



2014 End of Season Roundup

Launching a new U9 section and welcoming a record entry of forty nine teams, The South Norfolk Community League was in good health in this, its eighth season. Now played across five age groups, the sixteen over eight a side format again provided many entertaining games and some outstanding performances from our young cricketers throughout the summer, a clear demonstration that there is still plenty of depth in the youth game.

The U17 League, won in the two previous seasons by Garboldisham, was tightly contested this year with the ten teams from two regional groups playing for a place in the super 4s. Dereham and Cringleford Lodge from the north along with Diss and Gt.Ellingham from the south made up the final winners' league and it was new boys Dereham, winning all six of their games, who clinched the title with Cringleford runners up. Tom Puckey's 85 for Swaffham against Rocklands was the U17's best knock while Sonny Richmond of Dereham collected the top bowling award with his 4 for 6 against Mattishall.

In the new U9 League, it was Topcroft, last year's U11 champions, who again proved themselves strong at this younger age group. Winning all four of their games, they only came close to defeat against a strong Brooke side who restricted them to a ten run victory. Despite this dominance, it was Hethersett and Tas Valley who bagged the best batting and bowling performances in the very last game of the season; Will Worley's 27no and William Robertson's 4 for 6 eclipsing previous efforts, both against Gt.Ellingham. Gt.Melton, losing only to Brooke by 20 runs, finished second in the table.

Unusually, and unlike previous years, each league was topped by sides who won all of their games and in the U11 competition Gt.Melton's outstanding squad left the others trailing in their wake, playing for runner up spot long before the season reached its conclusion. It was only Mulbarton and Rocklands who provided any semblance of real resistance throughout Melton's campaign. Rocklands kept pace with the champions throughout the summer with seven straight wins but Melton's superior points score was always going to keep them on track for a third consecutive U11 title. Rocklands were worthy runners up with Hethersett & Tas Valley third. Elliot Hart of Garboldisham topped the batting with his 65no against Mundford while appropriately, Melton's Sam Johnson took best bowling spot with his 3 for 0, also against Mundford.

If the gulf between Melton and the others in the U11 competition was marked, then it was absolutely huge at U13 level where they were completely untroubled; their 37 run victory over Hethersett & Tas Valley in the last game the closest they came to defeat. Competition was hot behind them though with positions constantly changing. In the end it was Tas who grabbed second slot from Swaffham by the smallest margin - a tenth of a point. Melton even fielded an U13 Girls team whose victims included Rocklands, Garboldisham, Old Buckenham and Gt.Ellingham, earning them a fourth place finish underlining the club's consistency and performance at all levels. Best with the bat, 69no, was tied between Melton's Fergus Hughes' against Gt.Ellingham and by Tas' Tom Worley v Mulbarton while with the ball, Thetford's Emma Allison's 5 for 8 v Mulbarton was the top performance, one of only two fifers this summer.

While Melton again secured the U15 trophy, there was stiffer competition from other teams and they had to work harder, particularly to fend off the challenge from Mulbarton. But in the end, as in previous years, their main challenger, Mulbarton stumbled before summer's end as a loss by three wickets to Old Buckenham snuffed out their chance of securing their first title. In their game against Melton they ran them close, only losing by 17 runs, but it was not enough as Mulbarton finished runners up with Old Buckenham third and Gt.Ellingham fourth. Tom Osborn's 109no against Garboldisham for Mulbarton was the summer's top performance and solitary century of the season with George Southgate's 5 for 6 the only other fifer for Garboldisham against Rocklands.

Congratulations to all players, coaches, managers and parents for again giving up their time to keep the beautiful game alive and well in Norfolk.

