



## zipleague - Topcroft lift trophy

**T**here was to be a new name on the Derek Barnard Trophy in the fifth season of the zipleague U14 indoor cricket tournament hosted at Hethersett Old Hall School. With Gt.Melton having won the first three years and Gt.Ellingham the current title holders it was Topcroft's turn to lift the trophy with an accomplished display of the indoor game.



Pictured: (top) Runners up Hethersett & Tas Valley with Sara Worley and Rennie Broughton and (below) Topcroft CC squad, 2016 Champions.

Eight teams took part in a single league including new boys Norwich and it was noticeable how much the standard of play, particularly in fielding, had improved over the five years.

There were early successes for Topcroft, Gt.Melton, Gt.Ellingham and Tas Valley and it was key games between these four that were to decide the eventual winners. While two losses for Ellingham and Melton, both to Tas and Topcroft, scuppered their chances of another trophy, at the other end of the table, Cringleford and Old Buckenham bowled and fielded well in all of their games but frequently struggled to score enough runs with Norwich, still learning the game, improving all the time. Rocklands, runners up in 2013 and 2014, filled the final place - their exuberance and perseverance throughout the competition an example to us all.

In an exciting final session, Old Buckenham turned in their best performance of the tournament in restricting Topcroft to their narrowest win before Ellingham overcame Melton in the concluding game of the season to grab third spot.

Topcroft thoroughly deserved to raise The Derek Barnard Trophy, winning all of their games and playing some outstanding cricket, while Tas, losing only a single game, finished strongly to bag the runner up spot with Gt.Melton fourth.

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## RULES

### Rule changes this year

- **Compulsory retirement** introduced at U15 level.
- **One (boy) county player** allowed per team per fixture. See the full guidance notes [here](#)
- **A two point penalty** to be introduced for late submission of results (more than 48 hours after the fixture ends). This to be levied on the home team.
- **See full rules** and guidance notes [here](#)



Don't forget to **refresh**

Some have told us that they can't see the new fixtures on our site. This is because many modern browsers and operating systems cache previously visited sites to enable faster loading times so you might not always be viewing the latest version of a page. So make sure you regularly **refresh** to ensure you're absolutely up to date.

## Colin's view



"Everyone in English cricket knows that T20 holds the key to future prosperity and growth, but that is where consensus ends." So wrote Mike Atherton as the first class counties yet again dithered on the future of a new divisional competition embracing promotion and relegation. Here, in Norfolk, similar procrastination also prevails.

You certainly can't criticise the ECB and its local boards for a lack of innovation. The introduction over the last few years of a huge number of short format games played on weekday evenings surely offer something for everyone. But do they? Weekend league programmes are still the backbone of the recreational game and it is here that many clubs are really struggling.

Evening cricket is all very well but, in this country, our cool and rather indifferent climate functions as a real barrier to capturing the atmosphere and success of the IPL and Big Bash.

So what about weekend cricket? What's changed there? Well precious little. There's been some modest tinkering with start times and fixture length, some mergers and geographical reorganisation but the real issues of the lengthy format and too many games still remain largely unresolved.

What weekend recreational cricketers really need are choices. The rapid decline in Sunday Leagues should be sounding alarm bells. The longer game will always survive but, for many, the short format is the way forward, but not on a chilly evening when you've done a day's work, but at the weekend when your family can join you and the game doesn't last all day.

## Cricket Carnival

**With two groups** in three of our leagues, the top two from each (four teams) will take part in our Cricket Carnival Finals week at the end of the summer. The dates for these are August 30th - U15, September 1st - U13 and September 2nd - U11.

**There will still be medals** and trophies for the winners of each league and the Carnival days should be viewed as an additional cup competition in their own right.