

COUNTY LEAGUE NEWS

on behalf of Cheshire Clubs Cricket Committee (4 Cs)



SPRING 2021

New season beckons!

New Regulations

New Website

New Sponsors



RSK PROUDLY SPONSORS CHESHIRE COUNTY LEAGUE CRICKET



A year on from dealing with the huge disruption caused by the pandemic, it is wonderful to be able to look forward to a new season, and a complete season at that. Outdoor cricket has been given the green light to at least get started, which is great news in itself. As the Government roadmap unfolds further we can be cautiously optimistic for a whole season ahead. And of course, the lessons learned playing cricket within the strictures imposed by Covid-19 will be carried through into the 2021 season, which means the

sanitising breaks and the arrangements for changing and for intervals will stay in place throughout. So, whilst not ideal, it is without doubt better than no cricket. Also clubs have been contacted recently about the need to 'opt-in' to live streaming protocols the ECB have laid out, as this mode of providing live coverage gathers pace. And while 2020 obliged the League executive to bring in a set of regulations and a different structure that did not have the normal length of time for voting and general digestion, it has now proved possible to institute some permanent changes after consultation with clubs over this winter, of which there is more on other pages within this newsletter. There's also been fantastic news that the League has been able to attract new sponsorship, that League Chairman David Humpage has been honoured by the ECB in recognition of his 25 years of service, and that plans for a new website which will serve as a hub for all matters related to County League cricket are well underway - more of which elsewhere in this edition. But there has also been more than enough sad news, with the deaths

FROM THE EDITOR

of prominent figures within Cheshire Cricket, as well as too many well known players from the professional game. To learn of the sudden death of Dean Jones at 59 years old, for example, and of David Capel at 57 finally succumbing to a long illness after a life dedicated to the game, are but two sobering examples of too many cricket people lost, many at a relatively young age. Surely one aspect of the legacy of all of those no longer with us has to be that we make the most of each day and of each opportunity to play and/or officiate in the game we love. Arguments about the best format and a host of other matters will continue on, but hopefully cricketers across Cheshire will be able to enjoy both a full season and the sheer joy of involvement in the game and in their club, with the camaraderie and unique bonds that cricket forges amongst us. The newsletter will hopefully play its part in reflecting on all that goes on, and your assistance in circulation will, as ever, be a great help.

James

INTRODUCING THE NEW SPONSORS OF CHESHIRE COUNTY LEAGUE CRICKET

RSK

RSK is a leading integrated environmental, engineering and technical services provider. The business has grown organically and through strategic acquisition since it was established in 1989. Today, the RSK group is made up of more than 85 companies that are aligned to deliver end-to-end solutions to help organisations to achieve their goals in a sustainable manner. Employing over 4000 specialists throughout the UK, Europe, the Middle East, Africa and Asia, the company is known for providing practical solutions to global challenges. The new Runcorn/Widnes crossing, familiar to all of our readers, is one example of a project in which RSK were heavily involved, and everyone involved in Cheshire Cricket is absolutely delighted and privileged to have secured vital sponsorship with such a prestigious and diverse global company. Visit RSKgroup.com for more information about their range of work.

RSK was ranked the third largest UK environmental consultancy by Environment Analyst in its 2019 Market Assessment Report and is placed in the 2020 Sunday Times PwC Top Track 250.



2021 NEW RULES AND REGS

NOON START IN ALL SATURDAY FIXTURES

TEA INTERVAL OFFICIALLY 30 MINS



Yes, that's it! Two main changes have been brought in for 2021, in line with feedback received from clubs. There was a clear majority in favour of the noon start on Saturdays, from the first match of the season. The last Saturday in August and all September fixtures will be an 11.30 start.

The tea interval has up until now been 25 minutes officially, although in practice 30 minutes was being taken at many matches (including all those where umpire Emmerson stood). Formalising the 30 minute interval has a small but potentially significant knock-on effect on calculating overs remaining in the event of delays in matches and the amount of time that can be lost before an abandonment is made. Under this new regulation, timings are as follows:

110 over matches: max time lost can be 205 mins (3hrs 25) or 175 mins (2 hrs 55) if tea has been taken.

100 over matches: max time lost can be 170 mins (2hrs 50) or 140 mins (2 hrs 20) if tea has been taken.

90 over matches: max time lost can be 135 mins (2hrs 15) or 105 mins (1 hr 45) if tea has been taken.

WHAT ABOUT WIN / LOSE CRICKET?

In the recent questionnaire most clubs indicated a desire for change to a win/lose option or a mixed season of games with win/lose at play in half the games and timed cricket (with a draw option) in the other half. It is unclear whether any single proposal would necessarily carry the two thirds majority required for a rule change. To put a rule change forward for win/lose cricket would require a series of interrelated rule changes. For example points structure, bonus points (if any), dealing with rain impacted matches, required over rates and penalties, as well as a host of other matters.

