

Seniors Cricket and the Cherwell Cricket League

Over 50 and still playing in the CCL? You could be missing out on playing County Cricket!

OK so you might not have been quite good enough to make it into the first class game in your younger days – but it might not be too late to play some county cricket even though your 50th birthday is already behind you.

Implausible? Not really - one of the game's fastest growing sectors at present is seniors cricket, with nearly all the Cherwell League's constituent counties fielding sides in the Seniors County Championship at Over 50s, Over 60s and Over 70s age groups.

So if you are Over 50 and still playing for a CCL club the chances are there is a seniors county XI for which you could be playing.

Qualification for a county is by either by being born in that county, or living in that county.

For a significant majority of CCL players Oxfordshire would be the county for which they are qualified and the man responsible to the Oxfordshire Cricket Board for seniors cricket is Darryl Woods.

"Believe it or not we've been playing seniors cricket in Oxfordshire since 1986!" said Darryl.

"We've had a succession of strong sides at Over 50s and Over 60s - winning the Over 50s competition in 2008 - along with numerous 50s and 60s final and semi-final appearances since, as we've consistently 'punched above our weight' and more than held our own against the first class counties and those with big metropolitan areas from which to draw players.

"And we've just this season completed our second season at Over 70s, when we shared the County Championship title with Kent after the final was twice washed out by the weather.

"Until recently recruitment has been pretty much by word of mouth and via the personal contacts of the players currently in the various teams. However, as the Cherwell League has expanded exponentially in the past few years it now means we are without doubt missing out on players who could be part of our seniors teams.

"So to that end we're really keen to hear from any Cherwell League players either born or resident in the county, who are 49 and over - you are eligible to play in the year you turn 50 – and interested in playing for the county.

"And for any former county players thinking of returning to play for Oxfordshire who might not now qualify you can also claim 'grandfather's rights' within certain time and appearances criteria.

“There also doesn’t need to be any club versus county conflict. Seniors cricket is played mid-week, on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays depending on which age group is involved. We currently have three sides at over 50s, four at over 60s and one at over 70s, so there’s a place for all abilities.

“And there’s a great opportunity coming up shortly to come along and get to know the guys involved and get a feel for how it all works via our seniors winter nets which are due to start running in March.

“If you have a player at your club who you think might like to get involved or you yourself want to know more, drop our secretary a line at peterphowe@gmail.com or ring him on 07775 697342. Come along and see what we’ve got to offer,” he added.

For players from Cherwell League Clubs who do not meet the above criteria to play for Oxfordshire, the following contacts should provide an initial point of contact for your respective counties.

Buckinghamshire Ron Hedley rjhatters@yahoo.co.uk

Northamptonshire Grant Timms grant.timms@northampton.ac.uk

Bedfordshire Colin Stevens c.1stephens@btinternet.com

Hertfordshire Derrick Sheldon delshel@ntlworld.com