

## Cheshire County Cricket League

### **2015 NEWSLETTER: NOVEMBER ISSUE**

# Clubs asked to approve circles, over restrictions, earlier starts .....

THE League's Cricket Committee have framed a series of forward-looking playing regulation proposals which have been circularised to all clubs and will be considered at the Management committee meeting at Timperley on Wednesday, November 18, then voted upon in January. They include:

**Bowling restrictions.** In League matches only, bowlers to be restricted to a maximum of 18 overs in 110 overs matches; 15 in 100 overs games; 12 in 90 overs games; 10 in 80 overs games.

O This is an extension of the current 3rd XI rule and is intended to share all games out among more bowlers.

**Starting times.** Pitching of wickets to be brought forward as follows: Premier League in April to the penultimate Saturday in August from 12.30 to 12 noon; from the last Saturday in August and in September from 12 noon to 11.30 a.m. In other 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> XI league matches corresponding times come forward from 1 p.m. to 12.30 p.m. and from 12.30 p.m. to 12 noon.

O This is a uniform move of all Saturday league matches to start 30 minutes earlier following requests from players. Sunday start times unchanged.

**Fielding circles.** In 1<sup>st</sup> XI cricket when matches are officiated by two panel umpires, 30 yard fielding circles will be applied, which means at the instant of delivery a minimum of four fielders plus wicket keeper and bowler must be within the circle. If infringed, a no ball shall be called.

O Another measure tabled at the urging of clubs, to reduce negativity shown by some captains, especially on winning the toss, fielding and setting out to defend

**Pink balls.** In the 1st XI T20, each side shall use a new pink ball. Agreement to be reached between the captains and umpires before the toss to establish the process for replacing the pink ball in the event of loss.

O This is to aid visibility and would help the club which goes on to compete in the ECB knock-out stages.

**Over 40s circles.** In the Over 40s section Finals Day (semi-finals and finals) when panel umpires are operating, 30 yard fielding circles to be introduced as above. A strict interpretation of the leg side wide is also to be applied.

## 2016 FIXTURES

FIRST and second XI League fixtures for the 2016 season which begins on Saturday, April 23 are expected to be available early in December.

Clubs have been circulated asking them to notify the Competition secretary of any special weekend events such as mid-summer balls, etc. which entail 1st XIs needing to be placed away on specific dates, or of major groundworks.

Timperley have already asked not to be given any 1st XI games for the final four weeks due to major work on their ground.

When Cheshire announce their home match venues, an attempt will also be made to scheme in League 2<sup>nd</sup> XI home fixtures on the previous Saturdays.

O A copy of the Over 40 fixtures for 2016, devised by Ian Sharrock, is now available on the League website.

## **One-ground T20 Finals Day plan**

THE League T20 Finals Day in 2016 is to be staged on a club ground with one square for the first time, with matches possibly scheduled for 10.30 a.m., 1.30 p.m. and 4.30 p.m.

The event is earmarked for Sunday, July 10, with a fall-back date to Sunday, July 24 in the event of rain.

Clubs wishing to stage the event should apply to the Competition secretary ASAP.

A total of 34 clubs will take part, Marple and Stockport being ruled out after forfeiting games last season. Newcomers Barrow and Lindow are both included

Master-minded by Urmston chairman Rob Arnold, the same group format will apply as last season when Chester Boughton Hall beat Toft in a rain-ruined final at Upton. Nine re-shuffled groups will each feature a seeded club based on the 2015 ECB Premier League final placings. Seven of the groups have four clubs and the two have three clubs, the latter being allowed a reserve date in case of rain. The group fixtures will lead to a quarter-final play off, followed by four quarter-finals.

The final winners will go on to represent the league in the ECB National t20 Area finals on Sunday, August 7, then the Regional finals on Sunday, August 21. No date has yet been set for the National Finals Day, which Chester Boughton Hall have reached in each of the past two seasons, winning the event in 2014.

Clubs will be allowed to switch games to Sundays or other days of the week if they mutually agree. All requests for date changes need to be made by the first week in May, 2016.

