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Developing
cricket
from playground
to Test arena



Cricket Specific Indoor Centres

TS2

ECB Facility Briefs and Guidance
Notes for Cricket Specific Indoor
Centres (Excellence Centres)

Cricket Specific Indoor Centres



For any new build or upgraded Cricket Specific Centre

In recent years several Cricket specific centres have been built, notably at Lords (MCC), Trent Bridge (Nottinghamshire CCC), Sophia Gardens, Cardiff (Glamorgan CCC) and the George Abbott School, Guildford (Surrey CCC). These were built primarily to service cricket, mainly out of season.

Specialist centres such as the above are expensive to build and without combining with other sports programming time, expensive to maintain. Therefore, if necessary, indoor cricket schools should be designed with multiple use in mind. This will affect the design of the proposed centre, making the production of a comprehensive design brief an essential part of the planning stage.

However, many cricket specific centres are well established and would require only an up grading of the current facility to achieve the recommended minimum requirements.

It is essential that certain Critical Factors be identified when installation takes place:

- Flooring which plays well, is hardwearing, physically comfortable and safe for bowlers. (see ECB Technical Performance Specification for Artificial Surfaces).
- Has a quality lighting system.
- A flexible and efficient netting system for coaching variations.
- Canvas 'blinkers' to stiffen side and end netting for safety and to provide better sighting of the ball.
- A well lit back wall, to act as sight screen.
- Adequate storage. (Too make safe and secure coaching area).
- Social area and control point .
- Adequate changing and toilet facilities
- Ancillary rooms.

The following lists suggest recommended minimum requirements for a Cricket Specific Indoor Centre but it must be stressed that it is prudent to provide a facility to the best specification possible:

Net Lanes

The overall dimensions of a cricket specific hall will determine the number of bays with the following being suggested:

- 4- 6 Lanes. (If current buildings offer less but cater for crickets demand and or planning regulations will limit either new build or upgrade then these local conditions prevail).
- 16-20 m available for bowlers run-up.
- Flooring to meet ECB Technical Performance Specification for Artificial Surfaces. Technical TS-6 (i)(ii).
- The outside back and side netting must be suspended to give a minimum of 1m clear space between the building walls and netting to allow for safety and access.

Dimensions for a Single Net Bay

Multiples of the following are dependent on the overall size of the hall to determine the number of net bays: (see fig.1).

	Minimum	Recommended Maximum
Safety Margin (surrounds)	1m	
Width	3.66m	4m
Length	37.12m	41.12m
Height of Horizontal top net	4m	5m

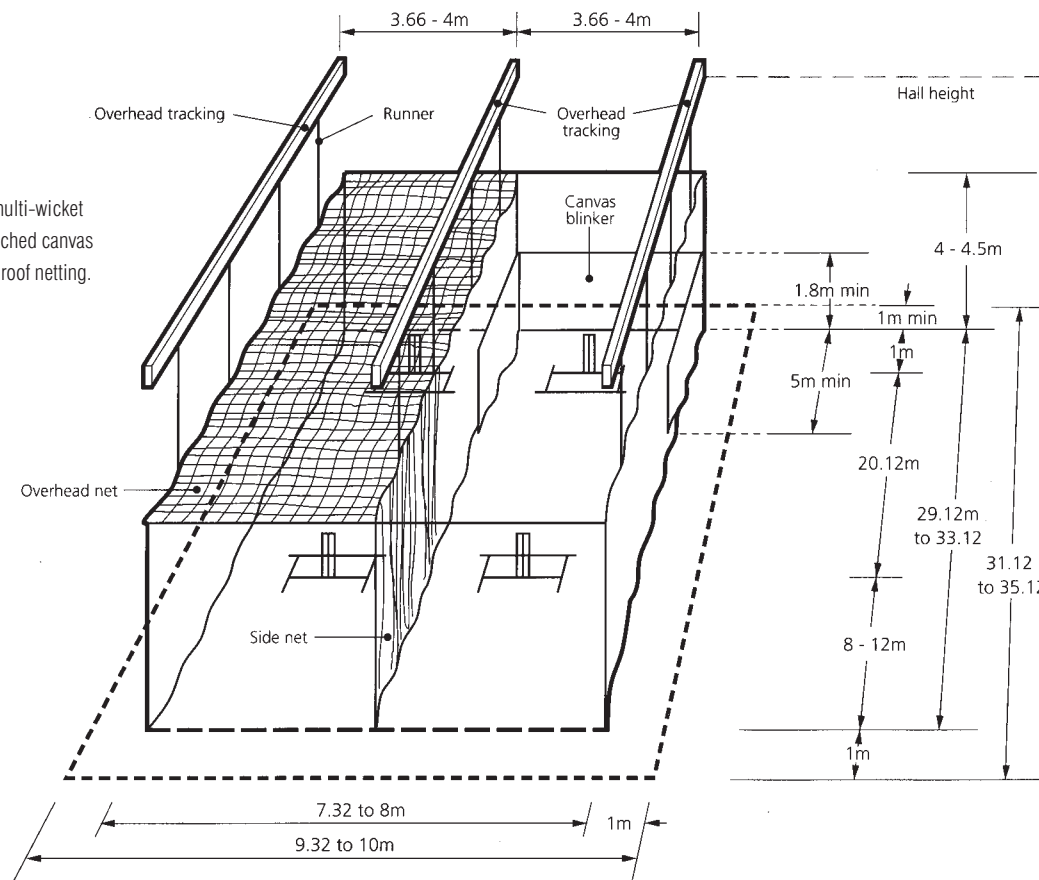
Netting and Blinkers

Netting

The individual net bay is separated from the adjoining bays by tracked side nets extending from end to end. The most efficient method is by independent overhead tracks, which allows nets to be drawn independently and which allows for flexible usage.

