



Somerset captain Lewis Gregory (left) and Sussex Sharks captain Luke Wright pictured with the new Vitality Blast trophy at Edgbaston today (Friday), before their teams meet in the second semi final tomorrow

Sep 14, 2018 13:00 BST

Fresh feel for Vitality Blast Finals Day

There will be a fresh feel at a familiar venue for Finals Day this weekend, as four captains bid to be the first to lift the new Vitality Blast trophy.

Birmingham's place as the home of Finals Day was confirmed earlier this year when Edgbaston was named host venue until 2024 – meaning this will be the sixth of at least a 12-year run.

Another capacity crowd of more than 24,000 is guaranteed rounding off a successful season which saw the competition's aggregate attendance reach a

new peak of 931,000 – up from 905,000 last season.

But there is a new set of semi-finalists as none of the four counties who have earned places at Finals Day this year made it to Edgbaston for the memorable 2017 climax, when Notts Outlaws beat Birmingham Bears to secure their first T20 title.

Worcestershire Rapids will be making the short journey to Edgbaston for their first Finals Day appearance since the Twenty20 Cup was created in 2003.

Somerset will be making their first Finals Day appearance since 2012, and their fifth in total.

For **Sussex Sharks**, it will be a fourth Finals Day appearance, and their first since 2012 – meaning **Lancashire Lightning** are the only one of the 2018 semi-finalists to have appeared at Finals Day since the switch to Edgbaston in 2013.

This will be their seventh Finals Day appearance and their third in the last five years - although like Sussex and Somerset they have only been champions once, in 2015.

Gordon Hollins, the ECB's Chief Operating Officer, said: "Congratulations to the four counties who have made it to Finals Day, and to all 18 counties for making this a superb first season for the Blast under Vitality's new, all-embracing sponsorship of T20 cricket at every level.

"Attendances increased by three per cent this season – the fifth time in the last six years that the competition has broken its own attendance record – and tickets for this season's Finals Day sold out in record time.

"The continued growth reflects the collective efforts of both ECB and the First-Class Counties to promote Vitality Blast via a comprehensive multi-channel nationwide advertising campaign. It's great to see this campaign paying off and the competition attracting even more fans this year."

Vitality Blast Finals Day will be followed on Sunday by another big day of T20 cricket in the Midlands, with the Vitality Club T20 reaching its climax at the 3aaa County Ground in Derby. This year clubs from Cheshire, Norfolk, Yorkshire and Sussex are in the running for the title won by South

Northumberland CC last year (details below).

Neville Koopowitz, CEO of Vitality, said: “It’s great to see the growth of T20 cricket over the course of the season and we’re delighted to be a part of the game’s continuing success. Excitement is building ahead of a big weekend and we can’t wait to watch all four teams compete for the new Vitality Blast trophy.”

Neil Snowball, Chief Executive at Edgbaston Stadium, said: “Finals Day has become one of the biggest days in the British sporting calendar and we have seen record sales again this year, with almost 20,000 general admission tickets being sold to fans before the competition got underway on 8 July.

“We’re very proud that Edgbaston continues to be the home of Finals Day and we’re set for another great occasion this Saturday as hosts for the tenth time.

“We wish all four teams the very best of luck and we hope that all spectators enjoy a fantastic day out with us at Edgbaston.”

Saturday September 15, Vitality Blast Finals Day (Edgbaston)

Semi finals – 11am Lancashire Lightning v Worcestershire Rapids, 230pm Somerset v Sussex Sharks, 645pm Final

Sunday September 16, Vitality Club T20 Finals Day (3aaa County Ground, Derby)

Semi finals – 1115am Nantwich (Cheshire) v Swardeston (Norfolk), 245pm Hanging Heaton (Yorkshire) v Roffey (Sussex), 630pm Final

Notes to editors:

Captains of the four counties at Vitality Blast Finals Day – Liam Livingstone (Lancashire Lightning), Lewis Gregory (Somerset), Luke Wright (Sussex Sharks) and Moeen Ali (Worcestershire Rapids) – will be available for photographs with the new Vitality Blast trophy at Edgbaston today, between 130 and 4pm (to fit in with the four teams’ practice sessions).

Ends...

You'll find all ECB Media Releases and associated resources on our [Newsroom](#)
>

Contacts



Kate Miller

Press Contact
Director of Communications
media@ecb.co.uk



Jonathan Reed

Press Contact
Head of Media & Publications
media@ecb.co.uk
+44 (0) 7525 596 621



Danny Reuben

Press Contact
Head of Team Communications
England Men's team
danny.reuben@ecb.co.uk
+44 (0)7825 723 620



Matt Somerford

Press Contact
Communications Manager - Domestic Cricket
media@ecb.co.uk
+44 (0)7551 134 716



Hen Cowen

Press Contact

Senior Communications Manager (they/them)

hen.cowen@ecb.co.uk

+44 (0)7585 987 302



Chris Tuttlebee

Press Contact

Corporate Communications Lead

chris.tuttlebee@ecb.co.uk

+44 (0)7824 551713

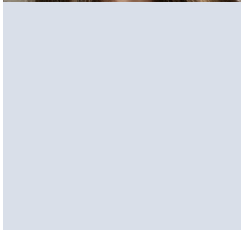


Emily Liles

Press Contact

Communications Manager - Performance (England Women)

emily.liles@ecb.co.uk



Accreditation Team

Press Contact

Accreditation

accreditation@ecb.co.uk



ECB Press Office

Press Contact

media@ecb.co.uk