



THE 2026 SEASON BEGINS

We're underway again for what will in all probability be the final season of the CCCL in its current format. The planned merger between the CCCL and the Cheshire Cricket League, which if all goes to plan will be unveiled for the start of the 2027 season, is in process. So it was that a chilly and damp-ish Saturday heralded 2026 cricket, with all 1st XI matches being played through to a conclusion.

2026 REGULATIONS & REMINDERS

There are no significant regulation changes to competitions this season although the following updates should be noted:

- ◆ Page 28 of the new league handbook outlines procedures for club umpires (i.e. those not appointed by the league) and players standing as umpires during a match. Particular attention should be given to regulations 2.15.4 (refusing to accept a non-playing umpire), 2.15.6 (players under 18 umpiring) and 2.15.7 (use of mobile phones, smoking & vaping whilst umpiring).
- ◆ Page 29 contains information regarding the provision of spare balls. Six balls in total should be provided by each captain at the toss (two new, four used) and clubs are to be prepared for this in order to avoid delays and extra pressures leading upto the start of a match.
- ◆ Page 40 & 41 contain a new section regarding dress code on the field of play.
- ◆ The points structure in Sunday 3rd XI cricket has altered and is outlined on pages 74-75.
- ◆ Umpires have been instructed to take action regarding bowlers or other fielders throwing the ball at a batsman, under Law 42.3.1. Although this action has been classed as a Level 2 offence for some years, particular emphasis is now being placed upon incidents such as a striker playing a delivery back to the bowler, who then immediately throws at the striker's end stumps. If either umpire deems such a throw to be too close to the striker, when there was no realistic prospect of a run-out, then Level 2 action is to follow.

The dates for Finals Days in all T20 competitions are on page 81 and will be featured in the newsletter throughout the relevant parts of the season.

2026 LAW CHANGES

MCC have published a document outlining numerous changes to the laws of the game which can be found on the Lords website, and downloaded for perusal. Umpires and players are encouraged to avail themselves of this facility. It should be noted, however, that these changes will come into force on 1st October 2026 and thus will not impact any cricket in England until the 2027 season. Many of the changes are technical ones - MCC list only 10 of the 73 'new' laws as being 'the biggest changes' - arguably the most significant being the one regarding deliberate short running. There will be an occasional focus on this new code throughout the newsletters published for the 2026 season.



THE 2026 WEEK 1 REVIEW - PREMIER DIV

The third season of hybrid-format cricket in the Prem saw defeat for the reigning champions and mixed fortunes for the two promoted sides.

A frustrating four-hour delay to the start of play at Stockport Rd was the only real disappointment of the opening day in the Premier Division, and it got worse for champions Didsbury as they lost by 4 wickets, hosts Timperley chasing down their 147 target with 9 balls to spare. With a 54 over game eventually being settled upon, Dids lost a clutch of early wickets to a mixture of good bowling, some injudicious strokes, and a run-out. Opener Tom Hafil (53*) carried his bat but despite Timperley having to bowl 3.2 overs with just two men out at the end, Dids' 146 seemed under-par, and a solid opening stand of 73 between Jamie Matthews and overseas recruit Dan Scholz (57*) gave Timpers the base to stay ahead of the game.

Not far away, Cheadle started their third Prem campaign post-Covid with a 95 run triumph at Brooklands, a result as heartening as it was impressive. Having been put in, a series of solid contributions saw Cheadle - welcoming back Subhaan Mahmood - post 224-8 in their allocation. Despite a fluent 45 from keeper Christian Jacobs, the wily trio of Will Holmes, Dan Brown and skipper Josh Dooler took 7-61 between them as Brooklands were all out 129. Back in the Prem after an eight-season absence, Bramhall got off to a spectacular start, with Hyde's new wk recruit Andrew Jones run out off the first ball of the match at Church Lane. After an initial slight delay to proceedings, that perfect start got better for the hosts as Hyde slumped to 26-4 after 12 overs. However, Rian Maisuria's composed 81* (147 bs) proved the decisive antidote, as Hyde battled their way to 160-9 in their 49 overs and then tore into the hosts, two quick wickets for skipper Andrew Jackson paving the way for Charlie Barnard (10-8-11-3) to weave his spell as Bramhall subsided to 113 all out.

