



2019 – 2020 Match Reports

Group 1 Round 1 November 4th 2019

Rocklands v Gt.Melton

A cracking couple of games launched the ninth season of the U14 competition and, in the first, Rocklands struggled to make much headway with the bat against Melton's organised bowling attack and adept display in the field. Rocklands' first two pairs lost only three wickets but there was little opportunity for expansive running as Melton pinned the batsmen down. A late flourish in the final power play overs added some gloss to the total but unfortunately four wickets too. Still 151 was in the end an excellent reward for their efforts and a challenging target.

Melton have often laboured with the bat in this competition but this was a much more assured display. The first four all batted with confidence and by the eighth over had already overhauled the Rocklands total. With Melton also choosing the power plays in the last four overs, their score, as in Rocklands case, could have easily been reined in but these last two played sensibly to guide their team over the line.

Rocklands 151 for 7 (7 points). Gt.Melton 173 for 2 (34 points).

Old Buckenham v Norwich

A particularly torrid start, partially self-inflicted, strangled the first eight overs of Old Buckenham's innings with nine wickets falling and it was left to the final duo to repair the damage. They did a pretty good job propelling the score forward by a further 29 but the final score of 134 was a little light.

Norwich, returning to the competition after a break, also had their early problems and were actually nine runs behind OB's total after the eighth over. Their final pair also had a mountain to climb but did so with an excellently managed assault on Old Buckenham's attack adding a further 42 runs and having passed their target, dotted out the final over, a power play (and you don't often see that) to win the game by five runs.

Old Buckenham 134 for 10 (12 points). Norwich 139 for 9 (33 points).

Group 2 Round 1 November 11th 2019

Ashmanaugh & Barton Wanderers v Topcroft

Ashmanaugh & Barton Wanderers set the bar high against a young Topcroft side as they powered their way to a testing target of 181. Without Topcroft's excellent fielding effort this would have been much higher but despite their perseverance and competence in the field they were unable to break down any of Wanderers' pairs save for a solitary wicket in the fifth over courtesy of an exceptionally fine catch.

Topcroft's early order had a torrid start as the wickets tumbled and the score cycled backwards. With seven down they were just four runs to the good at the end of the eighth over and pretty much down and out. But as so often happens in this competition a determined and adventurous final pair set about Wanderers' attack with brutal application and the scoreboard suddenly lurched into life as the runs flowed freely. But with two power play overs left and still 54 short surely the task was beyond them. 71 by this pair was an outrageous effort as they needed six from the final ball...alas just a four and a win for Wanderers by a single run. But phew...what a game.

Ashmanaugh & Barton Wanderers 180 for 1 (36 points). Topcroft 179 for 8 (8 points).

Mulbarton v Hethersett & Tas Valley

Mulbarton returned to the competition after a four year absence and gave notice they could be real contenders as they cruised to an impressive total of 200. All the pairs made positive contributions while Tas stuck to their task and were rewarded with six wickets for their excellent efforts.

This was a daunting total to chase down but Tas took their chances and scored plenty of runs against a focussed Mulbarton attack. Full credit for their determination as they continually pushed themselves forward despite the frequent loss of wickets. This was an admirable effort against a far older and stronger side and they deserve great credit for their performance.

Mulbarton 200 for 6 (39 points). Hethersett & Tas Valley 131 for 9 (9 points).

Group 1 Round 2 November 11th 2019

Gt.Melton v Gt.Ellingham

After a robust effort in their first game it was same again as Melton compiled a large total. Gt.Ellingham bowled and fielded with real conviction, conceding just five extras but the wickets did not come easily as Melton declined to run themselves out instead adopting the unusual strategy of some decent communication between the pairs. Ellingham worked extremely hard for their four wickets without which the score would have breached the 200 mark.

Sadly Ellingham were unable to replicate their on field antics with the bat. Their running was often rather too ambitious and the wickets tumbled. Melton too bowled extremely well, their speciality, and their opponents were never able to gain any real traction in their reply. But there were plenty of green shoots on show here and with a little more discipline, still plenty to come.

Gt.Melton 187 for 4 (42 points). Gt.Ellingham 105 for 14 (4 points).

