

Two games in two days! [posted 12/09/09]

After what seemed like ages *the 'Locster* juniors played cricket on consecutive days. Firstly lets say a big thanks to Matty Coyle who somehow managed to prepare two decks whilst also preparing for the big T20 Finals Day - now *that's* multi-tasking! Good effort sir! And also thanks to others who helped out in ground prep' - *NJ*, *Muscles* and *Pasty* being key pairs of hands in this regards, as was *Toko*. To the matches.

Friday saw the 13s romp to victory over Greenock in the youngsters' final league match. And what a difference a week makes. The week before, the guys had struggled against Greenock in a match abandoned at halfway. This time tho' it was the other way round. Greenock batted first and could muster only 32 all out as Saify grabbed 5 for 2,.....yes five wickets for two runs! Extraordinary! The other wicket-takers were *Huss'*, Haider and Saad, in other words all four bowlers needed. And a mention, too, for a great outfield grab by Mr Khaliq at mid off. Well held sir! And another tidy stumping by Armour *the Jnr*. 32 all out inside twelve overs.

Surely *the 'Locsters* would chase 33 to win? Correct. But don't call me *Shirley* I hear you say. 33 for 1 inside six overs was the reply - convincing methinks. Yash finished unbeaten after opening with *Rosco* - the latter being the only victim in the innings, stumped by Neil Flack in a tidy piece of work behind the sticks. This let *the Cricket Champ* in and Saad finished 12 not out (including a maximum). A nice way to finish the season. So a win, and comfortable. What a pity that that single defeat at Prestwick, and not getting games played has resulted in the boys losing just once in the league in the season, yet finishing off the top. Rain, rain, go away.....

So to Saturday's Frank Smith Trophy Final. [Ed: no Semi-final after Motherwell called off on the day!?!] Batting first the 18s mustered just 85 on a tricky deck. Tricky batting when balls are shooting along the ground at one end, and the oppo' are intent on bowling wides,.....lots of them. 21 of them to be exact. This amongst 33 gift-wrapped total extras. But in amongst the dross, and the shooters, there was some good stuff. But too few *'Locster* batters seemed to clock getting forward on dodgy decks is always better than going back. Hmm. Anyway, 33 extras - including those 21 wides - wouldn't compensate for only one batter - *Batspeed* - getting into double figures (16). The much-vaunted top order mustered just 18 between them as three got shooters, there was one first-baller, and one score of 8,.....from 34 balls. All-in-all not ideal. But 85 wasn't disaster - depended on how Prestwick's batters fared, and how the *'Locsters'* generosity on the extras-front would be.

Scrolling forward to over twenty and Prestwick were 81 for 8, and 5 were needed from the last four balls! Interesting. The oppo' batters had struggled too. Only three had got into double figures, and *the 'Locster* bowlers had - in the main - done well. *Bil'y* and *NJ* had bowled ten overs for just 26 and the latter had run out Eoin Baillie on ball two of the final over. *Batspeed* was bowling the last over and it was Prestwick's number nine and ten in. A single off ball three and it was still interesting. Then - disaster - 2 off a no ball, and a wide! Game over. But no criticism of Mr Ullah - teams win, and it's teams that lose. Sure there were some funny decisions, and, yup, there were some tight calls. But there was also the top-order combined batting failure, there were miss-fields, there were overthrows, there were singles missed, etc, etc. Over 40 overs there were certainly a good few runs that could've been saved or stolen. Probably for both sides.

So disappointment - again - the club's third defeat in the Frank Smith Trophy Final in six years. Maybe next year? Anyway a good end to the season in as much as it was (a) sunny, (b) a good crowd, and (c) at least it wasn't *the Dark Side* that won! Prestwick will likely share the 18s league title again as, again, they've somehow managed to play more games than anyone else. So once more a *'Locster* side will finish unbeaten in a league campaign, only to win zip-zap-zero. Maybe next year? Here's to 2010.....

Rain, rain, go away... [posted 30/08/09]

Ferguslie's Under 18s posted just 43 batting first on Sunday; a total *the 'Locsters* chased down - for the loss of just three wickets - inside eleven overs. That's the summary I guess. But, and just as well, it was *just as well* that the game was as short as it was as the rain started midway through the *Feegie* innings, and just didn't stop. And it was that annoying heavy drizzle stuff that just gets you soaked without the rain drops actually ever making a splash when they land! How depressing. Back to the cric':

With Stuart Darroch and Michael English unavailable, the Ferguslie side were missing a couple of their first choice starting eleven. *The 'Locsters* too had players unavailable: a number of players being unavailable given Ramadhan, and others not available for other reasons. Nicky Lafferty won the toss and put the visitors in. It would prove a correct decision as the Ferguslie openers struggled on the slow, low, damp and soft wicket. In fact it was probably only just playable, and this was *before* the rain started! The breakthrough came pretty quickly when Rutnagur nicked off first ball to Dani', Scotty Millen doing the needful behind the timbers. Rutnagur's departure brought Mapplebeck to the middle where he put on 6 with skipper Gregor Preston-Jones. But the skipper was second out, tamely chipping another Dani' delivery to *NJ*. Rutnagur's and *P-Js* departures were bad news for the visitors as it exposed their younger teammates earlier than maybe planned. Mapplebeck, Friel and Ally Preston-Jones applied themselves well enough, but none really managed to score freely enough, nor get "in", and each would eventually succumb to a cheap'ish exit mode - all getting dismissed courtesy of relatively easy catches in the ring. In fact the top six Ferguslie batters all went to catches. The first wickets that came courtesy of "bowled" were both victims for Ashar who'd come into the attack - he dealt with Khan (3) and Tahir (0). Dean Kennedy would be last batter out for Ferguslie - his 9 being the top score - *Maximillian* grabbing his wicket thanks to another grab by *NJ*.

44 to win didn't sound too tricky, but the batters would still have to apply themselves, particularly given the very tricky deck. And there was no guarantee the visitors' bowlers would be as generous in the extras stakes as *the 'Locster* bowlers had been. Yet again (!) the home side had wrapped up runs in ribbons and presented'em to an opposition. This time, in just 17.3 overs, they managed to bowl 12 wides and a no ball. As we've opined in these reports before - trust us - this'll cost a *'Locster* junior side one day. But it wouldn't be today however. *NTB* opened with Max and they managed to get 15 on the 'board before Nick was first out, bowled by Rutnagur. Then Max followed - 24 for 2 - LBW to Mapplebeck. *Bil'y* and Scotty then added another 15 before the former was bowled by Friel. This left *Muscles* to join Scotty to see the side home.

A win then. But it *was* miserable! Positives were Josh Bawa's bowling, and Ashar's and Max's similar performances with ball in hand. Nick batted positively at the start of the reply too, and it was good to get the win as noted, not least against a side that's always well organised and contains players of no little ability. Thanks, finally, to the healthy number of Ferguslie spectators who came over to watch - you're very welcome, and it was good to see you.

11s win [posted 28/08/09]

Here's a brief report on all things Under 11 - well, more accurately their win over Prestwick in the only game to beat the weather in 72 hours. Sigh. A good win it was tho', and over a club that always produces competitive junior teams. Batting first the guys posted [net] 338; every batter putting a high price - pleasingly - on their wicket. Ahmed-Raza top-scored with 19*, just pipping skipper Akhil who managed an unbeaten 18, and *big* Lewis's 15. And *Sohail* batted twice as Cammy Mac' decided he'd rather not get involved in cric' matters on the night [Ed: me too mate - far too cold!]. Anyway thanks to Ahmed-Raza for both his knocks. But, as noted, all *the 'Locster* batters played sensibly and 338 for 2's a big score in this format of the game. The Prestwick team was generous in extras too, contributing 34. And, talking of extras, the match featured that rarest of birds, the 5-point penalty! Unfortunately it made its appearance in the second innings as *the 'Locsters* defended their score.

Notwithstanding the 5-pointer, the guys *did* successfully defend their total,.....and more. Taking eleven Prestwick wickets the 11s restricted their opponents to [net] 191. There were wickets for pretty much all the bowlers too; and three run outs. A comprehensive win in the event. Best bowling figures on the night were probably *Slugger's* 2 for 6 in three overs, Akhil's 2 for 5 in the same number of deliveries and *Roberto's* figures of 3-2-1-1. *Beartlesque* Mr Cathcart!

This was the 11s' last scheduled league match but rescheduled games mean there's at least two more: *Drumps* and West of Scotland agreeing to games. Keep checking back for team news; and keep your 'phones on for selection texts!

18s see of Glasgow Accies for the second time in as many nights [posted 25/08/09]

The return *'Locster* 18s versus Accies 18s league match took place 24 hours after the first. And it was *deja vu* in many ways. The 18s batted first, posted a reasonable total and then defended it. Win points bagged. But, as ever, there's always a few differences: this time it was *Muscles* that made the score (44) around which the boys' first innings total built. And this time it was a plethora of *'Locster* bowlers that restricted the northsiders' reply. Eight bowlers in total were used as the home side's batters struggled on a tricky deck and in the deteriorating light. *Pasty* picked up a couple of scalps, and there were single wickets for Dani', Nicky and *Muscles*. *EJ* grabbed a run out, and Scotty showed *Pasty* how a real 'keeper executes a stumping! And mention of Elliott demands we thank him for stepping in at the last minute after Ashar couldn't make it - much appreciated. Thanks too, to Messrs. Rousen and Zameer Snr. for other assistance on the night.

As noted *Muscles* top-scored on the night with 44, and he and *Pasty* had kicked off the innings well with a 62-run opening stand. After *Pasty* was run out in a mix up Dani' joined Aamir and he'd record his zillionth 18s not out of 2009 [Ed: a-la Scotty Millen 2008!]. Dani' had a few partners as said Scotty came and went after *Muscles* was dismissed, *NJ* got a blob and *NTB* ended up at the other end. 10 not out for *DZC* this time.

In their reply the Accies batters never really got going and, had it not been for a shabby number of wides being bowled by *the 'Locster* bowlers (twenty plus+), they'd have got nowhere near the 63 they eventually mustered. Aamir was the principle culprit bowling eight wides in three overs. With it getting dark, for *the 'Locsters* to add - in effect - another three plus overs is nuts. Guys?!? Bowl straight! As we always say; there'll be games,.....sorry there *have* been games, where this amount of poor bowling will result in a loss.

Anyway another game in; let's not knock that! Plus another win. And it's non-stop for the 18s with a trip to Kilmarnock beckoning on Thursday night, weather-permitting.....

13Bs win again [posted 25/08/09]

After a lay off long enough to be a decent-lengthed prison sentence, *the 'Locster* Under 13Bs returned to league action on Tuesday with Helensburgh the visitors to Shawholm. And, unbelievably the sides managed to get in the full twenty overs-a-side game! Well done - mind you there was a bit of running back to their marks by *the 'Locster* bowlers bowling overs sixteen to twenty in the second innings! Helensburgh's reply probably wasn't helped either by having to bat second in the gathering gloom. Set [net] 294 to win the visitors could muster only [net] 246. But whilst the gloom was a factor, without doubt losing no fewer than fifteen wickets hardly helped their run-chase! For the home side there were wickets all-round: Hasan and Haider got three a-piece, *TJ* and Akhil getting two each. There were also three run outs and two decent outfield catches. Throw in a tidy 'keeping display from Yash that leaked just the single bye and the boys never really looked liked losing this one. Helensburgh - ironically - scored by far the greater number of runs off the bat in the game though; their keeping losing wickets meaning it was two steps forward and one back all the time unfortunately,.....for them.