After a 2025 spent staving off relegation, Neston were especially delighted to kick off their campaign with a notable 5 wicket win over near-neighbours Chester BH. Neston were also glad to have Ash Davis back in the Parkgate fold after his spell at Filkins Lane, the paceman getting Alex Money early on his way to 4-39. CBH recovered from 10-2 to post 221 (Noah Vickery 62, Atif Qureshi 51) and when the retuning Martin Green picked up the wickets of David Hurst and Matt Strong (first ball) it was Neston's turn to be in a pickle at 26-3. Matt Maritz (52) and former Bowdon man John Sanders then added 99 to turn the tide, Sanders finishing with a fluent 84* as Neston won with some eight overs to spare. Last year's runners-up Nantwich also found themselves on the Wirral, and they grafted their way to 196 at Oxton, young opener Ben Wright making 39 before claiming 3-32 (cont.)



2026 WEEK 1 REVIEW - PREM cont. & DIV 1

(including the returning Chris Stenhouse) as Oxton found the going every bit as tough, folding for 141. Ray Doyle, having passed the captaincy over to Luke Robinson, marked his new-found role with 5-26 to produce the stand-out figures of the day. The match of the day in terms of a tense conclusion was played at Moss Lane, the derby between Alderley Edge and Lindow turning into an absolute thriller. New AE skipper Chris Sanders opted to bat first and found himself striding to the crease a little earlier than he might have liked as his side fell to 39-3. However, Will Valentine smote 6 handsome sixes in a run-a-ball 76* as AE got to 206-8, Sanders then tearing in and bagging the first three Lindow wkts as the board showed 30-3. James Duffy used his vast experience to provide some ballast, Lindow fighting back, and as gripping contest developed they were 141-6 in the 39th, AE using 8 bowlers. Skipper Alex Matthews then whacked 39 off 28 to shift the momentum, as Duffy (48* off 113 bs) remained unbeaten, celebrating an exhilarating 2 wkt win with 8 balls left.

It was a miserable start to life in **Div 1** for the two relegated sides. Bowdon claimed a solitary point in a heavy loss at Bollington, their 119 all out featuring extras top-scoring with 39 (incl. 36 wides). After four years over in Nottinghamshire, Stuart Plant returned to the Rec and picked up 3-21, and with Tyran Liddiard also back in the ranks, promoted Bolly are a force to be reckoned with. Meanwhile Widnes initially boffed Toft at Beaconsfield Rd, the board showing 98-6 in the 37th, but youngsters Dan Ward (66*) and Liam Clorley (46) garnered 73 off the next 10, leading their side to 195-7. Two disastrous (for the hosts) early run-outs left them 28-4 but Luke McCoy (74) and Aaron Soni (32) buckled down to add 95. Ward (10-2-20-1) then bowled Soni to bring Toft back to life and they kept chipping away as McCoy was last man out, Toft winning an excellent game by 27 runs. An equally exciting contest at Dane Rd saw Sale's youthful last pair added an unbroken 31 to snatch a 1 wkt win over a disconsolate Marple, who were left to rue dropping Amlyn Layton four times as he crashed 65 off 54 bs, Layton earlier returning 10-2-14-2 which included the wkt of Marple's overseas recruit Jack Feilen, who made an accomplished 70 on debut.

Macclesfield, who pushed hard for promotion last year, got off to a winning start at Alvanley, who, despite Sophie Ecclestone's presence, went down by 32 runs. Macc had their own star turn in England U19 ace Joe Moores, who made a delightful 90 (85 bs) as his side posted 196-9. In reply, Alvanley were soon in the soup, struggling to 89-7 in the 35th as the Macc bowlers showed great control. Ieuan Morris and Corey McCarthy fought really hard in the lower order but couldn't stave off the inevitable, Alv all out 164. A high scoring contest at Flowery Field saw Stockport Georgians - who ended 2025 with a magnificent six match winning streak - continue where they left off, winning an entertaining encounter with Urmston by 19 runs. (cont.)