Rocklands v Norwich

Rocklands were rather hampered by the initial absence of two of their players and this clearly disrupted their innings. They were obliged to bat first with one pair appearing twice and the late arrivals only able to face a single over – the last. A gutsy effort by the central pair provided the bulk of Rocklands' runs and with a full team a further twenty runs could have made all the difference.

Norwich scraped past Old Buckenham in their first game and it all looked far too easy for them early in the innings. With four overs remaining, two of them power plays, the game seemed good as over but two wickets in the penultimate overs rather spooked them and they made heavy going of crossing the line. A half chance off the very last ball of the innings could have provided a rare tie but it was not to be as they edged out Rocklands by twelve runs.

Rocklands 149 for 6 (9 points). Norwich 161 for 5 (32points).

Group 2 Round 2 December 9th 2019

Hethersett & Tas Valley v Topcroft

Tas found their wings clipped early in the innings via some sharp catching and tight bowling from Topcroft. It was the middle pair who made the largest contribution to their final total adding 27 runs and losing only a single wicket but as the wickets tumbled the final total of 109 gave them little to defend.

Early wickets gave Tas a glimmer of hope as they grabbed three by the halfway stage but Topcroft's final pair, even losing two power play wickets, took the game away from them and in the end the win was a comfortable one.

Hethersett & Tas Valley 109 for 9 (5 points). Topcroft 146 for 5 (33 points).

Mulbarton v Brooke

Having racked up 200 in their first fixture, Mulbarton faced stiffer opposition this time from Brooke playing their first game. Even so they again made a strong start with the first pair adding 45. This was a solid platform and the following pairs batted sensibly adding steadily to this positive foundation. There were three wickets for Brooke in the middle order but these were the only ones to fall as Mulbarton pushed on falling just two runs short of their previous total.

Mulbarton had chosen to take their power plays in the first two overs whilst Brooke opted for the more traditional choice of the final two. After eight overs with the total on 49 they looked well on target to reach their goal. But the final overs failed to deliver the potential riches and a wicket on the penultimate delivery finally snuffed out any possibility of overhauling Mulbarton's large total.

Mulbarton 198 for 3 (32 points). Brooke 176 for 3 (10 points).

Group 1 Round 3 January 13th 2020

Gt.Ellingham v Norwich

But for some injudicious decisions and hesitant running Gt.Ellingham could have boosted their score by at least a further thirty runs and given themselves something to bowl at. As it was they were unfortunately largely architects of their own downfall, particularly with the bat. Theirs was an innings of feast and famine; some beautifully crafted strokes and terrific running combined with too much indiscipline on the calling front. That they managed to finish on 130 having lost ten wickets, two of them power plays, underlines just how much this side can potentially achieve.

Norwich have won both their previous two games against Old Buckenham and Rocklands so it was unsurprising they motored relatively untroubled towards the modest target. But they didn't have it all their own way as Ellingham bowled and fielded with real commitment claiming six wickets in a polished defence of their restrained total.

Gt.Ellingham 130 for 10 (9 points) Norwich 168 for 6 (36 points).

Old Buckenham v Rocklands

With both these sides looking for their first win it was five player team Old Buckenham who opened proceedings with the bat. This was not a positive start with Rocklands bowling tightly, taking five wickets from the first two pairs, with Bucks just eight to the good and only four overs remaining. There then followed a transformative final burst from the skipper brilliantly supported by his partner as this pair added a heroic 68 runs; chalk becoming cheese in a blink.

Rocklands really struggled to gather any momentum and as the innings progressed the chance that they might eclipse the large total looked increasingly unlikely. They lost the same amount of wickets as Bucks and were ahead of their opponents going into the last four overs but there was to be no repeat of their predecessor's heroics as the innings quietly meandered to a close.

Old Buckenham 176 for 5 (32 points). Rocklands 123 for 5 (7 points).

