other changes will be announced later)

- Players entered in the T20 Premier League squad are forbidden to play in Division 2, and lower divisions if they exist.
- The team must nominate 11 "Core Players" who are also forbidden from playing in Division 1. The remaining squad members may play in Division 1 as much as they wish. Selection criteria for Core Players will be advised later.
- The "50% rule" concerning Core Players is being removed.
- Players from a lower division squad may play in the Premier League as much as they want, without it affecting their eligibility in the lower divisions.
- League point penalties will be introduced for all forfeits.

Main incentives behind the new T20 Premier League:

- Playing the Premier League will place your team amongst the best teams in Finland.
- It will give those of your players who wish to play at a higher representative level better experience and more chance of being selected for representative teams (Elite/National team).
- All games will be played at the best grounds.
- All games will be streamed online when available.
- The best umpires will adjudicate
- The possibility of a bigger winner's prize.

- Only Premier League matches will be reported on in all media formats.
- Better quality balls will be used in the Premier League.
- The Premier League will be the best competition to improve the quality of cricketers in your club and therefore Finnish cricket.

Competition Entry Fee

- With more higher quality games, the cost of the Premier League will be higher. The Entry Fee is expected to be around 600-650 EUR per team (the final amount will be confirmed later and may vary depending on the final number of entries received).
- The winner of the league will receive a minimum of 75% of their Entry Fee as prize money at the Annual Awards ceremony.

T20 Division 1

- The competing clubs do not have to conform to the new licensing regulations, however if they win promotion to the Premier League, they must conform to the licensing regulations by the 2020 entry deadline.
- Maximum eight (8) teams.
- Clubs may enter more than one team in the division.
- Initial ranking will be according to the 2018 end-of-season T20 standings.
- A minimum squad size of 16 registered hard-ball license holders will be required. There are no restrictions concerning at which level these players may compete.
- Matches will be played on both grass and gravel/artificial surfaces.
- No triangular match days
- Full colour team kit will be compulsory
- There will be a mixture of Panel Umpires and Club Umpires used.
- Umpires will be allowed to apply for travel expense and daily allowance for all matches as per the Finnish tax authority regulations.

Competition Format

- Single-Round-Robin format (so 7 matches per team if eight teams compete, plus a chance to play in up to 3 additional playoff matches).
- Top four teams then playoff to determine end-of-season standings, using the same method as used in the Premier League.
- The winner of the playoffs will gain eligibility to enter the 2020 Premier League, providing they fulfil the licensing regulations by the following season's entry deadline.
- The loser of the playoff Final will playoff against the 2nd bottom team in the Premier League, in a single match. The winner will gain eligibility to enter the 2020 Premier League (providing they fulfil the licensing regulations by the following season's entry deadline), and the loser will be placed in Division 1 in the 2020 season.
- The bottom team after the Round-Robin phase will be automatically relegated to Division 2.
- The 2nd bottom team after the round-robin phase will playoff against the 2nd placed team in Division 2, in a single match. The winner will gain entry to Division 1 in 2020, and the loser will be placed in Division 2 in the 2020 season.

Main changes to the Playing Conditions (other changes will be announced later)

- Premier League "Core Players" are forbidden from playing in Division 1.
- The "50% rule" concerning Core Players is being removed.
- Players from lower division squads may play in Division 1 as much as they want, without it affecting their eligibility in the lower divisions.
- Players from the Division 1 squad may play in the Premier League as much as they want, without it affecting their eligibility in Division 1 and lower divisions if they exist.
- League point penalties will be introduced for all forfeits.

Competition Entry Fee

- The Entry Fee is expected to be approx. 300-350EUR per team (the final amount will be confirmed later and may vary depending on the final number of entries received).
- The winner of Division 1 will receive 50% of their Entry Fee as prize money at the Annual Awards ceremony.

T20 Division 2

- The competing clubs do not have to conform to the new licensing regulations.
- Maximum eight (8) teams in 2019.
- Clubs may enter more than one team in the division.
- Initial ranking will be according to the 2018 end-of-season T20 standings.
- A minimum squad size of 15 registered hard-ball license holders will be required. There are no restrictions concerning at which level these players may compete.
- Matches will be played mostly on gravel/artificial surfaces, but on some grass grounds where possible.
- No triangular match days
- Minimum team kit requirements will be a coloured shirt and white trousers.
- There will be a mixture of Panel Umpires and Club Umpires used.
- Umpires will be allowed to apply for travel expense and/or daily allowance for all matches as per the Finnish tax authority regulations.

Competition Format

- Single-Round-Robin format (so 7 matches per team if eight teams compete, plus a chance to play in up to 3 additional playoff matches).
- Top four teams then playoff to determine end-of-season standings, using the same method as used in the Premier League.
- The winner of the playoffs will gain eligibility to enter the 2020 Division 1.
- The loser of the playoff Final will playoff against the 2nd bottom team in Division 1, in a single match. The winner will be placed in Division 1, and the loser in Division 2, in the 2020 season.
- There are not expected to be any relegations from Division 2 at the end of 2019, unless more teams are entered and there is a resulting need to create a Division 3 in 2020.

Main changes to the Playing Conditions (other changes will be announced later)

- All Premier League squad members are forbidden from playing in Division 2 or below.
- The "50% rule" concerning Core Players is being removed.
- Players from Division 2, and any lower divisions if they exist, may play in any higher division as much as they want, without it affecting their eligibility in Division 2 and lower divisions if they exist.
- There will be no minimum requirements concerning the number of players required to be present at a match. NOTE: this only applies to Division 2, and lower divisions if they exist.
- There will be no penalties for playing short. NOTE: this only applies to Division 2, and lower divisions if they exist.
- League point penalties will be introduced for all forfeits.

Competition Entry Fee

- The Entry Fee is expected to be approx. 250-300EUR per team (the final amount will be confirmed later and may vary depending on the final number of entries received).
- The winner of Division 2 will receive 50% of their Entry Fee as prize money at the Annual Awards ceremony.