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Rachael Heyhoe Flint Trophy returns alongside new Women's Regional T20

- Rachael Heyhoe Flint Trophy to remain the name of women's regional 50 over competition
- Women's Regional T20 to launch this summer with opening matches on 26 June
- Women's Regional T20 Finals Day scheduled for 5 September
- Rachael Heyhoe Flint Trophy final to be staged on 25 September
- Schedule for two England Women home series to be announced soon

The Rachael Heyhoe Flint Trophy will return alongside the new Women's Regional T20 as a new era begins for women's domestic cricket this summer.

Fixtures for the Rachael Heyhoe Flint Trophy and the Women's Regional T20 have been released today with 56 matches to be played across both competitions.

The Rachael Heyhoe Flint Trophy will begin on 29 May with each of the eight teams to play each other once in the group stage. The final is to be held on 25 September.

The Women's Regional T20 is set to commence on 26 June with the eight teams split into two groups of four. Each team will play three home and three away matches during the group stage before Finals Day on 5 September.

England Women are set to host two international series across the summer of 2021, with fixtures to be announced shortly. England player availability throughout the Rachael Heyhoe Flint Trophy and Women's Regional T20 competition will be determined by international selection.

Southern Vipers won the inaugural Rachael Heyhoe Flint Trophy last September and, following the popularity of the decision to name last summer's competition after one of English cricket's most revered names, it was decided that the tournament should continue to honour the former England captain and pioneer.

Baroness Rachael Heyhoe Flint OBE led England at the first-ever World Cup in 1973 while off the field her determination for equality laid the foundations for the opportunities presented to modern-day players.

This summer 41 female players have signed full-time professional domestic contracts – in addition to 17 centrally contracted England players – while the launch of The Hundred will establish further opportunity for female cricketers.

ECB Managing Director of Women's Cricket, Clare Connor, said: "This promises to be a truly memorable summer of cricket for the women's game.

"We are not only set to further professionalise the game with more players on

full-time contracts than ever before but, crucially, we will showcase our game to more young girls across England and Wales so that they can say cricket is a game for them.

“I am particularly proud that we will continue to move forward with Rachael Heyhoe Flint’s name, with everything she represented for women’s cricket, firmly entrenched in our journey.

“The launch of women’s regional cricket last summer, despite the challenges caused by the pandemic, was another significant step forward for our domestic game. We are now looking forward to seeing those regional teams play twice as much cricket this summer with the addition of the T20 competition.”

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Editor’s Notes

The full schedule for today’s announced fixtures is available in the download link at the bottom of this press release.

The format and qualification process for the two competitions are as follows:

Rachael Heyhoe Flint Trophy:

Each Regional team will play against each other once during the group stage. The team that tops the table after the group stage will advance to the final, to be staged on 25 September.

The second and third-placed teams at the end of the group stage will meet in a playoff on 22 September. The winner of that match will progress to the final.

The venues for the playoff and for the final are to be confirmed.

Women’s Regional T20:

The Women's Regional T20 is set to start on 26 June with three opening-round matches to be played as double headers with Vitality Blast games at Trent Bridge, Edgbaston and Emerald Headingley. Emirates Old Trafford will also stage a double header on 9 July.

The Regional team have been placed into two groups of four based on their final standings in the Rachael Heyhoe Flint Trophy last summer (shown in brackets):

Group A	Group B
Southern Vipers (S1)	Northern Diamonds (N1)
Central Sparks (N2)	Western Storm (S2)
SE Stars (S3)	Sunrisers (S4)
Lightning (N4)	Thunder (N3)

Finals Day will be staged on Sunday 5 September with the best group winner progressing immediately to the final.

The semi-final on Finals Day will be contested by the 'other' group winner and the best second-placed team. The winner of that match will progress to the final.

2020 Rachael Heyhoe Flint Trophy

The Rachael Heyhoe Flint Trophy was initially staged last summer as a special one-off 50 over competition to ensure women's domestic cricket during the COVID-19 affected season.

The eight Regional team competed in the tournament which was won by Southern Vipers when they defeated Northern Diamonds by 38 runs at Edgbaston on 27 September.

It was always intended that the 50 over and T20 competitions would launch together this season, with a decision made this winter to retain Rachael Heyhoe Flint Trophy as the name of the 50 over competition.

Rachael Heyhoe Flint

Baroness Rachael Heyhoe Flint OBE was a trailblazer for women's sport captaining England to the first-ever Cricket World Cup title in 1973 while off the field her tireless determination for equality laid the foundations for the opportunities presented to modern-day players.

Heyhoe Flint played 22 Tests and 23 one-day internationals during a 19-year England career and is a member of the ICC Hall of Fame. The Women's Cricketer of the Year award was created and named after Heyhoe Flint in 2017 as a tribute to her following her death, aged 77, that year.

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Contacts



Matt Somerford

Press Contact

Communications Manager - Domestic Cricket

media@ecb.co.uk

+44 (0)7551 134 716