

## **A nap hand of winners!**

Its five out of five for the Over 60s and 70s

It's been a memorable week for the the Oxfordshire Seniors Over 60s and 70s as all five teams won in style with notable performances aplenty.

And top of that list has to be Dave 'Chalky' White's remarkable 98 from 89 balls chasing down just 150 against Middlesex for the Over 60s 3rds.

The seconds also put in a gritty team performance away to Leicestershire to get back to winning ways by 45 runs despite the late loss of two key players to injury, while the firsts got their campaign underway with an impressively smooth eight wicket away win against Bucks. Not to be outdone - the previous day - the Oxon over 70s looked hugely impressive in beating Wales by 79 runs at Kingston Bagpuize in their West of England Cricket League fixture, while the joint Oxs/Berks Over 70s secured victory by 77 runs in the final fixture of the week against Worcestershire at University College, Oxford.

The Over 60s firsts travelled to Fulmer CC, where having won the toss and chosen to bat Bucks made a good start with openers Steve White and Gary Hales posting 60 for the first wicket before White was caught by Phil Manning off Tim Mahoney for 3, after which the new pairing of Hales and Temoor Alam added a further 28 before Hales departed, bowled by skipper Darryl Woods for 39.

And without further addition to the score Alam then went for just 10 when he was well taken off his own bowling by Steve Roberts, to leave the game evenly poised at 88 for 3.

New batsman Anant Peshavaria looked well set but at the other end things started to unravel for the hosts. Skipper Murray Scott soon fell to Woods, caught by Phil Manning for just four, after which Kevin Woodhouse retired unable to continue for 11, with the visitors now very much in control.

Brian Shipley then also went quickly for just four bowled by Paul Hemming and was soon followed by Mazar Hussain for three, again caught by Manning off Hemming.

Max Higginbotham went for 12, caught by Charlie Anderson off the bowling of Mickey Thomas as Bucks subsided to just 165 for 7 from their 45 overs, with Peshavaria's 31 not out -delivering a modicum of respectability to the total.

All the Oxon bowlers contributed well with skipper Woods catching the eye with 2-33 from nine, while Tim Mahoney's 1-19 off nine was a remarkable demonstration of line and length economy, with Steve Roberts not far behind with 1-26 from his nine.

In reply Oxon lost Nick Morman early on when he was caught by Hales off Higginbotham for seven with the score on 10 but skipper Woods and the rock-like Charlie Anderson were unfazed as they posted 144 for the second wicket and took the visitors to within sight of victory, before Woods was finally dismissed, caught by Hales off Shipley for 86 off 100 balls, with Anderson making a stately 45 not out from 93 balls.

"Its always great to get the season off to a winning start," said skipper Woods, "but it was particularly pleasing that it was achieved with such an excellent all-round team performance." Next up the firsts are at home to Warwickshire at Shipton under Wychwood.

After last week's surprise defeat to Bucks the seconds travelled to Broomleys CC in Coalville looking to put that right against Leicestershire.

However, two late withdrawals from the side and a late start due to the ground not being ready saw them in a far from ideal position after losing the toss and being asked to bat in a game reduced to 40 overs.

However, Ivan Mulford and Johnny Morton quickly settled in and were soon scoring freely as

they racked up 73 for the first wicket in just 14 overs before Morton was bowled by Eddie Cham for a well-made 42.

New Batsman Adrian Manager looked equally at ease as he joined Mulford and fluently added another 50 runs before he too went eight short of a half century caught by Jitu Naik off Malcolm Butcher, with the score on 152 for 2.

Mulford continued to anchor the innings and was soon being well supported by one of the two late additions to the side in the person of Jerry Senior - and the pair added a further 26 before the opener was bowled by Malcolm Butcher for 64 off 103 balls with the score 178 for 3 in the 33rd over.

Senior was then joined by Howard Lancaster and the substitute pair took the total well past 200 as both scored freely at a run a ball, before Lancaster was trapped lbw by the persistently accurate Butcher for 17, followed next over by Senior who was caught by Mark Ward off Cham for 22.

