

The Cheshire Women's Cricket League and Lancashire Thunder jointly staged a ten-and-a-half hour cricket marathon at Chester Boughton Hall on Sunday August 18, with Thunder's match with Western Storm sandwiching the League's four cup finals.

MORNING SESSION

- Trinity outgun Appleton while Hawarden's batting fires to see off Didsbury seconds

CWCL T20 Divisonal Competition Final:

Stockport Trinity Fire 56-5 (15; Kate Harvey 18, Olivia Horsfield 3-9) BEAT Appleton Tigers 55 (15.5; Georgia Heath 18, Emma Royle 4-7, Hannah Wicks 3-8)

Eastern Division champions Trinity impressively outperformed Western Division champions Appleton to avenge last year's defeat to the same opposition. This is the first time since 2011 that this trophy has been won by the Stockport club.

Emma Royle flattened the off stump with only the second delivery of the match and by the time she had bowled her four overs straight through, the Tigers were reeling at 20-5 with Royle having taken four wickets for seven runs.

Georgia Heath and Abbey Gore would be the only players to reach double figures, as Hannah Wicks took three late wickets. The bowlers were backed up by some excellent ground fielding and catching and this was perhaps one of the best fielding displays I have seen from a team at this level.

Appleton naturally needed to bowl Trinity out to defend their small total and the opening overs of the reply saw the unfamiliar sight in women's club cricket of three slips and a gully. However, the Trinity openers took few risks in the opening overs and once Carys White came in at number three, the scoring rate increased dramatically. Having been on 20 after eight overs, White's cameo of 17 from 14 balls took the score to 46 after 11.

From 48-1 Trinity lost four wickets when in sight of victory, with Olivia Horsfield taking three of these wickets but this only served to make the match look closer than it really had been.

CWCL Development Knockout Final:

Hawarden Park 143-3 (20; Nicky Deane 25ret, Thea Murray-Williams 25ret, Rachel Warrenger 25ret, Laura Wilson 25ret, Rachel Saunders 2-34) BEAT Didsbury 2nd XI 84-5 (20; Shamaila Zaman 21)

In contrast a high scoring match was taking place at the same time on the second ground in the final of the competition for division three and four teams. Hawarden have a number of batsmen who would certainly not look out of place at a higher level and here four of those all rapidly reached the retirement score. The first wicket fell with the score on 102 in the 15th over.

Warrenger then took a wicket in the first over of the reply to make Didsbury's task even more daunting. Although there was some cultured batting from the likes of Shamaila Zaman, Zoe Conway, Marianne Lea and Zoe Rigley, their side never threatened to chase down the large target.

AFTERNOON SESSION

- Thunder come agonisingly close to ending Storm's unbeaten run

As the Thunder and Storm players were completing their match preparations a softball event took place on the second ground. The participants from the host club and Heaton Mersey CC and Stockport Georgians CC.

In the meantime, some spectators were amused to note that the groundstaff were bringing the boundary rope in – the international players and other professionals would have a much smaller playing area than for the match that had just taken place between two local club teams.

Kia Super League:

Western Storm 160-5 (19.5; Smriti Mandanha 72, Sophie Ecclestone 2-32) BEAT Lancashire Thunder 159-8 (20; Harmanpreet Kaur 50, Tahlia McGrath 44, Anya Shrubsole 3-36, Heather Knight 2-27)

Thunder's openers scored nine off the first three deliveries of the match from Anya Shrubsole but unfortunately the fourth and fifth deliveries both resulted in wickets.

Harmanpreet Kaur shoulders a massive burden in this team and she delivered a 36- ball innings of 50 which included six fours and two sixes. After her departure Tahlia McGrath assumed the role of senior partner, and having batted rather correctly earlier, she was just starting to unleash her range of improvised shots when she fell for 44. The highest score achieved by any of the home-grown players was just 18.

Thunder dismissed Rachel Priest relatively early, but the other half of Storm's superb opening partnership, Smriti Mandhana, was again in imperious form, scoring 72 from 43 deliveries with nine fours and two sixes. With the captain Kate Cross being Lancashire's only experienced seam option, she obviously felt she had no option but to bowl spinners in the powerplay. It may be fine for a spinner to take the first over when the batsmen are yet to play themselves in but asking any spinner to bowl the final powerplay over at a rampant Mandanha is a daunting task, even for a world-class one like Sophie Ecclestone. Mandanha duly scored 18 off this Ecclestone over and took her side to 57-1 off six overs and this prompted not only a perceptible loss of interest from the crowd, but it also caused Thunder's body language to change dramatically. Western Storm duly moved on to 106-1 without alarm.