In the first "dig", the 13Bs had batted sensibly - in contrast to Helensburgh - and had allowed their opponents just three wickets. And bizarrely two of these were avoidable run outs. Back up guys, back up! Then there were the 53 (yes fifty three!) wides gifted to *the 'Locsters* - that really is generous. Top-scorer on the night - off the bat - was Yash (11), with Lewis James being the only other *'Locster* batter getting into double figures. It just goes to show that - as in Under 11s "pairs cricket" - safeguarding your wicket and playing sensibly really does win you matches.

So the 13Bs finally get another match in, and the win keeps them top of the table. Only the match with East Kilbride didn't happen - maybe we'll get it re-scheduled. We can only ask.....

"Just not quick enough!" [posted 24/08/09]

That was the verdict of Coach von Rauenstein as *Pasty* tried to argue he'd executed a smart stumping in *the 'Locster* 18s' win over Glasgow Accies on Monday. Thank goodness is what this author says! But why was said *Pasty* wearing the mitts? Well Scotty Millen was elsewhere, *Maximilliant's* groin was sore [Ed: that guy's always injured!] and Saify and *Roscco* were in Under 13 action. So, with enough bowlers in his line-up, skipper *NJ* handed

the gloves to *Pasty*. And disappointingly for this report, the wee man did pretty well: two byes and a run out being the highlights. But, luckily, no stumping! Great decision by the square leg ump' we say! Phew!

And to the match. Batting first in a reduced sixteen overs-a-side match the home side's innings started badly with *Muscles* registering his first blob of the season and *Pasty* holing out to mid-off for just 12. 33 for 2. Dani' Chaudhry was in at three and was batting with *NJ* who was back in Under 18s action for the first time since his patella injury last month. These two batted well enough to keep the scoreboard more than ticking along, *DZ* in particular scorely freely after getting in. He'd eventually pass 50 and finish unbeaten on 52 to give his side a defendable target. He had, however, lost Nicky midway through his innings and finished with *Batspeed* as his partner, Amir finishing unbeaten on 14 when the sixteenth over was completed. 100 for 3 was by no means unbeatable, but it was a decent enough score, particularly on a less-than-easy-to-bat-on deck.

Bil'y Chaudhry and Amir opened the bowling for *the 'Locsters* and *Bil'y* was his usual economic self. He also picked up two early wickets as McNaughton and Revie went for 1 between them. But Amir was expensive, and after his first two overs had gone for 20 he was replaced in the attack by the skipper. Nicky's four overs cost 23, sufficiently economical to keep his side as bookies' favourite throughout the reply. After *Bil'y*'s opening spell it was Chaudhry #2's turn as Dani' was brought into the attack - to add to his 52* he'd bowl a decent spell of 4-0-18-1 to help keep *the 'Locsters* in the driver's seat. The fifth bowler on parade with *Pasty* wearing the gloves and other regular bowlers elsewhere (Umer, Joshy, Usman and Shoaib), was *Muscles*. But *AK* wouldn't bowl more than a couple of overs as he, like *Batspeed*, proved expensive. With two overs to bowl the visitors needed 18 to win - eminently get'able. *NJ* brought *Bil'y* back into the attack and when over fifteen cost just 4 it was odds-on *the 'Locsters* again. 92 for 7 would be the final score; a win by 8. Phew. Tighter than might've been comfortable.

A mention too for Abdullah who took a great catch near the death to get rid of Reeves. But let's remember that with the two teams playing again on Tuesday, the Accies guys have an immediate chance to get revenge, and *the 'Locsters* will know they'll have to perform better over on the northside if their to repeat Monday night's win. Here's hopng.

13s back on the rails on the northside [posted 24/08/09]

The Under 13s might've been forgiven for having forgotten what each other looked like, with their last game being beyond the average memory span of the average twelve or thirteen year old! But, notwithstanding, the 13s made the trip to New Anniesland to take on the Glasgow Accies 13s as junior cricket got restarted after ten days of inactivity thanks to the weather. Batting first in a reduced eighteen overs-a-side match *the 'Locsters* got off to a steady and positive start as Saad and Saify didn't give the home side bowlers an early breakthrough whilst - at the same time - keeping the scoreboard ticking over. Going at 5-an-over pretty much from the off the guys quickly adapted to the different - and at times *indifferent* - bounce of the astroturf wicket. Saad made the early running and raced to a retirement-inducing 30 to let Elliott take up partnering Saify. And with *EJ* coming to the wicket as the new batter, Saify picked up the pace and he too retired having reached 30. Well batted guys. Elliott and *Rossco* couldn't build a third big partnership though as the former was cleaned up by Satpute who'd come back into the attack. *The 'Locster* was probably a tad unlucky with a delivery that skidded on on the artificial wicket although a very harsh critic might've suggested he could've been forward and not back. *Rossco* and Hasan then saw the rest of the innings out, the latter getting run out last ball of the innings. 92 for 2 was the final total, Satpute being the pick of the home bowlers, picking up the only wicket to be credited to a bowler. Also economic was skipper Clemmie Mitchell whose two overs cost just 6 runs.

In reply Accies never really got going, this despite openers Siddiqui and Satpute similarly never really looking in too much trouble as regards losing their wickets. With Hasan and Saad opening for *the 'Locsters* the home side was restricted to 26 from the first seven overs meaning chasing down 93 to win was going to be tough. And "tough" became "really tricky" when Satpute was stumped by *Rossco* as he tried to "up" the run-rate in over nine. 30 for 1. 12 was then added by Siddiqui and new partner Forbes before Siddiqui lost his second teammate of the innings, Forbes caught by Haider off Elliott's bowling. 48 for 3. And it would become 49 for 5 as Siddiqui himself was despatched back to the changing room courtesy of a direct hit run out by Lewis James, and then Kanavan (0) and Russell (0) came and went without troubling the scorers. In fact if it wasn't for that persistent blight of

'Locster bowling performances - wides - the Accies' total might not have reached much more than 30. An astonishing - and demoralising! - 23 wides were gifted. As we often comment dear reader: this is the difference between winning and losing some games guys! Bowl straight!

But the generosity of the 13s wouldn't cost them this time, and as it became clear the home side wouldn't chase down their target Saify was able to bring Kess, Akhil and Ayub in to the attack. *Kessler* rewarded his skipper's faith in him by getting Russell's wicket courtesy of a decent grab by Saad at short cover. So another win, and back "on track" after the defeat at Prestwick. Still a few games to play too, and hopefully a few more to re-schedule. So let's get rid of those wides fellas!

West blown away by 'Loc 15s [posted 13/08/09]

West of Scotland Under 15s visited Shawholm on Thursday evening in a re-arranged league fixture. With Umer and *Pasty* unavailable the strength in depth of *the 'Locster* 15s was going to be tested again. The boys had come through seven days earlier down at Ayr with a similarly less-than-full-strength eleven, but could they do it again. Skipper on the night, Dani' Chaudhry tossed the coin and the result was his side were batting. In *Pasty's* absence *NTB* opened with *Batpseed*. These two got the innings off to a quick start as 46 was put on in eight overs before wicket #1 fell. West had already mixed up their bowling as they looked to make the breakthrough, it coming courtesy of an LBW appeal by young Andrew Umeed being successful. *NTB* out for 9. *Batspeed* was rattling along at a run-a-ball however and was joined by Dani' who started in pretty much the same vein. Dani's first ball - from Umeed - was contemptuously swept for 4, and he was off and running. 45 runs were added in overs eleven to fifteen as Majhu and Umeed took some tap. *Batspeed* reached his half century when despatched the second, third and fourth balls of Majhu's fourth over for 2, 2, 3. Well batted. Unfortunately his would become the second wicket to fall as West skipper Miro Ralston brought himself back into the attack. Ralston's first ball re-arranged Amir's stumps as he continued to play positively; his 53 had come off exactly 53 balls. Josh then joined Dani' and played a nice cameo role as *DZ* continued to score freely. 140 was eventually on the scoreboard when Ata's final over had finished - an eight-ball effort costing 13. And extras weren't the preserve of Mr Ata to gift - West had very generously given *the 'Locsters* 19 in wides in the twenty overs bowled. That's near Poloc proportions! 141 to win then. For West only Ralston's bowling figures would be less than Certificate 18, with Ata and Umeed, in particular, getting "papped" [Ed: technical cricketing term!]

Chasing 141 to win in a T20 match requires a fast start. Or, from the fielding side's perspective, the very opposite! The visitors' reply started with Ralston and Umeed. Josh and Saad opened with the ball for *the 'Locsters*. So which would it be? Fast start for West, or slow start for the home side? The answer was clear as early as over five. The West openers had managed to post just 15 from their first 30 deliveries. Hardly ideal when closer to 25 to 30 would've been needed to make *the 'Locsters* start to fret. And as the batters tried, belatedly, to kick-start the run-chase it was always likely risks would have to be taken. And so it was as Ralston nicked off to Amir (23 for 1) and number three Galloway followed quickly afterwards, going the same way only off *the Cricket Champ's* bowling (27 for 2). Umeed was then joined by Ata. The West mini-minor was looking for assistance to get things going as the innings was in danger of becoming becalmed. Umeed had scored just 14 from 29 deliveries but was running out of partners as he played the anchor innings. Then a bizarre over. *Batspeed* bowled a nine-ball over that went for 19 (!), but ended with him trapping Umeed leg before. Bizarre indeed. Ata lasted just three balls before he was run out by a great direct hit by Asher Mirza, and from here on in it was a procession. Majhu played doggedly and made 15 before becoming the third of Saif's four victims on the night, and Dani' managed to give seven bowlers a go. All the *'Locster* bowlers bowled pretty well, the aforementioned bonkers over from Amir being the [bizarre] exception.

So a good and comprehensive win recorded - West eventually posting 89 for 8. The 15s remain unbeaten in the league, and a win over West at any age-group is always a good result. There are still important league matches to come however, with Ayr, Prestwick, Ferguslie and Clydesdale all still to be played.

11s win in south side derby [posted 7/08/09]

Sometimes it's genuinely pleasing to be a cric' reporter. Friday was just such a night: warm and sunny, ground looking great, good crowd in attendance and the juniors playing cricket that would've brought a smile to coaches'

faces! The game was the Under 11s clash with Weirs' youngest hardball side. Batting first *the 'Locsters* scored 324 for 2 with all the batters chipping in. The calling and running was good, and the visitors' fielders were under pressure throughout. 39 singles run reflects this. Well done guys. Only two wickets fell; Akhil being one, unluckily run out in the final pairing of the first innings. The only other casualty on the evening was Amit. Kess top-scored with 18, one of four batters who got into double figures (the others being Robert 10, Lewis J' 12 and Ayub 11). For Weirs, Jack Greenwood bowled tidily returning 4-0-14-1.

In reply the visitors needed to get off to a quick start to be in with a chance of chasing down their target. And so, when they were three wickets down inside seven balls things were suddenly far from rosy in the away dressing room garden. Akhil had picked up the first wicket courtesy of a good catch by Robert at point, a dismissal he'd followed up next ball by cleaning up Nick Rae. The third quick wicket was Kess Sajjad's scalp as he re-arranged the stumps with his first delivery. Nice start. From here it was always going to be difficult for the visitors, and so it proved as incoming batters tried to "up" the run-rate, but lost wickets regularly, perhaps as a result of trying to score more quickly. Wickets continued to fall, with more good catches being taken: Ahmed-Raza taking a good caught and bowled, and Aliyan a decent grab at square leg. Then there was a smart run out. All good stuff, and pleasing for the watching coaches. Best bowling was from Ahmed-Raza who picked up 2 for 2 in two overs, and Aliyan who bowled his two overs for just 1 run. Again, good stuff.

