

2026 SCCL Premier Division Round Up Week 22

Wellington Champions, St Georges claim runners up, Newtown relegated and Ludlow face nervous wait.

By Jamie Dowley

The final chapter in the 2026 Premier season yet again showed that top level league cricket can always be relied upon to produce high drama when you least expect it, as Wellington stumbled over the line to claim a 3rd title in 4 years.



2026 SCCL Premier Division Champions Wellington CC 1st XI

Back from left : Stephen Brooks, Ben Pilkington, Jack Short (scorer), Jason Oakes, Dan Vaughan (c), Luke Goring, Ollie Smith, Matthew Morris

Front: Hugh Morris, Morgan Ward, Avijay Maharaj, Matt Simmonds

What on paper appeared to be a stroll in the park for Dan Vaughans side as they simply required a home win against already relegated **Shrewsbury 2nds**, evolved into his worst nightmare as **Wellington** threatened to capitulate at Orleton Park. Batting first with the pressure off, away skipper Josh Anders got off to a flyer as his side reached 50 inside 6 overs. When Anders was run out for 32, Vaughan was forced to introduce Matt Simmonds earlier than planned and he quickly regained control as his 2-11 off 7 overs dragged the game back. However, the Shrewsbury batting order all continued to chip in with Fin Lo (22), Krrish Chadha (21), Ben Manders (27) and Rob Foster (27no) ensuring a decent score of 183-9 off 40 overs. 184 to win the league was going to take some getting even against a side already relegated, and when talisman Vaughan fell lbw for 13 and Jason Oakes was dismissed for 4, the nerves were starting to build on the home bench. Both were victims to Isaac Simmons and when the 18 year old followed up with 2 more wickets to leave the champions elect 45-4, the tension was palpable. Matt Simmonds in at 5 was a calming presence and his 50 partnership with Hugh Morris was critical, and although Morris fell for 21, Luke Goring carried on with Simmons to seize the initiative once again. At 125-5 and things looking much better for Wellington, Simmons tried an injudicious shot, falling for 37, and when Goring picked the one man patrolling the entire leg side boundary for 29, and Matthew Morris did likewise, at 144-8 gloom enveloped the entire ground as League officials prepared to beat a hasty retreat to Quatt where the title now seemed certain to be presented. However, Oliver

Smith and Ben Pilkington had other ideas, and immediately Smith struck a 6 with his first ball. Both batsmen had decided if they were going down it would be in a blaze of glory and the big shots were in full flow as the pair struck cleanly and quickly. The gung-ho approach paid off handsomely and with Pilkington on 19no it was over to Smith to apply the coup de grace, he struck the winning boundary and end on 27no, a 9th wicket partnership worth 43 in short order that brings another title back to Orleton Park.

Title winning skipper Dan Vaughan *"I must say I thought it had gone but Ollie Smith who was the hero with the bat at Quatt the other week did it again under even more pressure, and Ben Pilkington also played a blinder. We know we have great batting depth in our side but that was a little too close for comfort if I am honest! We had a strategy to win games chasing and every time we have got over the line, so it shows the character we have"*

And on their chances for the play offs? *"We will be at full strength with Dave Laird and Josh McDonald back, and we know we will have to find a level of performance above perhaps what we showed today but we are more than capable of finding those levels"*

Dragons have too much power for Quatt to finish 2nd

As high drama played out at Wellington, at the very same time **Quatt** and **St Georges** were locked in their own struggles that at various stages of the afternoon appeared to be more than just a battle for 2nd place but could decide the SCCL crown. It was a winner takes all clash with St Georges having first dibs and they took their usual patient approach at the top of the order knowing they had plenty in the hutch to come although Waqas Ahmed perhaps overdid the cautious approach as he fell for a 22-ball duck. Captain Mohammed Aqeeb played okay for 23, while Charitha Kumarasinghe did likewise with 44 but Amritpal Singh played a gem of a knock in making an outstanding 115no. That gave Ashish and Zab Safi full license to play their shots, Ashish with a run a ball 42, while Safi was at his imperious best striking at 258 in making 31 including 27 off one Scott Furber over. That got the Dragons up to 290-6 as Quatt's bowlers toiled although Todd Henderson with 2-35 and James Lunn 2-46 can be satisfied with their return.

Quatt have tinkered with their batting line up all season but have finally settled on overseas pro Nipun opening and the Sri Lankan followed up his maiden league ton with another century here. Sadly, only Tom Whitney (23) and Henderson (43) could support him to any great extent and at no stage could Quatt really get close enough to chase down 290. The nearest was probably at 216-5 with 8 overs remaining but with Shah Fiaz (3-53), Ali Mustafa (2-49, and Faisal Khan (2-33) all able to take wickets supporting Ashish who was the pick of the attack with 1-19 off 9 overs, his one wicket was that of Nipun for 107 as St Georges claimed runners up spot with a 33 run victory.