2025 WEEK 1 REVIEW - DIV 1 cont, plus 2 & 3

Boosted by 46 extras, SG posted 263-7, new skipper Ben Staniforth making 67 while Sean Duckworth hit 50. The hosts then proved every bit as generous to the Urmston chase as they contributed 50 extras, Ben Percival marking his league debut with 65 and Irfan Naseri, recruited from Heaton Mersey, 43, but their side just fell short in a gallant attempt, all out 244 with 8 balls remaining. The Wirral derby saw Maritime, boosted by 74 from Bilal Anwar and a 20-ball 47 from Mickel Joseph, reach 276-8 at Port Sunlight, who never really got sufficient momentum going to seriously trouble their opponents. PS ended on 227-7, Maritime winning by 49 runs.

Some surprise results in **Div 2**, most notably at Old Greasby Rd where a strong Upton batting line-up was skittled for just 85 by Ashley, three wkts apiece for Jibrán Khan, Archie Murray and Sabtain Baig, who then eased Ashley nerves with 21* as they steadied from 45-4 to win by 6 wkts. Oakmere marked their Div 2 bow with a tense 17 run win over Haslington, who let it slip somewhat after tying the home side down for much of their innings. New man Sevriano Cupido made 75 as Oakmere took 73 off the last 10 overs, Has shipping 38 extras and looking at 228 to win. Despite skipper Ben Instead making 49 and some valiant lower-order fight from Freddie & Jack Taylor, Cuipdo took the last wkt to make it a memorable day by the A49. Meanwhile there were mixed fortunes for the two relegated sides. Grappenhall were thumped by visitors Cheadle Hulme, who ran out comfortable 7 wkt winners. Scott Howarth (4-20) charged in early doors before Hayden Forner (59) and Jordan Potts (51) added 150 for the 1st in a stress-free pursuit of 165. Davenham, however, bucked their 2025 trend with a hard-fought win at NE Cheshire. Martyn East (10-8-6-2) put a headlock on the NEC innings early on but Sam Scragg (50*) led a recovery to 157-8. New Dav skipper Connor Mizi then made 51 as his side reached their target in the 40th over. Another captain making a mark was Oulton Park's Andrew Dufty, who hit a superb 103* (95 bs) as his side cantered to 257-4 at home to Romiley. Dufty was accompanied by 56* from Owen Williamson as the pair added 108* in the final 14 overs. Dufty then claimed 2-16 as Romiley were never at the races, all out 172. The West Cheshire derby at the Flacca saw an opening day loss for newly promoted Tattenhall, who managed to get to 181 despite being reduced to 120-7 by Christleton, Corey Bovey making 57. Ben Stoddard (70) and Jake Liddle (55) then did the heavy lifting, although there was still time for a scare as Christleton went from 179-4 to 179-7 in a teasing finale.

In **Div 3** newly-promoted Irby marked their return to the CCCL after an 11-season absence with the highest total in the division, skipper Rafi Afridi making an impressive 104 in his side's 198 at Winnington Park, who managed just 80 in reply. Not such a happy return after nine seasons away for Bredbury SM, whose long ride to Barrow saw them muster just 118. They did make the hosts work very hard for the points, through, Barrow needing some 45 overs to make 120-7. Relegated last season, Ashton OM were immediately enveloped in a pall of gloom at The Beets as they crashed to 58-9 against Heaton Mersey. However, the last pair added a heartening 61 and in a pulsating climax, HM were bowled out for 116, AOM claiming an amazing three run win. Warrington's Nathan Jeffrey took 5-20 as visitors Middlewich were all out 137, Matthew Wright then making 50 in a 6 wkt win. Elsewhere Runcorn edged to a 2 wkt win over Mobberley in a low-scoring encounter while Hale Barns won by 79 runs at Stockport.



CCCL TABLES - WEEK 1 (APR 18)

1ST XI PREM		
TEAM	PTS	MONTH
CHEADLE	20	20
NANTWICH	20	20
HYDE	20	20
TIMPERLEY	20	20
LINDOW	20	20
NESTON	20	20
DIDSBURY	7	7
ALDERLEY EDGE	6	6
CHESTER BH	5	5
OXTON	5	5
BRAMHALL	4	4
BROOKLANDS	4	4