In 2015, the tournament was sponsored by Joseph Holt Brewery

### **FULL DRAW (all mid-week games start at 6.15 p .m.)**

#### **GROUP 1 (HYDE, Cheadle Hulme, Mobberley, Sale):**

Thursday, May 12: Sale v Hyde; Mobberley v Cheadle Hulme

Thursday, May 26: Hyde v Mobberley; CheadleHulme v Sale

Thursday, June 9: Hyde v Cheadle Hulme; Sale v Mobberley.

#### **GROUP 2 (NANTWICH. Congleton, Oulton Park, Tattenhall):**

Thursday, May 19: Congleton v Nantwich; Oulton Park v Tattenhall

Thursday, June 2: Tattenhall v Congleton; Nantwich v Oulton Park

Thursday, June 16: Tattenhall v Nantwich; Oulton Park v Congleton

#### **GROUP 3 (TOFT, Alvanley, Davenham Middlewich)**

Thursday, May 12: Alvanley v Toft; Davebnham v Middlewich;

Thursday, May 26: Middlewich v Alvanley; Toft v Davenham

Thursday, June 9: Middlewich v Toft; Alvanley v Davenham

#### **GROUP 4 (ALDERLEY EDGE, Bollington, Northwich, Timperley)**

Thursday, May 19: Alderley Edge v Bollington; Timperley v Northwich

Thursday, June 2: Bollington v Timperley; Northwich v Alderley Edge

Thursday, June 16: Timperley v Alderley Edge; Bollington v Northwich

#### **GROUP 5 (CHESTER BOUGHTON HALL, Neston, Oxton, Upton)**

Thursday, May 12: Oxton v Chester; Upton v Neston

Thursday, May 26: Chester v Upton; Neston v Oxton

Thursday, June 9: Neston v Chester; Upton v Oxton.

#### **GROUP 6 (BOWDON, Christleton, Grappenhall, Widnes)**

Thursday, May 19: Widnes v Bowdon; Grappenhall v Christleton

Thursday, June 2: Bowdon v Grappenhall; Christleton v Widnes

Thursday, June 16: Widnes v Grappenhall; Bowdon v Christleton

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### **T20 draw contd ...**

#### **GROUP 7 (MACCLESFIELD, Barrow, Warrington, Weaverham)**

Thursday, May 19: Barrow v Weaverham; Warrington v Macclesfield

Thursday, June 2: Weaverham v Warrington; Macclesfield v Barrow.

Thursday, June 16: Macclesfield v Weaverham; Warrington v Barrow.

#### **GROUP 8 (CHEADLE, Urmston, Lindow)**

Thursday, May 12: Lindow v Urmston; (reserve date, Thursday, May 19)

Thursday, May 26: Cheadle v Lindow (reserve date Thursday, June 2)

Thursday, June 9: Urmston v Cheadle (reserve date: Thursday, June 16)

#### **GROUP 9 (BRAMHALL, Brooklands, Didsbury)**

Thursday, May 12: Didsbury v Brooklands (reserve date: Thursday, May 19)

Thursday, May 26: Brooklands v Bramhall (reserve date Thursday, June 2)

Thursday, June 9: Bramhall v Didsbury (reserve date Thursday, June 16)

#### **QUARTER-FINAL play-off (Thursday, June 23 or Sunday, June 26)**

Winners of Group 8 v winners of Group

#### **QUARTER-FINALS (Thursday, June 30, Sunday, July 3 or Thursday, July 7)**

Winners of Group 5 v winners of Group 1

Winners of Play-off v winners of Group 3

Winners of Group 4 v winners of Group 6

Winners of Group 2 v winners of Group 7.

**FINALS DAY on Sunday, July 10 (ground to be arranged.)** . Fall-back date Sunday, July 24.

## **589 - wicket Halkon is Sale's greatest bowler**

LEG-SPINNER Rick Halkon was officially proclaimed Sale's greatest bowler at the club's end-of-season awards evening when it was revealed that he had topped the club bowling averages for a ninth time, passing the century-old record of Sir Edwin Stockton (*writes Rob Moore*).

