

OUCC

TT25 End of Season Newsletter

NEWSLETTER

Trinity 2025

In This Edition

1. Welcome
2. Arundel Weekend
3. BUCS Report
4. Inaugural Women's 2s Varsity
5. The Varsity Matches
6. Cuppers
7. Charity Fundraiser
8. Outreach in Oxford
9. OUCC at Chelmsford
10. OUCC on Tour
11. OUCC & MCC Outreach
12. Hall of Fame
13. Captain's Introduction

Welcome

On behalf of everyone at OUCC, welcome once again to our newsletter. In this edition, we will reflect on this season of OUCC, including Varsity reports from across the club.

This season marked the beginning of the Men's Blues campaign in the BUCS National Premier League as well as a clean sweep in Women's Varsities. With the end of the season, a new year of OUCC begins and we will introduce our new captains in this issue of our newsletter.

Once again, we would really appreciate if you could pass this newsletter to teammates and friends, encouraging them to sign up at the following link. We hope to build a wide network of friends of OUCC, sharing the success of the club on a termly basis.

OUCC Committee 2025-26

Arundel Weekend

The 50 Over Varsity Matches for OUCC are played down at the beautiful Arundel Castle Cricket Ground down on the South Downs Coast over the course of a weekend for the Women's Blues, Men's Blues and Men's Authentics.

On the Saturday, the Women's Blues kicked off the 3-day festival by losing the toss and fielding first with opening bowler Bea Jones taking two early wickets. In reply, the Cambridge captain Ciara Boaden led her side with 72 off 88 balls whilst the wickets around her fell until eventually bowled by Hannah Davis. Davis, who ended the innings with figures of 5-15, was supported by wickets from Goodman and Gallagher to restrict the Tabs to 147 all out after 36 overs.

In reply, Oxford opened the batting with Magdalen duo Hannah Sutton and Annys Thirwell-Jones but fell foul of persistent inswing from Rhydderch.



The victorious Women's Blues after the match

However, the bulk of the runs were chased down by Hannah Dais with 51* (91) and fresher Chloe Thomas 40* (49) to secure a win with 13 overs to spare. The convincing win from the Women's Blues secured them the double Varsity win for this season for the first time in three years.



OUCC's Women's Blues Team

The Men's Blues match followed on the Sunday, with Oxford electing to bat. Scores in the mid-thirties from the top three left at 113-3 at 33 overs, but the batting side faltered with a middle overs collapse. Late innings runs from Carnegie and Hardwick helped the Dark Blues to a total of 205. After lunch, early wickets from Men's Blues captain Justin Clarke gave hope to the Oxford fielding attack but the Tabs persisted. In the end, Cambridge chased down the required target in 42 overs in order to seal their win over Oxford.

The final day of the three day Arundel festival was the Oxford Authentics versus the Cambridge Crusaders. Cambridge put the Tics in to bat - a tactic that seemed highly fruitful as the Tics collapsed to 33-7 after 13 overs.

However, late order half centuries from Henry Kay and Christopher Sneddon steered the Tics to 167 all out after 49.2 overs. The Oxford Bowlers were led by William Marriage and Thomas Hilditch, stimulating a Tabs collapse to 40-5. The Crusers rallied in a similarly late order fashion to 118-7 with Happe 34* at the crease.



Henry Kay with 50 off 68



Oxford batsman at the crease with the famous Arundel view

A further 27-run 8th wicket partnership before Hilditch struck twice in one over. At the 43rd over, Tabs had only one wicket in hand and 23 runs to chase down. However, Happe 70* steered Cambridge to a win with a six.

Overall, despite the disappointing results from the men's section, the resounding win from the women and the lovely weather all three days made it a highly enjoyable weekend. Thank you very much to everyone at Arundel Castle Cricket Club who made the weekend possible and we look forward to next year!

BUCS Report

The Men's Blues commenced their BUCS campaign in early April at the Racecourse Ground in Durham, in predictably cold conditions. It was an immediate reminder of the standard of the competition, as Durham compiled 293 in a rain-reduced 46-over match. Oxford's reply faltered against a disciplined bowling attack, though there was a notable contribution from debutant Henry Nicholls, who made an unbeaten 79 — a promising indication of his importance to the side.

