

Oxford begin well in National Cadet League

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Oxford's cadet team at Cippenham after beating Hillingdon 8-1: Ethan Ball, Josh Selby and Niall Harris

The Oxford League have entered a team in the National Cadet League for the first time in recent memory and found themselves immediately placed in Division 1 (out of 4), through the wisdom of the organising supremo, Mike Atkinson. His judgement was vindicated in the first set of matches, played at Cippenham on Saturday, 14th October.

Ethan Ball opened the show with a 12-10 in the 5th victory over long-pimple exponent James Arnold of Horsham A. This pattern continued with both Kristelle Brook and captain Niall Harris prevailing at the very last ditch over luckless Horsham opponents. Oxford ran out 8-1 winners. Next up were Reading B and Ethan was rested to give 11 year-old Josh Selby a chance of playing. Gus Thomis competed well for Reading, with wins over both Kristelle and Josh, but Niall maintained his 100% record in a 6-3 victory. The final encounter was with Hillingdon, who mustered just one win, going down 1-8.

Niall held his game together well to win 9/9, Ethan and Kristelle took 5/6 and Josh 3/6. Both Niall and Ethan are gradually acquiring more maturity in their game, but equally praiseworthy on this occasion was Kristelle, who applied herself with considerable skill and determination against the boys. Oxford have established themselves as one of the front runners, but much sterner tasks lie ahead, as Reading A have a very strong trio and their match against Crusaders saw a higher level of play than in any of the Oxford matches.

John Birkin (City Team Manager)

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