Also a legger, Sir Edwin was a well-known figure in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, topping the Sale bowling averages eight times between 1901-1909; he was President of both Sale and Lancashire CCCs and was MP for Manchester Exchange for many years. The Manchester Association championship was awarded in his name from 1920 until its recent demise. Sale were the first winners of the trophy in 1920 when the club captain was Edwin's younger brother Albert.

One -Club -Man Rick Halkon's total league wickets haul of 589 is by far the biggest of any player who started after 1967, next best being current League Umpires Association secretary Glyn Roberts, with 482.

Halkon's wickets have come at the remarkable average of 15.77, economy rate (runs per 100 balls) 48.

His full career record is: 3,200 overs; 818 maidens; 9,290 runs; 589 wickets, with a best bowling performance last season of 9-32 versus Middlewich including a hat-trick. He holds two County League divisional records, 789 wickets in Division I in 2011 and 42 in 3rd XI Sunday Division 3 in 1999.

Among 2015 winners at the awards evening were: Player of Year Tyrone Lawrence; Best Clubman George Franks; Young Player of Year Sam Battersby; Most Improved Player Will Radcliffe; Under 18 Player of Year Joe Cannon.

## **CLUB NEWS BEGINS HERE**

STANDING down as chairman at **GRAPPENHALL** after nine years is Dave Nicholson, to be succeeded by Ian Hayes.

New 1st XI skipper is Adam Roylance who replaces Liam Parkinson, with Iain Wright leading the twos, David Seed the threes and Steve Newell the Over 40s.

**ALDERLEY EDGE** all-rounder Richard Wilkinson has been selected for the MCC squad for a six match tour of Nepal from November 14- 23.

Clubs are invited to notify *Newsletter* of further news for use in the winter issues.

## **Cheshire County 2016 programme**

### **Unicorns Knock out Trophy Group 2 (all 11 a.m.)**

Sunday, April 24:	Staffordshire	home
Sunday, May 12:	Herefordshire	away
Sunday, /May 8:	Wales	home
Sunday, May 25:	Shropshire	away

Quarter-final, semi-final and final dates TBA

### **Unicorns County championship West Division (all 11 a.m.)**

Sunday–Tuesday, June 5 – 7	Wiltshire	home
Sunday –Tuesday, June 19 – 21	Dorset	away
Sunday –Tuesday, July 3 – 5	Berkshire	away
Sunday –Tuesday, July 17 – 19	Devon	home
Sunday -Tuesday, July 31 - Aug. 2	Shropshire	home
Sunday -Tuesday, Aug. 14 - 16	Oxfordshire	away

Inter-divisional play-off (in West) TBA

O THE County Club's 101st AGM is to be held at the Golden Pheasant Hotel, Plumley on Monday, November 16 at 7.30 p.m.

## **ENGLAND DATES FOR YOUR 2016 DIARY**

### **Sri Lanka tour**

1st Test: Thursday, May 19 – Monday, May 23 at Headingley.

2nd Test: Friday, May 27 – Tuesday, May 31 at Durham

3rd Test: Thursday, June 9 – Monday, June 13 at Lord's.

1st ODI: Tuesday, June 21 (day-night) at Trent Bridge

2nd ODI: Friday, June 24 (day-night) at Edgbaston

3rd ODI: Sunday, June 26 at Bristol.

4th ODI: Wednesday, June 29 (day-night) at The Oval.

5th ODI: Saturday, July 2 at Cardiff.

T20: Tuesday, July 5 at Ageas Bowl (floodlit).

### **Pakistan tour**

1st Test: Thursday, July 14 – Monday, July 18 at Lord's

2nd Test: Friday, July 22 – Tuesday, July 26 at Old Trafford

3rd Test: Wednesday, August 3 – Sunday, August 7 at Edgbaston

4th Test: Thursday, August 11 – Monday, August 15 at The Oval.

