

All the news from the AGM ..

There was no support at the meeting for a new competition involving club 2nd and 3rd XIs, so these teams will remain in the main league structure in 2025.

The following teams were voted in to the league's hardball competitions: Runcorn, Elworth, Brooklands, Oxton and Macclesfield 2nd XI. The first three are promoted from the division 5 softball competitions, while Oxton make a return having previously withdrawn from the league while a Division 2 club.

Leyland have exercised their automatic right to be promoted from Division 2 to Division 1, as have Didsbury 2nd XI for a move from Division 3 to Division 2. Nantwich 2nd XI declined the opportunity to be promoted and so remain in Division 3.

Buxton made a voluntary request for their 1st XI to be relegated to Division 3 and the club have also withdrawn their 3rd XI from the league.

Additional promotions that were approved, all from Division 4 to Division 3, came from Macclesfield, Oakmere 2nd XI and Heaton Mersey & Cheadle.

The Hawarden Park team will be relocating to Northop Hall CC and remain in Division 2.

January's meeting developments

The shock news here was the resignation from the league of four times league champions Appleton.

JG Meakin have also resigned from the CWCL.

The composition of the hardball divisions for 2025 is:

Division 1

Leigh
Didsbury
Nantwich
Lindow
Oakmere
Chester BH
Stockport Georgians
Leyland

Division 2

Upton
Greenfield
Hayfield
Northop Hall
Didsbury 2nd XI

Division 3 – two regional divisions

Alvanley
Nantwich 2nd XI
Chester BH 2nd XI
Oakmere 2nd XI

Buxton
Stockport Georgians 2nd XI
Lindow 2nd XI
Macclesfield
Heaton Mersey & Cheadle
Woodley

Division 4 - three regional divisions

Lymm OP	Toft	Buxton 2 nd XI
Elworth	Lindow 3 rd XI	Lindow Development XI
Runcorn	Stockport	Langley
Oxton	Stockport Georgians 3 rd XI	Macclesfield 2 nd XI
Grappenhall	Didsbury 3 rd XI	North East Cheshire
Wistaston Village	Whalley Range	New Mills & High Peak North
Kingsley	Brooklands	Hawk Green

The following proposals have been adopted into the CWCL regulations after the debate at the meeting and the subsequent votes:

(Division 2)

The same fielding restrictions as Division 1 will be adopted

Owing to the reduction of the division to five teams, they will play each other three times

(Division 3)

The cross-divisional element of the fixture list has been withdrawn and teams will now only play the others in the West or East division, as applicable

Owing to the reduction of the West division to four teams, they will play each other three times

(Division 4)

The default start time for all Sunday and Bank Holiday matches is now clarified as 1330

(T20 Divisional Competition)

If fewer than eight teams enter this, which is the case, then the teams will be placed in a single division and will play each other once. There will be no final and the team finishing top of the division will be the champions.

(Development KO)

Clarification that the final will be played with the maximum eight-ball over relating to no balls and wides

(Divisions 2-4 and Development KO)

All clubs with multiple teams in the League's hardball competitions will nominate 'starred' players who are restricted in their ability to play in the club's lower ranked teams:

1st XIs must nominate six starred players in clubs with two teams

2nd XIs must nominate five starred players in clubs with three teams

3rd XIs must nominate five starred players in clubs with four teams

- Starred players are unable to play down for any team as a rule. If, in exceptional circumstance, a starred player is required to make the minimum viable numbers for a game, this is permitted as long as the opposition and League Chair are notified in advance. If no advance notice is given, the league will issue a warning after the first offence and reserves the right to punish the second offence with either a forfeit or a replayed match (if the offending team won the game)
- In the circumstances where a starred player is required to play down, they are unable to bowl or keep wicket and must bat in one of the last two batting slots.
- Clubs must submit their starred players to the League Chair prior to the first match of the season.
- The submissions will be reviewed and the League Committee reserve the right to challenge any player for whom the starring appears inappropriate for any reason. This could happen at any point of the season and the League Committee can request that a club makes a change to their starred players should there be concerns over any player's status as a starred player.
- Clubs will have the opportunity to make three swaps per season in their starred player submission to cater for unexpected changes in circumstances i.e. removing a player from the list to give them the opportunity to find some form. Swaps enforced by the league will not count towards this limit. Clubs will not be penalized and made to swap players on the list if a starred player is made long term unavailable or injured after the starred players list is submitted.
- Clubs are reminded in the Spirit of Cricket, regular 1st XI (non-starred) players should not be appearing in a 3rd XI and regular 2nd XI players (non-starred) shouldn't be appearing in a 4th XI.