1ST XI DIV 1		
TEAM	PTS	MONTH
BOLLINGTON	20	20
MACCLESFIELD	20	20
S.GEORGIANS	20	20
TOFT	20	20
MARITIME	20	20
SALE	20	20
MARPLE	7	7
ALVANLEY	6	6
PORT SUNLIGHT	6	6
URMSTON	6	6
WIDNES	5	5
BOWDON	1	1

1ST XI DIV 2		
TEAM	PTS	MONTH
DAVENHAM	20	20
OAKMERE	20	20
CHEADLE HULME	20	20
CHRISTLETON	20	20
ASHLEY	20	20
OULTON PARK	20	20
TATTENHALL	5	5
HASLINGTON	5	5
N.E.CHESHIRE	4	4
GRAPPENHALL	3	3
ROMILEY	3	3
UPTON	1	1

1ST XI DIV 3		
TEAM	PTS	MONTH
ASHTON OM	20	20
IRBY	20	20
BARROW	20	20
RUNCORN	20	20
HALE BARNES	20	20
WARRINGTON	20	20
HEATON MERSEY	5	5
BREDBURY SM	4	4
STOCKPORT	4	4
WINNINGTON PARK	4	4
MOBBERLEY	4	4
MIDDLEWICH	2	2

2ND XI PREM	
TEAM	PTS
LINDOW	20
DIDSBURY	20
TOFT	20
CHESTER BH	20
OXTON	20
BROOKLANDS	20
WIDNES	6
NESTON	5
UPTON	3
CHEADLE	1
NANTWICH	1
TIMPERLEY	1

2ND XI DIV 1	
TOP & BOTTOM	PTS
1. MARITIME	20
2. DIDSBURY 2A	20
3. BRAMHALL	20
11. MARPLE	5
12. HYDE	4



2ND XI DIV 2	
TOP & BOTTOM	PTS
1. GRAPPENHALL	20
2. H.MERSEY	20
3. UPTON 3	20
11. W.PARK	2
12. HASLINGTON	0

2ND XI DIV 3	
TOP & BOTTOM	PTS
1. OULTON PARK	20
2. RUNCORN	20
3. N.E.CHESHIRE	20
11. CHESTER BH 3	4
12. TATTENHALL	1

SUNDAY LEAGUE CRICKET COMMENCES ON MAY 3rd - THE 3RD XI T20 MINI-GROUP STAGES GOT UNDERWAY ON SUNDAY WITH A ROUND-UP ON THE NEXT PAGE.



WEEK 1 2ND & 3RD XI CRICKET

2ND XI CRICKET: Two centurions on day 1 of the Prem as all the best performing sides of 2025 got off to winning starts. Oxton's Charlie Clarke clattered 102 (141 bs), putting on 121 for the 1st wkt with Finn Dean (45) before Grant Hughes hammered 69* off 48 bs as the Cheadle attack was dispatched hither and yon at Kingsway, Oxton 239-3. Rich Fennah then bagged 5-34 and Isaac Bradley a remarkable 4-1 as the hosts collapsed from 79-4 to 88 all out. Lindow's Tom Parfett was the other man in three figures, reaching a fine 101* (117 bs) as he hit the boundary which secured a 7 wkt win over Upton. Champions Didsbury were grateful for some lower order heft as they inched up to 148 at home to Neston, having been 109-8. The 27 runs scored by last pair Michael Taylor and Owen Griffiths proved crucial as the two then spun their way to three wkts each, Neston - who were 62-3 - all out 113. Toft held on to secure a narrow 17 run win over Widnes but it was much more comfortable for Brooklands, who bowled out Nantwich for 99 en-route to a 6 wkt win, and Chester BH, who walloped Timperley by 9 wkts.

Div 1 saw mixed fortunes for the two sides relegated from the Prem. Stockport Georgians eased to a rain-affected 59 run win at Marple with Carlos Wakefield's 61 the top score. Sam Crossland's 60 helped Hyde recover from 65-7 to make 184 against visitors Bramhall, who had four batters all make 30-plus as they won by 4 wkts. Didsbury 2As held their nerve to secure a thrilling 6 run win at Macclesfield, making 163 after being 91-7. After a tense run chase Macc's Mudassar Panchbhaya went for glory in the gloaming but was caught in the deep. Promoted from Div 2, it was a losing start for Alderley Edge who went down by 78 runs at Maritime, while Romiley & Sale, and Bowdon v Alvanley, were both cancelled.