So win number three of the season against a Weirs side that'd only lost once before Friday's match; encouraging signs as the guys head in to the final month of the outdoor season.

Back down to Ayr,.....and same result! [posted 06/08/09]

New Cambusdoon's fast becoming a "favourite" on your scribe's GPS system, with Thursday seeing a return to the Alloway home of Ayr CC for the second night in a row. And, as ever, it's a perfectly pleasant place to be, and play cric'. The Under 15s were on the road this time as they tried to match the Under 15Bs' win at the same ground 24 hours earlier. Both sides were missing players because of age-group representative commitments, although it's fair to say the home side were probably worse hit as Elliott and Luke Speirs, and Seb' Stewart, were unavailable for selection. These guys would be a "miss" for Ayr. But, let's not take anything away from their replacements. In the field first-up, the Ayr boys quickly stamped their authority all over *the 'Locsters'* innings as they reduced their visitors to 39 for 6 in the eleventh over. In truth *the 'Locster* batters had contributed to their own demises; *NTB* played round a ball that nipped back from Joseph Taylor, the same bowler repeating the feat with Joshy before enticing *the Cricket Champ* to mis-cue one to Calum Ablett at square leg. Skipper Calum McLaughlin had got *Batspeeds* scalp courtesy of a good grab by Calum Gordon, [Ed: how many Calums can one club have??] and Ian Napier and Gordon had completed the first half rout by dismissing Saif and Umer Aziz respectively. The six departees had mustered just 20 between them, none demonstrating the kind of awareness of the match situation that was required to steady the ship. So, as the twelfth over started *Pasty* found himself with a seventh different batting partner in Elliott Rousen. It was important somebody hung around - and soon! Fortunately *EJ* would play his most mature innings in a *'Locster* shirt as he stuck with *Pasty* until the end of the innings. 15 from 22 balls was his return in scorebook terms, but the real importance was that he clocked what needed to be done and put a high price on his wicket. Running well between the wickets with the skipper, whilst playing straight and despatching poorer balls for runs, Elliott's innings was key to the side posting anything like a defendable total. Run out on the last ball, Elliott had put on 54 for the seventh wicket in tandem with the skipper; 51 being added in the last eight overs, 37 in the last five. *Pasty*, who'd held the innings together, top-scored with 41 from 51 balls in amongst the carnage. Well batted guys.

In the second half a win would need a few things: a bit of luck, some good and straight bowling, and catches being held. And all these came to pass: luck in that aerial shots went to hand, decent bowling as only 5 wides in twenty overs reflect, and catches being held as Saad's overhead one-hander showed, and *Rosco's* diving low grab re-emphasised [Ed: we'll overlook Mr Black's attempted pouch!]. The tone was set by the opening bowlers as Umer and Amir reduced Ayr to 15 for 3 in the first five overs, with dangerman McLaughlin back in "the hutch" courtesy of that catch by *the Cricket Champ*. After this start it would then be difficult for the hosts to build sufficient momentum to chase down 94. The aforementioned absences of a brace of Speirs and Stewart certainly didn't help either. As it was the fact the match remained "interesting" for as long as it did owed much to Ablett's 20 and

Joseph Taylor adding a solid batting display to his "3-for" with the ball. When Ablett was bowled by *Batspeed* in the latter's second spell, it was pretty much all over however. *The 'Locsters'* margin of victory would ultimately be 17 runs.

So the 15s remain unbeaten in the league still.

The bowling figures for *the 'Locsters'* were all pretty good as alluded to earlier: the four bowlers used all bowling five overs and returning 2 for 13 (Umer), 2 for 22 (Amir), 1 for 19 (Craig) and 0 for 15 (Josh) respectively. What an improvement on Sunday! Well bowled guys. In the field there were few mistakes to write home about; the good grabs have already been mentioned, and only *Franklin-D* and *NTB* might want to hold their hands up for a couple of shockers!

15Bs get off the mark [posted 05/08/09]

The 15Bs finally got off the mark at New Cambusdoon against Ayr in the league tonight. Batting first under Usman Amin's captaincy the side got off to a positive start with 39 being put on by opening pair Idrees Hafeez and Nick Black. *NTB* was first out, for 26, in the eighth over, and this brought Abid Chaudhry to the middle. These two only batted together for a couple of overs however as Idrees fell for 7 to a great one-handed diving catch by Ayr's Calum Gordon. Usman and Abid then added 48 for the third wicket as the run-rate increased - Usman in particular playing nicely and hitting some lovely shots. The two accompanied each other until the eighteenth over when Abid holed out to Ferry off Alner's bowling. With overs running out it then seemed that every *'Locster'* batter decided what was needed was swinging from the hip. It wasn't too effective however as both Cammy and *Franklin-D* went for ball #1 ducks. At least Abdullah stuck around a while before his *Webbed Feet Award* entry! Three ducks. Ooops. At the end of the twentieth over 114 was on the 'board however, and the skipper was unbeaten on 31, an innings that included four 4s and a 6. 115 to win.

The Ayr reply - unlike the first innings - started slowly. Joseph Taylor struggled to get the ball away as he fought changing his Audi into Olympic rings [Ed: in-joke for the Ayr boys!]. And he did stop himself becoming an Olympian as he eventually got off the mark. But the run-rate was high enough and when Taylor was first out (bowled by Frankie) his 11 runs had used up 43 deliveries. In contrast, opening partner Calum Gordon rattled up 19 from just eighteen balls and gave the start what little momentum it *did* have. Napier and Ferry then tried manfully [Ed: should that be boyfully?] to "up" the rate but departed too quickly to do any damage. The innings then petered out a little as the home side's tail-enders struggled to get the ball away as Usman juggled his bowlers. *FDR* finished with 3 for 4; Ashar 2 for 15. Well bowled guys. It's also worth noting that *Pasty* debuted as a 'keeper in the game and was general tidy, conceding just 4 byes, taking a catch standing up to Frankie and then completing a leg-side wide-ball stumping off Ashar's bowling! Other Halley's Comet-type events on the night included an *NTB* wicket-maiden! And, yes, there *was* a full moon as the convoy headed back up the M77!

So win first-up,.....eventually. And encouraging performance from a number of guys, especially valuable being the time spent in the middle by the batters.

Another day, same flaw [posted 03/08/09]

Sunday's Under 15 cup match versus Tynemouth saw *the 'Locsters'* gift their oppo' 29 in wides and no balls. Then 24 or so hours later it was the Under 13s who adopted the Christmas spirit and handed out gifts to near complete strangers! Poloc might well be accused of fielding an ineligible over-age non-member if they're not careful: S Claus Esq! This time the no ball and wide count was 18, but bear in mind this was only in fifteen and a half overs! And when you've posted 86 for 5 batting first, gifting 18 in the second "dig" just isn't smart. Guys, if we don't learn this soon-ish we're going to be losing near every close game we find ourselves in!

In the first innings a good start had been had too. Without Hasan and Haider who were on holiday, a young *'Locster'* side were asked to bat first. Saify and Saad opened and started well. 40 without loss from the first eight overs was an ideal start. But the first wicket was only an over away as a home side bowling change reaped rewards. Morgan's first ball trapped Saif leg-before, and his sixth disposed on Saad. Yikes, two down, and two new batters. Frankly no longer ideal! But in Elliott and Ross there was still decent experience in the middle. And

Elliott kept the run rate up there; quickly getting to 20. But, unfortunately, he'd become the third *'Locster* who'd got in, only to get out. When he chased a wide one from Nairn and got a nick to Sym behind the stumps, Ross found himself with a new partner. Move your feet *EJ*,.....trust me, it'll help. Ross then batted through with three partners: Faisal, Akhil and Ayub. But the momentum had been lost from the innings and only 13 were mustered from the last eighteen deliveries unfortunately. 86 for 5 posted, when nearer 100 was looking on at the start. "20 runs short" was the assessment at halftime, and so it turned out.

But the crime is that 86 wasn't "20 short" because of good batting, it was "20 short" because 18 were wrapped up in shiny paper and a bow and presented to the Prestwick boys. All then that was needed was sensible batting; spectacular batting being able to be left in the dressing room. And sensible batting was delivered: after Cairns was cleaned up for 0 and Slater went for just 2, Rao (30*) and Sym (28*) put on a match-winning partnership. And in the end it was easy-peasy: the win coming in the sixteenth over.

The 'Locster 13s have now suffered a league defeat and so must re-group pretty quickly if they're to regain momentum in the league title race. Missing two key bowlers can't be used as the excuse either as there was enough experience at this level, and enough ability fielded, to have secured the win. Basic flaws just cost them. But this report can't be ended without a mention of young Kess Sajjad's fielding effort: magnificent. The ball followed Kess around the oval, but wherever he went, and wherever the ball followed him to, he was up to the task. No miss-fields, and quick and strong returns to Ross. Ideal young man.

Basic errors cost 15s dear [posted 02/08/09]

The end analysis shows that Tynemouth CC from Northumberland won by 36 runs. But, as ever, the bare facts hardly tell the story in a match that ebbed and flowed. After being invited to bat first the visitors quickly found themselves 13 for 3 as Umer and Dani' tore through their top order. Then with Joshy and *Pasty* bowling nice and tightly *the 'Locsters* had the *Englanders* 33 for 4 as the twelfth over started. A low score was on the cards. But consolidation from Packham (batting at six) and left-hander Forrest pushed Tynemouth's score towards respectability, a north-ward move not exactly hindered by *the 'Locsters* inability to stop bowling wides, and the Tynemouth umpire's inability to stop calling no balls and incurring seven-ball overs! As it was in the final analysis the 15s would gift their opponents 29 in wides and no balls. And, of course, this was more than four extra overs in additional deliveries. And the extra deliveries went for 12. So that means that of the 90 ultimately posted, 41 can be directly attributed to wide and no ball deliveries - hmmm. But 90 was hardly unchaseable if *the 'Locsters* batted sensibly. In fact if they batted as they'd batted all season.

Cue the second disappointing aspect of the game: cheap dismissals caused by poor shot execution and poor backing up/running. The first shambolic event was Dani' sending the skipper back to see *the 'Locsters* slump to 13 for 2 when consolidation from the two batters was needed after Nick's earlier departure. And this just set the tone. Dani' followed shortly afterwards when he miscued a rank long hop straight to midwicket. 23 for 3. Josh then went in fashion similar - second ball - trying to go aerial. Sigh. 26 for 4 and much now resting on some *Batspeed* fireworks. And Amir was certainly warming to his task and had got into double figures.....when he was run out not backing up. Sigh. And his wouldn't be the last run out as Saad made it a hat-trick. Sigh. And when Saad went it was 41 for 6 and the fat lady was gargling. What had started so well was now petering out in horrid fashion. Saify tried his best and made 14, but by now big shots were needed and as the boys swung from their hips, the remaining wickets fell - 54 all out. Disappointing.

