



Aug 12, 2020 08:00 BST

Vitality Blast Finals Day to conclude domestic season

- Domestic season to conclude with Finals Day on Saturday 3 October
- Lord's set to stage five-day Bob Willis Trophy final from Wednesday 23 September
- Rachael Heyhoe Flint Trophy final set for Saturday 26 September
- Three domestic trophies to be decided in final week of season

The England and Wales Cricket Board has confirmed that this summer's

shortened domestic season will culminate with Vitality Blast Finals Day at Edgbaston on Saturday 3 October.

The fixture schedules for the Vitality Blast and Rachael Heyhoe Flint Trophy were published today with the final of the women's 50-over competition to be staged on Saturday 26 September.

A third piece of domestic silverware will also be up for grabs during the final week of the season with the five-day Bob Willis Trophy final scheduled to be held at Lord's from Wednesday 23 September.

The Vitality Blast will begin on Thursday 27 August with defending champions Essex Eagles at home to Middlesex at the Cloudfm County Ground in Chelmsford.

Yorkshire Vikings will host Notts Outlaws at Emerald Headingley on the opening night as the first of 10 Vitality Blast group-stage matches that will be televised by Sky.

The Rachael Heyhoe Flint Trophy will begin two days later with all eight teams to play twice over the August Bank Holiday weekend.

The special-edition competition has been created for this summer only to ensure women's domestic cricket is played despite the challenges of COVID-19 and underlines the ECB's commitment to professionalise the domestic game for women.

ECB Chief Executive Officer, Tom Harrison, said:

"After a challenging few months it's really exciting that we can look forward to three domestic finals at the end of the summer. It promises to be a thrilling climax to the season, and something members, fans and everyone involved in the game can look forward to.

"The prestige of a Lord's final for the Bob Willis Trophy will provide an even greater incentive for the First-Class Counties, and it's pleasing to see so many people watching the high-class entertainment via the enhanced live streams the counties have invested in. Finals Day at Edgbaston will also ensure the men's county cricket finishes the season on a high.

“I’m also proud that we will stage the Rachael Heyhoe Flint Trophy in honour of a true great of our game both on and off the field. Rachael’s determination to give women’s cricket the platform it deserves is a legacy that must endure through these difficult times as we continue the journey to professionalise the women’s game. This summer’s tournament will be another important step on that path.

“The fact we’ve been able to get so much domestic cricket played this summer owes to the collaborative efforts of the county network and their willingness to find a way to get the game on in the safest way possible for all involved. There will be many more challenges ahead, but the unity and spirit shown during this summer has been a tribute to the county network as we work together to grow our sport.”

The Vitality Blast has been regionalised into the same three groups used in the Bob Willis Trophy with each county set to play 10 group-stage matches behind closed doors. The quarter-finals will all be played on Thursday 1 October.

BBC Radio will cover every match of the Vitality Blast while all 18 First-Class Counties have been scheduled to play in front of the Sky cameras during the group stage.

Vitality Blast matches that are not televised by Sky may be available via the First-Class Counties’ live streaming services across their digital channels.

Emerald Headingley (North Group), Edgbaston (Central Group) and the Kia Oval (South Group) will host eight of the 10 Sky televised group-stage matches, which will include neutral double-headers at each of those venues.

The Ageas Bowl and Emirates Old Trafford, which have hosted men’s England internationals this summer, will also stage televised derby matches. One quarter-final and Finals Day will also be televised by Sky.

All white-ball knockout matches, including the Rachael Heyhoe Flint Trophy final and Vitality Blast Finals Day have been assigned reserve days.

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Editor's Notes

Vitality Blast groups

North: Derbyshire Falcons, Durham, Lancashire Lightning, Leicestershire Foxes, Notts Outlaws, Yorkshire Vikings

Central: Birmingham Bears, Glamorgan, Gloucestershire, Northants Steelbacks, Somerset, Worcestershire Rapids

South: Essex Eagles, Hampshire, Kent Spitfires, Middlesex, Surrey, Sussex Sharks

Sky matches

Emerald Headingley: 27 August - Yorkshire Vikings v Notts Outlaws; Double-header, 31 August - Leicestershire Foxes v Durham, Derbyshire v Lancashire Lightning

Edgbaston: 2 September – Birmingham Bears v Gloucestershire; Double-header, 3 September – Worcestershire Rapids v Somerset, Northants Steelbacks v Glamorgan

The Kia Oval: Double-header, 5 September – Essex Eagles v Kent Spitfires, Surrey v Middlesex

The Ageas Bowl: 10 September - Hampshire v Sussex Sharks

Emirates Old Trafford: 17 Sept - Lancashire Lightning v Yorkshire Vikings

Live streaming

Vitality Blast matches that are not televised by Sky may be available via the First-Class Counties' live streaming services across their digital channels. A full break down of how to follow will be available on ecb.co.uk

Rachael Heyhoe Flint Trophy

The ECB Reporters Network will cover every match of the Rachael Heyhoe Flint Trophy with plans to live stream some matches.

Vitality Blast ticket purchasers

With Vitality Blast matches set to be played behind closed doors, ticket purchasers for the original group-stage fixtures will be contacted by the original host venue with information on the process for obtaining a refund, as well as any other options that may be available to them.

Vitality Blast Finals Day ticket purchasers

Ticket purchasers for the initially-scheduled Vitality Blast Finals Day 2020 have the option of rolling over their ticket(s) to 2021, at no cost, or to claim a refund.

Ticket purchasers do not have to take any action to rollover their tickets to next year's Vitality Blast Finals Day and will automatically be booked into the same seats for 2021 Finals Day.

No additional charge will be incurred, and ticket purchasers will receive a confirmation of their revised booking once the 2021 Vitality Blast Finals Day date has been confirmed.

If a ticket purchaser, for any reason, can not attend Finals Day 2021 when the date has been set, they have the opportunity to use Edgbaston's Official Resale Platform to give other fans an opportunity to purchase their tickets at face value.

To claim a refund on the value of their 2020 Vitality Blast Finals Day tickets, ticket purchasers can complete the online form before midnight on Wednesday 26 August.

All refunds will be processed before the end of September.

Should approval be granted from the Government for spectators to attend

Vitality Blast Finals Day on 3 October 2020, this will be ticketed as a new event. All details of how to book tickets and the priority process will subsequently be released at edgbaston.com.



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