

## **Junior Convenor's Report Poloc Cricket Club AGM, January 2010**

Looking back on 2009, again – unfortunately – I will tend to think of two things: rain, and "what might have been". On the weather front the outdoor season was again blighted by cancellations and the occasional abandonment. A quick look at the age-group pages on the website tells me no fewer than 57 scheduled junior matches were either cancelled or abandoned. Extraordinary. And the Under 15s suffered a remarkable nine straight cancellations at the season end as they tried to get games played to win their league. All of this said we still managed, as a junior section, to play 45 matches. Add to this a full "campaign" at Under 10 "Kwik Cricket", including going to the national festival in September in Perthshire, and the eight matches played by the Academy side, and there was still plenty cricket played.

That's the negatives out of the way.

On the positive side, and there were again many, I think I should mention:

- the Under 10s competed in eight "Kwik Cricket" festivals which was great, including the one hosted by us that saw literally hundreds of children and parents enjoying themselves here at Shawholm on a Sunday morning – a big thank you is due to David James for organising our participation at these festivals;
- the Under 13s lost only one league match all season, unfortunately a loss that saw them finish runners-up in their league – but a very creditable season nonetheless;
- the Under 13Bs won their league at a canter, winning five from six matches and finish ahead of the other eight competing sides;
- the Under 15Bs also played (unlike in 2008!), finishing joint top of their league on points;
- the Under 18s were unbeaten in the league all season, but cancellations meant they simply didn't play enough fixtures to end up top of the pile – a creditable third having played just eight matches was no mean feat however given the winners had played twelve matches, losing two, and mustered just 3 more points;
- the Under 18s also made it to the final of The Frank Smith Trophy again in 2009, but – and again – finished on the losing side in a good match with Prestwick;
- I have not forgotten the Under 15s you'll be pleased to note, but wanted to leave them until last given their success in winning the Scottish Cup – I think I'm right in thinking this is a "first" for the club and one the club should be rightly proud of – in a tense day at New Williamfield, the Under 15s produced a real team effort in the semi-final to beat Stirling County before seeing off Carlton more comfortably in the final – a tremendous achievement;
- the Under 15s also went through their league campaign unbeaten, again – but as with the Under 18s games washed out cost them their title.

So I think a year of continued competitive success for our junior teams.

Added to this was the success of the Academy side that, with contributions from Jeremy King, Matt Coyle and Jason Dombroski at various points during the season, won the Strathclyde League for the second year running. Again very positive.

Mention of Messrs. Coyle, King and Dombroski, and the earlier mention of David James, brings me to words of thanks to each of them, and others from time to time, for invaluable contributions to coaching, team management and just "being around" when absolutely needed. Without their, and hopefully others' future, help, our junior section will be unsustainable. Thanks to each. Talk of sustainability brings me to the development work we are doing. In 2009 the club was accredited – twice – by Culture & Sport Glasgow under its Clubmark scheme. These are creditable awards, and Culture & Sport Glasgow have been real and tangible supporters of the

work we are doing. Also in 2009 six of our youngsters completed their Level I coaching "badges", we organised and ran First Aid courses for others, and still others attended Child Protection courses. All these with a view to creating an infrastructure, and a breadth and depth, to our junior section that means it is not reliant on only one or two people going forward.

Under "development" it's also worth noting we coached in eight schools during the year; many of the sessions delivered by 2009 Professional Hancke von Rauenstein and Matt Coyle. Thanks to both for their work in this area. We also ran weekly indoor winter coaching for all ages, ongoing at the moment. Also in terms of indoor cricket, the club entered two sides in the annual "Super 8s" competition held between Christmas and New Year, the Under 19 side finishing runners-up.

Developments were also seen in equipment, with a bowling machine being purchased during the year, funded by a grant from Culture & Sport Glasgow, and donations. Looking towards the rest of 2010, we have again been awarded a Community Grant of £1,000 by Culture & Sport Glasgow towards the purchase of a small mobile scoreboard for juniors, 50 cricket balls and new "junior water hog". This is the kind of tangible support Culture & Sport Glasgow is providing, and adds to the part-funding of the coaching and First Aid courses it also gave the club in 2009.

Another "new" piece of equipment in 2009 was the new table tennis table that was donated to the club – this proved a real "hit" with juniors, and if nothing else gave them something to do while it rained!

Perhaps the largest and most exciting development, looking forward, is the installation of two artificial-turf net bays. The total cost of this, excluding recoverable VAT, is approximately £19,000. I am pleased to say that successful fund-raising means that all of the funds needed for this project have been secured from third parties. The funding is coming from Cricket Scotland's Development Trust (£6,250), Lord's Taverners (£3,000), The Hugh Fraser Foundation (£3,500), the club's own charitable arm (£1,000) and **sportscotland** (£5,000). To get this facility at, in effect, no cost is remarkable in my view and will greatly enhance our coaching provision, not least when ground conditions prevent use of the grass nets. More of this project later I think.

Finally, a few words in closing about individuals: I have thanked those people who have helped throughout the year with coaching and team management. Thanks are also due to the parents and supporters who are also invaluable in what they contribute. Notable in this regard are Zameer Chaudhry and Stuart Rousen who, I think, probably didn't miss a match! Both, and others, were also very willing to assist with transportation to away matches. Stuart should also be thanked for his provision of match photo's, and not just of junior matches. These add "colour" to our website, and are enjoyed by the youngsters. Malcolm Leitch and Ronnie McGregor should also be thanked for, respectively, umpiring and scoring Academy matches whenever possible.

On the playing side the club's youngsters enjoyed representative selection in a number of different teams and squads throughout the season. There are genuinely too many to mention. That said I should mention Danial Chaudhry playing for Scotland Under 15s in 2009, and him being awarded their Player of the Year accolade in December for his performances in the European Championships. Well done to Danial. A final individual highlight worth noting, and a rare event indeed, was Josh' Sajjad's 100 not out in an Under 15 league match against Hillhead. And, amazingly, he was batting number five! Quite remarkable!

The club's youngsters continue to be keen and committed to their cricket. Many played regular first and second eleven cricket in 2009, and would quite genuinely play anytime, anywhere, in any conditions! In general they are good ambassadors for you, and – I believe – continue to represent the best chance of the club enjoying a prosperous future, both on the cricket field and

off it as we try and educate them about what they have to put in, as well as take from, *their* club.

**Keith Young**  
*Junior Convenor*  
January 2010