So what's to be learned? Bowl straight. Don't give an ump' a hint of a reason to "no ball" you. Hold catches - did we mention a few were dropped, including Lonnerberg who hit 12 from eight balls at the death for Tynemouth, *after* being dropped first ball by Ashar. Pity; Ash' had it, then didn't, then had it again, then grassed it as he rolled over. But no individual, as ever, is to blame. There were collective failures as players were "gotten to" by the visiting ump', bowled poorly and batted disappointingly. On the plus side Umer, *Pasty* and Josh returned impressive economic bowling figures, and the boys certainly know that they've lost a match they really should've won. And it's this disappointment they have to bank and remember, determined they won't feel it again if possible. Practice and practice again is the key: the basics. Bowlers bowling and bowling to be able to bowl in these bigger matches. Batters doing the basics well: backing up and executing sensible shots given the state of particular games. And

one defeat doesn't make this side a bad one - and Thursday gives them the chance to bounce straight back as they play Ayr in a re-arranged Under 15 league match.

Beaten by the rain,.....again,.....and again,.....and again [posted 28/07/09]

The 'Locsters are outta luck these days as regards beating the weather. Tuesday saw Saad, Hasan, Saif, Elliott and Haider having a bowl-out with the South Glasgow Under 13 Area team instead of a match at Titwood, then the Under 11s see their re-scheduled match against Renfrew abandoned mid-way through the first innings. And to complete the misery, the South Glasgow Under 15 match scheduled for Shawholm on Wednesday was quite literally washed away as rain swept across the city on Tuesday evening, leaving Josh, Amir, Umer and Craig to twiddle their thumbs. In the few overs that *were* bowled as the rain fell in the Under 11 match, *the 'Locsters* had started well: batting first they'd scored net 98 runs with seven overs still to bowl, Lewis James top-scoring with an unbeaten 38 that included five 4s and two 6s! *Buntalicious!* And the good news for Lewis is that these runs all count for his lifetime stat's!

18s win at Glenpark [posted 27/07/09]

With skipper Nicky Lafferty incapacitated through injury, Max on holiday and Dani' Chaudhry unavailable because of national age-group duty, it was a new-look *'Locster* 18s that made the trip to Glenpark to take on Greenock's Under 18s. But it was still a side that should - if everyone played to their potential - be strong enough to bring back the win-points. Before getting to the match report however, we should start with an apology to Frankie Rainey. *FDR* was late - he's acknowledged that - but it was still bizarre that the Glenpark-bound convoy left without him! And here's how: when the pre-departure headcount was taken the aforementioned injured Nicky Lafferty (along for "the ride") was included. Doh. So, thinking they had eleven the convoy left. Sigh. So apologies again to *Franklin*.

To the game. *The 'Locsters* batted first and *Muscles* and *Pasty* carried on from where they left off on Saturday with *the 'Holmboys* by putting on a good opening stand. Aamir would be the first to go when he'd reached 45 however, caught by Greenock skipper Greg McDougall. Scotty Millen then joined *Pasty* but wouldn't last long as he was "gunned" in controversial fashion by a ball that *Loc* observers swear pitched outside leg. Scotty wasn't helped by a low bounce, and the end result "looking bad". Some you win, some you don't..... Out for 7. This brought *Batspeed* to the crease and Amir batted as only he does - his unbeaten 32 would come from just fourteen scoring shots. Only four batters were required on the night, as 166 was posted; *Pasty's* unbeaten 56 adding to Amir's 32*.

167 would be a tough ask for the home side, not least given rain had made the deck "interesting", and the Glenpark midges were swarming! And swarming all over the opening batters it was hoped, would be *the 'Locster* opening bowling combo' of *Bil'y* and Umer. *Bil'y* was his usual accurate self, his three overs going for just 13 runs, picking up McDougall's scalp as he went along. Umer wasn't quite so economic though - his three overs going at a run-a-ball. But the home side needed more than a run-a-ball and so with the combo's six-over spell yielding just 31 runs the win was already pretty much beyond the Glenpark'ers. This allowed stand-in skipper *Pasty* to bowl some of the younger guys: Saqib and Cammy each bowled a couple of overs, and Shoaib got through a maximum five-over spell. Cammy picked up Bushfield's wicket, Saqib was wicketless, but economic, while Shoaib returned 5-0-18-1. This to add to his run out of Samuel. *Pasty* was also in the wickets, getting 3 for 27. The Greenock batters stuck to their task despite the worsening conditions, with wicket ends becoming slippy, and those midges still swarming! But, despite their best efforts, 97 was all they could muster in their twenty-over allocation leaving *the 'Locsters* winners by 69 runs.

Next up is a Friday match, and a chance to keep the winning run going.

Derby win for 'Locster 13s [posted 27/07/09]

The Under 13s were back in league action on Monday night after what seemed like weeks of inactivity.....because it *had* been weeks of inactivity! In fact there shouldn't have been a match on the 27th either, except for the rescheduling with West of Scotland of a match postponed earlier in the season. And so it was that the northsiders visited Shawholm. After the toss, *the 'Locsters* were in the field, with West skipper Nitesh Madju opening with Iain Wheel for the visitors. And the two lead off batters for the boys from Hamilton Crescent gave their side a really positive start, at least after Madju had nicked his first two deliveries through a vacant first slip area. Thanks Coach,

great field placement! But after getting going it was Madju that provided momentum to the first innings - he would eventually retire on 30, having been particularly punishing on Saad's bowling. His 30 came from just 25 balls and included three 4s and a 6. Well batted. Iain Wheel, meanwhile, was more circumspect in his batting, but was the perfect foil. After Madju retired Iain was joined by his twin brother Douglas and they pushed the score on to 55 before the first wicket fell - Douglas being dismissed courtesy of a genuinely good overhead catch by Elliott Rousen. 55 for 1 then became 55 for 2 as Iain Wheel obviously felt he should stick with his sibling and followed him back to the "hutch", bowled by that man Rousen. From this point on it was pretty much a procession as West batters came and went with a regularity that kept both scorers on their toes. The odd run here and there came along - particularly when Faisal Akram had a bowl! - but, in general, wickets were keeping pace and the final West wicket fell with a ball to go in the twentieth over, an over that saw Hasan Ahmad grab the final three opposition wickets. And in amongst the carnage there were two smart run outs: Kess Sajjad and Saad Salim doing the needful.

Six *'Locster* bowlers were used with Hasan taking four wickets. And there were also good returns from Haider (4-2-12-1) and Elliott (4-1-12-1), although Saad might want to forget his four overs for 25. Ooops.

75 was the target after the dust had settled on the first innings [Ed; or should that be rain had settled?] Saify opened with Saad and, like West, the first wicket would fall after a retirement (Saad for 32*) and with the score on 55. But unlike in the first innings, there would be no clatter of wickets after the first one fell. There *was* the "accident" that saw Elliott run out for 0, but - bar this - matters progressed nicely towards *the 'Locsters* win. Saif scored 14 before he went courtesy of a smart catch by Madju who'd taken over the gloves behind the stumps. The catch was off Douglas Wheel's bowling, and had Madju "standing up". Ross Armour and Hasan were at the crease when the winning runs were hit - Hasan chipping a Thornhill delivery for 6 over the mid-wicket boundary. And talking of 6s, Saad got his revenge on Madju in his innings - pulling Madju for a maximum over "cow corner". Saad's 32 came from just twelve balls and included five 4s.

75 was reached inside thirteen overs and gave *the 'Locsters* the win, and leaves then unbeaten in the league in season 2009.

Well, well, well,.....well done! [posted 24/07/09]

*Ladbroke*s would've given huge odds against it if it offered in-game odds on WDJCU matches! What're we talking about readers? Answer: a *'Locster* batter scoring a ton when, eight overs in to Friday night's home match against Hillhead, the home side were 50-odd for 3, and the centurion wasn't in the middle yet! *Pasty* had lost three partners already and now found himself with batting comrade #4 in Josh Sajjad. In fact thoughts were just beginning to extend to whether a decent total might be posted when it started.....

4! Josh's opening scoring shot. In fact seven of his first ten crossed the boundary. That'll be 31 off ten scoring blows. Interesting..... The next ten scoring shots then included no fewer than three 6s as *Pasty* lent on his blade at the non-striker's end as Josh past his score, notched up a half century, and just kept going. With the Hillhead opening bowlers beginning to wonder why they'd bothered getting rid of three of *the 'Locsters'* top four batters, Josh bunted their teammates' deliveries to all parts. Three more 4s and a couple more 6s, plus a few scrambled singles and twos, brought Josh to the last three balls needing 5 for a ton. Extraordinary. Ball #118 saw *Pasty* get bat on ball and Josh onto strike. The big fella then managed a 2 off the penultimate delivery making it 3 for the ton off the last ball. But the final ball was smacked straight to deep mid-off when it came and *Pasty* and Josh set off for what must've been cricket's most unlikely all-run 3! Mid-off reached the ball as the guys were coming back for the second. Then, bizarrely, he shelled the ball at the bowler's end where a ricochet off the bowler saw the ball rebound into no-man's land. The third run was on! And off the guys set - run complete, ton recorded! Extraordinary. And given the start, who'd have guessed it!

Around the carnage of Sajjad's flashing blade *Pasty* made an unbeaten 58, itself including six 4s, and a maximum. The end result? Nearly 200 posted. Ouchay.

In reply the Hillhead batters all struggled, bar Urquhart who managed 17. But he couldn't find someone to hang around with him - five ducks appearing on the 'card. In all seven *'Locsters* turned their arms over, with a wicket a-piece being picked up by Cammy, Saqib, Ashar, Saad and Saify. But the main plaudits go to Frankie whose "5-for" strangled the Hillhead middle order. Mention of Ashar also brings to mind a blinding one-handed grab in the field to dismiss one of the McNaughton boys. So the Under 15s stay unbeaten, and Friday the 24th of July will go down in at least one *'Locster's* memory as a day to remember - well batted JS!

Big bunting puts paid to 11s at Hughenden [posted 24/07/09]

Take out the 34 and 21 that were respectively bunted by Messrs. Horn and Ghaffar at Hughenden on Friday night and the Under 11s would've romped to victory "nae bother". But, of course, the two aforementioned giants' contributions can't be ignored and so *the 'Locsters* will have to wait and fight another day. Horn's unbeaten knock included two 6s, and Ghaffar's another brace. Not just bunting, BIG bunting. And both contributed with the ball in hand too; combining to bowl six overs between them, picking up two wickets in the process. But the best bowling on show was without doubt Usman Irfan - one of *four* sets of brothers on show [Ed: is that a record?] - the home bowler bowling his three overs for no runs at all. Well bowled, and very nearly offsetting his three dismissals when he batted!

Talking of the batting again, the home side posted net 300 (340 for 8) with no other Hillhead batter ending up in double figures, bar Horn and Ghaffar. To win would be tough, and the guys looked a little shell-shocked by the big-hitting they'd been on the end of. In the field Robert took a smart catch, and *Sluggie* James grabbed his first *'Locster* league scalp. The bowlers all took a bit of tap, although Kess's 2 for 14 and Ayub's 2 for 17 weren't too bad. Amit took the gloves for the first time too,.....and now knows it's not as easy as he thought!

In their reply chasing the big total *the 'Locsters* got off to a shocker and were -3 after six overs! Oooooops. But the ship was then steadied by the middle batting pairs, with *Sluggie* memorably smacking three consecutive 4s off Faisan Irfan on his way to a career high 14*. Another to make a decent contribution was Akhil, batting in the last pair, who made an unbeaten 10. But these twos' efforts were in vain, and even tho' only four wickets were lost, no-one could repeat the fireworks of Gulliver #1 and Gulliver #2, and *the 'Locster* Lilliputians ran out losers by 33 runs.