The Executive Committee felt that to introduce such change whilst in the middle of pandemic restrictions and have it voted on without due scrutiny would be improper and inappropriate. They instead concluded that a better solution would be to use 2021 to fashion a holistic solution to be ready for presentation at the Autumn Management meeting with a view to be voted on at the 2022 AGM. To this end a subgroup comprising experienced senior players from each of our three 1st XI divisions along with two League Officers is to be formed to fashion the alternative proposal. This subgroup is aiming to produce a fully formatted structure for all clubs to view by the end of May 2021 at the latest. It is then hoped that their will be an equitable final proposal is put to the clubs at the 2021 Autumn Management Meeting.

PLAY CRICKET REGISTRATIONS: Clubs are once again reminded about the importance of ensuring all players are properly registered on Play Cricket before they play a game (bearing in mind the safeguarding implications) and about the need to adhere to the rules regarding result summaries and scorecards to avoid fines.

2021 OPENING FIXTURES - SATURDAY 17th APRIL

1ST XI PREMIER DIVISION

Alderley Edge v Hyde
Cheadle v Neston
Chester BH v Oxton
Oulton Park v Timperley
Toft v Didsbury
Widnes v Nantwich

1ST XI DIVISION 1

Bramhall v Bollington
Congleton v Warrington
Davenham v Bowdon
Marple v Grappenhall
Sale v Macclesfield
Urmston v Brooklands

1ST XI DIVISION 2

Alvanley v Barrow,
Haslington v Hale Barns
Lindow v Ashton OM
Mobberley v Christleton
Stockport Georgians v Romiley
Upton v Stockport



Current Premier League Champions Chester Boughton Hall open up with a home fixture against Oxton, who will be boosted by the arrival of 23 year old Barbadian left arm spinner Damario Goodman. CBH led the tributes to their much loved long time scorer Don Speakman (far left) who died in January after a short illness.

In the 2nd XI Chester Boughton Hall 2s will be aiming to emulate their 1st XI again, starting their title defence with a trip to Bowdon.

2ND XI PREMIER DIVISION

Bowdon v Chester BH
Didsbury 2 v Toft
Hyde v Alderley Edge
Macclesfield v Oulton Park
Nantwich v Marple
Neston v Cheadle

2ND XI DIVISION 1

Brooklands v Lindow
Grappenhall v Heaton Mersey
Oxton v Davenham
Romiley v Stockport Georgians
Timperley v Sale
Warrington v Upton

2ND XI DIVISION 2

Ashton OM v Urmston
Bollington v Bramhall
Didsbury 2A v Neston
Hale Barns v Cheadle Hulme
Tattenhall v Congleton
Upton v Widnes

SUNDAY 3RD XI CRICKET 2021

Sunday cricket is in excellent shape ahead of the new season, with the league matches commencing in early May following the T20 round-robins. There are five divisions including a ten team Premier Division, where champions Didsbury will start their tilt at a fifth title in six seasons with the visit of Stockport Georgians. Promoted sides Romiley and Heaton Mersey both start with home fixtures.



3rd XIs Div 1 and 2 both have ten teams, including (in Div 1) the new-look Marple & Compstall 3rd XI, while the Central & East division has 14 sides including two from Didsbury (the 5s and Wanderers) who will use Flixton CC for their fixtures. Over in the West division, things look a lot different from its 2019 iteration, with eight sides including Trafford Metrovicks & Lymm OP. There are also 10 sides registered in the 3rd XI Friendlies Division, which provides cricket on an as-arranged basis depending on player (and ground) availability.

OVER 40s 2021 After an enforced hiatus the over 40s midweek league is all set to recommence battle; four regionalised groups including two Central divisions of 18 teams in total. News will appear in due course.

2021 CUP COMPETITIONS

T20 FORMATS



The 1st XI and 3rd XI T20 mini-groups have been allocated with 1st XI fixtures commencing on Thursday May 6th. In the 1st XI competition there are nine mini groups, with current holders Toft in a group of three but having to wait until May 27th to get their trophy defence underway with a trip to Bowdon. The other three club mini-group accommodates Wirral sides (Neston, Oxton, Upton). Every mini-group has at least one Premier Division side in it. The full fixture list is on Play Cricket.

The 3rd XI competition has eight mini groups, with holders Didsbury 3 up against Georgians, Bredbury SM and Lindow. The 3rd XI groups will be played on Sun April 18th & 25th, and Sun May 2, with the quarter finals and finals day arranged for later in the season. All the fixtures are on Play Cricket.