In their next fixture, the Blues hosted Leeds at the Parks. Excellent bowling from Adam Hassan (4-36) and Max Kirkby (3-38) restricted the visitors to 257. Although the Oxford innings ended at 180, the performance represented a significant improvement with the bat.

The following week, Exeter visited the Parks. After a steady start from Kirkby and Nicholls, Toby Brown accelerated the innings with a fluent run-a-ball 71, taking Oxford to 219.

In response, opening bowlers Chris Carnegie and Justin Clarke produced an outstanding display of seam bowling, dismantling Exeter's top order and securing OUCC's first BUCS National Premier League victory by 117 runs. Despite a strong effort from spinners Chris Mingard and Saqlain Choudhary, Oxford were unable to replicate this success against Cambridge in their next outing.



Fresher Henry Nicholls at the crease

A trip to Loughborough followed, with the use of international-standard facilities providing a valuable experience for the squad. Oxford made 188 batting first, but Loughborough chased down the target with relative ease, aided by two professionally contracted players. The Blues responded well in their next fixture, a must-win encounter against Oxford Brookes.

Choosing to bowl first, the attack once again performed impressively, with Clarke (3-28) and his fellow bowlers dismissing Brookes for 158.

The chase was not without difficulty, but composed contributions from Nicholls, Brown, and Amogh Karpe ensured Oxford crossed the line.

The campaign concluded against eventual league-winners Cardiff UCCE, with Oxford fielding a side affected by examination commitments. Choudhary impressed with figures of 5 wickets in a disciplined collective bowling performance that included several BUCS debutants, restricting Cardiff to 258.

Oxford's reply was led superbly by captain Justin Clarke, opening the batting for the first time in his OUCC career, who recorded a magnificent century. Despite his efforts, Oxford fell narrowly short, losing by 27 runs.

The Women's Blues opened their BUCS campaign strongly at home to Lincoln. Chloe Westbury (79)* anchored the innings with support from Charlotte Oxton (33) as Oxford posted 192. Vice-captain Maya Barnwell (3–9) then led a sharp bowling display to dismiss Lincoln for 75 and seal a 117-run win.



Women's Blues against Lincoln with 179 for Jemima Vereker

That momentum carried into Warwick, where Oxford made 232 thanks to a half-century from Georgia Munro, Jemima Vereker's 33, and a quickfire 42 from Oxton. Munro then struck with the ball, taking 3 wickets in 3 overs, as Warwick were bowled out for 97 to give Oxford a 135-run victory.

A tough outing followed at Nottingham, where Oxford conceded 209 and were bowled out for 56 to suffer a 153-run defeat.

Oxford bounced back against Loughborough, posting 126 with Hannah Sutton (30) and Munro (29) contributing. Barnwell, Evie Mayhew and Bea Jones each claimed two wickets as Oxford bowled out their hosts for 103, securing a 23-run win.

The BUCS Varsity clash against Cambridge proved difficult, with Westbury (46) and Munro (17) the main contributors in Oxford's 97 for 9. Cambridge chased the target in 16 overs to win by nine wickets.

Oxford finished on a high against Nottingham, with Vereker's unbeaten 179 and Westbury's 50 powering them to 262. Barnwell (4 wickets) and Ella Gallagher (2) then combined to bowl Nottingham out for 63, sealing a 199-run victory.

The Authentics also completed their BUCS campaign, successfully retaining their place in their league despite limited player availability throughout the season. The highlight came in victory over Nottingham, when Alexander Andrews produced a fine innings of 85.

In summary, the 2025 BUCS season represented an encouraging year for OUCC. The Men's Blues demonstrated that they are capable of competing with the strongest university sides, while the Authentics' campaign ensured that over 30 players gained exposure to high-level inter-university cricket.

Inaugural W2s Varsity

The first-ever Women's 2s Varsity match was held at Cambridge's historic King's College.

Although Oxford were unable to claim the win, the fixture marked a historic step forward for Women's Varsity cricket, giving players a platform at 2nd XI level and setting the stage for the contest to grow in future years.





Cambridge and Oxford Women's 2s

The Varsity Match

In their final matches of the season, both the OUCC Men's Blues and Authentics played Cambridge in their 4- and 3-day Varsity matches respectively at the beginning of July.