Then suddenly everything changed. Ecclestone, returning to the club where she took her first steps in senior women's cricket back in 2012, was able to have the protection of boundary fielders and Heather Knight duly found the safe hands of Sune Luus. Two overs later, Mandanha was dismissed by Emma Lamb, and Fran Wilson and Sophie Luff soon followed.

It all came down to seven from the last over, bowled by Cross, and even though she restricted the batsmen to singles from the first three and then bowled a dot ball, Deepti Sharma hit the winning boundary off the penultimate ball. A visibly distraught Cross could barely drag herself off the field at the end.

What started as a laudable attempt to ensure the North West's best players turned out for their local KSL team has unfortunately meant that this Thunder team will be forever worried about their brittle batting – this year's squad appears on paper to be even weaker than in previous years. Only 104 people attended a previous Thunder match this year – surely this must be, at least in part, due to the team not being successful?

EVENING SESSION

· Trinity make it a T20 double after a last over thriller, while Upton scoop further silverware in the Plate

CWCL Senior Knockout Cup Final:

Stockport Trinity Fire 100-7 (19.3; Kate Harvey 26ret, Rosie Wilson 3-15) BEAT Didsbury Swordettes 99-5 (20; Roshini Prince-Navaratnam 25ret, Laura Griffiths 25ret, Hattie Roberts 2-11)

With four finals to be played, the chances were that at least one would produce a tense finish and it proved to be this one as Stockport Trinity got home in the final over to make it a T20 double.

Three of Didsbury's best batsmen were dismissed cheaply, two of them by Hattie Roberts, but Didsbury still had two dangerous T20 specialists in Roshini Prince-Navaratnam and Laura Griffiths, who duly got the innings back on track after coming together at 27-3.

Didsbury then lost momentum after the pair had reached 25 and been forced to retire, and the final total of 99 was not a daunting target, especially considering that the Chester ground has a great batting pitch and the boundaries remained at the shorter length used in the earlier KSL match.

Just as in their earlier successful run chase, Sarah McCann and Kate Harvey laid a good foundation with their opening stand, and when Carys White came in after the first wicket she played several fine strokes and got her team above the required rate.

However, every time it appeared someone might finish the job for Trinity, they would get out. White, Gaby McKeever and Emily Thomas all looked good for a short time but couldn't stick it out and when Rosie Wilson delivered a double-wicket maiden in the 17th over it looked like the pendulum had swung Didsbury's way. Trinity finally got home with three balls to spare with numbers nine and ten at the crease.

CWCL Senior Knockout Plate:

Upton 120-6 (20; Charlie Scudder 28ret) BEAT Stockport Georgians 82-7 (20; Maddy White 19ret, Phillipa Dagger 2-8, Hannah McGowan 2-10)

Upton's imposing total proved too much for their fellow Division 2 side. Maddy White did her best in reply for as long as she could, thrashing three fours in the first over, but shortly after she admitted defeat with her injury, and then none of her teammates could match her score of 19. Instead it was some excellent bowling from the likes of Phillipa Dagger, Hannah McGowan and Madi Arthur that brought the trophy home for Upton.

In the two seasons since the team was formed, the North Wirral club have now scooped three trophies, after winning Division 3 and the Development Knockout last year. This year they are still in contention for the second division title in a very tight race.

Staging four finals for the League is no small task in itself and staging a Kia Super League match is not an easy undertaking either. The League is therefore massively grateful to Chester Boughton Hall for taking on both on the same day. Special thanks to everyone who was there for the entire day, including the Didsbury 1st and 2nd XI squads and their supporters; Stockport Trinity and their supporters; the umpires Keith Wells, Duane Jones, Allan Axon and Graham Pugh; and the many staff and volunteers from the host club.

Semi-final results from the week preceding the finals:

Senior KO Semi Final – August 12:

Chester Boughton Hall Deemons 37 (15; Dawn Prestidge 20, Hana Rafiq 5-5, Roshini Prince-Navaratnam 3-3)
Didsbury Swordettes 41-1 (6.5; Mishel Jeena 19*)

- Didsbury decisively booked their place in what for them is a third final in this competition

Plate Semi-Final – August 14:

Upton beat Woodley after a bowl out.

- Sadly, with the match scheduled for just four days prior to Finals Day, and the Woodley ground ruled unfit for a match to take place, this was the only way to decide the finalists. Upton prevailed in the sudden death stage of a bowl out involving players having one attempt each at knocking down an unguarded set of stumps.