The following proposals did not attract sufficient support and will not be adopted:

(All competitions)

A proposal to tighten the criteria relating to overseas players

(Division 1)

- Various proposals to change the circumstances in which match re-arrangements are permitted
- A proposal to change the default start time to 1300
- Various proposals for a change to the regulations regarding the judgement of wides by umpires (*although there was a majority in favour of effecting some form of change, none of the individual proposals attracted majority support*)

(Division 2)

A proposal to play matches as 40 overs per side

(Division 3 and 4)

Proposals to scrap the batting and bowling bonus points

(Development KO)

A proposal to restrict this to Division 4 teams only

Fixtures

The CWCL master fixture programme for 2025 has been circulated with this newsletter. Please notify me of any agreed re-arrangements as soon as possible.

Meetings

The Captains' Briefing will take place on Wednesday April 2, at a venue to be confirmed. As some extremely important information about the forthcoming season will be communicated here, it is vital that every club entering the hardball divisions (1-4) is represented, so if the captain is unable to attend, please ensure the vice-captain attends instead. The meeting will then be followed by a full meeting of the League Committee.

EXTERNAL COMPETITIONS

There are only three CWCL clubs in the draw for this year's National Knockout Cup. All have a bye to the second round, where Lindow travel to Llandudno, Leyland host Ramsbottom and Stockport Georgians will be at home to Hightown St Mary's.

Whalley Range and Didsbury 2nd XI will go straight into the National Knockout Plate.

There is also an exciting new competition arranged by Lancashire CCC, known as the Thunder Premier Cup. The eight competing teams will all be allocated members of the Lancashire and Lancashire Thunder Academy squads for the duration of the competition. The competition culminates in a final at Old Trafford on September 21. So will that final involve any CWCL clubs? There must be a good chance as five of the eight teams accepted into the league come from our first division: Didsbury, Leigh, Leyland, Lindow and Stockport Georgians. Lancashire League clubs Edgworth, Ramsbottom and Sefton Park complete the line-up.

REPRESENTATIVE CRICKET

Cheshire Women return to competitive action in 2025 after a six-year hiatus.

They have been drawn away to fellow Tier 3 side Lincolnshire in the first round of the new Vitality T20 Women's County Cup, a competition which includes all 37 domestic counties, from the professional Tier 1 counties to the amateurs in the third tier. The match takes place on May 5 with the winner facing a trip to Leicestershire in the second round.

There's also a busy programme of Sunday cricket for Cheshire in the new 50 and 20 over league competitions.

Cheshire will be reviving an arrangement last used in 2013 and will play all of their home matches at the 'women's county ground' of Warrington CC.

Metro Bank One Day Cup Tier 3 Division 1

April 20	Wiltshire	A
April 27	Cambridgeshire	H
June 1	Staffordshire	A
August 10	Berkshire	H
August 24	Buckinghamshire	H
September 7	Devon	H
September 14	Hertfordshire	A

Vitality Blast Tier 3 Division 1 North

June 15	Buckinghamshire	A
June 29	Staffordshire	H
July 13	Cambridgeshire	A

OTHER NEWS

Emirates Old Trafford is host to an England Women v India women Vitality IT20 on Wednesday July 9 at 1830 and Lancashire Cricket are aiming to set a new record for the highest ever women's international crowd in the north. Early bird tickets are available for just [£11 adults and £5 juniors](#) until March 12. [Group ticket discounts](#) are also available if you book six or more tickets. Free fan village activities, live entertainment and food and drink stalls means that there will be something for everyone to enjoy.

SENIOR WOMEN'S DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

Cheshire continues to offer its wide range of [umpiring and scoring courses](#).

The Board also offers a number of [safeguarding courses](#). These do not take a long time to complete but are very important for anyone in a position of responsibility in grassroots cricket.