**Behaviour on the cricket field**

**Law 42.4. Deliberate attempt to distract striker  
  
It is unfair for any fielder deliberately to attempt to distract the striker while he is preparing to receive or receiving a delivery**.  
(a) **If either umpire considers that any action by a fielder is such an attempt**, at the first instance he shall immediately call and signal Dead ball and inform the other umpire of the reason for the call. The bowler’s end umpire shall  
(i) warn the captain of the fielding side that the action is unfair and indicate that this is a first and final warning.  
(ii) inform the batsmen of what has occurred.  
Neither batsman shall be dismissed from that delivery. The ball shall not count as one of the over.  
(b) If there is any further such deliberate attempt by any fielder in that innings, the procedures, other than warning, as set out in (a) above shall apply. Additionally, the bowler’s end umpire shall  
(i) award 5 penalty runs to the batting side.  
(ii) inform the captain of the fielding side and, as soon as practicable, the captain of the batting side of the reason for the action.  
(iii) together with the other umpire report the occurrence as soon as possible after the match to the Executive of the fielding side and to any Governing Body responsible for the match, who shall take such action as is considered appropriate against the captain and the player or players concerned.

*Umpires are taught that the critical moment for any 'chatter' to cease is* ***when the ball comes into play (i.e. when the bowler commences his run-up).***

*Any noise after this point should be interpreted as an attempt to distract the striker, and the umpire should call 'Dead ball' immediately and follow the actions stated above.*

**Law 42.1. Fair and unfair play - responsibility of captains  
  
The responsibility lies with the captains for ensuring that play is conducted within the spirit and traditions of the game**, as described in The Preamble – The Spirit of Cricket, as well as within the Laws.  
  
**Law 42.2. Fair and unfair play - responsibility of umpires**  
  
**The umpires shall be the sole judges of fair and unfair play. If either umpire considers an action, not covered by the Laws, to be unfair he shall intervene without appeal** and, if the ball is in play, call and signal Dead ball and implement the procedure as set out in 18 below. Otherwise umpires shall not interfere with the progress of play without appeal except as required to do so by the Laws.

**Law 42.18. Players’ conduct**If there is **any breach of the Spirit of the Game**  
either in the case of an unfair action not covered by the Laws, under 2 above,  
or by a player,  
either **failing to comply with the instructions of an umpire**,  
or criticising an umpire’s decisions by word or action,  
or showing dissent,  
or generally behaving in a manner which might bring the game into disrepute,  
the umpire concerned shall immediately report the matter to the other umpire.  
The umpires together shall,  
(i) **inform the player’s captain of the occurrence, instructing the latter to take action.**  
(ii) warn him of the gravity of the offence, and **tell him it will be reported to higher authority**.  
(iii) report the occurrence as soon as possible after the match to the Executive of the player’s team and to any Governing Body responsible for the match, who shall take such action as is considered appropriate against the captain and player or players and, if appropriate, team concerned.

*The Captain is therefore responsible for the behaviour of his side, and of ensuring that they play within the Spirit of Cricket.*

*The umpires alone decide what is fair or unfair and* ***either umpire*** *can act if he determines that any aspect of the play or behaviour of any player(s) is unfair.*

*Once an umpire has detected unfair play, he will consult his colleague and summon the captain of the offending side, instructing him to act. A failure to do so will have even more serious consequences for the captain.*

**THE SPIRIT OF CRICKET**

**Cricket is a game that owes much of its unique appeal to the fact that it should be played not only within its Laws but also within the Spirit of the Game.** Any action which is seen to abuse this spirit causes injury to the game itself. The major responsibility for ensuring the spirit of fair play rests with the captains.

**4. The Spirit of the Game involves RESPECT for:  
Your opponents  
Your own captain and team  
The role of the umpires  
The game and its traditional values**

**5. It is against the Spirit of the Game:  
To dispute an umpire's decision by word, action or gesture**  
**To direct abusive language towards an opponent or an umpire  
To indulge in cheating or any sharp practice, for instance:  
(a) to appeal knowing that the batsman is not out  
(b) to advance towards an umpire in an aggressive manner when appealing  
(c) to seek to distract an opponent either verbally or by harassment with persistent clapping or unnecessary noise under the guise of enthusiasm and motivation of one's own side.**

*Extensive noise is clearly in breach of the Spirit of Cricket, and especially when directed specifically at the batsmen is unfair and in breach of the Laws, . When committed after the bowler has commenced his run, it is in breach of the Laws of the Game. Umpires are taught to act when anything other than occasional encouragement by the fielding side of good play is observed. In the first instance, a quiet informal word with the captain is the norm, but further action s required either if the captain fails to act or if his instructions to his side have little or no effect.*

*At School and Junior Club level, Masters-in-Charge, Team managers and Coaches have a major responsibility to ensure that acceptable standards are maintained.*

Mark Williams