Group 2 Round 3 Monday January 20th 2020

Brooke v Ashmanaugh & Barton Wanderers

There was no shortage of excitement in this first fixture of the evening as Brooke, having chosen their two power plays in the first four overs, pummelled Wanderers' bowling and the runs flowed freely – 54 of them. But so too did the wickets although a positive 29 from these first two was still a sturdy start. Brooke batted well but whenever they threatened to break away, their focussed opponents reined them in. All of the three pairs lost multiple wickets and their final score of 157 left the door ajar for Wanderers.

Wanderers start was definitely not what they needed and two classy catches left them rolling backwards and a long way from the distant target. Brooke continued to halt the impetus of the second pair too and even though these two did some decent repair work, 38 was still required from the final couple of batters. Wanderers added only 17 in the penultimate two overs and the power plays would, as they so often do, decide the game. A wicket here would have sunk Wanderers but they rode their luck, scoring astutely, to scrape home in a close and exciting game.

Brooke 157 for 9 (9 points). Ashmanaugh & Barton Wanderers 169 for 4 (35 points).

Mulbarton v Topcroft

Mulbarton have been big scorers in their first two games and again turned in an accomplished performance with the bat. The first pair were the most prolific adding 57 before those following on, although less productive, contributed positive runs to the final total of 189.

Topcroft's first two pairs lost three wickets but their progress towards the goal was steady leaving the final pairing the challenge of scoring a further 65 runs. It all looked a long way off as losing a wicket on the penultimate ball of the tenth over, they were still 62 short. It should have been game over but Mulbarton rather lost their shape and line in the final twelve power play balls and some panicked fielding combined with a flurry of wides very nearly gifted their opponents a remarkable win.

Mlbarton 189 for 3 (33 points). Topcroft 180 for 5 (11 points).

Group 1 Round 4 Monday January 27th

Gt.Ellingham v Old Buckenham

In a fixture reduced to nine overs courtesy of chaos on the roads in heavy rain Gt.Ellingham again demonstrated their suicidal tendencies when calling and running between the wickets. If only they could transfer some of their disciplined approach when bowling and fielding to the more careful gathering of runs, they could post competitive totals.

Old Buckenham didn't need any runs and it was points they were after. As already said, Ellingham did their best to rein them in but all three pairs made substantial contributions towards a large score leaving the door ajar for a Winners' League slot.

Gt.Ellingham 98 for 13 (1 point). Old Buckenham 175 for 1 (40 points).

Norwich v Gt.Melton

With both of these teams unbeaten, Melton turned in another outstanding performance in the field. Norwich, so extravagant with the bat in previous games, were made to work extremely hard for their runs. The two final power plays offered potential riches but two wickets here snuffed out the chance of a really competitive score.

Melton made measured progress towards the winning line before three wickets in the middle of the innings, two from sharply held catches, blew the game wide open. With only two runs coming from the penultimate two overs, a power play wicket could have turned the fixture around. But this final pair kept their heads down to see out the remaining balls without loss.

Norwich 124 for 6 (5 points). Gt.Melton 137 for 3 (29 points).

Group 2 Round 4 Monday February 3rd

Mulbarton v Ashmanaugh & Barton Wanderers

Mulbarton's run machine was again in fine fettle as they racked up the season's highest total against unbeaten Wanderers. All of the pairs made generous donations to the large score with each losing only a single wicket. It was an impressive effort especially given the quality of the Wanderer's attack which conceded only six extras in the whole innings.

No team has ever chased down such a large total in the history of the competition and although Wanderers' first two pairs made good ground, asking those finishing up to score 87 runs, even with the benefit of two power plays, seemed an impossibility. But golly gosh these final two really got stuck in adding 71 runs and, but for a good catch in the eleventh over, might well have astounded us all with an astonishing victory.

Mulbarton are the first team to book their place in the Winners' League and Wanderers', despite the loss, still look favourites to join them from group 2.

Mulbarton 218 for 3 (36 points). Ashmanagh & Barton Wanderers 203 for 5 (13 points).

Hethersett & Tas Valley v Brooke

This was Tas' best performance with the bat and while this wasn't necessarily reflected in the score, this young team played well against some pretty imposing bowling from Brooke who were, as a team, largely older and bigger. Tas scored plenty of runs but nine wickets, four of them power plays, ultimately took a heavy toll on their final score.