Under 11s lose out in thriller [posted 17/07/09]

The Under 11s lost out in the last over after nearly snatching victory from the jaws of defeat. With four overs left visitors Ayr were sitting comfortably - 9 runs ahead with the final pair cruising. Then over seventeen saw Aliyan sneak out Gordon in a wicket maiden. Interesting. Then another wicket fell in over eighteen, *and* another in over nineteen. *Very* interesting. Over twenty - the last in the match - started with the scores tied. Ayr needed runs to secure the win; *the 'Locsters* needed a fourth wicket in four overs to take the points instead. Ball one from Akhil's over was carved by Gordon through cover, and *Sluggie's* legs, for 4. Ayr 4 ahead. But it made no difference. With 5 runs being the cost of losing a wicket the home side were still in the game. A nick off ball two then saw Baird on strike and *the 'Locsters* now needing a wicket to tie. Balls three and four were dots, before ball five saw Baird mis-hit his shot straight back at Akhil in his follow through. But, agonisingly, the ball looped just over *the 'Locster* skipper's head to land safely by the umpire. And to add insult to injury the Ayr boys scampered a single to make the win secure. An exciting finish to a good game.

Akhil had bowled well despite narrowly missing out on saving the game for his side: 2 for 14 in his four overs adding to little brother Ayub's 2 for 11 in his three. Well bowled the Ahmed Bros. These two were also two of the six not out batters in *the 'Locsters'* innings as net 266 was posted. Top scorer in the first half was *Big* Lewis, with 13*. Kess made it to double figures (10) too. But neither Lewis nor Kess got close to Shuja Khan's unbeaten 20 in the Ayr reply - Master Khan particularly enjoying *Little* Lewis's first over, hitting three successive 4s in it. Well batted.

So defeat and lessons to learn as the guys thought back on fielding mistakes made that certainly cost 6 runs over the piece, as well as basic bowling errors - 10 runs were leaked in no balls! Yikes. But there were also plus

points. Lewis James's smart stumping, a couple of good catches, and better batting - in the main - as only four wickets were lost. Next week the youngsters head over the river to take on Hillhead.

Still unbeaten [posted 16/07/09]

Thursday saw a re-arranged 18s league match down at New Cambusdoon, with Ayr as the hosts. Batting first the home side - without Neil Smith and with Calum McLaughlin carrying an injury - managed to post just 89 for 5 in their innings. They were restricted by some tight bowling, an effort that wasn't really backed up by the efforts in the field. A number of catching opportunities were spurned, and the ground fielding lacked both effort and application. With a few exceptions the 18s disappointed in this facet of the game. In the wickets were Dani' with one, and *Pasty* with three. *Bil'y* bowled his usual miserly opening spell, backed up by li'l' bruv'. And then the spin twins did their part - *NJ* not getting a wicket [Ed: thanks *Muscles!*], but picking up the late run out of Seb' Stewart, *Pasty* getting his "3-for". 90 to win was target.

Muscles and *Pasty* opened for *the 'Locsters* and had put on 16 before the former tried a second consecutive hook shot off *Scooter* McElnea's bowling - his first had gone for four through midwicket, attempt #2 went skywards and was pouched by 'keeper Stewart. 26 was then added by *Pasty* and new partner Dani' before Scotty Millen was required in the middle after Elliott Speirs trapped *Shorty* LBW with one that kept low. Scotty and Dani' then finished off matters in double-quick time, Scotty "entertaining" the spectators with a reverse sweep and two Dilshan "scoops". Hmmm.

The win was secured in over 14 when Dani' pushed a single through extra cover - 90 for 2. Win. Well done to the guys, well bowled and well batted. But that fielding still needs work, *and* more application.

18s win again to make Frank Smith semi's [posted 02/07/09]

It was game #2 and win #2 of the week for the Under 18s on Thursday night as they defeated Kelburne in the Quarter-final of The Frank Smith Trophy. Batting first *the 'Locsters* posted 153 for 2, with Dani' ending up 47 not out, and Scotty M' 20 not out. And Scotty's knock was an eight-baller! Six of these were Jamie Cook's last over which Scotty smacked for 14 - ouch. Earlier *Muscles* and *Pasty* had put on 47 for the opening wicket, Amir going courtesy of a good grab at mid-off by Arbuckle off Ryan Morrow's bowling. *AK* was a little unlucky as he'd timed his off drive pretty well. *Pasty* went on to score 51 - from 49 deliveries - before he, too, holed out. He went caught at long off by Cook off Hair's bowling. Bar Morrow, all the Kelburne bowlers took a bit of tap - the other used conceding between 44 and 46 runs each in the five-over allocations.

The innings had been - like three days previously - well timed, with a nice acceleration throughout. 22 came from the first overs, 42 from the next five, 32 from the third five, and 57 from the closing five overs. 153 was the eventual total as noted.

The 'Locsters' defence of their total started with *Bil'y* and Shoaib in tandem. *BZ* was his usual stingy self, whilst Shoaib generally bowled a good full length, and a good line. And it was the latter who made the breakthrough dismissing Cook for 3, caught by *Bil'y* at mid-off. Cook's opening bat partner, Kelburne skipper Morrow, was striking the ball well however, and as long as he was at the crease there was a chance he could see his side home. He'd pulled Shoaib for a maximum in his second over, and then took a liking to bunting *Pasty* over *cow corner*. He'd reached 46 when he was dismissed in bizarre circumstances. Flicking *Pasty* to short backward square-leg Hair inexplicably called him for a start-stop-start single. *Batspeed* fielded it cleanly and shelled it to *Pasty* at the bowler's end. A decent take and bail-removal process saw Morrow continue his run to the clubhouse. Bonkers for the visitors as their win chances likely left the field of play with their skipper. From this point on it the game saw a procession of cheap dismissals: the state of the game allowing *Nicky* to bring more bowlers into the match: Josh, Amir and Elliott all rolling their arms over, and all taking a wicket. Or, more accurately in Elliott's case: three wickets,.....in five balls! Poor *Maximillion*, he was tee'd up to bowl over twenty!

So another win, and another cup Semi-final berth secured. A nice batting display with *Pasty* getting another half-century, and Dani' and Scotty again proving their worth in the top-order.

West, weather and win! [posted 29/06/09]

A week on it was the Under 18s who had the spotlight all to themselves, after *the 'Locsters* 13s had enjoyed the same seven days previously. And, just like a week before, it resulted in a win for the club on a lovely-jubby night weather-wise. And unbeaten the 18s remain in this year's Under 18 league Premier Division. Good news, and encouraging as the guys look forward to taking on Kelburne's Under 18s in the Quarter-final of *The Frank Smith Trophy* on the 2nd.

Skipper *NJ* won the toss and inserted West, with Luthra and Azhar opening. And open they did: both barrels! 79 were smacked off the first ten overs as 150+ looked on. But it could've been so different had Scotty Millen held on to a catch behind the stumps as Luthra nicked off to an Umer delivery. Grassed. Mind you Scotty could claim his head was still in a tiz, after behind "chinned" by a *Billy* Chaudhry delivery that took off - it should be noted Scotty was standing *back* at the time, but still got pinned! Ouchay! Luthra went on to score 46 from just 46 deliveries as he and Azhar (45 from an impressively low 36 deliveries) racked up 96 for the first wicket - Luthra holing out to Dani' off *Pasty*. This brought Umeed in and the rate started to get back under control - especially as Azhar quickly followed his opening partner. 99 for 2. But he, too, had been given a life as *NJ* spilled a skied chance, again off *Pasty*. The rate started to fall as noted though, and an innings that had started with a bang, went out with a whimper with Andrew Umeed and Gavin Smith at the crease at the close (13 between them from 21 deliveries). Phew: 150+ evaded, and under seven-an-over needed to win. For *the 'Locsters*, *Billy's* 4-0-15-1 and *NJ's* 5-0-21-1 stand out, whereas Umer's and Dani's combined 6-0-62-0 wished they didn't!

The 'Loc plan was "as normal" - openers *AK* and *Pasty* to see off the new ball, and create a base. 26 for 1 off five overs, with Aamir an early casualty, was a sensible start. 50 off nine overs with the back up bowlers on, and - now - Dani' in with Scotty was also fine. No need to panic. Call it 90 needed off eleven overs with eight wickets in hand. But the key would be whether *the 'Loc's* second-half accelerated or - as West's had done - decelerated towards over twenty. It proved the former,.....thankfully! Scotty hit 33 from 22 balls, Dani' 45 from 37 balls and *NJ* 29 from just 15 balls as *the 'Loc* middle order took a liking to - in particular - young Umeed's bowling: having gone for 14 in the first five balls of over thirteen, he picked up Scotty's wicket with the last ball to bring *NJ* in. But, and crucially for *the 'Locsters*, this was a good enough result to get him another over - over fifteen, his fifth, was then smacked for another 14 as the required run-rate plummeted and a *Fat Lady* could be heard gargling. *NJ* just failed to see his side home however as he cut a delivery from the too-late-returning Smith to Miro Ralston at point where the latter pouched a good catch. But there was little Smith could do coming back into the attack at this stage, and when his first ball to Joshy raced for 4 byes it was virtually all over. And the end came with the first ball over Max Ralston's final over; a scurried leg bye being enough to seal the win.

So a win. Good. But let's not get carried away. Post-match chat centered on some of the areas for improvement: including some fielding basics, fielders thinking more carefully about where to start from when asked to "save two" (36 runs were run in 2s, most to guys trying to save said number!), some of the seamers trying to bowl smarter rather than quicker, and generally improved awareness of what's going on - concentrate people! But also let's not take away from what turned out to be an entertaining win, on a warm and sunny night, with a good crowd against a good team from our second-favourite club! So onwards to Thursday and that *Frank Smith Trophy* quarter.

Another win for 15s [posted 26/06/09]

After their cup won the night before, the Under 15s were in action on Friday in the league - Greenock were the visitors. Batting first the visitors posted 98 in their innings, a total dominated by Scotland Under 15 player Alex Baum, who had made 50 before being dismissed courtesy of a grab by Ashar Mirza off Dani's bowling. Also in the wickets were *Batspeed*, who got rid of Charlie Murray, and skipper *Pasty Face*, who took the scalps of Anderson and McQuillan. And, altho' wicket-less, Umer Aziz bowled his usual brilliant opening spell, going for a miserly 17 in his five overs up-top.

Then, in the run-chase, it was *Pasty Face* batting through again as he posted his second league half century of the season - *another* unbeaten 57. And *the 'Locsters* wasted no time as 102 ended up on the 'board in the thirteenth over, with only *Batspeed* (4) and Dani' (10) having being dismissed. *Pasty's* 57 came off just 53 balls, with Joshy

with him at the end, unbeaten on 14. Amir fell courtesy of an Anderson delivery that cleaned him up, Dani' succumbed to an LBW appeal from Dorian.

So another win and the Under 15s remain unbeaten. The guys have built reasonable momentum as they look forward to the weekend's national knock-out cup Finals Day at Stirling; let's hope they remember to enjoy the day as they represent the club in this prestigious event. Well done guys, and good luck for Sunday.

11s shown how to bat and bowl at Glenpark [posted 26/06/09]

There was a chill in the air as the Under 11s took on their Greenock counterparts on Friday night. And as *the 'Locsters* came off worse on the night - losing by net 44 runs - it was a chill wind that..... Battin first the guys simply made too many basic technical mistakes as eleven wickets fell, the vast, vast majority being "bowled". Oops. Pre-match reminders from Coach David James to show respect to bowlers' straight deliveries obviously having fallen on deaf ears as batter after batter cleared their left side and swung across the line. Pity all that practice wasn't put in to practice, by guys who can all play a regulation forward defensive when they want to. In amongst the almost rhythmic beat of leather on stump, a few *'Locster* batters might be excluded from the general criticism: Ahmed-Raza, Akhil and Lewis Mac' didn't lose a wicket, with Akhil top-scoring with 21*. And the James boys both into double figures, in gross runs terms. For Greenock the biggest wicket haul was Murray's "3-for", with Harry Briggs's 3-0-5-0 being an example in economy.

