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Cheshire County Cricket Club...2019

Cheshire crash out of KO Trophy in the Lincolnshire gloom

**Cheshire 88 (22.5 overs), Lincolnshire 80-4 (16.4 overs).
Lincolnshire won by 6 wickets (DLS method)**

Sunday 2 June 2019, Bracebridge Heath CC

Holdings Cheshire crashed out of the 2019 KO Trophy as they misfired in the rain and gloom in Lincolnshire.

Having won the trophy so dramatically in Wormsley at the end of last season, this was a million miles away as they struggled on a difficult pitch.

Batting first, it proved tough from the off. Will Evans, who sensationally blasted 183 against the same opposition last season, dug in well for 19, Jamie Crawley was spectacularly caught close in for 13 and Andy Jackson struck a late 18. It was grim watching though as Alex Willerton's pace and bounce proved a real handful as he almost single handedly blew Cheshire away with 6-20.

Batting in the gloom and rain was no fun with frequent showers forcing the players off the field.

Cheshire's total of 88 all out was always going to be straightforward for Lincolnshire but a couple of early wickets from Ben Gibbon (2-22), leaving the hosts on 12-2, gave some hope.

More rain and a change of heart from Lincolnshire as they opened up, and after the total required was revised to 80, they cantered home by six wickets in the 17th over.

A disappointing end to Cheshire's KO Trophy defence but skipper Rick Moore was philosophical in defeat.

"Conditions were pretty awful," he said. "And we didn't really have the firepower to match Willerton's fine display. Plenty of learnings to take from the game though."

Cheshire have work to do to qualify for the T20 finals too and the outcome isn't in their own hands as they travel to Northumberland next Sunday (9 June) and then host Lincolnshire at New Brighton the week after (16 June),

2019 fixtures:**Unicorns Counties Twenty20 Competition 2019 (double headers)**

Date	Opposition	Venue
5 May (A)	Cumberland	Carlisle – lost 2 games
19 May (H)	Staffordshire	Nantwich – won 1, lost 1
9 June (A)	Northumberland	Jesmond
16 June (H)	Lincolnshire	New Brighton
25 August	Finals Day	Wormsley

Unicorns Counties KO Trophy 2019

Date	Opposition	Venue
12 May (H)	Northumberland	Toft – won by 33 runs
2 June (A)	Lincolnshire	Bracebridge Heath, Lincoln – lost by 6 wickets

Note: * Provisional - if successful in earlier rounds

Unicorns Counties Championship (Western Division) 2019

Date	Opposition	Venue
23/24/25 June (H)	Wiltshire	Chester Boughton Hall
7/8/9 July (A)	Dorset	Chapel Gate, Bournemouth
21/22/23 July (A)	Berkshire	Finchampstead
4/5/6 August (H)	Devon	Alderley Edge
18/19/20 August (H)	Shropshire	Nantwich
1/2/3 September (A)	Oxfordshire	Thame

From 2020:

- Minor Counties becomes the National Counties Cricket Association
- The current Eastern and Western divisions of ten sides will each be split into two tiers of five sides
- Each side will play four games a season (currently six), with the bottom side being relegated/top side in lower division being promoted
- A final will be contested between the Western and Eastern Division 1 champions
- There will be an increase in KO Trophy 50 over matches by reverting to a group stage/quarter/semi-final format (as previous), replacing the current straight knock out. Counties will be guaranteed at least two home matches.
- The T20 format will be retained with four groups of five (different to KO Trophy groups) – the winners going straight to final's day.

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