In the Blues match at Fenner's, Oxford were put into bat on the hottest day of the year, duly cashing in on a flat pitch to reach 101-0 at lunch. The opening batters continued after the break, with Henry Nicholls approaching his century before heartbreakingly being dismissed for 99 on the day he received his Blue.

A flurry of wickets followed, with the Blues then reduced to 227-5 - bringing Saqlain Choudhary to the crease with opener Max Kirkby. In the final hour of the day, opener Kirkby reached his maiden OUCC century off 283 balls to leave Oxford 285-5 overnight.

Returning the following day, Choudhary and Kirkby continued to pile on the runs. Choudhary upped the run rate and reached a swashbuckling century with a quick flurry of boundaries.

Shortly after, both Kirkby and Choudhary were removed for a well-made 146 and 113 respectively. The Cambridge spinners bowled well to run through the Oxford lower order, with a cameo of 40 from Robbie Hardwick ensuring the Blues reached 450 all out. In reply, Oxford looked for early wickets but were frustrated by good batting from the Cambridge top 3. The Cambridge batters scored quickly to reach 232/3 overnight, with the game finely poised.

On the 3rd day, the Men's Blues continued their hunt for wickets and were rewarded just before lunch with a few quick wickets from Saqlain Choudhary and Chris Carnegie. However, the Oxford fielding side couldn't capitalise and the Cambridge tail wagged to achieve parity and finish their innings on 457/9 (dec).



Carnegie getting a few quick wickets before lunch

This left the Oxford batters a tricky period to negotiate before tea, which they did ably. The openers then pushed on through the evening session against a tired attack to reach the close of play without loss. Resuming the following morning, the opening pair continued their fine form from the game.

Sadly, Nicholls was again cruelly dismissed before his milestone, being adjudged LBW for 96. Kirkby notched up his second hundred of the game and together with Amogh Karpe (49) pushed the run rate along. Kirkby was eventually dismissed for 176, to finish a remarkable match for the Oxford opener (facing 637 balls in the match - equivalent to a whole day's play). The Oxford batters then looked to push the rate along for a declaration, which came at 405/5.



Henry Nicholls on his way to a second 90+ score of the match

Looking to take early wickets, captain Justin Clarke was the man again - removing the Cambridge opener with an excellent delivery. However, the game looked to be petering out to a draw, before Chris Carnegie (3-58) took a few quick wickets to give the Oxford side hope. Unfortunately, however there was not enough time in the game to force a result, with Cambridge finishing 183/6 - well adrift of their target.

Everyone in the Men's Blues would like to thank all the coaches and volunteers that have supported the side this year, particularly Graham Charlesworth and Mark Williams. We also wish leaving players, Justin Clarke and Chris Mingard well for the next stages of their journey. Both players have contributed incredibly for OUCC over the past decade, achieving 9 Blues between them.



The Blues at the 4-day Varsity Match

Tics Multiday Varsity

The Authentics similarly took on Cambridge at the Parks, and were also put into bat by the Cambridge captain. Oxford reached 66-0 before the fall of the first wicket, Harry Waugh, for 44. The other opener Schofield continued to bat well and the Tics reached lunch 2 down. Schofield continued on to get 75, despite wickets falling from the other end he was supported well by Timon Basu (53) and Henry Kay (32). The Oxford innings finished on a very respectable 269 all out, leaving Cambridge an hour's batting on the first evening. The opening bowler Henry Kay duly picked up a couple of wickets in the evening to leave Cambridge 2 down overnight.

The following morning, Cambridge put together a couple of partnerships before wickets from Timon Basu and Adam Hassan (14-9-3-14) tore through the middle order. Sneddon, Douglas and Marriage chipped in with one wicket apiece to finish the Cambridge innings for 168, giving Oxford a healthy lead.

The Authentics then looked to bat Cambridge out of the game, which opener Harry Waugh and number 4 Tom Douglas took to. Harry Waugh brought up a stunning century on the morning of Day 3. Captain Mikyle Ossman also piled on the runs, before selflessly declaring on 79* to set Cambridge a difficult chase on the final day.

