

## O.I.B.A. – 2025/2026 COUNTY JUNIOR SINGLES FINAL

For the 2025-2026 the O.I.B.A. held an Under 14s and Under 18s singles competition in February. The singles competition for both groups was compliant with the EIBA English Bowls Youth Development Scheme County School of Excellence 2025/26. The winners in the Under 14's and the Under 18's categories qualify for the EIBA Grand Final which is being held in October 2026 at Melton Mowbray Bowls Club. The competition involved a Round Robin Singles competition of 3 bowls over 7 ends and a skills test involving four skills each comprising of two elements. Points were awarded for both the singles game and the skills test. In the Under 14s Ruby Steffens of Carterton came out on top and in the Under 18s it was Alfie Acock of Chipping Norton. As a result the County held a play off between these two players for the O.I.B.A. County Junior Singles Champion which was held on Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> March at Oxford & District Bowls Club.

The first three ends went to Alfie who picked up 3 shots one on each end. Ruby took end 4. Alfie gained 3 on the next end. Ruby was not having any luck, a number of times she hit the jack only for it to roll towards Alfie's woods. On end four and six Ruby picked up 1 shot each end. Alfie had found his weight and line and took the next few ends. The final end Ruby pushed the jack 2 feet from the ditch and her wood went in the opposite direction. Alfie excellently drew three woods to the jack to win the game.

**Final Result:** Junior Singles Champion - Alfie Acock of Chipping Norton  
Junior Singles Runner-Up - Ruby Steffens of Carterton

Both these players played well despite the nerves. They will both be a force to be reckoned with in forthcoming years. This is the future of the O.I.B.A. bowls and I wish them the best of luck. Also good luck in October when you both go to Melton Mowbray to play EIBA Grand Final, we shall be there to support you.

This is only one of two OIBA competitions that the prizes also include a monetary prize. This is due to the generosity of Michael Andrew who for the second year donated £50 to the winner and £25 to the runner-up for which I and the OIBA would like to say a big thankyou. Michael attended the final and presented, along with President Paul Saxton, the Cup, financial rewards to Alfie & Ruby.

In February the winners and runners up of both age groups received their individual trophies.

Thanks to Bill Turner & Oxford & District Indoor Bowls Club for hosting the final.