The home side were eventually set net 44 to win - not too stiff a target if they batted sensibly. And they did. Only seven wickets fell in their twenty-over reply, with the last pair bunting a net 37 runs to secure the win. Two home side batters made twenty plus: Armstrong and the impressive Currie both getting 21. Along side these two knocks, Briggs slugged his way to net 12 (22, out twice) and McQuat posted 13. And hopefully *the 'Locster* youngsters will've learned more lessons in the field too. Why do we practice basic pick-ups and throws at practice - every session? Answer: so that when the ball's hit to you in the field with an easy run out at your mercy you don't fumble the take and miss the keeper's gloves by a distance.....like *'Locster* fielders did three or four times early in the Greenock run-chase.

The home side's innings closed with them having racked up net 87, and a comfortable win. So *the 'Locsters* move on to next week, and Renfrew at home. Let's hope those lessons *have* been learned.....

15s secure Finals Day berth with win over Prestwick [posted 25/06/09]

The 'Locster 15s won against Prestwick on Thursday evening in the national knockout cup and will now feature in Finals Day at New Williamfield this weekend coming. Yet more fixture chaos! But let's not take anything away from the side's performance on the night. Let's start at the start: a big thanks to Kess Sajjad first of all, for standing in at the last minute as a couple of *'Loc* players were delayed. And thanks too, to Abid Chaudhry, for agreeing to step in late on too. Cheers guys - much appreciated.

Ross Patterson, the Prestwick skipper, won the toss and decided to bat first. A decision that he would justify in his own performance as he played sensibly before retiring on 51. *Rosco's* a talented all-rounder, and his performance on the night simply underlined his ability and no little application. His innings was only ever threatened when a big appeal by *the 'Locsters* for a catch behind was rejected by the umpire. But around Patterson there was little in the way of support, with six ducks making the scorecard read more like binary code than anything else. The next highest contribution was extras (15), with McDowall posting 7. 81 for 9 was the final total as Saqib Ahmed took the second one-handed catch of the night to dismiss said McDowall. The first one-hander had been Dani's, a cracking overhead snatch to get rid of Rao who looked on in disbelief! Saify, too, is worthy of a mention when it comes to the display in the field: three stumpings being a more-than-decent in an innings. What else to say about the first half? Only really that there were still a bundle of mis-fields - some costly, some not, but all inexcusable as all the guys can do better - work still to be done then in the fielding drills. And a passing comment on *that* appeal for a "caught behind": once the decision's given guys we get on with the game - straightaway - no questions asked!

The 'card of the Prestwick innings shows all *the 'Locster* bowlers grabbed a wicket bar Dani' whose economy rate was a breach of the Trade Descriptions Act! Umer got rid of Prestwick numbers #2 and #3; *Pasty Face* grabbed three, Saad the same, with Josh bowling Saul Jones. And adding to the one-handed catches already noted, Ashar Mirza took a good low catch early on to get rid of opener Eoin Baillie.

82 to win then. Joshy and Craig opened, and 10 was added before Josh was cleaned up by that man Patterson again. This brought Dani' to the middle and he and Craig would bat sensibly to see their side home - the winning target being reach in the eighteenth over with a *DZ* cover-drive 4. Craig finished unbeaten on 43, Dani' on 27. Well batted.

So it's off to Stirling on Sunday where Stirling County await in the semi-final - the other semi' featuring Carlton and Huntly *Highlanders*.

13Bs see off *the Dark Side*,.....or is it *the Pink Side*? [posted 24/06/09]

The 'Locster 13Bs were pleased to be Clydesdale's girls side's first competitive opponents on Wednesday evening, playing the *Queen Bees* in the Under 13B league. And it was a great game, on a beautiful night, on a decent deck, in front of a boisterous home crowd! All-in-all, good stuff! The home side featured two guest girls, in the shapes of Messrs. Rana and Awan. Both (?) kept wicket on the night, before bunting their side into a decent position after the first five-over section in the run-chase. The run-chase required the *QBs* to finish on net 80 to win, a target they just failed to reach, finishing 20 runs short as *the 'Locster* bowlers grabbed important late wickets. 329 for 10 beating 299 for 8.

In the first half a number of *the 'Locster* batters posted decent totals, with Yash and Haider both finishing with 14, and skipper Faisal Akram top-scoring with 17. Only Akhil really found trouble posting -10 under the pairs game's quirky scoring system. For the *Queen Bees* honorary girls Awan and Rana took four wickets between them, in between 'keeping wicket. Other wicket-takers were Cruickshank, Nulty, Munro, McCracken and McMillan. And worthy of mention was Alex Munro's sharp bit of fielding and run out.

The second started with a bang - or should I more accurately say a bump - with Faisal having to retire hurt after being smacked on the hand by ball #3 of *the Bees'* innings being smacked back at him by Awan. Faisal's inability to continue resulted in Ayub finishing off his over. Hope you're feeling better Fais'. Awan and Rana put on 50 without loss in the first five overs, and this was almost as good as it got. The score then got as high as 270 as the remaining fifteen overs were played out, before eventually finishing at 259, as McMillan and Nulty lost four late wickets between them at the end.

A win then, a the 13Bs still "in the mix" in the league. A good exercise for the *Queen Bees* too we hope - well played guys!

Northside challenge [Hill]headed off [posted 22/06/09]

Hillhead were the visitors to Shawholm on Monday evening, and with the 18s having a blank week, the 13s had the limelight all to themselves. And they didn't disappoint with a convincing win. The win was secured in the eleventh over of *the 'Locster* reply as they chased down 72 to win, losing only one wicket in the process. Well played guys. The win was set up with a good performance in the first half of the game as the guys bowled straight, and fielded sensibly, to restrict Hillhead to 71. Only 9 runs were leaked in wides in the near eighteen overs bowled, with Saad and Haider grabbing a couple of wickets a-piece. The Hillhead innings eventually closed when Lewis James, in his debut bowling spell for the Under 13s, cleaned up Khan. In between Saad taking the first wicket and Lewis's tidying up of matters in over eighteen, there was some good cricket with Ross taking a smart catch behind the stumps and Haider and Akhil both hanging on to decent caught and bowled chances to get rid of batters. Also of note is Hasan's quick hands and true arm as he ran out Sadiq. For Hillhead only really Faisal Munir (30*) and McNaughton (15) showed signs of being comfortable with proceedings.

The 'Loc's reply started with Saad and Saif, the former hitting a quick 13 before holing out to a good catch at midweek by Munir off McNaughton's bowling. This brought Yash to the crease and he played sensibly in

partnership with his skipper to see his side home. Yash's unbeaten 13 being a good contribution to the run-chase, and adding to Saif's 29*. So another win and pleasingly signs that the guys' bowling is getting tighter. And good to see lots of huys chipping in with catches, wickets and runs. Next Monday's a blank week in the 13s fixture card - time to get back to good practice!

"Kwik Cricket" successes for 'Locsters [posted 21/06/09]

The 'Loc's Under 10s were at Titwood on Sunday morning participating in the latest WDJCU "Kwik Cricket" festival. As usual there were three games to be played and the guys finished "two and one". Wins over Helensburgh and Clydesdale were partially offset by a narrow defeat to Kilmarnock's youngsters. The standards on display were pretty high too, with rumours of fantastic diving catches from Aliyan and a Macdonald reaching us here at the website - well done! Thanks to David James and helpers for organising as ever.

Under 15s thump Uddy [posted 12/06/09]

Uddingston's Under 15s have been on the end of a few heavy defeats this season by all accounts and so it was a confident 15s outfit that travelled to Bothwell Castle policies on Friday to take on their Lanarkshire rivals. The home side, despite their record thus far this year, do - however - have players of note: Geenshields, Jordan and Main all being previous or current representative players. So a potential banana skin of that there was little doubt. Warnings of complacency were dished out, and hopefully would be heeded.

The *Uddy* skipper Jamie Greenshields won the toss and decided to bat. Umer and Joshy opened for *the 'Locsters*, with Umer being right on the money from ball #1. He'd bowl three quick overs and return figures of 2 for 14. Josh meanwhile was a tad more expensive, going for 26 in his three overs up front; although he nipped out Gavin Main in his first over, caught behind by lil' (?) bruv' Saify. Main going cheaply (4) was good news for *the 'Locsters*, as were the dismissals of Jordan and Dennis Eyles for nowt between'em. Two more dangerous players gone. Both sent back by Umer. At this juncture spin was called for and it turned into the *Elliott Rousen Show*. EJ proceeded to grab six wickets as he ran through the home side's middle and lower order, dismissing the top-scoring Greenshields (22) *en route*. Nice. The *Uddy* tail did wag a bit however, and 74 was posted.

Eminently chase'able, but a "professional" job would be needed and - again - no complacency allowed. The home side, let's remember, still had their star men ready to run in and bowl at their visitors. Main and Greenshields opened the bowling as they'd done the batting. 15 from their first two overs kinda' decided things right up top tho'. 12 off Main's second, and 23 off Greenshields' second, then sealed it. And things were wrapped up in double-quick time as victory was secured in the eighth over. 77 for 0. *NTB* was 23 not out at the end, *Pasty Face* 40 not out.

So a good win. Some improvements in the fielding. And, very definitely Mr Rousen's day, much as it had been Saad's day with *his* "6-for" at New Anniesland in the 15s' last league match. But where was *the Cricket Champ* tonight? Answer: he called off. And who took his place after a 4.30pm 'phone call? Answer: Elliott J Rousen! Fate.....

11s win in style [posted 12/06/09]

Uddingston were the visitors to Shawholm on another beautiful summer's night on Friday. It was good enough to sit out and enjoy a wee snack and a drink in act - just ask the midges who had their full of scorers' and umpires' blood! And the cricket was pretty good too, at least from a *'Locster* point of view. A win by 74 runs was the net result as a young Uddingston outfit's target of 220 was easily chased and surpassed by the club's youngest hardball side. In the field first *the 'Locster* bowlers all bowled pretty well with the wides count being low. Four of the nine bowlers used got a wicket, with Kess Sajjad's 2 for 4 in his three overs standing out. And the bowlers were well backed up in the field: Lewis James taking a smart catch behind the stumps and Lewis Macdonald dismissing an *Uddy* batter with a direct hit run out from point. Both nice pieces of cricket.

In the reply, the run chase got off to a tricky start with Lewis James being cleaned up second ball, and his partner Amit getting out too in their four-over stay at the crease. But, notwithstanding their dismissals the two added a net 12 off their bats and *the 'Locsters* were well up with required rate. The second pair of Ayub and that man Kess

again added a net 13,.....all Kess's. Well batted *Kessler*. Then we saw *Sluggor* James live up to his name when ball #1 of the third pairs' innings was smacked through extra cover for a boundary. Cal' and Robert went on to add another 14, with no wickets falling between overs 9 and 12. And so it went on. Ahmed-Raza and Aliyan struggled a bit more than the others batting as the fourth pair, but Akhil and Lewis Macdonald restored the margin of victory with a net 18 off the bat as the innings was closed out.

Well done guys - a good win after the defeat at Titwood. Onwards, and upwards we say.....

