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LV= Insurance County Championship returns to two divisions in 2022

- **The ECB has confirmed that the LV= Insurance County Championship will return to two divisions from next summer following a vote by the First-Class Counties**
- **This decision follows discussions between ECB and First-Class Counties to determine how and when a return to two divisions could be achieved**
- **10 counties will compete in Division One and eight in Division Two with a two-up, two-down promotion-and-relegation system**

The LV= Insurance County Championship will return to two divisions next season following a vote by the chairs of the 18 First-Class Counties.

The return to a two-division LV= Insurance County Championship, after two Covid-affected seasons, will see the competition move to the 10:8 structure that was agreed by the First-Class Counties prior to the pandemic.

2022 LV= Insurance County Championship structure:

- Counties will play in two divisions. There will be 10 counties in Division One and eight in Division Two with a two-up, two-down promotion-and-relegation system.
- Each county is due to play 14 LV= Insurance County Championship matches.
- The counties will be placed into the division that they had qualified to compete in had the 2020 LV= Insurance County Championship taken place.

The England and Wales Cricket Board's role ahead of this week's vote has been to facilitate discussions between the First-Class Counties and provide the options available to them.

The priority of those discussions has been to determine when and how a return to the two-division structure – featuring 10 counties in Division One and eight in Division Two as agreed by counties following the 2018 Domestic Playing Programme (DPP) - could best be achieved.

The process to transition to that structure had begun during the 2019 LV= Insurance County Championship. At the end of that season three counties were promoted from Division Two (Lancashire, Northamptonshire, Gloucestershire) while the last-placed Division One county (Nottinghamshire) was relegated.

A two-division LV= Insurance County Championship has, however, not taken place since then due to Covid-19.

It has always been the intention of the First-Class Counties and the ECB to return to the two-division structure at the earliest opportunity.

After the First-Class Counties voted to change the format of men's first-class cricket in 2020 and 2021 to mitigate against the impact of Covid-19, this week's vote also considered the option to play one further year of the seeded group structure that was successfully staged this summer.

Although there was support from counties to use the 2022 season as a way to step back to a two-divisional structure, there was not the two-thirds majority that was required under the ECB Articles.

The LV= Insurance County Championship will, therefore, be played in the new two-divisional structure from next season.

ends

Editor's Notes

2022 LV= Insurance County Championship - Division One

Essex, Gloucestershire, Hampshire, Kent, Lancashire, Northamptonshire, Somerset, Surrey, Warwickshire, Yorkshire.

2022 LV= Insurance County Championship - Division Two

Durham, Derbyshire, Glamorgan, Leicestershire, Middlesex, Nottinghamshire, Sussex, Worcestershire.

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