

zipleague Match reports 2013-2014

Final Round Monday 3rd March 2014

Mulbarton v Topcroft

Group winners Mulbarton and Topcroft, having lost both their other two super four games, opened the evening in what had become a third place playoff.

Mulbarton have struggled to score runs during their campaign and being one player short was not an ideal start to the game. In this situation, the bowling side chooses the team member to bat again; in their opinion - the weakest. But perversely this disadvantage seemed to focus the efforts of Mulbarton as they batted with rather more maturity and care than usual, losing only three wickets, and posting their highest total of the tournament; 149, and all this without a solitary run single the entire evening and a maiden over to end the innings.

Topcroft were looking to end a hat trick of defeats and while the game felt rather flat at this stage they made steady progress towards the 150 required. Their openers added nine and the second pair twenty as they approached the final four overs needing a further 21. It was only really now that the game sparked into life as Mulbarton pushed for wickets, achieving one in the tenth over and leaving 18 still to win. Suddenly there was a glimpse of the old Topcroft, a team that had won their first three games with quick running and controlled hitting, and the final two resuscitated this approach plundering 34 off the remaining seventeen balls - steering their team to a deserved 17 run win.

Mulbarton 149 for 3 (8 points). Topcroft 166 for 4 (29 points). Topcroft won by 17 runs.

Rocklands v Gt.Melton

In the final game of the competition it was winner takes all as Rocklands got off to a rather sluggish and nervy start against Melton's organised attack, with their first pair losing one wicket and only adding two runs. Things got little better for the next two as they were pinned down, unable to get the ball away and losing a further two wickets; just seven on the board after eight. The key was to be the power play overs eleven and twelve and the final pair batted faultlessly propelling the score forward thirty runs before a wicket off the very last ball took some gloss off their efforts as they ended on 127.

Melton, like Mulbarton, have also struggled with run scoring but this was a modest total well within their capabilities. But Rocklands looked worthy contenders for the title as they collected three wickets off Melton's first pair to give them real hope. The second duo inched their way forwards helped by a rather over generous portion of extras from Rocklands, something they could ill afford defending such a low total and partly as a result of this Melton's last two needed only a further nine runs which they negotiated without alarm, dotting out the last over to win by 3 runs.

Both sides played well in a predictably rather edgy game but in the end it was Melton's marginally superior bowling attack that shaded it in this tightly contested and entertaining final.

Congratulations to Gt.Melton on their third consecutive title and to all the other teams and spectators who helped to make this third season so successful and enjoyable.

Rocklands 127 for 4 (5 points). Gt.Melton 130 for 3 (27 points). Gt.Melton won by 3 runs.

Round 12 Monday February 24th 2014

No report was filed this week. See results from these games on the fixtures page.

Round 11 Monday February 10th 2014

Topcroft v Rocklands

As the rain hammered down on the school hall roof, the opening game of the super fours saw Topcroft, Group A winners, take on Rocklands, narrowly reprieved after last week's extraordinary results.

Topcroft opened their innings badly by losing a wicket on the first ball and their first pair had to work hard to repair the damage as another wicket in the power play and a third during their last over left them only 14 to the good. Rocklands surprising return to the competition seemed to have energised them with the bowling and fielding of an exceptionally high standard. The wicket keeper was particularly outstanding and, including a sharp stumping along with a direct hit, another three wickets were inflicted on the second pair as their progress stumbled. Twenty five on the board with four overs remaining meant that Topcroft were still a little shy of what was required but the final pair batted with maturity clawing their way to 140 with six balls remaining. A wicket maiden to end the innings was exactly what they didn't need as they finished on 135.

Even with a wicket in the fourth over power play, Rocklands' first two made a good start towards their target adding 17. Another wicket for the second pair proved only a minor setback as they cruised seemingly to an easy win, just three short of the total after eight. But Topcroft fought back taking wickets in both the tenth and eleventh overs as, with the final six balls, a power play, Topcroft found themselves five short of the winning post. Cue much tension and excitement before these final two calmly added six dotting out the rest of the balls to sneak a win by two runs.

Topcroft 135 for 7 (7 points). Rocklands 137 for 4 (30 points). Rocklands won by 2 runs.