1st ODI: Wednesday, August 24 (day-night) at Southampton

2nd ODI: Wednesday, August 27 at Lord's

3rd ODI Tuesday, August 30 (day-night) at Trent Bridge

4th ODI: Thursday, September 1 (day-night) at Headingley.

5th ODI: Sunday, September 4. at Cardiff.

T20: Wednesday, September 7 (floodlit) at Old Trafford.

### ***Groundsmen's officers to carry on***

ALL officers were re-elected at a sparsely-attended Cheshire Association of Groundsmen's AGM, namely: Brian Huxley chairman; David Twiney treasurer; Brian Jarrard secretary; Paul Agar and Nick James (ECB pitch advisors).

Richard Cragg gave a delightful talk on the manner in which Bramhall's present cricket ground had been developed from a farmer's field.

## **Grounds chairman praises clubs**

GROUNDS chairman John Bygate has warm praise for clubs who helped to maintain the high quality of pitches and outfield in the League in 2015. He writes:

“It was a good summer for cricket with only one day virtually washed out. The cold spring gave some winter sports clubs outfield problems and cold temperatures continued to the end of June, preventing a fast growth of grass

Generally speaking our grounds continued in excellent condition. Christleton, Chester Boughton Hall, Alvanley, Grappenhall, Oulton Park, Sale, Oxton and Weaverham all averaged 18 or over in the Pitch table. The lowest figure of 15.56 for Bowdon was above the ECB report mark of 14 for problem pitches and it was disappointing to see two other Premier League clubs, Cheadle and Bramhall, in the bottom six. These clubs are aware of their problems.

Outfields were generally excellent and boundary markings good. New electronic scoreboards are becoming the norm and the League strongly encourage clubs to instal them wherever possible. It is essential that main scoreboards are used for all 1st and 2nd XI matches, NOT portable boards sited by the pavilion.”

### **Grants are available**

The report continues: “Grants are available for grounds either through the ECB or Sport England. The latter covered the cost of levelling the outfield, reseeding and drainage at Grappenhall. The League were helpful in re-arranging their fixtures to enable a start to be made in mid-August so that the ground could be totally reseeded by the first week in September.

In mid-August 2016, Timperley are to have their main square relaid, while Oulton Park are looking to enlarge and level their ground over a period of 4-5 years. Clubs considering applying for grants need to be aware that 25 years’ occupancy of the land (owned or leased) is necessary and the land must be registered.

The League offer a warm welcome to newcomers Barrow and Lindow from the Cheshire League. Officers visited both grounds supported by a Cheshire/ECB Pitch Advisor in August and approval was unanimous

We should be proud of our grounds and it’s worth mentioning that Minor Counties clubs Dorset and Cambridgeshire commented on the number and quality of grounds within our league on their recent visits.”

O Relegated from Division One, Christleton retained their position in 2015, finishing top of the Pitch table for the second successive season and taking second place (with Stockport) behind Oxton in the Outfield marks allotted by the umpires..

### **TOP 10 PITCH REPORTS**

<b>Position &amp; club</b>	<b>Average 2015 marks</b>	<b>2014 mark &amp; position</b>	
1. Christleton	18.82	18.71	1
2. Chester Bo Hall	18.80	18.57	2`
3. Alvanley	18.55	18.10	5
4. Grappenhall	18.50	17.73	9
5. Oulton Park	18.40	16.89	19
6. Sale	18.33	17.00	16=
7. Oxton	18.11	16.60	23
8. Weaverham	18.00 (7 reports only)	16.27	27=
9. Urmston	17.90	17.25	13
10= Macclesfield	17.71	17.44	12
10=Tattenhall	17.71	18.00	6

