

60s Thirds and 70s go marching on....

But there are defeats for the 60s 1sts, 2nds and 4ths

As the 2025 season rapidly approached its half way point it was a tough week for the Oxfordshire Seniors Group sides with just two wins and three defeats among the five sides that contested matches in the Seniors County Championship and the West of England Seniors Cricket League.

On the bright - side first up this week - was a crushing home win for the joint Oxon/Berks Over 70s against Hampshire in a low scoring encounter at Bradfield CC near Reading.

Skipper Adrian Manger won the toss and elected to field and his side produced a dominant display to claim victory by six wickets.

The Hampshire batsman struggled to build any kind of momentum, managing just 86/8 in 30 overs with only Andy Pryce (20) and Andy Jarvis (18) providing any real resistance.

The hosts then chased down the target with relative ease in 18.2 overs, finishing on 88/4 with Charlie Anderson remaining unbeaten on 29.

Hampshire found the going tough against a disciplined home bowling attack. Trevor Spindler (2/7) and Alan Weaver (2/16) led the way and effectively dismantled the top order. Pryce battled hard, facing 54 balls for his 20 runs, but wickets continued to tumble at regular intervals at the other end with only Jarvis, Wood, and Tapper, offering any other real resistance.

Chasing such a modest total, Oxon/Berks got off to a strong start with Ian Stuart (23) and Derek Watts (19) setting the foundations with a stand of 41 for the first wicket, though Hampshire fought back with Chris Wood (2/18) and Andy Jarvis (2/10) picking up key wickets. However, Anderson remained composed throughout guiding his team home with an unbeaten 29 off 37 balls.

Skipper Manger commented after the game: "This was a commanding win today, with our bowlers setting the tone right from the start before our batters closed out the result comfortably."

Also victorious were the Over 60s 3rd XI who travelled to Barrow Gurney, near Bristol, where they secured a convincing victory over Somerset by chasing down 157 with six wickets in hand.

Somerset won the toss and elected to bat, but soon found themselves struggling for momentum early on against tight Oxon bowling. However, after an initial collapse, Duncan Nash (44 off 96 balls) and David Webb (38 off 53 balls) steadied the innings, and ensured the hosts reached a respectable 156/7 in their 45 overs.

For Oxfordshire it was very much a team performance with the ball, with Richard Cook (2/26 in 9 overs), Steve Wilson (1/34 in 9 overs), Fred Price (1/17 in 4 overs) and Andy Haynes (1/18 in 9 overs), all making important contributions.

The visitors then made light work of their chase, reaching the target in 32 overs. Andy Haynes led the charge with a brilliant 63 off 67 balls, including 9 fours, well supported by Fred Price with 22 off 36 balls, and Mike Barrow (25 not out off 27 balls), which ensured the team closed the game out with some ease.

For Somerset Edwin Morris (3/38 in 9 overs) provided a number of crucial breakthroughs, with help from Kevin Dornan (1/26 in 9 overs), who bowled very economically.

Oxon skipper Clive Ricks said: "This was another good all round team performance, a very disciplined bowling effort backed up by an assertive batting display. Winning is a good habit which we seem to have acquired this season."

Meanwhile the Over 60s 1st XI travelled to Pershore CC where they played Worcestershire and were on the wrong end of a very good batting performance from the hosts who chased down a target of 202 with five wickets to spare.

Opting to bat first after winning the toss, Oxon skipper Darryl Woods and fellow opener Nick Morman started steadily as they posted an opening stand of 50 runs in 80 balls.

Morman made 23, while Woods anchored the innings with 63 off 99 balls, well supported by Rupert Taylor's quick-fire 40 off 25 balls. However, failure to accelerate the run rate in the closing overs saw them close at 201/7, somewhat short of a total that might have put the hosts under some kind of scoreboard pressure

For Worcestershire Rob Sharp (2/41 in 9 overs) and Robert Hawk (2/28 in 8 overs) kept things very tight while also delivering the vital breakthroughs required to keep the visitors in check.