Simon Oldfield on 14 and Stuart Bullen on six were the not out batsmen as the visitors totalled, 239 for five in 40 overs, with extras adding a crucial 32 runs to the total.

Malcolm Butcher was the pick of the home bowlers with 3-42 from his eight overs, with Eddie Cham close behind on 2-43 from eight.

In reply Leics made a something of a stuttering start as first Brad Peake was bowled by Andy Slater for 18, soon followed by Nigel Clarke for 13, who was well stumped by Peter Howe off the bowling of debutant Stuart Bullen to leave the hosts on 64 – 2 with 16 overs gone. At the other end however, opener Lall was looking ominously well set.

But the visitors soon struck again as keeper Mark Ward went for just three bowled by Bullen, which then brought in Butcher who helped steady the ship somewhat as he and Lall added 43 before Adrian Manger bowled him for 21 off just 14 balls, with the score on 127-4 in the 25th over.

Rod Wood only troubled the scorers for a single as Howe again obliged with the stumping off Bullen, and the big breakthrough then followed when Bullen trapped Lall lbw for an excellent 82 off 76 balls

Leics needed skipper Dave Perry to play a captain's innings but he made only four when he was caught by Graham Nelson off Manger as the hosts began to slip behind the asking rate with the score on 148 -7

Nigel Lewis and Jitu Naik worked hard in adding 42 for the eighth wicket - making 18 and 26 respectively but Lewis went lbw to Adrian Manger while Naik was run out, before Manger wrapped things up by bowling Steve Waddington for nought as the hosts made 194 all out with three overs unused.

The pick of the Oxon bowlers were new boy Bullen and Manger who returned almost identical figures of 4-46 and 4-47 respectively from their eight over spells, but the early

squeeze from the economical Nelson, Slater and Pykett also played an important role when Lall was accumulating steadily.

Afterwards skipper Pykett commented: "The run up to this game and the late start etc, could have put us in totally the wrong frame of mind to be competitive, after which it would have been no surprise if we'd lost.

"But we showed just how tough, focussed and determined a side we are and as a result we mostly controlled the game well and notched up a really impressive win. We'll be a better team for today's game."

Next up the seconds travel to Moseley CC in Solihull to play Warwickshire.

The thirds were looking to maintain their winning start and also set the record straight

against last seasons bogey side Middlesex, who were the only county to beat them both at home and away.

The visitors won the toss and opted to bat on a typically hard and dry wicket at Challow and Childrey CC of a type that batters tend to enjoy.

However, it was the hosts left arm opening bowler Jon Woods who took the early honours and put Oxon firmly in control as he ran through the Middlesex top and middle order, which he started by removing Godon Kennedy for a duck in his second over.

Opener Mark Melzer and new batsman Atula Tilakaratna looked like they had repaired the early damage as they moved the score along to 33 in the eighth over before a brilliant direct hit run out from Chalky White caught Tilakaratna dawdling on what should have been a comfortable single on Melzer's call.

Wood meanwhile was keeping things very tight and getting the ball to swing back into the right handers, which proved to be more than effective as he first bowled Peter Berg for a single and then Howard Lee for a duck next ball, to reduce Middlesex to 34 for 4 in the ninth over.

Phil Knappett made just seven but added 20 with the impressive Melzer before he was bowled by Woods, after which new batsman Chris Chunnillall lasted just one ball before he was dismissed by a brilliant low slip catch by Steve Kelly to give Woods his 'five for' and reduce the visitors to 54 for 6.

However, the tail dug in and rallied around opener Melzer and worked hard to get off strike and allow him to keep the score moving along. Skipper Doug Gordon made a patient 15 from 45 balls as Melzer launched a counter attack and the pair added 56 for the seventh wicket before Gordon was lbw to the left arm spin of Ian Curtis, which was quickly followed by Melzer being beaten in the flight and bowled by Steve Wilson for a very well made 70 from 82 balls.

Frank Prenesti and Peter Doole kept up the good work as they added an important 36 runs to take the total up to 150 before Doole was bowled by Steve Partington for 27, shortly after which Richard Taper went in the same fashion to see the innings closed at 155 all out with an over to spare.

