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## Future Stars Shine at 'Chance to Compete'

Four schools from across the country battled it out for the national title at Moseley Cricket Club last Friday (14 September) as part of the 'Chance to Compete' National Finals Day. All four teams won through to the final after progressing through their regional heats. Sir Thomas Rich's School from Gloucestershire claimed the title in dramatic circumstances with an epic last ball victory over Brine Leas School from Cheshire in the final.

The kids were also treated to coaching from some of the best with Former England and Warwickshire bowler Gladstone Small on hand to help inspire the next generation of cricketers. Gladstone was joined by England women's cricketers Caroline Atkins and Beth Morgan who offered advice and tips to the youngsters.

'Chance to Compete' is a national secondary school hardball competition run by the Cricket Foundation, who run the Chance to Shine campaign. Following a successful pilot last year, this year the competition was rolled out nationwide. The competition is aimed at giving secondary state school children an opportunity to play hardball, competitive cricket.

Speaking at the event, Steve Peyman, Director of Operations at the Cricket Foundation, said, "It's been a fantastic occasion. The children have thoroughly enjoyed themselves and there has been some great cricket on show. All day the games were played in the right spirit and it was capped off by a nail-biting finish.

"Thanks again to Gladstone, Caroline and Beth for attending. The kids loved having them here and they have picked up some great tips from them."

Speaking about his school's victory, Phil Brown, teacher at Sir Thomas Rich's school, commented, "What a great day. It's a beautiful surrounding and setting and there has been some really good cricket. The last ball victory could have gone either way and it was fantastic to win. The final was very tense and I'm glad it's all over!"

"I'm very proud of the boys. They've worked hard and there is some terrific talent here, with good prospects for the future, and they have come together brilliantly as a team. It's great to see them progress so well - I've really enjoyed coaching them."

'Chance to Shine' supported by Brit Insurance is the biggest grass-roots sport development programme ever undertaken in Britain. It was launched in 2005 by Governor of the Bank of England Sir Mervyn King to reverse the decline of cricket in state schools and has now brought cricket to over one million schoolchildren.



The winning squad from Sir Thomas Rich's School proudly display their medals and the champion's trophy with Gladstone Small and England Ladies Cricketers Beth Morgan and Caroline Atkins

*Semi-final 1 - Crown Hills v Brine Leas*

The first semi saw Crown Hills from Leicestershire come up against Cheshire's own Brine Leas. Crown Hills batted first and some good bowling from Brine Leas restricted them to 48. Brine Leas' openers Max Perry and Eddy Warrington made short work of the total, knocking it off in just over four overs. Perry made 20\* and Warrington finished on 18\*.

Result: Brine Leas won by seven wickets

*Semi-Final 2 - Southborough High v Sir Thomas Rich's*

Southborough High from Surrey took on Sir Thomas Rich's from Gloucestershire in the second semi. Southborough batted first and posted a competitive 72-2 from their 8 overs. Prince Singh made an unbeaten 20 and Rafeh Jafri smashed 23\* from just eleven balls including one four and two sixes. In reply Joel Price cracked 22\* from 9 balls as Sir Thomas Rich's looked to be cruising to victory at 68-1 before Arun Astley (3-14) took a flurry of wickets to put the result back in the balance. Despite this, Sir Thomas Rich's came into the last over only needing one to win. The next three balls comprised of a run out, a stumping and a dot ball as the tension mounted and seemed to be getting to Sir Thomas Rich's. Step forward Ben Davis who hit the fourth ball of the over to the boundary as his team just got over the line and into the final.

Result: Sir Thomas Rich's won by two wickets





### *3rd and 4th place play-offs - Crown Hills v Southborough High*

In the play-off match for third and fourth positions, Crown Hills again batted first but this time scored at a quicker rate than their semi and posted a very competitive 77-5. Adam Dakri scored a very useful 23\* but extras top scored as Southborough High conceded a massive 32 runs in wides. Southborough were keen to make up for their bowling performance and with Malkit Madhang (23\*), Shayaan Kumar (18) and Rafeh Jafri (16\*) all contributing they chased down the total with four balls to spare. Southborough High finished on 79-1 to clinch third place.

Result: Southborough High won by six wickets

### *Final - Brine Leas v Sir Thomas Rich's*

Brine Leas batted first in the final and their openers looked to carry on from where they left off in the semi. Perry and Warrington both made 22\* as they looked set for a big score. Despite a few run outs, Joel Clarke made a quick 13\* to guide his team to 71-2 from their 8 overs. Sir Thomas Rich's managed to keep up with the rate throughout their innings thanks to 23\* from Henry Peach and an unbeaten 18 from Kieran Richards. A tidy over from Nathan Hall (7-2) meant that Sir Thomas Rich's needed eleven from the final over. The tension was palpable as Richards and Davis tried to get their team over the line. It came down to the final ball as the pair scampered a quick single to the 'keeper to win the competition and become 'Chance to Compete' national champions.

Result: Sir Thomas Rich's won by four wickets from the final ball



Chance to Compete Eight-a-Side National Champions