This chase became even more difficult when the opening spell from William Marriage left Cambridge 14-2. It was clear that Cambridge would have to bat for the draw on the final day, but Sneddon had other ideas, removing their Number 4. Adam Hassan and William Marriage then set about trying to take another 7 wickets, consistently chipping away at the Cambridge line-up.

However, this didn't look likely until 4 quick wickets from Hassan left Cambridge 9 down with 8 overs left to bat. Unfortunately, despite several close chances and appeals, the Authentics couldn't quite get over the line. This was, however, a great advert for Authentics cricket and the match was thoroughly enjoyed by all.

Cuppers

Over 20 college teams entered Cuppers this year, a reflection of the continued passion for cricket at Oxford. There were some great matches right throughout the competition, but it all boiled down to the final two - Magdalen vs New at the Parks.

Magdalen, buoyed by the presence of Blues Clarke and Kirkby, entered with an air of inevitability. New College, however, had other ideas. Woodford won the toss and chose to bat, sending out McDevitt and Campbell-Ferguson against Clarke's hostile opening spell. McDevitt fell quickly, but Saqlain Choudhary struck bravely, counterattacking Clarke for six and lifting his side.

Campbell-Ferguson and Choudhary put together a solid partnership before both were dismissed. Bridson, calm and assured, carried the innings forward with Andrews. Later, Roberts and Mondal added crucial late runs, punishing Kirkby in particular, to take New College to a strong 156 from 20 overs.

Magdalen's reply faltered immediately. Kirkby was trapped LBW by Choudhary for 1, and Marriage struck with a searing yorker to remove Stanton. Wickets tumbled steadily; even Clarke could not anchor the chase. Thirkell-Jones fought determinedly, taking Magdalen past 100, but support was lacking.

Marriage returned to finish the job, bowling Magdalen out for 101. New College claimed victory by 55 runs, completing a league-and-cuppers double and strengthening their claim to be the top side in Oxford cricket.



The victorious New College XI outside the Parks Pavilion

Charity 5K

To raise money for our continued charity partners Child Bereavement UK, OUCC members once again took to the paths of University Parks in their cricket pads. The team managed to raise £420 pounds for this wonderful charity. Thank you to Parkrun for hosting us and thank you to everyone that donated!



OUCC's annual 'Run in Pads' to raise money for Child Bereavement UK

MCC Foundation

Last month, Oxford University Cricket Club (OUCC) proudly hosted 40 young cricketers, from the MCC Foundation's Leicester Centre, across a range of age groups, for a day of cricket and academic exploration in Oxford. The event aimed to inspire these budding athletes and give them a short introduction to university life, both social and academic.

The day began at Christ Church, where their Access and Outreach team delivered an insightful University and Future Choices talk. Covering a broad range of topics, the talk contained rich information about the opportunities available to these players in the coming years.

Afterwards, the group toured the historic grounds of Christ Church, where through conversation with Christ Church students they garnered a better understanding of collegiate life. This was followed by Lunch in the Christ Church's dining hall, whose hospitality and support were deeply appreciated.

Following lunch, the group embarked on a walk to New College Cricket Ground, with a short detour for some sightseeing of Oxford's notable sights. Once we had arrived at New College Cricket Ground, OUCC players led fielding drills and a hard-ball net session, which were thoroughly enjoyed by the young cricketers.

FOUNDATION

The day concluded with a short Q&A session, where they took the opportunity to ask some more informal questions about life at Oxford and the cricketing opportunities provided by the club.

OUCC extends heartfelt thanks to Christ Church for hosting and supporting the event, and to the MCC Foundation, and all the players, and volunteers who made the day possible. The event was a tremendous success, with positive feedback from participants and coaches alike.

OUCC looks forward to future opportunities to connect cricket and education, helping young people realise their full potential both on and off the field.

OUCC at Chelmsford

OUCC were delighted to be invited by Essex to commemorate 100 years of first-class cricket at Chelmsford.



Essex presentation to OUCC on the pitch at lunch

The first match, 100 years ago was Essex CCC vs OUCC and the scorecard for this match (and photos) can be found below.



Photograph of the players in the first match at Chelmsford

During the lunch interval of the County Championship match vs Hampshire, representatives of OUCC were invited on to the pitch. The club was presented with a commemorative cap which will be framed and take pride of place in the University Parks Pavilion. Ex-Oxford Blue and Essex member Tom Bury was also given the honour of ringing the bell before the 2nd day of the match.