Mulbarton v Gt.Melton

Four wickets for the first pair including a hat trick in the second over was the worst possible start for Mulbarton as the score plummeted downwards. It got no better either for the next two as another four wickets propelled the total further in the wrong direction as the batting wilted under the onslaught of Melton's organised and accurate bowling attack. The final duo attempted to add some polish to the innings and even briefly managed to steer their team back into positive territory before power play wickets off the last two balls plunged the score back into negative territory, finishing on 82.

Having posted the lowest total of the competition so far there was to be little doubt as to the outcome of this game although, to give them credit, Mulbarton responded positively, even taking three wickets off Melton's first pair to provide the faintest glimmer of optimism. But it was not to last as Melton sensibly batted out the overs to secure a comfortable 47 run win.

Mulbarton 82 for 10 (4 points). Gt.Melton 129 for 4 (34 points). Gt.Melton won by 47 runs.

Round 10 Monday February 4th 2014

The last matches of the Group B games were played out in a cold school hall with all five clubs still mathematically able to qualify for the super fours.

Garboldisham v Tas Valley

After a rather lugubrious start to their campaign, Garboldisham have looked far more threatening of late, particularly in their last game against Gt.Ellingham. Tonight they needed a big win to have any chance of clawing their way into the top two. From a spectator's point of view, Garboldisham's innings was a rather somnolent affair as they slowly accumulated

runs. There were no frantic singles or big hitting but at the same time Ellingham were unable to prise out any of the batters and apart from some dropped catches few opportunities came their way. This was a slow burning effort as Garboldisham's first pair added 13, second 17 and the last two 20 as, without the loss of a single wicket, they finished on 150.

Having failed to accumulate a single bowling point the pressure really was on Tas to score big and win the game. But tonight it was not happening for them as Garboldisham delivered a master class in controlled bowling and athletic fielding. Forced to take risks, Tas lost wickets regularly, and plenty of them too; four for the first pair, three for the second and four for the third making eleven in total. There was a mini recovery by the second pair before two wickets in the eighth power play over snuffed out any real chance of victory as they finished on 86.

Garboldisham's large points total propelled them from bottom to top of the table, equal with Rocklands, such was the close competition in this group.

Garboldisham 150 for 0 (36 points). Hethersett & Tas Valley 86 for 11 (0 points), Garboldisham won by 64 runs.

Gt.Ellingham v Mulbarton

And so to the final game in Group B between the number two and four seeds where if Mulbarton won they would go through and if Ellingham won and managed to collect ten bonus points, the prize of a place in the last round would be theirs.

This was a hugely entertaining game as Ellingham, batting first, adopted a drop and run strategy with mixed results; scoring and relinquishing runs in almost equal measure as their first pair, losing three wickets, finished ten to the good. The second pair's time at the crease had everything – copious extras, two power play wickets and forty runs but amidst all this frenetic excitement, the score continued to go backwards. At the end of the ninth over, Ellingham had slumped to 97 but a spirited recovery by the last pair added a further 35 before two wickets in the last over pegged this back to a slightly disappointing 125.

Mulbarton have slipped up plenty of times in this position before but tonight saw a more measured approach as the first two batsmen compiled a careful fifteen without loss. Two wickets in the next four overs pegged this back somewhat but a generous dusting of extras from Ellingham cancelled this out as Mulbarton approached the modest target. The last pair had to contend with two power plays and here things can go horribly wrong. At the start of the final over they were just two ahead and at any time a wicket would have won the game for Ellingham, but the last man standing dotted out the balls as Mulbarton won by six runs to book their place in the winners' league.

Gt.Ellingham 125 for 12 (4 points). Mulbarton 131 for 2 (35 points). Mulbarton won by six runs.

With Rocklands and Garboldisham both tied on 78 points the team with the most net runs would progress to the next round. With Rocklands' 137 against Garboldisham's 89 it is Rocklands who join Gt.Melton, Topcroft and Mulbarton in the final four.

Round 9 Monday January 27th 2014

Saxlingham v Bungay

Round 9 saw the final Group A fixtures, with two places up for grabs in the Winners' League, and opened with Saxlingham versus Bungay. Saxlingham still had a real chance of progressing further but first needed a convincing win against Bungay and, batting first, made a cautious but solid start adding eight without loss off their first four overs. Their second pair capitalised on this platform, adding a further 37 with some slick running and helped by 16 extras. Bungay have improved steadily throughout the competition and good bowling combined with much sharper fielding in the last four overs, including both power plays, pegged Saxlingham back and although they still added a further 19 runs, it could

have been a lot more.