18s see off Dark Side [posted 08/06/09]

Almost unbelievably *the Dark Side* were beaten for the third time in eight days - all at Shawholm - when *the 'Locster* 18s beat their *Toytown* cousins in the league on Monday night. 134 wasn't enough for the visitors batting first as the home side chased it down with a few balls to spare. Runs were scored by Barbour, Chitnis and Page for *the 'Dale*, with Dani', Nicky and Scotty getting into double figures for *the 'Loc*. The bowlers on both sides in this *Twenty20* affair all took a bit of tap, although *Bill's* "3-for" stands out as regards wickets taken. Somewhat bizarrely there were also five (yes 5!) run outs in *the 'Dale* innings, as they lost nine batters in getting to 134.

This was the 18s' first outing of the new season with - in earlier weeks - Greenock having forgotten, Hillhead having conceded, and Ferguslie having cancelled. And guess what next Monday is guys? Answer: a blank week for the 18s! Sigh.

13s win in friendly [posted 08/06/09]

With Monday the 8th being a blank week in the 13s' league schedule, *the 'Locsters* were delighted to pop over to Hamilton Crescent to play their West of Scotland counterparts in a friendly. The match gave the chance for a few more of the guys to bowl, and for Yash to continue his "pinch-hitting" up the order!

Batting first the home side posted the more-than-respectable 134 with openers Majhu and Ewing showing good technical ability and all-round shot-making as 'Loc bad balls were summarily despatched across the fast outfield. For *the 'Locsters* there were a few of the "usual suspects" as regards flaws with the ball: poor control over line and length kinda' sums it up. In the field, in general, things went fine - Yash through himself around like a demon and there was some impressive diving stopping by Hasan at short cover, particularly later on. Ross Armour also did well as out fielders hurled the wee red sphere at him from all angles, sometimes forgetting he was almost close enough to just hand it to him!

The run chase went pretty smoothly when *the 'Locsters* came to bat. Saad and Saif'y retired as they reached or passed 30, and Elliott was left unbeaten on 26 at the end. Throw in a useful, and positive, contribution from Yash, against a perfectly good West bowling attack, and it was a pleasing reply. The reply reached the required target in the final over with Elliott bunting one back over the bowlers head for a couple to seal the win. This after a wee wobble in over nineteen that saw a couple of 'Loc wickets fall in successive deliveries meaning Faisal's ball was a hat-trick ball! Yikes.

So a good workout, on a pleasant evening, in a nice location - if you forget the "locals" playing 5-a-side on the lower outfield; a match whose rules seemed to involve smacking a spare footy onto the square!

Dark Side seen off in wham, bam, thank you m'am Twenty20 cup encounter [posted 05/06/09]

The club's Under 15s secured a quarter-final berth in the national knockout cup as they reversed the result from last week's Under 13 cup clash with *the Dale*. Last week [Ed: see below] i batted first, posted a huge total, then lost. This time the roles were reversed as, thanks to blade-flashing heroics by *Batspeed* late on, *the 'Locsters* chased down 141 to win with balls to spare! Extraordinary. The run chase had got off to a stumbling start with *NTB* departing for a blob, but *Pasty Face* and Dani' took the score on to provide the base for a decent attempt at reaching the required total for the win. And pretty much all the batters chipped in thereafter, with the middle order of Josh (22) and *Batspeed* (22) proving crucial after Dani' (50*) and *Pasty* (21) were back in "the hutch", the former playing the innings anchor role. *Batspeed's* innings in particular finally turned things the home side's way and was the perfect way to secure the win: two 6s and a 4 in one over from McDermott proving downright

destructive. Well bunted Mr U! And after his blitz it was left to *the Cricket Champ* and Saify to see the guys across the finishing line.

But what about the first half? Well - in short - it was horrible! Ground fielding that was described to this correspondent as the worst ever witnessed by a Poloc side. And if you've been to Shawholm over the years you'll understand this is a reasonably harsh statement as there's been some truly dreadful fielding efforts! And we're only talking about the senior elevens here people!! But it was poor. Throw in 23 in wides (!) and it was tough to watch. Best for *the 'Loc* was Umer Aziz who was back with as smooth a run up and action as ever - 1 for 18 amidst the carnage on show was a more than creditable performance, and he took the important wicket of the dangerous Jasim Beg at the top of the innings. And for all that *Batspeed's* batting was brilliant in the run chase, his bowling (two overs for 21) was terrible in *the 'Dale* innings! Saad, too, fresh from his "5-for" against Accies, went for 23 in his two overs. Ouch. Big, big improvements need to be made in the fielding department though - you just can't expect to chase down 140 every week. And isn't that ironic given the amount of fielding practice we've been doing!

But, ultimately, a win's-a-win as they say, and *the 'Locsters* progress to the quarter-finals where they'll meet either - wait for it, deep breath - Ferguslie or East Kilbride or Prestwick. The tie - at home again - is meant to take place before the 21st but we'll just have to wait and see.

And as I type I hear *Chief Darth* is still giving his stormtroopers the hair-dryer treatment - remember to lock up when you leave CD.....

11s suffer second defeat [posted 05/06/09]

Toytown was the setting for the Under 11s latest league outing. And it would be an outing that would see *the 'Loc's* youngest hardball team suffer their second reverse of the season. In the final analysis it was a win by [a net] 32 runs as *the 'Dale's* batters bunted their way to the win. Three home side batters ended up in double figures in their run chase, with last man Duckett looking, physically, as if he'd been asked to repeat Under 11 cricket for a few years given his sheer size. As he slogged his side to the win, *the 'Locster* fielders shrunk further and further away from his flashing blade just in case they ended up in his arc. Scary stuff,.....and we weren't playing! Around Duckett, there were other big individual scores by Taylor (17*), Sher (14*) and Ali (17). For *the 'Loc* the best batting had come from Ayub (16*) and Lewis James (11*), whilst young Cammy Macdonald had cut himself two 4s at the top of the innings. Both sides lost six wickets in their innings, the difference between the sides being as much physical size and age, as it was technical superiority.

In the field Robert executed a smart run out, and Akhil bowled two maidens amidst the bunting. Ahmed-Raza was a double wicket taker; 2 for 5 being a nice return for straight bowling. Elsewhere it was a case of fielders trying to get their bodies in the way of careering red leather objects hurtling across the turf, or through the air. Cameron, again, gets a mention here for his heroics on the mid-wicket boundary, one particular diving stop resulting in a bruised knee - ouch! Well fielded Cammy - great effort!

So a defeat, but some good signs nonetheless. With experience the guys will get better, and they'll likely never encounter as big an Under 11 as Mr Duckett!

Back on the rails [posted 01/06/09]

After their "pants round the ankles, bare-bottom thrashing" at the hands of *the Dark Side* last week in the cup, it was back to league action as Drumpellier Under 13s visited Shawholm on a gloriously sunny and warm Monday evening. Batting first, *the 'Locsters* repeated the good part of their cup match with *the 'Dale*, scoring 117 for 4 in their twenty overs. Saad retired for the second match running, his 30* being all-but matched by Elliott's 26. Master Rousen was a tad unlucky he didn't get a "sheriff" too - Haider coming in to face the last ball of the innings with instructions to get bat on ball whatever happened, as Elliott was running. Elliott did his part - sadly Haider failed in his - somewhat bizarrely backing away to leg, swinging-and-missing and leaving the Drump's 'keeper with his easiest run out of the season. Haider?!? In and around Saad and Elliott's two knocks, Ross had played nicely

and compiled 15, before being dismissed courtesy of a good grab by Nathan Allison off Humza Sabri's bowling. Toss in 36 extras and 117 for 4 it was.

The second half brought home Coaches' nerves as the scars of last week's shambles threatened to re-open. Would the messages have got in? Would the guys bowl straight and not try and be too cute, or - particularly - try and bowl too fast? Answer: yes. That's an affirmative! Just 19 in extras was a big improvement, particularly as early wickets allowed eight bowlers to roll their arms over. Haider dominated the wicket-taking stat's, his off breaks giving him four scalps. Hasan too was in the action with two wickets and no fewer than three catches. Faisal grabbed a wicket too, and picked up and threw in smartly to Ross to orchestrate Muir's run out.

The final scorecard shows Drump's were 57 for 9. A win by 60. No mean feat against a decent side. A funny incident to finish on too: the sides actually came off after the first ball of the 21st over (!) had seen Robertson dismissed "caught & bowled" by Saify. The only people apparently unaware the match was over being the two ump's. Mssrs. Young and Pryde take a bow. To spare Robertson his blushes and restore his "sheriff", the 'card correctly shows the game having been completed one ball earlier!

13s crash out to *the Dark Side* [posted 28/05/09]

The 'Locster 13s learned a tough lesson on Thursday evening. And it's a simple one: games are *never* won at halftime. Ask AC Milan! But forget footy people, we're talking about cric'. The halftime score on Thursday in the national knockout cup showed *the 'Loc* had notched up 132 for 1, with three batters retiring and only Yash's run out being a blot on an otherwise spotless copy book. Hasan, Saad and Saify had got to 30 and retired, and Elliott had smacked a cameo 12 off six balls at the death. *The 'Dale* guys looked shell-shocked. BUT, the message in the home dressing room was that no complacency would be allowed and that lessons from what *the Dark Side's* bowlers had done wrong had to be learned. The lessons? Simple: bowl straight and don't try and bowl too fast. All the repetition of winter practice being reiterated: bowlers need to be able to bowl at least five good balls an over; three won't do. *Simples!*

And so the run-chase commenced,.....with a wide! Sigh. Then Saad thought he'd bowl as fast as he could. Sigh #2. Throw in Hasan deciding to bowl three wides in a nine-ball opening over and the dressing room discussion seemed but a distant memory. 22 for 0 off the first four overs was a good start for the visitors, and *the 'Locsters* were still bowling wides. Six of'em,.....and counting. First change bowler was Wasay. His first over? An eleven-baller! Things weren't improving. 62 for 2 at halfway saw *the 'Dale* only 3 runs shy of where *the 'Locsters* had been at the same stage. Very definitely game on. And so it continued. On and on. Wide after wayward delivery. When over eighteen went for 13 [Ed: including 3 in extras of course!] only 7 more were needed. 7 more that were swiftly in-gathered in the nineteenth over when Taylor edged his first ball for a boundary. *The 'Dale* win with seven balls to spare. Another *'Loc: 'Dale* cup classic, of sorts.

So how much did those extras cost *the 'Locsters* in the final analysis? Well we can start with the 20 in wides, no balls and byes for a start. But what was scored off the extra deliveries bowled? That's often the real "cost". The answer? Another (!!!) 20 runs. 40 runs just gifted. And nothing learned from *the 'Dale* having been similarly generous, gifting 37 runs to *the 'Loc* in the first innings. So we're back to where we started: all the good work and technically sound batting wasted; lessons not learned; and halftime smug'ness and cocky'ness looking well out-of-place come stumps. "Winning" the match three retirees to one, and five wickets to one, ultimately irrelevant as basic technical flaws and poor thinking with ball in hand proved fatal.

Next up for the guys it's back to league action on Monday.

