

## O.I.B.A. – 2025/2026 COUNTY MIXED PAIRS FINAL

For the 2025-2026 the O.I.B.A. introduced a new competition, the Mixed Pairs. The final was played on Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> March at Oxford & District Bowls Club. The final was contested by Fiona (lead) & Piers (skip) Myatt of Chipping Norton and Linda Boyd (lead) and John Benfield (skip) of Chipping Norton.

The first three ends went to Fiona & Piers who were 7 – 0 picking up two single shots and five. End four Fiona was holding shot and John drew gaining 2<sup>nd</sup> wood. With his last wood he turned Fiona's shot wood out and picked up 2 shots, the score now was 7 – 2 to Piers & Fiona. End five went to Fiona & Piers picking up 1 shot however the next three ends went to John & Linda who picked up 5 shots. The score on the eighth end was 8 – 7 to Fiona & Piers. Ends 9 & 10 Fiona and Piers bounced right back and picked up 5 shots the score now was 13 – 7. John was having none of it and came back picking up 4 shots on end eleven, Linda & John were now only two behind 11 – 13. End twelve went to Fiona & Piers picking up 1 shot and end thirteen went to Linda & John picking up 2 shots. Fiona and Piers were just in front at end thirteen by 1 shot, 14 – 13. End fourteen Linda was holding three shots however Piers with his last wood caught a short wood which straightened his wood and rolled in for shot. John was walking away from the head shaking his head in disbelief. Fiona and Piers now 15 – 13 up and on end fifteen and took two more shots and was now 17 – 13 up. At end sixteen Fiona was holding with a very close wood however John with controlled weight came into head and pushed the jack back for 1 shot. The score now was 17 – 14 to Fiona & Piers. Linda and John had control of the mat and picked up four shots to go in front for the first time in the game, Linda & John were going into the last end 18 – 17 up. The nerves were getting to both leads on the last end as the woods were quite spread; Linda with her last wood drew shot about 12 inches short of the jack. Piers drew two woods although they were only 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> woods. John was covering all possible eventualities and with his last wood was short and drew 4<sup>th</sup> wood and that's how the game ended.

**Final Result:** Linda Boyd and John Benfield of Chipping Norton      19  
Fiona & Piers Myatt of Chipping Norton                                      17

This was another good game with good quality bowling from all four players. However those of you that know John, who never gives up, and will tell you it's not over until it's over. Well done to Linda & John who are O.I.B.A. County Mixed Pairs Champions for 2025/2026, commiserations to Fiona & Piers you both played well.

Thanks to Bill Turner & Oxford & District Indoor Bowls Club for hosting the final and the O.I.B.A. President Paul Saxton for presenting the trophies.