Two maiden overs were the main feature of Bungay's first pair's stay at the wicket but despite this and a lost wicket they still finished five to the good. Numbers three and four scored runs and lost wickets in equal measure and by the start of the final four overs were still 55 short. This was too much but the final two did their best adding twenty five before a power play wicket undid almost half of their good work as they finished on 130, their highest total of the tournament.

The win earned Saxlingham 30 points setting Melton in the following game an identical target to overhaul them and claim a place in the next round.

Saxlingham 164 for 1 (30 points). Bungay 130 for 4 (4 points). Saxlingham won by 34 runs.

Topcroft v Gt.Melton

With Topcroft already safely through to the next round, the result of this fixture was of less importance to them, determining only their order of matches in the winners' league. For title holders Melton though a win and a good win, was absolutely crucial to avoid leaving the competition early.

Batting first, and perhaps unsurprisingly, Topcroft displayed less of the focus that had made them the only undefeated team in the competition. In stark contrast, Melton had polished their rough edges exhibited in earlier games and a top class bowling performance, outstanding from two players, backed up with some superb ground fielding put Topcroft to the sword as their first pair lost two wickets, second four and third six to make twelve in total. Topcroft were culpable to an extent for some of these but on the night Melton looked like champions again as their opponents slumped to 87.

With already 12 bonus points collected, Melton just had to bat sensibly without having to worry about accumulating a large total. Topcroft had made their task much easier for them and the result of the fixture was never in any doubt. The first pair added 21 and the second 9. There were no wickets and before the last ball both teams were tied at the top of the table; then quite uncharacteristically the batsmen risked a suicide run off the last ball to lose their only wicket of the innings.

This last wicket left Topcroft top of the table to be joined by title holders Melton in the winners' league where the slate is wiped clean. On this performance Melton must still be the team to beat.

Topcroft 87 for 12 (1 point). Gt.Melton 134 for 1 (35 points). Gt.Melton won by 47 runs.

Round 8 Monday January 20th 2014

Gt.Ellingham v Garboldisham

Fourth seeds Gt.Ellingham faced Garboldisham in a match they needed to win to guarantee inclusion in the winners' league.

Their first two started strongly rattling along to 119 despite the loss of two wickets. The second pair did even better and without losing a wicket added a further 26 handing them a real opportunity to bat their opponents out of the game. Garboldisham bowled and fielded with more commitment than in the past and were determined not to let Ellingham get away as the last pair were unable to exploit their earlier advantage, losing four wickets and finally finishing on 139.

Garboldisham had only scored 110 and 88 in their two previous games so a total of 139 looked easily defensible. Ellingham pinned down the two openers but gifted rather too many extras and despite two wickets, this first pair added 8 runs. Numbers three and four were less successful and a wicket in the eighth powerplay over left them only 11 to the good. But it was the ninth and tenth overs that proved decisive as sensible batting added twenty runs to take them within touching distance of the target. There were still nine required off the last two, one a powerplay, but the batsmen

kept their heads and despite Ellingham's best efforts added a further eleven runs without loss in a tense finish, watched by a large crowd, to win by two runs.

The result deals a real blow to Ellingham's chances of progressing to the last four and they must now hope that other results go in their favour and that they can achieve a convincing win over Mulbarton in their last Group B fixture.

Gt.Ellingham 139 for 6 (6 points). Garboldisham 141 for 3 (30 points). Garboldisham won by 2 runs.

Rocklands v Hethersett & Tas Valley

Group leaders Rocklands' first pair batted consummately powering their way to 122 by the end of the third over before, without warning, the wheels fell off and Tas Valley grabbed three wickets in the fourth powerplay over reducing them to 94. This really knocked the stuffing out of Rocklands and they never recovered. Even though they lost just a further three wickets, there were only nine scoring shots in their last eight overs. Make no mistake Tas bowled and fielded with real commitment snuffing out any chance Rocklands had to get back into the game as they finished on a disappointing 91.

