

# THE BLACKBALL FLYER

The newsletter for Oxfordshire's Blackball County Pool team—all the latest news and events

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## The facts:

- Oxford fields six teams, competing against up to 7 different counties in the region, playing roughly one match a month, to Blackball rules.
- Each year the ladies, two youth and three mens' teams compete throughout the year to claim one of the qualification spots for the National Finals held at Selsey in March
- Youth A & B and Mens B have already qualified. Ladies, Mens A and Mens B2 will all be decided in the next few weeks.
- National finals is a chance for teams to prove themselves against the other top teams in the country.
- Teams who finish top of their respective region receive trophies, and there are trophies and financial incentives for teams who reach the finals at Selsey.
- In 2007 the Men's A team recorded Oxford's best achievement to date, reaching the final of the main event - second best team in the country!!

## HEADING FOR SELSEY...

It's been another successful year for OCPF, and the time is fast approaching when the Oxfordshire teams will be tested on the National stage...

But how have we done in the region? Which teams have qualified for National finals? And which team is favorite to bring home some silverware this year?

The Youth A and B teams and the Mens B have already secured their qualification spots, and will definitely be representing Oxfordshire at Selsey in March.

The **Men's B** have had a storming season, one of their most successful years to date. They have already qualified for Selsey, and are in with a terrific chance of finishing top of the region, having lead the table since early in the season. Only rivals Hampshire can stop them now... but Oxford's superior frame difference should hopefully see them through.

## COUNTY TRIALS

County trials are coming up on **March 15th** at Rileys (Between Towns Road). Matches will be played to Blackball rules; anyone in the county is welcome to trial on the day.

Men—10.30am  
Youth & Ladies—2.30pm

The **Ladies** made a strong start to the season, and have been top of the regional table all season. One more win from the last two games will make qualification for National Finals a certainty.

3 encounters does put them favourites to hold onto their spot at the top of the region. But anything can happen...

The **Men's A** are unfortunately languishing toward the bottom of the regional table. But their hopes of returning to Selsey and repeating the heroics of two years ago are not yet lost — a win against Bristol should be enough to see them scrape through in the last qualification spot.

The **Men's B2** may still be able to qualify for Selsey for the first time ever. The addition of an

extra qualification spot means they have an outside chance if they can pull off an upset against Berkshire B, and beat Bristol.

All in there should be at least four Oxford teams at Selsey this year. Hopes for success most probably rest with the Men's B, Ladies and Youth A.

Fingers crossed we'll be cheering for someone on the final day at Selsey. And of course there's always the singles...



Mens A - National Runners-up - 2007

Indeed the ladies section is very close at the top, and given the Oxford team's strong frame difference, the ladies can still win the group, especially if W.Berkshire record a win against Hampshire next week.

The **Youth A** always have a close battle with their Berkshire rivals, and this season is no exception. It usually comes down to the results between the two teams, and Berkshire having won 2 out of

## NEW LADIES B TEAM - CAPTAIN NEEDED

For the 2009/10 season Oxford Ladies are looking to expand their successful A team.

A lady is needed to take on the role of B Team Captain, responsibilities to include team selection, organising transport, and captaining the team at matches. A full playing squad position is available to the successful applicant. The main qualities we are looking for is enthusiasm and organisation—you do not necessarily need to be an existing player or have experience as a pool captain.

Put your name forward to Nicki Hoskins by **Sunday 8th February** - 07740356398 - nicola.hoskins@gmail.com.

The existing ladies squad will vote on nominations on 15 February.

*“The end of the season is near, and qualification for an England Trial is within my grasp...”*

## YOUTH POOL SERIES

The 2008/09 Youth pool series has reached its conclusion.

This competition is open to all youth players in the area, not just Oxfordshire County pool players.

This year top honours went to **Rhys Freemire**, with Andrew Gee taking runner-up spot.



## IN THE HUNT FOR PERSONAL GLORY...

Although County Pool is first and foremost a team game, there is also opportunity for individual honors. OCPF recognizes **outstanding achievement** with a trophy for best Male, Female and Youth player of the season.



B team player John Street has put in a remarkable performance this season, and currently tops the Oxford ranking for both A and B men, as well as being top of the regional B team rankings. Team-mates Shaun Taylor and Ben Scott are also within striking distance, but as long as John holds on for the last couple of games he will take home the trophy.

Captain of the ladies Nicki Hoskins is just ahead in the race for the Ladies title, but with Jaz Venning just a frame behind, every win will count. These two players are also top of the regional rankings.

It's really close in the youth rankings, and any one of four players can still finish top. Luke Ingram, Peter de Banks, Rhys Freemire and

Jamie Saczak have only two frames separating them.

More crucially, there is also the opportunity for players who finish in the top 10 of the regional rankings (excluding existing England players) to qualify for an **England trial**.

Qualifiers wont be known until all results are in in February. However the following players are within reach of a trial, depending on the outcome of the last few games.

For the men, Matthew Challen leads the charge, with Jamie Street and Lee Brown-John also able to qualify, and Lauren Thomas may be able to qualify for the ladies.

## DIARY DATES

- 8th February - Last county match of the season & final standings/seedings for finals announced
- 15th February - Regional statistics finalized and England trialists announced
- 15th February - **Ladies & Youth County Singles Championship** (players from 2008/09 season)
- 22nd February - **Mens County Singles Championship** (open to all players from 2008/09 season)
- 6th - 8th March - National finals at **Selsey**
- 15th March - **AGM** at Rileys from 9.30am. Come and have your say!
- 15th March - Mens **County Trials** from 10.30am; Ladies and Youth from 2.30pm
- 29 March - **Squad Day** - Single frame knockout (open to all 2009/10 squad members)
- 4th -11th April - World Championships - players representing England will travel to Bridlington
- 12 April - Likely to be first county match of 2009/10 season (t.b.c)

For more information or any queries, contact County Manager John Kinsey on 07880723844

### CLUES:

Across:

- 3. Where a player is beaten without winning a single frame
- 5. A piece of apparatus used for shots which are difficult to reach
- 7. Where a game is restarted due to there being no legal shot available
- 8. Someone who tries to win money at pool by hiding how good they are
- 9. The green cloth on which pool is played
- 10. Usual number of players on the Mens A team
- 11. Ladies team who are currently reigning champions
- 12. Clearing the pool table without your opponent having a single shot - Break and ...

Down:

- 1. Maximum amount of time allowed to take your shot in Blackball rules
- 2. Best of... - number of frames in the world snooker championships final
- 4. Last English player to win blackball world singles title in 2007. Andy ...
- 6. Pub pool game where players start with lives and lose one for each shot they miss

## POOL QUIZ