### **TOP 10 OUTFIELD MARKS**

<b>Position &amp; club</b>	<b>Average 2015 mark</b>	<b>2014 mark &amp; position</b>	
1. Oxton	19.89	19.38	11
2=Christleton	19.82	19.86	3
2= Stockport	19.82	19.00	19=
4. Urmston	19.67	19.50	6=
5= Nantwich	19.64	19.45	8=
5= Neston	19.64	19.89	2
7. Hyde	19.56	19.25	15
8. Middlewich	19.55	19.50	6=
9. Irby	19.50	18.38	27
10. Alderley Edge	19.40	19.45	8=

## **Cheshire League lose sponsors**

THE Cheshire Cricket League have lost sponsors TACS Partnership after a three-year association. A Press statement received by *Newsletter* from the company reads:

“Stockport-based tax advisors, the TACS Partnership, have withdrawn their sponsorship of the Cheshire Cricket League with immediate effect. The firm took this action after the league chose not to take further action against a club (Barrow) which allowed a player who had admitted an assault on an opponent to return to play in the league after just three weeks, despite a ban of a minimum of eight games having been imposed on the player by the club.

TACS Partnership spokesman David Blake added: “We have taken the decision with a heavy heart as we had hoped to remain as sponsors for the foreseeable future. As we cannot support the position taken by the league in respect of the actions of the club in question, we no longer feel able to continue to support the league”.

The TACS Partnership became sponsors of the league in 2013 and have actively supported cricket in the Cheshire over the past three seasons.

Anyone wanting further information should contact TACS by telephone on 0161 429 0006 or by e mail on [experts@tacs.co.uk](mailto:experts@tacs.co.uk)

O The Cheshire Cricket League are seeking replacement sponsors. Contacts: Chairman Graham Coull (tels. 01606 47408; 07867 825022; e-mail [graham.coull@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:graham.coull@yahoo.co.uk)). Secretary Brian Birtles (tel. 07766 114 447; e-mail: [bdbirtles@hotmail.com](mailto:bdbirtles@hotmail.com)),

### **Umpires recruitment urgent**

THE urgent need for the recruitment of more umpires was the main topic on the agenda at a meeting of the League Umpires & Scorers Association which is to follow the AGM, at Toft on Wednesday, November 11.

Meanwhile, Alistair Davies reports that he has set up a Facebook page entitled ‘Cheshire County Umpires’ inviting members to take part, with 200 ‘friends’ already enrolled. Twitter and Linked in accounts are also being set up.

### **SENIORS’ DINNER DATE & 2016 FIXTURES**

THE annual Cheshire Seniors’ Cricket Dinner is to be held at Chester Boughton Hall on Friday, November 13.

Meanwhile, Cheshire’s ECB 50 Plus County championship fixtures for 2016 have been announced. All Wednesdays, they are:

May 18: Cheshire v Notts; May 25: Cheshire v Durham; June 1: Yorkshire v Cheshire; June 15: Cheshire v Derbyshire; June 22: Cumbria v Cheshire; July 6: Cheshire v Northumberland; July 13: Lancashire v Cheshire.

Play-off dates (all Sundays). Last 16: July 31; quarter-finals: August 14; semi-final: August 21; final September 11.

## **Author’s Sydney Barnes play offer**

WELL-KNOWN author and former Cheshire club wicket-keeper Andrew Searle, now living in Dubai, writes to *Newsletter* with the following information – and offer:

“About 20 years ago I wrote a biography of the famous ex-Staffordshire and England bowler Sydney Barnes and I was recently contacted by director Keith Plant of Alsager Community Theatre who, along with writer Andrew Stewart and local actors Phil Jackson and Chris Eaton, asked for permission to devise a 45 minute play based on the book. I was only too pleased to agree.

“The upshot is that the play was written and the group are now planning to take it around cricket clubs in Cheshire and North Staffs as a possible fund-raiser for clubs and Chance to Shine. All were at some time involved in league cricket in the area

“If any club would like to take up this offer, please contact me on [Andrew.searle2@btinternet.com](mailto:Andrew.searle2@btinternet.com)”, he concludes.