Tas have been the surprise package of the tournament so far and instead of resting on their laurels set about building a decent innings; no doubt with one eye on the batting points available. Demoralised Rocklands knew the game was up as Tas serenely motored towards their second win in the group. Unlike the first match the result was never in doubt as their first pair added 14, second 10 and third 23 to win the match comfortably by 56 runs.

Before the evening started both Ellingham and Rocklands would have been favourites to win their games and both lost. With just one round remaining, group B still remains wide open.

Rocklands 91 for 6 (4 points). Hethersett & Tas Valley 147 for 4 (30 points).

Round 7 Monday January 13th 2014

Topcroft v Bungay

It was top versus bottom as the only team still unbeaten in the competition, Topcroft, took on Bungay.

Topcroft, batting first, have looked particularly impressive this season and their first pair, with the loss of only a single wicket, provided a solid platform for the rest of the innings. Despite Bungay's much improved bowling and fielding they were unable to rein in this exuberant side as the next pair added a further 18 bringing the score to 133. But it was the final two who provided the greatest entertainment of the evening as they plundered a further forty five runs.

Unnecessary wickets off the last two balls pegged this back a little but the final score of 168 was close to the best of the winter and a challenging total for their opponents.

Bungay's first two batted sensibly adding 14 before the second were beguiled by Topcroft's slow left armer who took three wickets which could have been five. Despite their best efforts, Bungay's score went backwards with the last two handed a mountain to climb with sixty still required. With Topcroft saving the best 'til last the ninth and tenth overs brought only four runs before two wickets in the last two power plays snuffed out any chance of even getting close as Topcroft completed a hat trick of victories in convincing style.

Topcroft 168 for 5 (33 points). Bungay 105 for 7 (5 points). Topcroft won by 63 runs.

Old Buckenham v Saxlingham

Saxlingham, having reinvigorated their campaign with a 3 run win against number one seeds Gt.Melton, must have been hoping for a good result to give them an outside chance of progressing to the last four. They certainly started well as Old Buckenham, rather leaden footed, were unable to get the ball away and seemed reticent to try for any singles.

Saxlingham fielded outstandingly and there were some excellent catches as wickets tumbled and by the eighth over, Old Buckenham were six short of their starting point. The last pair batted heroically but there had been too many dot balls in the innings and although they added sixteen, the team's best effort, the final score of 110 looked very fragile.

Saxlingham's first pair, instructed simply to avoid losing wickets, managed just this until their last over when two wickets left them on 100. It got worse too as the next duo seemed rooted to the spot and Old Buckenham fought back, taking three wickets and driving the score down to 96. It was to be a nervy finish, even more so as the final pair lost two wickets in the penultimate pair of overs. Two power plays were to end the innings with Saxlingham still needing fourteen. Suddenly this pair were galvanised and running four singles added 22 off the eleventh. A wide off the first ball of the final over carried them twelve clear of the target and they sensibly batted out the remaining four balls before a crashing six ended the game to put themselves firmly in the mix for the final round.

Old Buckenham 110 for 8 (6 points). Saxlingham 135 for 5 (31 points). Saxlingham won by 25 runs.

Round 6 Monday December 16th 2013

Gt.Ellingham v Rocklands

Despite only two rounds preceding the evening's games in group B, Gt.Ellingham remained the only unbeaten team and their first pair gave them the perfect platform, scoring 24 without loss off their four overs against neighbour's Rocklands. The second two though were unable to maintain this momentum and a disappointing power play combined with another two lost wickets drove their score backwards. With the innings finely balanced, the last two batsmen applied a dose of common sense and, despite losing a wicket and without the benefit of a power play, added 27 to post a decent total of 148.

Rocklands sprang from the starting gate adding 11 off their first six balls before being pegged back by Ellingham's organised attack and another two wickets left them just 7 to the good after the first pair. Rocklands then demonstrated the art of running quick singles and their second duo, even after losing two wickets, added 37 including 20 off their productive eighth over power play. Just five short of the winning post, their last batsmen just needed to bat sensibly and with the benefit of an unusually high number of extras, 18 altogether, they arrived at the last over, a power play 13 ahead and just needed to dot out the balls. Rocklands were not going to throw the game away and demonstrated a level of maturity and skill that puts them right in the frame to progress further in the competition, winning the game by 24 runs.