The 2nd XI competition is a straight knock-out and the first round of 15 matches has been drawn, matches taking place either on Tuesday 18 or 25 May with a 6.15 latest start time arranged, as follows:

CHEADLE v HEATON MERSEY ROMILEY v CHEADLE HULME OXTON v WARRINGTON
BRAMHALL v MARPLE NANTWICH v MACCLESFIELD DIDSBURY 2 v HALE BARNES TOFT v CONGLETON
URMSTON v SALE BOWDON v BROOKLANDS TIMPERLEY v ASHTON OM UPTON v CHESTER BH
DAVENHAM v LINDOW HYDE v STOCKPORT WIDNES v GRAPPENHALL TATTENHALL v NESTON

CHESHIRE CUP 2021

There are 31 entries for this year's Cheshire Cup. Round 1 is scheduled for May 16, except for teams who are in the National Knockout Cup playing on that Sunday. Games involving those teams will take place on May 23. Holders Nantwich get a bye to Round 2, which is scheduled for June 6th (draw takes place May 24th), while last years' runners-up Cheadle host Toft. The two losing semi-finalists in 2020 (Elworth & Widnes) face tricky away matches.



The 1st Round draw is as follows:

MAY 16: ALDERLEY EDGE v ELWORTH; ALSAGER v OULTON PARK;

BOLLINGTON v NORTH EAST CHESHIRE; CHEADLE v TOFT; HYDE v BRAMHALL;

BOWDON v PORT SUNLIGHT; LINDOW v WARRINGTON; MACCLESFIELD v OXTON;

MARPLE v GRAPPENHALL; SALE v BROOKLANDS; URMSTON v WIDNES

MAY 23: DIDSBURY v CHESTER BH; NEW BRIGHTON v B'HEAD PK; ROMILEY v TIMPERLEY; WALLASEY v NESTON.

CHESHIRE SHIELD 2021



Shield holders Hawk Green are one of 11 sides given a bye in the first round - as are losing finalists Barrow - which gets underway on May 16th (1.00pm start) as follows:

APPLETON v STOCKPORT GEORGIANS;
BUNBURY v KINGSLEY; CHEADLE HULME v
ASHTON-ON-MERSEY; PARKFIELD LISCARD v
ALVANLEY; WIRRAL v CALDY

DEATH OF DAVE LAWSON

Dave Lawson died in January, a figure very well known throughout Cheshire cricket, latterly as President of the Cheshire Cricket League and also as an umpire (and umpire tutor) of many years' experience after a long playing career. Many tributes followed for this popular man who served Cheshire cricket so well.



NEW LOOK LEAGUE WEBSITE

Plans are underway for a new website which will encompass all matters relating to the County League, and crucially interfacing effectively with Play Cricket. Encouraged by the experiences of the Greater Manchester and Bolton leagues, Cheshire are exploring how best to use a new type of structure which will allow all League information, including match regulations, appointed officials, communications, match forms etc, as well as an archive and a means of pulling together the best cricket photography from around the region. Many clubs put significant time and effort into their twitter feeds and the opportunity to capture and reflect this can only enhance the standing and engagement with cricket in Cheshire. Look out for more information in the coming weeks.



NEWS IN BRIEF...

Many clubs have been busy in the close season with fundraising activities, with plenty of updates available on various twitter feeds. Amongst some of the more notable news, **Nantwich** have signed **Aneesh Kapil**, who has represented England U19s and has professional experience too....and speaking of Eng U19s, **Alderley Edge's George Bell** is the latest Cheshire youngster to join their training squad...**Didsbury's Hannah Jones** has signed a professional contract with Lancashire Thunder and is also included in the Manchester originals Hundred Squad....**Kesh Fonseka** of **Hyde** has, at 15, become the youngest ever entrant to the Lancashire Academy....busy times at **Timperley** who have secured the services of **Jake Sandham** (Norden), South African **Chris McCarthy** (Hurst) and **Alex Paterson** (Nantwich)....**Timpers** have also announced the formation of a girls cricket section and that they are now a Disability Cricket Champion Club....all go at **Toft** who are also getting good numbers of women signed up to play, as well as advancing plans for their new pavilion, refurbished outdoor nets, and three former international stars visiting for events in 2021...whilst also improving their nets, **Marple** easily surpassed a GoFundMe target of £5000 to secure money for a new scoring facility in memory of their greatly loved club President Ernie Goulding who died recently aged 98....**Oxton's Henry Dobson** has been selected for the Leeds Uni side to play Yorkshire starting on Easter Monday....league Chairman **David Humpage** received a surprise letter and gift from the England Cricket Board to mark 25 years of service to the Cheshire County League, a signed bat from the 2019 Ashes series (pictured).



That's so Village @ThatsSoVillage · Feb 24
me: isolating all winter to save the old and vulnerable

our umpire after the first ball of the season hits me on the hip:



CHESHIRE CC NEWS



Cheshire's fixtures in the new look National Counties competition have been announced, with upto eight different grounds in the region hosting matches. Nantwich and Bowdon will have T20 matches, whilst Didsbury and Toft host 50 over games in May and June. New Brighton and Chester BH will be used should Cheshire progress in this competition. The 3 day format then takes over, with games at Oxton (July 11-13) and Alderley Edge (Aug 15-17).

Send your feedback and information to James: editorclnews101@gmail.com