In response, Worcestershire got off to a blistering start and were able to control the game from an early stage, as Peter Harler smashed 64 off 60 balls (9 fours). Alongside Rob Drake (38 off 80 balls), the opening pair laid the foundations of the win with a century opening stand.

And despite losing wickets in the middle overs, Andy Gandon (25 not out off 34 balls) and Martin Downes (14 not out off 9 balls) eventually guided their side to victory with the score on 205/5 with four balls to spare.

For Oxfordshire Micky Thomas (2/40 in 9 overs) was the pick of the bowlers with Tim Mahoney and Stuart Bullen picking up the other wickets that fell.

After the game skipper Woods commented: "Once again we failed to recognise and capitalise on key moments in the game when they presented themselves. We got back into the game with some quick wickets after their big opening stand but then failed to press home the advantage we had at that stage of the game."

The Over 60s 2ND XI hosted Gloucestershire at Banbury CC and went down by 85 runs on the back of a dominant all round display by the visitors

Oxon skipper Andy Slater won the toss and asked Gloucs to bat, after which they made the most of that opportunity as they amassed an intimidating 251/7 in their 45 overs.

The backbone of the innings was provided by Andy Macleod, who made 72 off 96 balls, with 11 fours, and one six. He was well-supported by Neil Wilson (31 off 59 balls), Andy Taylor (28 off 29 balls), Mark Moodie (44 off 19 balls) and David Griffiths (30 off 35 balls) – which ensured that the hosts batting was under pressure from ball one.

For Oxfordshire Simon Oldfield was the pick of the attack with 3/12 in two overs) alongside Adrian Manger whose 2/19 in 9 overs) kept one end tight when the slog was on.

Chasing down 252 was always going to be a tall order for the hosts and so it proved, as they stumbled along losing three wickets for the addition of 90 runs.

Despite a valiant 66 off 77 balls from Mike Howat, a middle-order collapse sealed their fate, with only David Warner chipping in with 25 off 23 balls. For Gloucs Steve Pennington's exceptional spell of 5/17 in 5 overs, well supported by Mark Moodie with 3/44 in nine, tore through the hosts' batting as Oxfordshire were eventually bowled out for 166 in just 37 overs.

Skipper Andy Slater conceded that his side were somewhat second best on the day; "Today wasn't one of our better performances, as we've already shown we are a better side than this result suggests. But credit where it's due, Gloucs put in a good display and were well deserved winners."

The 4th XI were back in league action in the West of England Seniors Cricket League when they took on Wiltshire Over 70s A at Chippenham CC, where the hosts secured a narrow victory by three wickets after winning the toss and electing to field.

Oxfordshire posted a competitive 182/4 in 40 overs, with notable contributions from Adrian Beecroft (46), Roger Hutchence (35*), and Howard Voisey (39*). However, Wiltshire responded by successfully chasing down the target in 38.2 overs, finishing on 186/7 and led by a match-winning knock of 77 by Richard Guy.

Despite losing Tim Gush early for nought - Oxfordshire batted steadily thereafter, mainly thanks to Beecroft and Jerry Senior (29) who stabilized the innings, while adding 50 runs for the third wicket.

Later contributions from Hutchence and Voisey pushed Oxfordshire past 150 runs in 35 overs before setting a final total of 182/4. The Wiltshire bowling attack remained disciplined throughout, with Tony Sully (2/27) and Robert Eustace (1/34) picking up crucial wickets.

Chasing 183, Wiltshire made a shaky start, losing Keith Redding for just three runs. However, Richard Guy anchored the innings with an impressive 77, including a vital century stand with Terry Blake (38). But despite Oxfordshire striking back with a number of crucial breakthroughs, Richard Moore-Colyer's quickfire 17 helped keep Wiltshire on track.

Suresh Patel (2/22) and Hugo Ritson-Thomas (2/36) led Oxfordshire's bowling efforts, but Wiltshire clinched victory by three wickets in the 39th over.

Skipper Tim Gush said afterwards: "This was another tremendous contest which again we've managed to finish on marginally on the wrong side of the result. But credit where its due Richard Guy's standout performance for Wiltshire with the bat was probably the deciding factor."