Alongside Woods' outstanding 5-27 from nine overs, the turn and bounce of Ian Curtis' left arm spin delivered the remarkable figures of 1-16 from his nine overs.

Faced with a low total on what appeared to be a good batting wicket - Middlesex needed an early breakthrough and their opening bowlers, Taper and Kennedy, kept things pretty tight

early on as both Andy Haynes and Chalky White found it difficult to get the ball away with any fluency.

And with the score on just 8 in the fourth over Haynes uncharacteristically chopped one on to his own stumps off the bowling of Kennedy.

New batsman Partington joined White and the pair then unhurriedly moved the score along to 52 in 14 overs before Partington was stumped by keeper Doole off the bowling of Prenesti for 10. That however was the last wicket to fall.

Requiring 104 to win new batsman Richard Clapp joined White at the crease and the pair quickly set about the task of knocking off the remaining runs.

White by now was looking well set, while at the other end Clapp simply knocked the ball into the gaps and ran hard to get the opener back on strike as he picked up the pace with powerful pull shots into the onside and crisp hits over the top when he came down the wicket to the spinners.

In just 16 overs the pair posted the century stand required at a rattling six and half runs an

over with 15 overs to spare, with White finishing on 98 from 89 balls to deliver the win by eight wickets.

A delighted skipper Clive Ricks said: "We enjoyed two outstanding individual performances today from Jon and Chalky but everyone else played their part at some point. It's a great start to the season, but as ever, Warwickshire will be a tough nut to crack next week when we play them at Banbury XX."

Meanwhile - away from County Championship Over 60s action - in the West of England League the Oxfordshire Over 70s also clocked up their first win with an impressive win over Wales Over 70s 'A' team.

The visitors won the toss and elected to field but were not able to muster an early breakthrough as the Oxon openers Tim Gush and Adrian Beecroft quickly got to work and posted a very useful 65 for the first wicket in 19 overs before Beecroft was bowled by Robin Jones for 37.

However, the new batsman Ralph Orchard was soon striking the ball well and together with Gush moved the score swiftly along to 91 in the 23 over before Gush was lured down the track by Jones and Peter Jenkins completed the stumping with the opener having fallen just five short of a well-deserved half century.

Orchard was then joined by Jim Head and the pair continued to score freely and posted a stand of 73 before Head was forced to retire injured with 22 to his name and the total on 164 for two in the 33 over.

As Orchard batted on Roger Hutchence came and went for just two – again unable to continue with injury - but his replacement Peter Burrows made a quick fire 21 before Orchard was finally dismissed by Alan Hughes when caught by Ray Luscott for a very well made 72 from 70 deliveries, with half his runs coming in boundaries.

The Oxon innings closed with the score on 220 for 4 setting Wales the stiff task of scoring at five and a half runs an over throughout their innings to which end they made a decent start as openers Alan Hughes and Rod Howe posted 43 for the first wicket in 13 overs before Howe was caught by Jerry Senior off the bowling of Nick Warry for eight.

However, Warry soon struck again, when two balls later he dismissed Bob Morris for nought, this time caught by Ran De Silva.

New batsman Robin Jones then joined Hughes and the pair looked comfortable as they added 25 runs before Hughes became Warry's third victim when he was again caught by Jerry Senior for a well made 41 from 59 balls, with the score on 58-3 from 16 overs. With the strike rate now approaching seven an over the visitors batsmen were somewhat up against it but still offered staunch resistance.

Jones made 32 from 51 balls before he was bowled by Orchard, while Luscott made a dour 32 not out from 73 balls and Jon Brazier 15 not out as the Wales run chase somewhat petered out with the score on 141 for 4 at the close of play leaving the hosts winners by the comfortable margin of 79 runs.

After the game Oxon skipper David Beck commented: "This was a tough opening fixture. Any win against Wales has to be hard earned and to win by such a comfortable margin gets us off to a great start."