Other Lancashire Thunder results

Kia Super League – August 13:

Yorkshire Diamonds 151-6 (20; Lauren Winfield 56, Hollie Armitage 33, Alyssa Healy 30, Kate Cross 2-31)
Lancashire Thunder 142 (19.1; Harmanpreet Kaur 37, Emma Lamb 32, Katie George 2-16, Alice Davidson-Richards 2-25)

- This was perhaps the match Lancashire had targeted to break their duck, but their last three wickets fell quickly to leave them short of the target when bowled out at the start of the final over.

August 16:

Lancashire Thunder 132-7 (20; Harmanpreet Kaur 34, Emma Lamb 29, Sophia Dunkley 23, Kate Cross 22*, Amanda Wellington 3-22, Stafanie Taylor 2-23)

Southern Vipers 132-8 (20; Taylor 51, Maia Bouchier 40, Lamb 3-33, Cross 2-13, Sophie Ecclestone 2-22)

- This thrilling tie at least ended Thunder's losing run, and they had to fight back from 30-4 and 94-7 batting first, with Kate Cross and Sophie Ecclestone putting together a crucial eighth wicket partnership. Vipers slumped to 24-4 but a stand of 94 between Stafanie Taylor and Maia Bouchier looked to have put them on course for victory. Ecclestone then bowled Taylor and ran out Bouchier, and two more wickets from Emma Lamb in the final over ensured the Hampshire-based franchise couldn't quite get over the line, with a scampered single off the final ball bringing the scores level.

August 20:

Loughborough Lightning 157-7 (20; Georgia Adams 50, Georgia Elwiss 38, Kathryn Bryce 32, Sophie Ecclestone 3-17, Kate Cross 2-23)

Lancashire Thunder 74-6 (13.4; Sune Luus 30, Tahlia McGrath 26, Kirstie Gordon 3-18, Hayley Matthews 2-1)

Lightning win by 35 runs on D/L/S

- Thunder enjoyed an almost perfect powerplay at the start of the match, reducing Loughborough to 18-3, but nothing went their way thereafter. Lightning managed to score at almost 10 per over in overs seven to 20 to set a daunting total. Sophie Ecclestone's 15 dot balls from 24 deliveries and overall figures of 3-17 was yet another demonstration of her world class talent, and while she may have taken some punishment in her final over, Cross's 2-23 was also a fine effort. The other Thunder bowling analyses were less than perfect though.

On this day, players who had played for one of the various incarnations of Lancashire women's cricket - the combined Lancashire & Cheshire team prior to 1997, the Lancashire team that played in the county championship from 1998 onwards and the Lancashire Thunder Super League team – were all invited to a function at the Test ground. Although Lancashire will continue to field a county T20 team, and it is possible one of the teams in the new 50 over regional championship will carry the Lancashire name, the ECB's plans to revamp top-level domestic women's cricket mean this is the end of an era. The attendees, who were presented with a Lancashire cap in a televised on-field ceremony, included the following players with Cheshire connections:

- Carol Ingham – played for Lancashire & Cheshire from 1987-1992 and for Lancashire in 1998; and in the last 12 years has produced consistent performances in the CWCL for Appleton, Trafford MV, Ashton-on-Mersey, Lymm Oughtrington Park and Oakmere
- Allyson Byrne – was the last captain of Lancashire & Cheshire in 1996-7 and continued to play for Cheshire until 1999 and for Neston in the CWCL until 2012
- Laura MacLeod – alongside her fine international career, she played for Lancashire & Cheshire from 1995-7, for Cheshire from 1998-2001 and again in 2009 and 2016, for Lancashire from 2003-6 and for Lancashire Thunder in 2016
- Kate Holt – played for Lancashire & Cheshire from 1995-7 and for Cheshire from 1998-2000; and thereafter appeared in the CWCL for Chester Boughton Hall and then for Poynton and Stockport Trinity until 2011
- Rachael Walsh - played for Lancashire from 2000-09 and again in 2013, and for Cheshire from 2010-2; and also made occasional appearances for CWCL clubs Poynton and Bowdon

August 23:

Lancashire Thunder 164-5 (20; Ellie Threlkeld 52, Harmanpreet Kaur 38, Tahlia McGrath 29, Katie Levick 2-19, Alice Davidson-Richards 2-51)

Yorkshire Diamonds 168-6 (18.5; Alyssa Healy 77, Jemimah Rodrigues 43*, Sophie Ecclestone 2-18)

- This may be the weakest batting line up on paper Thunder have fielded in the four years the competition has been running, but the bowling has not always gone to plan either. Sophie Ecclestone was again the pick of the bowlers but even Kate Cross couldn't stop Alyssa Healy's blistering innings of 77 from 38 balls.