Gt.Ellingham 148 for 4 (8 points). Rocklands 172 for 4 (31 points). Rocklands won by 24 runs.

Garboldisham v Mulbarton

After the excitement of the first high octane fixture, this was rather a drab affair. Neither side played with any real sense of commitment - the quality of cricket well below both teams' capabilities.

With a wide off the first ball, this was the only time that Garboldisham were in credit until the last over. Seemingly robbed of any inclination to exploit single opportunities and with Mulbarton taking wickets, despite spilling chances, the score went in only one direction – backwards. It took the final pair to put at least some gloss on a disappointing performance with the bat as they at last sought out runs and despite two wickets, added 33 to end the innings in credit on 110.

Mulbarton are now perennial strugglers when faced with a small target and this particularly small target should have set alarm bells ringing. A lack of any real intent and a lost wicket left them just 2 ahead after four before the second pair

gifted Garboldisham four wickets driving the score down to 106. Having chosen both their power plays in the last four overs, disaster beckoned but at least the last two batted with some moderation adding eight runs to win the game by 4 runs, but a comfortable convincing win it certainly was not.

Garboldisham 110 for 10 (6 points). Mulbarton 114 for 5 (31 points). Mulbarton won by 4 runs.

Round 5 Monday December 9th 2013

Gt.Melton v Saxlingham

Title holders Melton with two wins under their belt have flattered to deceive this season - being slightly fortunate to have won against Old Buckenham and Bungay in low scoring games. Looking to stamp their authority on the group they started strongly against Saxlingham with their first pair adding 23 without loss. But tight bowling from Saxlingham arrested the run rate; a wicket and only 8 runs coming from the seventh and eighth over. Much was expected from the last pair and with power plays included, a big score was still possible. A wicket in the ninth brought Melton to their final two overs on 137. But with only one scoring shot in the eleventh and a wicket off the second ball of the final over, Melton limped to 141, surprisingly their highest score this season.

Despite scoring plenty of runs Saxlingham had lost seventeen wickets in their only game so far and Melton must have been hoping for more of the same as they set about defending their modest total. But they were to be disappointed as their attack lacked penetration and Saxlingham were content to knock the ball about finding the side walls for singles and it was the end of the sixth over before they lost their first wicket. Melton also uncharacteristically dropped chances as their opponents crept to the end of their second pair only sixteen short of the target. Galvanised at last, Melton pinned them down and the next two overs brought only eight. And so with the game nicely poised; eight runs needed from the last two overs, both power plays, Melton struck with a wicket off the second ball (10 runs deducted). Scrambled singles repaired the damage and carried Saxlingham to the last over needing just six. But a wicket from the fourth ball left them again three short before another frantic side wall single netted them six and, batting out the last ball, they squeaked through by three runs in the most exciting game so far of the tournament.

Gt.Melton 141 for 5 (7 points). Saxlingham 144 for 3 (29 points). Saxlingham won by 3 runs.

Old Buckenham v Bungay

With both teams looking for their first win Old Buckenham looked less than convincing with the bat as they opened their innings against Bungay. Only in positive territory for the briefest of moments, Old Bucks' first pair lost three wickets as they limped into negative territory on 96. It was same again for the second two as another three wickets tumbled, thanks largely to some great catching and with only 106 on the board, much was required from the final pair if they were to post a competitive score. Many teams seem to have adopted the strategy of taking their power plays in the last two overs and Old Buckenham followed this pattern. Shame then that they didn't choose the ninth and tenth as they added 20 runs from these before losing three wickets in the power plays to end on 128 for 9.

Many sides have struggled to post decent totals this season, partly down to much improved fielding but also through being over cautious, and this was certainly true of Bungay whose first two pairs did not manage a solitary run single and, having lost seven wickets by the eighth over, looked done in with some top class catching, a feature of this game, accounting for several of these. Although still 34 adrift, the game can turn quickly with power plays and the last two mounted a spirited assault taking them to within 20 of the target with 12 power play balls to come. But Old Buckenham kept their nerve taking three wickets from these to complete a comfortable win, their first in the competition.