- It is recommended that nets be suspended from a heavy-duty aluminum tracking and trolley system, which conforms to BS.1892. This type of system requires an independent overhead net, under which the tracking system is fixed. There must be no space between the roof netting and the tracking system through which the ball could pass from net to net.

Figure 1.
Space diagram – a multi-wicket netted area, with Attached canvas blinkers and integral roof netting.



- It is recommended that white nylon is used in the roof netting and is either sewn in or roof fitted with, 50mm knot to knot, (2") square mesh, with the leading edges taped for reinforcement.

The side netting should be long enough for at least 0.3m of slack/drape to rest upon the floor. This creates added weight and prevents the net from billowing out when struck by the ball, thus interfering with adjacent nets. This is essential for safety.

Additional weighting could be added to the base of the netting (lead line).

- It is recommended that 48mm white nylon mesh be used. (50mm (2") square knot to knot).
- All sports hall netting, canvas, storage pouches, etc. should be made of a fire retardant material in accordance with BS 5867 Part 2.
- All netting should be sound, not allowing balls through, under or out of the net area.
- The netting should not be tight thus making balls rebound dangerously.

Blinkers

Blinkers must be fitted to all practice nets. Either heavy duty white canvas or nylon, they should be suspended on both sides of the batsman.

- It is recommended that the blinkers should extend at least 3m in front of the batsman, 5m from the rear net, and at a minimum height of 1.8m. (see fig 1).

A similar system is recommended for the back netting behind the bowler to create a good visual background and safety against balls driven down the net bay.

- It is recommended that the bowling end blinker be 3m (9'9") high either as a Velcro attachment or sewn in to the netting.

Playing surface

The choice of floor surface is critical and above all should be chosen in accordance to its performance characteristics. Whether it is a multi-sport surface or rollout mat, it should perform well in terms of resilience, stiffness, friction and resistance to wear. (See ECB Technical Specification TS-6 (i)(ii)).

The flooring chosen should be one that can be repaired or replaced without any effect on its playing characteristics, such as spin, pace and bounce. The flooring may be a polymer sheeting or carpet, laid on a concrete screed. The wear characteristics of sheeting are generally superior to those of carpets. An added advantage is that the density and thickness of polymer can be varied to give differing playing characteristics. The installation of permanent underlays to the continuous surface and/or the use of temporary rollout mats can also vary the latter.

Before making a final choice of surface, obtain test results indicating the performance of various product combinations. (See ECB Technical Specification TS-6 (i)(ii)).

If there is no alternative to using rollout mats, it should be firm with no extra cushioning, otherwise a combination of a subsurface and mat will seriously affect the ball bounce.

Set out below are the suggested minimum requirements for a Cricket Specific Indoor Centre:

- Flooring to meet ECB Technical Performance Specification for Artificial Surfaces.
- Additional spin mats if available and required.
- Bowlers shock pads in each lane through out crease area and for a minimum of 3m into follow through strides.
- Batting and Bowling creases marked in each lane.
- Full-length match pitch with bowlers shock pads to be marked in the centre of the hall. (this facility is dependant on the layout and size of hall).

Lighting

It is essential to have good quality lighting so that the players can follow the movement of the ball travelling at speeds of up to 80mph, having been struck by the batsman or bowled by the bowler.

The batsman must sight clearly the bowler throughout all elements of the run-up and delivery and the ball through its flight, with the bowler having a clear view of the pitch. Glare or brightness of the lighting system must not distract the sight lines of both.

The illuminance must be uniform throughout the hall, with the background walls behind both batsman and bowler providing a good viewing contrast. It is a mistake to economise on lighting, firstly as safety is paramount and secondly due to the specialist nature of cricket and the propulsion of balls at speed. The lighting system must therefor take into account the specialist nature of the game.

- It is recommended that the minimum lighting level for a Cricket Specific Sports Hall be between 1000-1500 Lux with a Uniformity Ratio (min/ave) 0.8.

These requirements can generally be met by a system of a number of horizontal, fluorescent luminaires, fitted with reflectors and mounted at right angles to the pitch. The reflectors must screen both batsman and bowler from direct view of this light source.

Cricket Specific Ancillary Equipment and Accommodation

Due to the Cricket specific usage of the centre a certain percentage of programming time will be allocated to the development of excellence, although that is by no means to say that all levels of cricket should not benefit from the ancillary cricket coaching equipment.

However, it is recommended that a Cricket Specific Indoor Centre should have the following minimum equipment:

- Video recording camera in one lane positioned at the front and rear of a net bay and also at right angles to the batting and bowling crease.
- At least 1 bowling machine.

With regard to ancillary accommodation, the following is a suggested minimum requirement:

- **Reception area** - depending on the centres usage will determine how elaborate this area needs to be. I.e. An office may or may not be required.
- **Storage** - a secure room for equipment and coaching aids, remembering that storage requirement normally increase with time.
- **Changing area** - the size of the changing area will depend on the number of practice bays and the proposed timetable for usage. However for cricket specific purposes calculations should be based on 6/7 players per net with female provision needed both for cricket and if a multi-sport programme is envisaged.
- Video playback room / lecture room with a minimum capacity of 40 people.
- First Aid and Physiotherapy room.
- Fitness room.

Access for Disabled People

All sports facilities should be accessible to the whole population including people with disabilities. For further guidance please refer to the separate Sport England Guidance Note: Access for Disabled People.

Further Advice

There are a number of Sport England Guidance notes on related matters. A current list is available from: Sport England Publications, PO Box 255, Whetherby LS23 7LZ. Telephone 0990 210255. Fax 0990 210266.

ECB Disclaimer

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