MTB writes: I recently watched an FA Vase football match between Rochdale Town and 1874 Northwich (result 2-4) played on the Rochdale club’s ground which adjoins the now defunct Castleton Moor Cricket Club. The names of some of the surrounding streets took my eye such as Sydney Barnes Close (and Cover Drive!). I contacted Andrew about this and he told me that the great man played for ‘the Moor’ in the Central Lancashire League from 1924-28 and took more than 100 wickets in each of the last four seasons, his highest bowling average being 6.25 at a time when he was well into his fifties. This unique cricketer went on to play for local rivals Rochdale, then for three seasons with Rawtenstall in the Lancashire League.

## **FIRST XI FINES TOTAL £2,920**

FINES incurred in 1st XI cricket last season totalled £2,920, a considerable increase on 2014. This was largely attributable to the persistent failure of captains to submit their weekly umpires' marks which ran up a deficit of £1,320. Website fines were also up.

Plaudits are due to Alderley Edge, Congleton and Nantwich for incurring no fines at any level.

Clubs whose administration as not so good were: Tattenhall 19 (£285); Cheadle Hulme 13 (£195); Macclesfield 12 (£180), Weaverham 11 (£165) and Didsbury 10 (£150).

Second and Third XI fines are reported separately.

## **Obituary News**

### **BRYAN LOWE – A WONDERFUL COVER POINT**

THE death has occurred of former Cheshire captain and chairman Bryan Mellalieu Lowe, who went on to become President of the County Club and the League. He would have been 90 on November 5.

Bryan was born at Worsley in 1915 and was educated at Leigh GS and Cheadle Hulme School.

His cricket career was spent with Monton from 1934-39, Cheadle Hulme 1940-52 and latterly Macclesfield 1953-63. He played for Cheshire from 1948 to 1963, scoring 3,358 runs at an average of 23 including three centuries in days when wickets and run-scoring were of a lower quality. He took 44 catches and became known throughout Minor Counties cricket for his brilliant cover point fielding which was likened to that of Lancashire's famous Cyril Washbrook.

He captained the county club from 1954-58 and later became chairman from 1965-83, going on to serve as president from 1988-91. He was also one of the County League's longest serving presidents (1988-93)

Bryan leaves a widow, Mary, and a family. His funeral is at Macclesfield Crematorium on Tuesday, November 10.

### **IAN BISHOP - A GREAT HALE BARNs MAN**

ONE of the longest-serving administrators in Cheshire cricket, Ian Bishop died aged 81 on Sunday, October 25 after a long illness.

Club secretary Jon Petch writes: "Ian joined Hale Barns in 1979 as a player and later contributed greatly to the management of the club as chairman and he particularly enjoyed hosting Match Day Sponsored Teas which brought in considerable revenue.

He was made a Life Member in 2003 and served as President from 2008-2012. He helped form the Cheshire Umpires & Scorers Association along with Tony Morris, later becoming President of the Meller Braggins League and latterly a vice president.

"He was passionate about cricket in all its forms, especially at Brooks Drive and although he had been unwell for many months, he always kept in touch with results and other developments. He was a kind-hearted man who always took the trouble to get to know people in all areas of Cheshire cricket and contributed greatly to its development over more than a quarter-century".

Ian leaves a widow, Gwynne, and family. His funeral at Altrincham Crematorium on Thursday, November 5 was attended by a large congregation of family, friends and former cricket colleagues.

### **TOM GRAVENEY - A TEST AND LEAGUE LEGEND**

FAMOUS ex-Worcestershire, Gloucestershire and England batsman Tom Graveney OBE, who died on November 3 aged 88, was for more than 20 years President of the League Cricket Conference, a body to which the Vivio Cheshire County League has been affiliated since 1975.

Conference general secretary Rob Sproston writes: "Tom used to attend as many Conference and exec meetings as he could. He was loved and respected by everyone who came across him in League cricket after his years as a top Test player. In the Conference, we have now lost our three senior officers in chairman Bob Cherry, secretary Neil Edwards and now Tom in a short time. We should be very thankful for what they did for League cricket".

**Next issue of Newsletter: early - December**