

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

The 2025-2026 O.I.B.A. Men's Pairs final was played on Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> March at Oxford & District Bowls Club. The final was contested by Jamie Goodwin (lead) and Craig Morphet (skip) of Carterton and Dave Leighfield (lead) and Mark Vaughan (skip) of Chipping Norton.

This match was billed as the battle of the "Bowls Gladiators" and those that came along were not disappointed. Despite some very fine bowling and exceptional drawing by all four players Dave & Mark took the first five ends and were 9 – 0 up. End six saw Jamie draw two woods inches from the jack however Mark bowled his wood which hit a short front wood rolled up to the two shot woods and wiggled around them for shot. Craig played into the head and knocked Mark's wood out the head for two. Mark drew and again achieved shot. Craig with his third wood drew 3<sup>rd</sup> wood. After much discussion, between Mark & Dave, Mark drew another wood close to his own shot wood. Craig with controlled weight took both of Mark's woods out of the head for four shots. Jamie & Craig were finally on the board at 9 - 4 down on the sixth end. The next five ends were shared both teams picking up 4 shots each, the score on the 11<sup>th</sup> end was 13 – 8 to Dave & Mark.

Jamie & Craig were not giving and next 6 ends was shared with some magnificent bowling by all four players, at 17 ends the score was 18 – 13 to Dave & Mark

Going into the final end Jamie & Craig played a shortest jack and both leads bowled short woods. Jamie drew shot wood 8 inches behind the jack followed by Dave drawing shot 5 inches behind the jack and in front of Jamie's wood. The fireworks started Craig fired taking two of Jamie's woods off the green and pushing another of Jamie's wood in for shot. Mark put a blocker about 5 feet short. Craig fired again knocking two of Dave's woods off the green. Mark put another blocker in 15 inches short of the jack which became third wood. Woods were flying everywhere. Dave was heard to say "I'm looking forward to seeing how he can make five shots" referring to the number of bowls on the bank. Craig fired again and this time got the jack clean however it went to the back ditch for Dave & Mark to pick up one shot.

**Final Result:** Dave Leighfield and Mark Vaughan of Chipping Norton 18  
Jamie Goodwin and Craig Morphet of Carterton 14

This was an excellent game; you had to see it to appreciate the high standard of bowling from all four players. Well done to Dave & Mark who are O.I.B.A. County Pairs Champions for 2025/2026, commiserations to Jamie & Craig 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.