In **Div 2** Upton skipper Luke Williams took a wicket with the first ball of the match against Winnington Park, his side coasting home with a handsome 9 wkt win while there wins also for Heaton Mersey, Ashton OM in their derby at Urmston and Port Sunlight at Ashley. Grappenhall banished memories of an unhappy 2025 by bowling out Haslington for 74, a pleasing 10 wkt win theirs to enjoy on the ride home.

In **Div 3** Oulton Park won a nailbiter at Oxton by 6 runs, while Runcorn's John Dempsey made a dashing 84, and with support from nos. 9 & 10 lifted his side from 99-7 to 234-9 at Northwich, enough for a 51 run win. The West Cheshire derby was a damp squib as Tattenhall could only make 51 at Christleton, while NE Cheshire beat Chester BH 3s by 4 wkts. The other two games were cancelled.

Sunday 3rd XI T20 News some generally undistinguished batting displays were the feature of the first round of group games. Holders Toft needed just 8 overs to reach their target of 68 at Oxton, while in the other match in that group, Elworth bowled Middlewich out for 42, and travel to Toft on Sunday for the pivotal game in that group. Last year's runners-up Didsbury took Stockport Trinity for 196 before bowling them out for 44. Two Premier Division sides, Sale and Timperley 5s, went down to surprise reverses, the latter in a desperately tense match with Didsbury 4s, who scrambled to their 83 target with one wkt and two balls remaining. Elsewhere Macclesfield bowled 42 wides at Bramhall, while Woodley's Waqar Malik hit nine 6s in a 30-ball 86* as his side romped to a 116-run win over Runcorn.



CHESHIRE CUP 2026

The 2026 Cheshire Cup gets underway on May 10th, with five matches in the first round. Round 2 is scheduled for June 7th and sees holders Didsbury face an intriguing match at Macclesfield. Last season's runners-up Lindow are awaiting their R2 opponents.



R1: Bunbury v Westminster Park; Irby v Northwich; Runcorn v Bredbury SM; Upton v Parkfield Liscard; Warrington v Oulton Park

R2: Elworth v Bowdon; Macclesfield v Didsbury; Maritime v Cheadle; Marple v Alderley Edge; New Brighton v Oxton; Port Sunlight v Neston; Romiley v Bramhall; Stockport Georgians v Hyde; Toft v Chester BH; Urmston v Timperley; Widnes v Wallasey.

Birkenhead Park, Bollington, Brooklands, Nantwich, Lindow will learn their R2 opponents after the R1 fixtures.

T20 CRICKET 2026 - THE FORZA T20 CUP

The CCCL is delighted to announce its partnership with Forza, part of NetWorld Sports. Forza are providing sponsorship for all of this year's T20 competitions which is a significant boost for everyone involved.

The eight groups for the main **1st XI Forza Cup** have been drawn, along with the **Forza Plate** competition for Div 2 & 3 sides. As per last season, this will produce eight teams to join the Prem & Div 1 sides in the main competition. The inaugural Plate winners Upton face matches against Christleton, Irby & Tattenhall, with matches in all the qualifying groups for the Forza Plate scheduled for Thursday evenings on May 14th, 21st & 28th.

T20 holders Alderley Edge are up against two Division 1 opponents in Bowdon & Stockport Georgians, with the fourth side in their group to be determined. The main group fixtures are scheduled for Thursday June 4, 11 & 18. **1st XI Finals Day is 19th July (reserve date 26 July).**

The **2nd XI Forza Cup** gets underway on Tuesday May 26 with 14 R1 fixtures scheduled. **2nd XI Finals Day is 16th August.**

The **3rd XI Forza Cup** group matches are already underway, with further fixtures on April 27th and Monday May 4th. **3rd XI Finals Day is 5th July.**

ECB NATIONAL CLUB CHAMPIONSHIP

Fixtures for Cheshire sides competing in the NCC take place on Sunday 26th. In Group 7, Cheadle entertain Shrewsbury, while Hyde travel to Eccleshall. In group 8, Didsbury welcome Stourbridge while Neston host Northop. Widnes travel to Stone and Oxton go to Wolverhampton. Nantwich's fixture had not been published at time of writing.