

We're now just weeks away from the start of a new season, where the Cheshire Women's League will have as many as seven different tiers of competition. The new Division 5 will be hardball pairs cricket, with softball cricket under normal cricket rules played in Division 6 and softball pairs cricket in Division 7.

Important Information for Clubs

Fixtures

The master fixture list for Divisions 1 to 4 of the CWCL in 2026, and also for the associated T20 competitions that are administered by the league has been issued to club representatives. All fixtures have been uploaded to Play Cricket.

Matches will take place on the default dates shown unless re-arranged as permitted under league regulations. In divisions 1 and 2, any re-arrangements under the 'mutual consent' regulation will need to be finalised by April 12.

Please advise me as soon as possible of any agreed re-arrangements in division 1, 2, 4 West or 4 East, and in the T20 Championship and Knockout Cups.

Jane Williams - janeparties21@gmail.com - will be the fixture contact for Division 4 SE.

Nichola Halford - nichola.halford@googlemail.com - will be the fixture contact for Division 3 W & E

For the time being, I am acting as the fixture contact for Divisions 4 West and East, although any volunteers to take on this task for the other divisions are very welcome. I will explain what is required and remain available to help these volunteers over the course of the season.

Please be aware that it's also necessary to inform your fixture contact of any unplayed fixtures during the season, together with the reason for them not being played, e.g. weather conditions or one of the teams being unable to fulfil the fixture date.

A series of useful documents will be circulated to club main contacts at the start of next week. This will include the updated club contacts list, so if you have not yet informed me of any changes to your captain, vice-captain, coach, manager or treasurer contact details yet, this is your final reminder.

The re-arranged 2025 Knockout finals will take place at Grappenhall CC on Sunday 3rd May. The Development final between Alvanley and Lindow 2nd XI will commence at 1100, followed by the senior knockout final between Didsbury and Lindow's first team at 1500. These matches will be played according to the 2025 competition regulations.

Player Registrations

While formal registration of the entire playing squad is not required at any level of the league, the relevant forms still need to be completed for:

- Players who represent a different club in the senior T20 competitions to that which they represent in the league competition
- Players who are loaned from one club to another
- Players who transfer between clubs after the season has commenced

In the case of a permanent transfer, the team management of the player's new club are also expected to check that the team management of the club the player is leaving are aware of the intended transfer.

Regulations

The results of the votes on the proposals tabled at the 2026 Rules Meeting are now available. Some fairly significant changes lie ahead as a result, especially in the higher divisions.

The following regulation changes have been adopted:

1. (Division 1) All deliveries that pass to the leg side of the batter - based on her normal stance – and which do not touch the batter's bat or person, shall be called 'wide'
2. (All T20 competitions) Other than in the final over, the maximum number of deliveries in any over - including any 'no balls' and wides - shall be eight
3. (Division 1, Senior Knockout, T20 Championship) The Duckworth-Lewis-Stern method shall be used to decide the results of weather-affected matches (*Note: the pure run rate method will still be used to decide weather-affected matches in divisions 2-4 and in the Development Knockout*)
4. (Senior Knockout, T20 Championship) There will now be no compulsory retirement score for batters (*Note: the retirement score remains at 30 for Division 4 and the Development Knockout*)
5. (Division 2) Matches will now be played as 40 overs per side (*Note: this means Division 2 will also adopt some key elements of the Division 1 regulations, such as the batting bonus point system, a maximum of eight overs per bowler, additional fielding restrictions for the first eight overs and 12.30 starts for September matches*)
6. (Division 2) Teams will play each other twice, home and away
7. (Division 2) One team will provisionally be relegated to Division 3 (*Note: this could mean Division 2 expanding to eight teams in 2027 should both of the Division 3 champions take up their right to promotion*)
8. (All competitions) There is now no 'first warning' for breaching the regulations relating to starred players. Any team which fields an ineligible player under this regulation will forfeit the match, unless their opponents agree to a replayed fixture
9. (Division 1) Umpires for all matches shall be appointed centrally, from the members of the league's umpires' panel. Clubs will need to pay the necessary expenses (and mileage allowance for matches where the home club is not affiliated to the Cheshire Board) (*Note: the league has also committed to providing financial support for clubs to aid this transition – see below*)
10. (Divisions 2-4) Any loan player who is playing in a lower division from that of their parent club shall be subject to the following restrictions:
 - The opposition shall be informed of the player's presence in the team well before the game
 - If the player is a recognised batter, they shall not bat in the top four positions
 - If the player is a recognised bowler, their overs should be used appropriately to the spirit of the game, and they should not be used as an opening bowler

