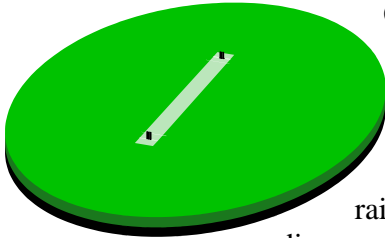


Cricket: A Brief Description.

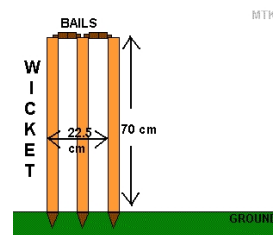
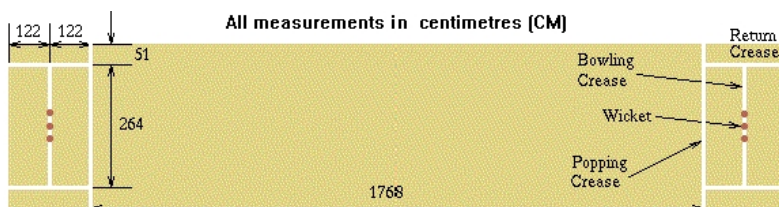
By Thomas H. Fryer.

The Cricket Ground



Cricket is a game somewhat similar in principle to baseball. It is played on a large grass field by two teams of 11 players (there are no size or shape restrictions on the field).

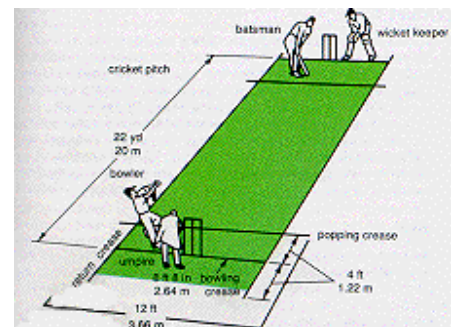
In the centre of the field there is a strip of very short grass 22 yards long. At each end of this 'pitch', there is a wicket consisting of three sticks ('stumps') raised out of the ground and two bails resting on top of the stumps. The following diagrams show the exact dimensions of the pitch and the wickets.



The edge of the field is marked out by a boundary. If the ball goes beyond this boundary, it is dead (out of play).

Procedures for Play

1. The captains of the two teams toss a coin to decide who should bat first.
2. Two players from the batting side go out to the middle. Their objective is to defend the wicket and score as many runs (points) as possible. At any given time, only one of the batsmen is actually batting. The other is waiting his turn at the other wicket.
3. The objective of the other side (the fielding or bowling side) is to get the opposing batsmen out and to restrict them to as few runs as possible.
4. The game begins when the fielding captain has placed his players in suitable positions around the field, the idea being to prevent runs from being scored, and to enable the fielding team to get the batsmen out. Batsman 1 stands in front of his wicket, and one of the fielding team bowls (throws with a circular action of a straight arm) the ball from the opposite wicket.
5. The first aim of batsman 1 is to prevent the ball from hitting the wicket. If, then, he hits the ball and it travels to a gap in the field where there is no threat from a fielder, he will run the 22 yards to the other wicket. Batsman 2 will also run from wicket to wicket and thus the batsmen change positions. They have scored 1 run (accrued to batsman 1).



6. Batsman 2 will then face the next delivery, and he will try and score runs in the same fashion. The batsman may score any number of runs from one shot. If the ball reaches the boundary having hit the ground before doing so, the batsman scores 4 runs. If the ball goes over the boundary on the full (i.e. not having hit the ground), the batsman scores 6 runs.

How to Get the Batsmen Out

1. **Bowled** If the ball hits the batsman's wicket, and the wicket is broken (at least one of the bails falls to the ground), he is out.
2. **Caught** If the batsman hits the ball in the air (the ball must have touched the bat or the batsman's gloves) and a fielder catches the ball before it hits the ground, he is out.
3. **Run-out** If whilst attempting a run, a fielder returns the ball to one of the wickets, and the batsman nearest that wicket is not in his ground (i.e. behind the popping crease), he is out if the wicket is broken. The batsman is not out if he breaks the wicket by accidentally running into it.
4. **Stumped** If the batsman misses the ball and is not in his ground, the wicket-keeper (the fielder placed behind the stumps) may retrieve the ball and break the wicket with it. The batsman is out.
5. **LBW** If the ball hits the batsman's person in front of the wicket and the batsman has not hit the ball with the bat, he is out leg before wicket. (This law is one of the more complicated of the game. There are many restrictions as to what may be LBW and what not. To get an exact idea, please look at **the laws** of the game.)
6. **Hit wicket** If whilst facing a delivery, the batsman breaks the wicket with his bat or his own body, he is out.
7. **Hit the ball twice** The batsman is not allowed to hit the ball twice with the bat, unless he is preventing the ball from rolling onto his wicket after he has already hit it.
8. **Handled the ball** The batsman may not touch the ball with his person unless he has the permission of the opposing side.
9. **Obstructing the field** The batsman may not do anything to obstruct the fielding side be it by action or by word
10. **Timed out** If the batsman takes too long in getting to the wicket after the previous batsman has been got out, he may be given out, timed out.

Extra Runs That Can be Scored

The fielding side may also get additional penalty runs (called extras) under the following circumstances:

- Byes** If the batsman misses the ball, but there is still the opportunity to score runs, the runs shall be scored as byes (they count for the team's score but not for the batsman's individual score).

- Leg-byes** If the ball hits the batsman's person, but not his bat, and he has tried to hit the ball or has taken evasive action, runs may be scored as leg-byes (again they do not count towards the player's individual score).
- No-balls** If any of a number of laws are broken regarding the fair delivery of the ball, a run may be added to the batting team's score as a no-ball. That delivery must then be repeated. (Please see the laws for a more in-depth description.)
- Wides** If the ball is bowled wide of the batsman and it is determined that the batsman could not have hit it from his normal position in front of the wicket, a wide is scored. The ball must be bowled again.

The End of the First Innings

1. Once 10 of the 11 batsmen on the batting side have been got out, that innings (batting session) is over. One of the batsmen will be not out. The total number of runs scored by all 11 batsmen is added to the total number of extras scored giving the team's total.
2. The team that was originally fielding now has its turn to bat whilst the team that batted first now fields, trying to restrict the other team to fewer runs than they have just scored.

The Winner

1. If the team that batted first scores more runs, that team wins by the difference in runs scored by the two teams, e.g. if Team A scores 197 runs, and Team B scores 150 runs, Team A wins by 47 runs.
2. If the team that batted second overtakes the first team's total, the second team wins by the number of wickets left in hand, e.g. Team A scores 197 runs and Team B scores 198 with 8 batsmen out, Team B wins by 2 wickets.
3. Sometimes, matches will consist of two innings per team. The totals for the two innings are then added together and the winner is determined by the same criteria as in points 1 and 2.

The Umpires

The games are controlled by two umpires who ensure that the laws are followed. Their decision is final and should never be contradicted by the players.

The Spirit of the Game

Not only is the game always to be played within the laws, but also within the spirit of the game. This means that fair play is paramount, and that one should always be sporting. Otherwise, it just wouldn't be cricket.