Ex-Oxford Blue and Essex member Tom Bury

OUCC Tour

OUCC are delighted to announce our intention to tour India in 2026. This tour comes on the back of successful tours to South Africa and Barbados in recent years. We are particularly proud as this is the first time we will be taking both a men's and a women's team on tour. OUCC would be delighted to hear from any alumni with connections in India, as we would love to engage with our network whilst on tour.

We are particularly interested in hearing from anyone with a connection to the Bangalore and Goa areas. As many alumni will be aware, these tours are not able to run without the kind generosity of alumni who support these tours. If you would like to contribute towards the tour party, especially if you have toured in the past, please get in contact by replying to this newsletter.



The last Men's tour to South Africa in 2024

MCC Online Q&A

Shortly after OUCC's marquee day at Lords, both Blues squads were invited by the MCC to take part in an open Q&A with pupils from a secondary school in the centre of Westminster, as a part of the MCC's long-standing tradition of affecting a positive impact upon the local community.

Along with students from Cambridge, a number of current Blues answered questions posed by a class of greatly inquisitive and curious pupils concerning a wide range of topics: what it was like playing at Lords, Oxbridge admissions, how to juggle university sport with academic commitments, and what we wished we knew before starting university.

It was an excellent opportunity to help to advise current pupils on their next steps, as well as to provide insight into university life from a number of different perspectives.

OUCC Hall of Fame

In the second edition of our 'OUCC Hall of Fame' series, we tell the stories of one of the greatest cricketers to play for OUCC. We are very grateful to David Walsh for his piece on the great Alan Smith.

No Oxford cricketer has won more Test caps than Colin Cowdrey. His 114 caps for England between 1954 and 1975 put him eleventh in the all-time list, but top of those who played their Test careers before 1980. The next most capped Oxford Test cricketers are Imran Khan with 70 and MJK Smith with 50. He came up to Brasenose in 1951 from Tonbridge School, where he had enjoyed a prolific career.

He made his debut for Kent in the previous summer of 1950, when he was still at school, and he then left Tonbridge in April 1950 to have a full season with Kent. He made a first-class century against Oxford that summer for the Free Foresters, played for the Gentlemen against the Players and was capped at the age of eighteen for Kent, after scoring over 1000 runs in the 1950 season.

Not surprisingly he was welcomed with open arms at Oxford, for whom he played three seasons 1952-4, captaining the side in his final year. Ironically these have been described as one of the gloomiest periods of Oxford cricket, as they did not win a single first-class match while Cowdrey was playing for them, losing one and drawing two of his three University matches, mainly because of a weakness in bowling.

Cowdrey made 116 not out in the 1953 Varsity match and scored nearly 3000 in his three seasons at an average of 44.5. He also captained the Oxford Rackets team.

Cowdrey played for Kent throughout his time at Oxford, once the university season had finished, and was a surprise selection, aged 21, for the MCC Tour of Australia in 1954-55. Here he made the selectors sit up with a century in each innings against New South Wales and was chosen for the First Test, making his international debut.

His name went excitingly into the history books when he made his maiden Test century, 102 out of 191 at Melbourne in the Third Test against Ray Lindwall and Keith Miller on a poor pitch. England won that game, and the Ashes, and Cowdrey's Test career was launched.

His 114 Tests produced 7,624 runs with 22 hundreds and 120 catches, he captained England 27 times and toured Australia 6 times. As a batsman he was very light of foot, despite a heavy build, always had plenty of time and was a superb timer of the ball, seeming to caress it to the boundary.

When Cowdrey retired from playing, he became a significant elder statesman for cricket. In 1986 he became President of MCC, then Chairman of the International Cricket Council from 1989-93. He was also the moving voice in the introduction of 'The Spirit of Cricket' as a preamble to the newly codified laws in 2000.

He was knighted for services to the game in 1992 and ennobled as a Life Peer, Lord Cowdrey of Tonbridge in 1997. He died in 2000.

Colin Cowdrey always spoke warmly of his time at Oxford and was a significant friend of Oxford cricket, often writing encouraging notes to Oxford players. He was a prodigious letter-writer and a very kind man.