August 25:

Lancashire Thunder 122 (19.5; Sophia Dunkley 29, Sune Luus 27, Jenny Gunn 3-14, Sarah Glenn 3-25)

Loughborough Lightning 123-2 (16.1; Amy Jones 66*, Chamari Atapattu 26)

- A comprehensive win for the Lightning and Thunder's search for a win in 2019 goes to the final match at Blackpool on Wednesday.

OTHER NEWS: Didsbury suffer first league defeat as Prestidge hits 134, but remain in pole position ... Leigh and Woodley looking good in divisions 2 & 3 ... League XI play MCC at Marple this Thursday ... Dinner tickets on sale

CHESHIRE WOMEN'S LEAGUE

Division One – August 25:

Oakmere 186-6 (40; Dawn Prestidge 134, Amna Malik 3-26) (25pts)

Didsbury 113 (39.3; Roshini Prince-Navaratnam 42, Emma Tarpey 3-17, Natalie Lyons 2-10, Rachel Tidd 2-6) (6pts)

- Is there a final twist in the tale? Dawn Prestidge's magnificent score – the highest in the league this season, and Oakmere's good all-round bowling show combined to end Didsbury's league unbeaten record. However, the Manchester team are still in pole position and it is likely a win at Appleton next Sunday, or at home to Stockport Trinity in two weeks, will be enough to see them finish as champions.

Division Two – August 25:

Leigh (25pts) w/o Wistaston Village (minus 10pts)

- Without needing to take the field, another step closer to the divisional title for Leigh. Ashton-on-Mersey now cannot overtake them, subject to the small caveat of Leigh not having to concede one of their final two fixtures; however Nantwich, Upton and Oxtan are still in contention, mathematically at least.

Division Three – August 21:

Woodley 124-4 (20; Marika Smith 23, Imogen Young 21) (25pts)

Didsbury 2nd XI 40 (11; Louise Hughes 4-7, Georgie Morton 2-17) (3pts)

- Woodley's excellent recent form continued here – is this their year for glory?

August 22:

Lymm Oughtrington Park 38-5 (20; Louise Hughes 3-3)

Woodley 39-2 (9.4; Marika Smith 10*)

- More fine bowling from Louise Hughes as Woodley took another step closer to the title

Division Four – August 12:

Marple 2nd XI 82-7 (20; Kat Axon 15, Claire Ashworth 2-10)

Lindow 83-8 (20; Ashworth 30, Axon 4-16) (25pts)

- Lindow got home from the final ball to keep their title bid on track, but with top scorer Claire Ashworth dismissed earlier it was a real nailbiter with the Wilmslow team's tail enders left to complete the job.

Player loans:

Nicky Deane - Hawarden Park to Chester Boughton Hall 2nd XI

Helen Johnson – Stockport Georgians to Oakmere

Clubs are reminded that loan players can now make just three league loan appearances for the same club during the same season, so it is no longer possible to approve open-ended loans as may have been the case in previous seasons. Clubs are asked to be aware of how many league appearances each loan player has made to ensure this regulation is not breached.

Matches awaiting possible re-arrangement - Division 3:

Marple v Lymm (Marple unable to fulfil fixture on original date)

Didsbury 2nd XI v Marple (Marple unable to fulfil fixture on original date)

Division 4:

Marple 2nd XI v Heaton Mersey & Cheadle, Chester Boughton Hall 2nd XI v Heaton Mersey & Cheadle, Heaton Mersey & Cheadle v Marple 2nd XI* (weather conditions)

*=assume not played due to rain on August 11 in absence of any further information

Chester Boughton Hall 2nd XI v Marple 2nd XI (Marple unable to fulfil fixture on original date)

Please advise of any re-arrangements, or if any of these will not be re-arranged.

Matches not played due to weather conditions and which are not re-arranged will be recorded as Cancelled (8pts each).
Matches not played due to one team being unable to fulfil the fixture and which are not re-arranged will be awarded to the other team (25/minus 10pts)

The League Dinner will be on Saturday September 21, with attendees asked to arrive for 1900 to sit down for dinner at 1930. As last year's event was in Frodsham, we now return to the east of the county, and for the third time the event will be staged at Hazel Grove Golf Club in Stockport, a venue which has met with widespread approval on our two previous visits. The League will no longer be in a position to repeat the 'three free tickets for very six bought' offer but will once again freeze the ticket price at £20. The menu and order form have been circulated to club representatives.