This was a small total to overhaul but Brooke exhibited rather less confidence with the bat than they had demonstrated when bowling and it all became rather a struggle. Seven well deserved wickets for Tas in the opening eight overs had becalmed Brooke and left them still adrift of the winning line. But although it was a slightly nervy performance from the last two, they managed to hold it together for a narrow win.

Hethersett & Tas Valley 116 for 9 (9 points). Brooke 130 for 8 (32 points).

Group 1 Round 5 Monday February 10th

Gt.Melton v Old Buckenham

With Melton only needing two points to overtake table topping Norwich and book their place in the Winners' League, there was understandably little urgency in the early part of their innings. The first two pairs batted cautiously and, losing only two wickets, did deliver a solid base for the final two to exploit. Unfortunately the power plays failed to deliver the anticipated bonanza leaving Melton well short of a testing goal.

There was considerable early success for Melton's bowlers and for a while the modest total looked like it might be beyond Old Buckenham's reach but, as so often before, the skipper and his partner turned things around in the final four overs, collecting the necessary runs and dotting out the final five balls of the innings to secure a well-deserved win and become the third team to join Melton and Mulbarton in the last four.

Gt.Melton 128 for 5 (6 points). Old Buckenham 138 for 4 (28 points).

Rocklands v Gt.Ellingham

This was Rocklands' best batting performance of the season with all of their pairs adding generously to the demanding total. There was success for Ellingham's bowlers too who stuck to their task bagging five wickets - a special mention to the wicket keeper who played superbly.

Ellingham started their innings with the usual run out but they have learnt a lot and this was the only unnecessary mistake. Their calling was much improved but while the runs flowed, the wickets did too. But it was a plucky effort from a team who have always played the game in great spirit whatever the result. Well done to you all.

Rocklands 170 for 5 (34 points). Gt.Ellingham 132 for 7 (8 points).

Thank you to Norwich, Rocklands and Gt.Ellingham for being part of our ninth season. We wish you all luck over the summer and hope to see you again next winter.

Group 2 Round 5 Monday February 24th

Topcroft v Brooke

Topcroft's final pair have played with real conviction and energy throughout the competition but often found themselves at the crease with the game already gone. And so it was here again too with their predecessors shedding eleven wickets against a strong Brooke attack before their arrival. These two added thirty runs from the final overs but it was another extremely frustrating innings.

This was Brooke's best performance of the season, bowling particularly well, and the result was never in any doubt as they ran out easy winners securing forty points to finish third place in the group.

Topcroft 97 for 14 (1 point). Brooke 161 for 1 (40 points).

Hethersett & Tas Valley v Ashmanagh & Barton Wanderers

With Brooke's high points tally there was the possibility of Wanderers slipping up in their final game and consequently this was their nerviest performance of the winter. There was plenty of enthusiasm from the team but their line when bowling strayed from the usual high standards. Tas have struggled to score runs this year but the young team stuck to their task and thanks to a swashbuckling effort from the final two posted a reasonable score.

Wanderers made it to the final four in their first season last year and were determined to do so again and showed considerably more application when batting despite some unnecessarily risky shots. Tas bowled well, some of the team exceptionally so, but Wanderers were just too good booking their place in the final four alongside Gt.Melton, Mulbarton & Old Buckenham.

Hethersett & Tas Valley 128 for 10 (5 points). Ashmanagh & Barton Wanderers 183 for 2 (38 points).

Winners league Round 1 Monday March 2nd 2020

Ashmanagh & Barton Wanderers v Old Buckenham

A disappointing beginning to their innings, losing four wickets, did nothing to deter Wanderers from putting this poor start behind them and advancing onward. Their second pair added 39 before the final two another half century to set Bucks an extremely testing goal. Bucks themselves bowled and fielded well but after their early success only two wickets came from the remaining eight overs.

Old Buckenham lost early wickets too, dismantling the possibility of a decent platform for the final two to exploit. 76 required from this pair was surely too great a burden and the risky race for runs inevitably brought wickets too, snuffing out any chance of an unlikely victory. Wanderers played with real confidence, thoroughly deserving this first win in the final four.