One friend wrote that 'the memory of him in later years – portly, a fraction stooped, his fey voice ever solicitous about all-comers – will remain, almost as indelibly as the memory of him in his pomp: fairly portly even then, caressing the best bowlers' finest efforts past cover as it if it was the simplest trick in the world'.



Colin Cowdrey hits the ball through the covers against Australia

Captains' Introduction

OUCC is delighted to announce the new captains for the upcoming season.

Men's Blues Captain:
Saqlain Choudhary (New)

Women's Blues Co-Captains:
Hannah Davis (St John's)
Ella Austin (Brookes)

Our captains have written short iintroductions outlining their vision over the next year.

Saqlain Choudhary

This year is an exciting one for the Men's Blues and OUCC as a whole. We are looking forward to a challenging second season in the BUCS National Premier League and seeking to improve our cricket to be a successful side.

We are aiming high – both in terms of our competitive goals and our ambition to make cricket as inclusive and accessible as possible within the University and wider community.

We will also retain our historical fixtures against clubs in Oxfordshire and London, the Armed Forces, and wandering sides which often feature OUCC alumni.

The traditional highlight of our season remains our rivalry with Cambridge University. We will face them 4 times across various formats and competitions. We play a T20 game at Lord's in a double header with the Women's Blues, and a 50 over fixture at Arundel Castle and a BUCS fixture. We complete our season early in July with the four-day varsity match, contested this year at The Parks.

We are especially excited to make space in our fixture list with matches against academies for talented young cricketers from less represented backgrounds, such as ACE.

We have trained well through the winter with increased commitment and support from the university sports federations and I am confident that the Men's Blues will play a high standard of competitive cricket once again this season.

In recent years, multiple OUCC members have been selected for Oxford's combined UCCE side annually, with several OUCC graduates going on to represent county sides in the last decade.

As always, we are extremely grateful to everyone who enables the cricket programme at Oxford, including our sponsors, senior committee, coaching team, groundstaff and supporters. We always enjoy seeing members of the university, alumni, parents or any other cricket enthusiasts at our fixtures. The Parks is a wonderful place to play or watch the game; we look forward to seeing you there or elsewhere this summer!



Saq at Lord's in 2024

Hannah Davis & Ella Austin

The Women's Blues are looking forward to another successful season, made even more exciting by the first ever joint University of Oxford - Oxford Brookes co - captaincy for our BUCS campaign.

Our squad brings together players from both universities, with increasing levels of ability and experience on display. As such, it is fitting that our leadership mirrors the joint spirit of the team as we move towards putting more emphasis on the success of our UCCE side.

Our league season involves competing against other universities in the BUCS Midlands Tier 1. This year, we hope to put ourselves in a strong position to win our league and progress to the premier division. As part of our full fixture list, we also play friendlies against teams such as the Armed Forces, MCC, Free Foresters and Alumni.

The annual Varsity matches (T20 and 50 overs) against Cambridge remain highlights of our season, with the historic rivalry between the two sides as strong as ever. We are very fortunate to play these fixtures at Lords and Arundel, two fantastic grounds, and we are determined to continue our winning streak after impressive victories in 2025.

We are delighted to field a second team this season, which reflects the growing strength and depth of women's cricket across both University of Oxford and Oxford Brookes.

This additional team provides excellent opportunities for development within our squad, allowing newer players to gain valuable match experience while ensuring our established players maintain competitive fitness throughout the season.

We are particularly excited to announce that we will be embarking on a tour this season alongside the men's team, which promises to be a fantastic opportunity for both squads. While the destination is yet to be confirmed, we are looking forward to what will undoubtedly be a memorable experience that combines competitive cricket with the chance to strengthen bonds within the broader Oxford cricket community.



Hannah at Lord's in 2025

After a productive winter programme that welcomed many new members, we have laid strong foundations for the season ahead. We are looking forward to showcasing our skills and getting out onto the grass together. We would like to thank our coach, Graham, for his guidance, as well as our sponsors and committees who make every season possible through their ongoing contribution.

As ever, any support from the university and wider cricketing community at our matches this year would be greatly appreciated. The Parks is a great place to watch cricket and we always enjoy having spectators there to cheer us on and help raise the profile of the Women's Blues!



Ella at the Parks in 2025