Old Buckenham 128 for 9 (32 points). Bungay 82 for 10 (9 points). Old Buckenham won by 46 runs.

Round 4 Monday December 2nd 2013

Mulbarton v Hethersett & Tas Valley

Mulbarton started positively in a match they were expected to win, their first pair adding twenty without loss, with twelve runs coming from their initial powerplay. But from then on the pace rather slowed as some top bowling and fielding from Tas pinned the second two batsmen down. A wicket off their last ball left Mulbarton with only twenty five on the board. The team's earlier reticence to run any singles put unnecessary pressure on the final two resulting in a couple of wickets, including one in the tenth over power play, as they finished on a disappointing and below par 120.

Tas scored 167 in their first fixture against Gt.Ellingham so this low total was well within reach but perhaps buoyed by the small target the focused running between the wickets in their previous match against Ellingham was absent and they made heavy weather acquiring their runs as they inched towards the winning line. Mulbarton also regularly took wickets; two for the first pair and three for the second including two in the sixth over powerplay and by the start of the final pair were only four runs ahead. It was a nail-biting and exciting 24 balls as these two added six and lost one wicket to scrape home for a well deserved victory by five runs.

Mulbarton 120 for 3 (7 points). Hethersett & Tas Valley 125 for 5 (25 points). Tas Valley won by 5 runs.

Garboldisham v Rocklands

The last team to open their account in this year's competition, Garboldisham, had a torrid start with their first duo losing four wickets; their team only in positive territory for the first two balls. It didn't really get much better as the team lurched back and forth - their innings characterised by a total absence of run singles. The final pair patched things up a trifle and there was even a moment when it looked like they might broach three figures again but a wicket in the final over left them seven short of this total.

The adage of it's difficult chasing a small, or in this case non-existent, target was certainly true here as Rocklands did their best to make a game of it by losing six wickets and only adding four runs off their first powerplay by the end of the second pair, leaving them only twenty ahead. This sounds a lot but quick wickets can quickly erode this. Good then that the last two pulled things together, batting with care and application to add a further 33 without loss to put the result beyond doubt.

Garboldisham 88 for 9 (6 points). Rocklands 143 for 6 (33 points). Rocklands won by 55 runs.

Round 3 Monday November 25th 2013

Topcroft v Old Buckenham

Topcroft made a solid, if unspectacular, start against Old Buckenham's organised attack. The standard of fielding was also much improved and runs came very slowly; eleven for the first pair and only five for the second as the number three seeds demonstrated little urgency in setting a decent total. Luckily, the final pair performed more strongly than their predecessors, and, including twenty six off their one power play, added a further thirty six to set a more convincing target of 152.

Old Buckenham's reply simmered slowly with the first pair bogged down for their four overs in which Topcroft bowled only one extra. Coming to the boil the second two added a further sixteen but there were plenty of opportunities spurned to collect additional runs, something that was to prove costly in the end, and it was down to the last two to collect the thirty runs needed to win the game. Demonstrating greater resolve their innings finally came alight even though at the beginning of the final two overs, both power plays, they still needed another twenty six. It was a big ask and a wicket in the eleventh over made the task even more unlikely with twenty eight required off six balls. That they managed twenty four was a great achievement and there was a moment when they thought they had even won but the ball had already struck the back wall and therefore the subsequent run was disallowed.

Topcroft 152 for 5 (30 points). Old Buckenham 149 for 5 (9 points). Topcroft won by 3 runs.

Bungay v Gt.Melton

New boys Bungay started steadily against holders Melton despite two power play overs that only yielded two runs. With a net twenty four on the board after eight overs, there was an opportunity to apply some real pressure. Sadly this was not to be as the last two batsmen lost three wickets including an unnecessary run out to finish on 118.

There have been games when Melton would have scored these runs in a single over but they seemed rather leaden footed; unsure whether to attack the ball or just look for the easy singles. In the end they eschewed both options and against a good defensive performance from Bungay crawled their way to fourteen by the end of the eighth over. The final pair had clearly had enough of this procrastination and approached their innings, containing both power plays, in a positive fashion. Luckily for them there was to be no repeat of their four consecutive power play dismissals in their previous game as they eventually drew clear, helped by a generous sprinkling of extras, to win by nineteen runs.