The following proposals were not adopted:

1. (Senior Knockout & T20 Championship) Removal of the regulation where all leg side deliveries are called as wides
2. (All competitions) A proposal for a system whereby the batting bonus points were calculated based on increased run rates, and for teams batting second, based on them reaching a percentage of the target score. *(Note: this proposal did not receive majority support in any of the four divisions)*

The results of the following votes will be disregarded as they were dependent on the outcomes of other votes:

1. A proposal to raise the senior T20 retirement score from 40 to 50 *(Note: this was only ever a fallback proposal should the proposal to scrap the retirement score entirely have failed)*
2. (All competitions) A proposal that would allow the league to appoint umpires for selected matches *(Note: this would only have been considered had the proposal relating to panel umpires in division 1 been rejected)*

The revised regulations are available [here](#), with the changes for 2026 highlighted in red.

Umpires

With the new umpires panel to be introduced in Division 1, clubs are reminded of the need to inform both appointed umpires of any cancelled matches, giving two hours' notice prior to the scheduled start, where possible.

The appointments for the first round of matches on 19th April are as follows:

- Chester Boughton Hall v Northop Hall – Emma Mallinson & Ankit Jain
- Didsbury v Oakmere (at Woodford) – Oliver Passant & Chris Rigg
- Leyland v Leigh – Brian Boys & Trevor Burnett
- Stockport Georgians v Lindow – Carol Ingham & Duane Jones

Clubs in all divisions are asked to ensure that the correct venue for all of their 2026 home matches is showing on Play Cricket, to assist both the opposition and the appointed umpires.

Safeguarding

Please be aware of all of the [safeguarding resources](#) issued by the ECB, which include an updated Safe Hands Policy.

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the league committee will take place on Wednesday 3rd June at 1930, venue to be confirmed.

Small Grants

The League will provide an automatic grant of £350 to the eight Division 1 clubs, in recognition of the transfer to using panel umpires and the likely increase in costs.

Clubs in Divisions 2-7 are invited to complete the Small Grants form and apply for up to £200 of funding. Here, these funds can be used on any matter relating to club development (including purchase of scoring aids, kit, course fees and equipment) but cannot be used for regular expenses (e.g. umpire and scorer fees, ground hire, training venue hire).

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REPRESENTATIVE CRICKET

The Cheshire Women's League XI hosts MCC on Thursday August 27 at Heaton Mersey CC. The match is likely to be played over 45 overs per side this year and will start at the earlier time of 1100. After missing out due to injury after she was selected as the captain for the 2025 fixture, Didsbury's Emily Wilkins will lead the League team.

OTHER NEWS FROM ECB

The ECB wants to hear your opinions on how women's cricket leagues are run today, and how you think they could develop and improve. As a vital part of our wonderful game, sharing your experiences and insights will enable the ECB to turn your ideas into actions. The survey will take 10-15 minutes, but there will be options to finish it earlier, depending on your selections. As a thank you for taking part, you'll have the chance to win two tickets to the first Semi-Final at this year's ICC Women's T20 World Cup, taking place at The Kia Oval on Tuesday 30th June 2026. The survey & prize draw will be open until 31st March 2026.

With the 2026 season getting closer, the ECB Officiating Department continues to offer free online courses for those across the game who are interested in understanding more about umpiring and scoring. These courses are completely free of charge and accessible at any time.

ECB is excited to launch a brand-new development programme created exclusively for female umpires - whether you're curious about starting or already actively umpiring any level of recreational cricket.

- Inspiring guidance from experienced female umpires at every level
- Monthly bite-size online or in person workshops
- Exclusive networking at a live Women's Professional match in 2026
- Chances to umpire in ECB competitions locally or nationally

The online launch event takes place on Thursday 30th April at 1900, featuring Gabi Brown (a former CWCL player) from the ECB Professional Umpire Team.

The club group ticketing offer gives clubs the chance to watch the world's best women's teams on home soil – offering two free tickets when they buy 10 tickets to any fixture in the T20 World Cup, excluding the Final. Matches at Old Trafford are as follows:

Saturday 13th June: Scotland v Ireland (1030), Australia v South Africa (1430)

Sunday 21st June: South Africa v India (1430)

Thursday 25th June: India v Bangladesh (1430)

Friday 26th June: Sri Lanka v Scotland (1830)