

From Park & green



to Lord's dream

Grab your kit for two great initiatives
to guarantee year-round cricket

ADMIT IT, YOU'VE DREAMT OF hitting the winning run or taking the deciding wicket at Lord's. But we can't all be Andrew Strauss or Stuart Broad. What we can do, whether we bat, bowl or a bit of both, is play the game for fun.

And the England and Wales Cricket Board is supporting two terrific initiatives to help those with busy lives feed their cricketing obsession for a couple of hours, either on a summer's eve or winter's day, on a village green, in a sports hall – or at Lord's.

Last Man Stands is a 20-over, eight-a-side version of the game, with five-ball overs off a maximum 12-yard run-up. There are another couple of crucial differences: at the fall of the seventh wicket, the

last man stands; and a six hit off the last ball is worth 12 – ideal for all you budding Kieswetters or Pietersens out there.

Pioneered in London in 2005, Last Man Stands leagues are running in 12 venues across the capital, with a further six across



Last Man Stands and Indoor Six-a-Side: your cricketing fix for all seasons

the nation, from Manchester to Southampton.

There are two competitions: the Last Man Stands Corporate Cup and the UK Champions League, the finals of which will be held on the Nursery Ground at Lord's on 10 September. The winners of each



12,000

The number of cricketers registered
to play in Last Man Stands leagues

competition will then meet two days later to decide who are the overall UK champions.

It's not just in England that this is catching on. Last Man Stands has spread to three continents and an inaugural World Championship is planned in November to coincide with England's defence of the Ashes. This year's overall UK champions will represent their country on Brisbane's Gold Coast.

Every team and player also gets a world, country and regional

ranking on the Last Man Stands website to compare with others.

That's summer sorted then. But the action doesn't stop there. A whopping 730 clubs – and rising – are competing across 32 counties for the right to succeed Godmanchester of Huntingdonshire as the Indoor Six-a-Side Championship winners.

The victors will be decided next March in the national finals featuring the four winners of the regional finals at MCC's Indoor

Cricket School at Lord's. Recent participants on finals day have included teams from Sheffield Hallam University, Warwickshire village side Stockton and Betteshanger Colliery Welfare, a Kent outfit still thriving despite the closure of its local pit.

So gather your friends, grab your kit and get involved. What's now just a bit of fun could turn into an unforgettable experience. ●

● For more information about Last Man Stands visit www.lastmanstands.com

● To find out how to enter a side for the Indoor Six-a-Side contact your local cricket development manager at www.ecb.co.uk/development/get-into-cricket