Next up the Oxon Over 70s are off to Bromsgrove to play Worcestershire at Avoncroft CC. The joint Oxs/Berks Over70s made it back to back wins when they comfortably beat Worcestershire in their County Championship clash at University College.

Skipper Adrian Manger won the toss and elected to bat but was soon wondering if he had made the right call when both openers were back in the pavilion within 10 overs with only 20

runs on the board.

First to go was Derek Watts for just a single when he was lbw to Eddie Hill and he was soon followed by Ian Stuart for seven who was caught by Bob Pittaway off the same bowler.

However, the visitors early success was soon blunted by the new pairing of Charlie Anderson and Phil Ridgeway, who added 48 in the next ten overs to move the score on to 68-3, before Anderson was stumped off the bowling of Martin Woodward for 30.

Ridgeway and Ian Harvey then kept the score moving along steadily as the pair added a further 34 runs for the fourth wicket before Ridgeway was bowled by Pittaway for 38 from 57 balls.

Harvey and Ronnie Brock then continued in the same vein but with Brock scoring more freely as he struck six fours in making 33 before he was caught by Tony Price off the bowling of Andy Pittman having posted a stand of 49 with Harvey and taken the score on to 143-5 in the 36 th over.

Skipper Manger made just a single as he tried to force the pace in the closing overs, bowled by Pittman, as did Harvey soon afterwards again bowled, but this time by Ian Roberts.

The not out batsmen were Steve Partington on 13 and Chad Cudjoe on seven, as the Oxon innings eventually closed after 45 overs on a hard won 176 for 7.

For the visitors the opening pair of Eddie Hill (2-29 from nine overs) and Peter Hayes (0-13 from nine) were the stand out bowlers.

With runs apparently hard to come by Worcestershire were in need of a steady rather than rapid start so losing Russell Jones bowled by Ken Fuller's first legal ball of the innings with the score on one was not the start for which they were looking!

And that was further compounded just seven overs later when first keeper Godfrey Lamb was bowled by Jim Blackford for just seven with the score on 26, which was immediately followed by the run out of Peter Hayes by Manger and the loss of Eddie Hill bowled by Ken Fuller with no further addition to the score.

At the other end all opener Robert Bond needed was someone to drop anchor and try to help him repair the damage and in Ian Roberts he found just the man.

Bond looked well set as he struck six fours in his 34 runs, with Roberts doing his best to get off strike in support. The pair had doubled the score and looked like they might work the visitors back into the game but that hope was soon gone when Bond was adjudged lbw to Ian Harvey in the 20 th over with the score on 52-5.

Thereafter Roberts continued to defend stoutly but soon lost new batsman Tony Price for just two when he was bowled by Harvey, which then brought in Bob Pittaway, who like Roberts dropped anchor and something of a stalemate ensued before Roberts was winkled out by Steve Partington - aided by a catch from Phil Ridgeway - for 10 off 55 balls.

David French didn't trouble the scorers as he was bowled second ball by Ian Harvey for nought with the score now 65-8 in the 28 th over, but new batsman Martin Woodward was in no mood to surrender his wicket cheaply and once again the hosts were made work for their wickets although the match result was by now a foregone conclusion.

Ronnie Brook did manage to prise out the obdurate Pittaway when he bowled him in the 45th over for 14 off 65 balls, but Andy Pittman managed to block out the last two deliveries to keep the tenth wicket intact as Worcestershire closed their run chase at 99-9 handing victory to the hosts by 77 runs.

The hosts bowling figures were all impressive. Ian Harvey's three wickets cost just 12 runs from his seven overs while Ken Fuller looked positively profligate with 2-28 from nine and none of the other four bowlers used conceded more than 18 runs.

After the game skipper Adrian Manger commented: "It was good to see how we adapted to the conditions after the loss of the two early wickets and got our heads down to graft our way to a defendable total, that in the end proved to be a lot better than it initially looked.

"In the second innings our bowlers never gave them anything to work with and we always looked in control with the game eventually proving to be something of a stark contrast to the previous week's last gasp drama!"

Next up the Oxs/Berks Over 70s travel to Harbourne in Birmingham for a midday start against Warwickshire.