Bungay 118 for 6 (3 points). Gt.Melton 137 for 2 (29 points). Gt.Melton won by 19 runs.

Round 2 Monday November 18th 2013

Rocklands v Mulbarton

Rocklands opened the group B matches, batting first against number two seeds Mulbarton; their first two pairs struggling against a cohesive bowling and fielding performance. With just nine runs coming from the first four overs, the second duo travelled backwards and a score of 104 off eight did not look promising. The last two provided some much needed momentum adding 27 to propel the score to a more respectable and defensible 131.

Mulbarton are experts at making a complete hash of chasing modest targets and again provided a perfect example of this approach losing five wickets with only seven runs to the good as the eighth over ended. Taking their two power plays in the ninth and twelfth would be crucial but a wicket for Rocklands left Mulbarton still twenty shy of the winning line with a dozen balls to come. The usual capitulation beckoned with eleven needed off their last over, a power play. But today was to be different as the last pair added twenty two off these six balls to win by twelve runs and prevent an embarrassing first round defeat for the number two seeds.

Rocklands 131 for 5 (10 points). Mulbarton 143 for 7 (29 points). Mulbarton won by 12 runs.

Hethersett & Tas Valley v Gt.Ellingham

New teams to the competition usually take a while to get the hang of this form of the game but this was certainly not the case for debutants Tas Valley whose first four batsmen provided a master class in working the ball around the hall and quick running between the wickets. With their first pair adding 24 and their second 36, they looked set to bat Ellingham out of the game. But choosing to take power plays on the last two overs is always a risky strategy and unfortunately backfired as the final pair travelled backwards, losing three wickets, to finish on 167.

This was still an impressive effort though as Ellingham attempted to chase down the target, adding 18 off the first four and another 22 off the second. Needing 28 to win from their last pair, this was going to be close and for Ellingham their tenth over power play was the key as, without losing a wicket, they added twenty runs to take them one clear with twelve balls remaining. Tas claimed another wicket but it was to be too little too late as in the end the number four seeds won comfortably by 15 runs.

Tas Valley 167 for 7 (11 points). Gt.Ellingham 182 for 5 (35 points). Gt.Ellingham won by 15 runs.

Round 1 Monday November 11th 2013

Gt.Melton v Old Buckenham

In front of a large and appreciative crowd, the third season of the indoor league blasted off with title holders Gt.Melton batting first against debutants Old Buckenham. Melton's openers started solidly and despite losing two wickets still added 32 with some excellent quick singles, the key to this form of cricket. But their opponents gained some level of control from then on limiting Melton's second pair to a meagre eight runs. With their top batsmen still to come Melton must have been eyeing up a prodigious total and so it would have been but for an extraordinary last two overs, both power plays, in which they lost five wickets, four of them consecutively, to finish on 126 for 11 wickets, their lowest ever total in this competition.

Melton having never had to defend such a low target showed why they are champions; bowling, catching and fielding tenaciously, helped admittedly by Bucks early reticence to seek out the quick singles and having already lost seven wickets by the end of the eighth over, looked finished. Their final pair had other ideas though and added some real lustre to the innings with some smart running adding 28 off their four overs to finish on 113 for 10. It might have been so different if Old Buckenham had exploited their earlier opportunities as it wasn't until the ninth over that the first single materialised, but this was a great showing from the newbies and they will have learned a lot from this encounter against the top seeded team.

Gt.Melton 126 for 11 (32 points). O.Buckenham 113 for 10 (12 points). Gt.Melton won by 13 runs.

Topcroft v Saxlingham

Saxlingham took on the other seeded team in the group, Topcroft, who looked impressive in their all blue strip and it wasn't just show either as after a cautious start they looked to break free with their second pair taking the total to 136, although three wickets in the tenth over brought them back to earth as they finished on 134 for 7.

Saxlingham have scored plenty of runs in the past, including the highest total last season, but they seemed rather distracted on this occasion as wickets tumbled against Topcroft's impressive attack; three for the first pair, seven for the second, and despite a flurry of runs at the end, another seven for the last pair making seventeen in total, not the sort of record they were probably looking to set at the beginning of the evening.

Topcroft 134 for 7 (40 points). Saxlingham 90 for 17 (7 points). Topcroft won by 44 runs.