Ashmanagh & Barton Wanderers 195 for 6 (37 points). Old Buckenham 159 for 8 (11 points).

Mulbarton v Gt.Melton

Mulbarton's run machine, so reliable in the past, spluttered as it came up against the best fielding side in the competition. Runs against other teams that had been chalked up before now resulted in wickets, four in the initial four overs. But there was to be no rebuilding here and although the following pairs added positive runs, the haul was a meagre one.

Melton were already well ahead after the first third of the game and while there was some consolation success for Mulbarton, they didn't help themselves by bowling too many extras. Melton didn't need any more runs and so opted for safety first ending an assured performance with both bat and ball.

Mulbarton 122 for 12 (5 points). Gt.Melton 157 for 3 (37 points).

Winners league Round 2 Monday March 9th 2020

Mulbarton v Ashmanagh & Barton Wanderers

Mulbarton put last week's bad day at the office behind them as they took on Wanderers in a must win fixture. Batting first the initial two pairs did a decent job in steering their side to 132 against some organised bowling that gave little away. Potential riches from the last two beckoned and another top score looked likely before Wanderers grabbed two late wickets in the final power play over shaving 20 from the total.

Wanderers have never lost more than six wickets in their games but had already done so in this innings before the end of the eighth over. Even so, with only 24 required from the last four, they were looking favourites. This then became 17 before an astonishing final two overs at the death from Mulbarton yielded just a single scoring shot and eleven dot balls. Extraordinary.

Mulbarton 145 for 7 (31 points). Ashmanagh & Barton Wanderers 134 for 7 (10 points).

Old Buckenham v Gt.Melton

In the past Old Buckenham have struggled to provide a decent platform for their final pair to exploit but this was not the case here; their first four batters lost only a solitary wicket in putting 34 on the board, riding their luck when they

should have been run out half a dozen times. But this luck vanished for the final pairing as Melton plundered four wickets and Bucks' extremely challenging target evaporated.

Melton made measured progress towards the reduced total but Old Buckenham fielded excellently as the run rate drifted upwards. Even so, these first four added 28 leaving the final two to score a further 29. The final two power play overs would be key and a wicket in either of these could have torpedoed their efforts, but Bucks were unable to make the breakthrough against a level headed performance from these two ending an exciting and entertaining evening's competition.

Old Buckenham 156 for 5 (8points). Gt.Melton 170 for 3 (32 points).

Winners league Final Round Monday March 16th 2020

Ashmanaugh & Barton Wanderers v Gt.Melton

An assured and disciplined performance with the ball by Gt.Melton shackled Wanderers' usual expansive play as they found it heavy going putting runs on the board. There was a smattering of extras from Melton but this was the only blemish on an otherwise top class display. Wanderers were unable to generate any real traction save for a spirited effort from their last pair. But these were undone too losing power play wickets off the final two balls of the innings.

The target was small and Melton did concede a wicket in the third over but this was to be the only one as they made measured progress towards the winning line. Much credit must go to Wanderers for again making it to the final four in their second season but on the night they came up against a side in top form brimming with confidence and Melton, winning all their games in the winners' league, were worthy recipients of The Derek Barnard Cup.

Ashmanaugh & Barton Wanderers 122 for 7 (3 points). Gt.melton 134 for 1 (30 points).

Mulbarton v Old Buckenham

With second spot still up for grabs, Mulbarton were back on top form with the bat scoring freely against Bucks' attack. There were plenty of let offs though and they rode their luck to post another 200 plus score. All of the pairs made handsome additions to the total with the first adding 42 and the second 55.

Old Buckenham had a good stab at the target helped by Mulbarton's generous contribution of extras and they certainly scored plenty of runs with some audacious batting. But wickets fell too at regular intervals and their final tally of eleven meant they were never really able to threaten their opponent's score. It was a spirited end to the evening with Mulbarton runners up and the competition finished before we all wonder exactly when the next youth cricket will be.

Mulbarton 206 for 2 (41 points). Old Buckenham 151 for 11 (7points).

Final results

1st. Gt.Melton

2nd. Mulbarton

3rd. Ashmanaugh & Barton Wanderers

4th. Old Buckenham