Griffiths stars as Shelton stroll secures top flight status

Shelton went into their home contest with Madeley knowing a win would guarantee them a premier place for 2027 and with the visitors having done so themselves last week, they were probably ideal opponents for Jack Morris' side. Having decided to bat first, Madeley put on 29 for the first wicket but once Anil Kumar went for 24, the rest of the batting line up folded meekly with only Mithun and Shahzaib reaching double figures. As Griffiths wreaked havoc in taking 5-25, it was left to captain Morris to wrap up the innings with 4-26 as Madeley totalled 98. Dan Walker has had an inconsistent season but here he anchored the reply with an unbeaten 35, while Greg Smith made 46 as Shelton cruised home by 8 wickets against very beachy opponents.

Jack Morris *"It was a massive game no doubt about that, not a position we ever wanted to find ourselves in, but it was great to get the win and confirm Premier Division cricket for 2027. The match played out as well as we could have hoped, it was one of our better performances of the year, Sam bowled great, and the chase with Dan and Greg was controlled and got the job done."*

Ludlow need favours as win resolves little

Luke Miles side went into their finale at **Sentinel** knowing they had to win and hope Madeley could overturn Shelton to guarantee a pathway to survival. Well, they kept their side of the bargain as they steamrolled a Sentinel side who gained a place in the final table despite a pretty mediocre performance here. Stuck into bat the Edwards brothers put on 50 for the

first wicket and although Sam went for 20, younger brother Jack came good with 56 in his first meaningful contribution since his move from Shifnal. At 111-5 the innings could have gone away from **Ludlow** but with Simon Fletcher making 34 and Will Gough hitting an excellent 51, they managed to reach a very competitive 210 off 40 overs. Matty Cliffe bowled with nice loop in taking 2-31 while Nick Bateup cleaned up the tail as he took 3-19. The Engines reply didn't have a lot going for it as Ludlow turned the screw with Sammy Bowen bowling a good new ball spell with 3-26. Only Jacob Binnerley with 20 contributed as the Sentinel season petered to 78ao with Joe Williams claiming 3-16 and Josh Bowen 2-14. But its Sentinel who moves up to 7th as their 4pts takes them above Madeley and they will be delighted with their finish given their troubles for most of the season. For Ludlow they are now desperately hoping Wellington can gain play off glory or their 55 years stay in the top flight of Shropshire could well be over.

"It was a great performance but maybe too little too late" bemoaned Ludlow Chairman Phil Parker

Relegation decided in Wales washout

Newtown entertained **Wem** in a match they simply had to win to have any chance of survival, but with the game poised at 128-3 in the Wem innings, with Harry Chandler 43no and Tom Astley 35no, heavy rain prevented any further play. So ends the Welshmen's 2 year stay in the division as they depart back to Division One in 11th place, while Wem finish in 4th.

Allscott confirm top 5 finish as Whitchurch suffer mauling

Finally, **Whitchurch** travelled to **Allscott Heath** 19 points behind their opponents and having been put into bat it became virtually impossible for them to catch up. The Robinson brothers put on 39 for the first wicket at which point wickets fell regularly afterwards, with Mike Robinson going for 21 to fall agonisingly close of 700 league runs, ending on 696, another excellent season though. Kunal Dabas was another with a chance to reach that 700 target but he too fell short falling for 26 as spinners Jason Summers (3-27) and Kuldeep Devatwal (3-24) took over the contest. Only Kashif Hussain who ends the season batting with real verve and here made 40, got the visitors up to a semi defendable total, as they ended on 167-9 off 40 overs. The Allscott reply was a convincing one, Maz Hasnain biting the hand that used to feed him with an imperious 62, while Jason Summers batted through for 60no. That left Devatwal who has been the consummate professional for the last 3 years to see his side home with 32no and an 8 wicket win.

Callum Starling *"We have had a good season, the league is much stronger at the top end than last year and yet we have still held our own at the right end of the table, and we keep moving in the right direction. It was a great result today, we have had a lot of injuries in the squad, but we are mixing it with the big boys on a weekly basis and are very happy, and will go again next year"*

Whitchurch Chairman Iain Marsh *"it's been a slightly disappointing end to the season, but the lads have given their all during the campaign, there is a great spirit in the group and rest assured we will back next year to give it a real go"*

So that wraps up the 2026 campaign, easily the most exciting of the 3 I have covered on a weekly basis. Good luck to Wellington for the play offs, thank you to all the captains who have co-operated and given me quotes most weeks which add colour to the reports, but please look out later next week for a team by team review of the Premier campaign and my exclusive SCCL Premier Team of the Season.