The format will be similar to previous years and the three-course meal will be followed by the individual and team presentations and the disco. There may be a special guest to present the prizes, but it is not anticipated that they will give a formal speech.

It is extremely important that clubs send details of the numbers attending and their menu choices to Alan Thomas no later than Friday September 13 and that payment is sent to Bob Halstead by the same date. Contact information for Alan, Di and Bob is on the email sent to club representatives, as is details of the league's bank account (although payments can also still be made via cheque). Again, there is a limit of 120 so places will be allocated on a 'first pay first served' basis, so please book your place early to avoid disappointment.

Any under 16s must be accompanied by a responsible adult.

Any ticket not paid for by September 14 will be offered for re-sale.

SENIOR REPRESENTATIVE CRICKET

The League XI will play the MCC this Thursday, August 29, at 1130 at Marple CC. Gillian Spragg leads the team for a second time, having been the captain in the very first fixture in 2009. Molly Price, Liv Bell, Carys White and Roshini Prince-Navaratnam from last year's victorious team return, but the other six players get their first opportunity in this fixture.

The full team is: Gillian Spragg (Stockport Trinity, captain), Carys White, Kate Harvey (both Stockport Trinity), Roshini Prince-Navaratnam (Didsbury), Ellie Davey (Leigh), Emily Stones, Ellie-Mae Davies, Georgia Norman (all Porthill Park), Molly Price (Chester Boughton Hall), Liv Bell (Stockport Georgians), Hailey Coutts (Oakmere). Additional fielders: Kat Axon, Freya Jones (both Marple). Scorers: Rosie Davis (Didsbury), Ray Bell (Stockport Georgians).

The bar will be open all day.

CHESHIRE SENIORS

With this newsletter I have also sent some statistics for the last 11 years of Cheshire's county T20 matches.

OTHER NEWS

The ECB's annual National Playing Survey is now live, and everyone is invited to complete this and [have their say on their experiences of playing cricket](#). Everyone who completes the survey will be entered into a draw to win £500 cash, a £100 Amazon voucher or tickets to the final Ashes Test.

LEAGUE TABLES

Division 3	p	w	wcn	l	lcn	BatP	BowlP	NRR	Pts
Woodley CC	9	8	0	1	0	4	0	2.25	204
Didsbury CC 2 nd XI	11	4	2	5	0	7	12	-1.21	169
Hawarden Park CC	9	5	1	2	1	10	3	1.71	153
Marple CC	7	1	1	4	1	10	10	-0.53	60
Lymm Oughtrington Park CC	8	0	0	6	2	4	5	-3.7	-11

Division 4	p	w	l	c	BatP	BowlP	NRR	Pts
Lindow CC	8	5	1	2	4	3	0.8	148
Marple CC 2 nd XI	4	2	2	0	9	8	-0.1	67
Chester Boughton Hall CC 2 nd XI	3	1	0	2	0	0	2.44	41
Heaton Mersey & Cheadle	5	0	5	0	18	7	-1.59	25

p - Played, w - Won (25), wcn - Opposition Conceded (25), l - Lost (0), lcn - Team Conceded (-10), c - Cancelled (8), BatP - Batting Bonus Points, BowlP - Bowling Bonus Points, Pen - Penalty Points, NRR - Net run rate, Pts - Points

LEAGUE TABLES

Division 1	p	w	l	c	BatP	BowlP	NRR	Pts
Didsbury CC	8	6	1	1	3	3	1.78	164
Oakmere CC	9	5	4	0	7	15	-0.17	147
Porthill Park CC	8	5	2	1	7	5	1.22	145
Appleton CC	8	5	3	0	9	9	0.23	143
Chester Boughton Hall CC	9	2	7	0	13	23	-0.83	86
Stockport Trinity CC	8	1	7	0	18	15	-1.77	58

Division 2	p	w	wcn	l	lcn	c	BatP	BowlP	NRR	Pts
Leigh CC	12	7	1	3	0	1	10	8	1.65	226
Ashton-on-Mersey CC	13	6	0	3	0	4	8	10	0.51	200
Upton CC	11	4	2	4	0	1	8	15	0.05	181
Oxton CC	11	5	1	5	0	0	12	14	0.28	176
Nantwich CC	11	4	1	3	0	3	6	10	0.25	165
Stockport Georgians CC	11	2	2	5	0	2	12	15	-0.81	143
Appleton CC 2nd XI	13	3	1	2	4	3	2	6	-0.4	92
Wistaston Village CC	12	0	0	6	4	2	14	16	-2.76	6