Under 13Bs go two-for-two [posted 27/05/09]

The 'Locster Under 13Bs made their longest trip in this season's league schedule with a visit to New Cambusdoon. As ever the hosts were both friendly and courteous, and all concerned were treated to an exciting match. After restricting *the 'Locsters* to net 245 in their sixteen-over allocation, the home side looked on course to win the game when they needed just 1 run from the last three overs. But, astonishingly, and to *the 'Loc* guys' credit, they didn't succeed as four wickets fell in the last eighteen balls to secure the points for *the 'Locsters*. Credit to Akhil, TJ and

Hasan for good bowling in those three overs, and to the fielding that restricted the home side's final batting pair. The end margin of victory was 6 runs as Ayr finished net 239. Nine home side wickets had fallen, compared to only two *'Loc* dismissals.

Yash had earlier top-scored with an unbeaten 12, with Hasan's 9* and *TJs* 7* being useful contributions too. But the win was secured because all the batters protected their wicket dilligently and didn't give away cheap dismissals - each costing -5 runs in the Under 13B league's scoring system.

Hasan recorded a "3-for" and grabbed a run out too, with Hassan Khaliq's two other run outs being worthy of mention.

15s progress in the cup [posted 26/05/09]

The 15s defeated Drumpellier in the first round proper of the national knockout cup at Langloan. The match had been rained off the week previously and after afternoon showers it was still a soft deck that the boys faced playing on in Coatbridge. A young Drumpellier side batted first and quickly found both scoring and not losing wickets tricky. And with playing conditions tricky enough given the pre-match weather it probably didn't exactly help matters that the home batters' running between the wickets could be classified as somewhere between risky and suicidal. In the end analysis there were three run outs. One being potential danger-man Abdul Sabri who inexplicably tried to complete a second run when a single was only just possible - bizarre! The main wicket takers for *the 'Locsters* were *the Cricket Champ* and *Batspeed* who each grabbed a brace. And there was one each for *Pasty Face* and *Josh'y*. Throw in the three run outs and it was nine down at the close of the innings. Drump's skipper Scott Perman had top-scored with 15 out of his side's total of just 44.

The 'Loc run chase was spear-headed by Dani' and *Roscco*. These two put on 20 before the latter got a ball that both jagged back *and* kept low - a lethal combination! Exit stage left; to be replaced by Frankie. Frankie matched *Roscco's* 2 before he, too, departed, the second clean-up of the innings. This gave *NTB* the chance to enter the fray, hit a boundary and shake hands with the oppo'. Job done. Dani' ended up 21 not out; a return that looked unlikely for the nanosecond between him edging ball three and it being grassed by the home wicket-keeper. Ouch.

The 'Locsters now await news of their round two opponents.

Winning start for the Under 15s [posted 22/05/09]

After being unbeaten in 2008,.....well unbeaten by all but the weather, *the 'Locster* 15s had started season 2009 with that *deja vu* feeling. Rain, rain and more rain. Cancellation after cancellation. But then on Friday the sun shone! Wow, so that's what it looks like - I remember now! And the venue for what would be game #1 of their league campaign was the perfectly pleasant surroundings of New Anniesland. And an astro-turf awaited them!

After being put into bat *the 'Loc* boys showed no sign of ring-rustiness however as *NTB* and *Pasty Face* rattled along happily at six an over. 59 for 0 was on the 'board at halfway, and it was over twelve before the boys lost their first wicket: Nick going for 26, caught by Allen off McAlpine-Scott's bowling. This brought Dani' to the wicket and he and *Pasty* carried on as if nowt had happened. Both went past 50, and both ended up unbeaten as *the 'Loc* racked up 160 in their twenty over allotment. A decent - nay, very decent - total.

In reply the Accies openers, too, started well. 52 for 0 off nine overs was matching *the 'Locsters'* first half performance and it was only when the first wicket fell in the tenth over that things started to go definitively in the favour of *the 'Locsters*. And in over eleven things definitely went their way: a Saad Salim hat-trick saw to that as 65 for 5 was suddenly on the 'board. Yikes. And from there it was only really a matter of time - 79 all out being the ultimate home side total.

Saad finished with a "6-for" and the match ball - a new match ball I should add! Well bowled sir - the end of a productive week for *The Cricket Champ*' following on his 29 for the Shawholm side last Saturday.

11s narrowly lose out [posted 22/05/09]

Under 11 league cricket made its home debut on Friday night with Glasgow Accies and their bountiful travelling support the visitors to Shawholm. With a win under their belts - in the rain - at Kilmarnock the week before *the 'Locsters* were in confident mood, this despite missing a few faces because of holidays. Batting first the visitors batted sensibly losing only one wicket in their accumulation of a net 89 runs. Aston top-scored with an unbeaten 10, as *the 'Locster* bowlers bowled tidily enough. The extras count was, as ever, penal given the 2 runs for a wide and no ball, but it must be said *the 'Loc's* young bowlers did pretty well. Only eleven deliveries called wide is reasonably respectable methinks. Best bowling on the night was from skipper Akhil who returned figures of 4-2-5-0, good leadership from the front.

In reply *the 'Locsters* lost more wickets than their visitors yet were still in the match as the final overs beckoned. Ayub was following his big bruv's example - Akhil had made an unbeaten 17 to seal the MOTM award - and was batting nicely with Kess. With two overs of their five-over, and the game's twenty-over, allocation, the maths showed that 16 were needed. With the odd wide or no ball almost bound to come along somewhere in the remaining twelve deliveries it was going to go down the wire. But over nineteen proved the turning point as Kess was cleaned up by Gilikson, the resultant 5-run deduction all-but securing victory for Accies. And when skipper Agwan's final over cost just 5 victory was indeed secured and the points were heading back over the river.

Disappointing in the end, but a genuinely good game. Only five wickets lost in 40 overs says much about the batters' concentration and technical ability. And let's not forget the sun was out, and it was warm!

13Bs do well versus 'well [posted 21/05/09]

The summary of this one is that *the 'Locsters* saw off Motherwell in a close one. Under the Pairs Cricket scoring system, net 294 beat net 284. And it could've gone either way really until the result was finally decided after Haider Akram's final over was completed. Looking behind the summary however, there was more to this game than first appears. And, most importantly, something that did come out of the match was that certain behaviour is simply not acceptable on a cricket field! For the young *'Locsters* this means learning the lesson that sledging from oppo' players has to be ignored. And, that verbally responding in kind and/ or refusing to shake hands at the end of a match are both, similarly, not acceptable. The culprits know who they are, and the matter has been addressed, both internally and with representatives from Motherwell. What a pity too, given the excitement of the game, and the fact a game was even possible given the horrible weather that's been around.

Batting first *the 'Locsters* opened with Yash and Lewis James. And we should've known we were in for an "unusual" match when the former bunted a maximum! Good hit Mr Singh! Lewis batted well, too, not sacrificing his wicket in the pair's four-over allotment. Saad and Akhil were next in and Saad carried on from his 29 for the Shawholm XI the previous Saturday to smash 26 on the night. Saad's innings including no less than three 6s! The rest of the side then batted perfectly sensibly and when Hasan and Hassan were done net 294 was posted. A decent score. For Motherwell, Hatcher (with an economy rate of just 3.5) and Edmund [Ed: he of the "interesting" action!] with a "3-for" were the stand-out bowlers.

Edmund would swing the bat with effect too come the visitors' turn to bat - 27* being his return batting with his brother. And Hayden, with an unbeaten 8 in the last pairing, nearly saw his side home, partner Nawaz's two dismissals being crucial in *the 'Locsters'* winning margin.

A win first up then, but lessons to be learned: on and off the paddock.

Under 11s win first up too [posted 15/05/09]

After the disappointment of Kilmarnock calling off the Under 15 league match with the club, the Under 11s cheered everyone up with a win down at Bellsland,.....a very cold and wet Bellsland. You can see the 'card of the game [online](#), with the first Under 11 stat's of the new season [uploaded](#) too.

The home side batted first and in deteriorating conditions managed 4, yes just FOUR, runs off the bat in their twenty overs. Mind you *the 'Locsters* were kind enough to give *Killie* a plethora of additional runs through the

usual avenue named "Extras". In fact, in all in this match, there would be 117 (!) runs conceded in wides alone. Unbelievable. If extra balls were bowled the game might still be going on - a modern version of a "timeless Test"! Back to the match itself: with a slippery ball and on a hairy outfield, pretty much all aspects of the game were well nigh impossible: bowling, batting, fielding, catching, even running between the wickets - there were a few up-endings as batters [literally!] *slid* their bats in,.....followed by whole bodies. Cartoon capers. And, as ever, there are some funny incidents worthy of note in an Under 11 encounter.

The 'Loc umpire determined at one point to mention to a home batter named "Adam" that, although backing up was a good thing, he really shouldn't be halfway down the wicket when the bowler bowled. Without blinking, young "Adam" retorted that the umpire was wrong and that [*verbatim*] "Backing up is a key batting phase and so I will continue"! Magic! And for both the readers who regularly read these reports, they will know this is a "key batting phase" most batters at *the 'Loc* fail to execute!

Six wickets were claimed by the Under 11s; Akhil Ahmed taking four. The resultant target was a net 39 - not too demanding,.....unlike the conditions! As it was the total had been comfortably passed when "time" was called in the gathering gloom - *the 'Locsters* having managed to post net 68. Only four wickets had been lost - three somewhat bizarrely to run outs.

So a first game and a first win. But, hopefully, the rest of the season will see more cricket-like weather.....

Under 13s start with a win [posted 11/05/09]

The Under 13s got the 2009 competitive junior season off to a great start on Monday with a convincing win over their Ayr counterparts. On a spectacularly good evening [Ed: it wasn't hosing down, and it was above 10 degrees C!] *the 'Locsters* batted first, set the home side a decent target and then bowled and fielded well to claim the win.

Batting first the guys were in a bit of trouble after ball #1 however as Saify got a great ball first up; good enough to send him packing back to the changing room. 0 for 1. Oops. This brought Elliott in to partner Hasan who was still leaning on his bat at the non-striker's end. Fortunately for the guys these two brought stability and, with no little ability and good shot-making, they pushed the score on without further cause for alarm. 50 for 1 was passed in the tenth over and both batters looked set for 30-inducing retirements. First to get there was Elliott whose fourth 4 of his innings saw him to 31. Well batted, particularly coming in at 0 for 1. Sorry to mention that again Saify. Could Hasan repeat the feat? Answer: unfortunately no, as he arguably got the ball of the day - a properly good, straight, yorker from Gordon. 61 for 2. Two new batters were now in, and what a contrast! Bunter Salim and the technically correct Armour. Saad's first two swings of the [unlikely-to-be-a-real] willow saw him dropped twice. This kind of setting the tone. So early was he with some swings he nearly hit the ball before the one he was facing. Go on, think about that one people.....

As you'd guess Mr Salim perished to a catch. Caught and bowled Henderson; a genuinely good grab. Then, after *Rosasco* was adjudged LBW to that two-feet-together-with-toes-pointing-to-the-standing-umpire defensive shot that only he plays, it was cameo time as Wasay heaved at eleven deliveries, connecting with two for two 4s, and Akhil on debut tried to nurdle it around. In the end 95 for 6 was posted.

To win the match Ayr needed a decent start. Unfortunately, while they didn't lose wickets, they kind of got stuck as regards keeping the 'board ticking over. 16 for 2 at halfway meant 80 was needed off the second ten overs - this would always be tricky. That said they did manage 50 as McCrone bunted an unbeaten 33, including six 4s. For *the 'Locsters* three wickets were grabbed: one each for Saad, Saify and Haider. All *the 'Loc* bowlers bowled pretty well, with the guys up-front setting the tone: Saad's, Hasan's and Haider's twelve overs leaking just 18 runs in total. Throw in two decent catches and a stumping, and some energetic and committed fielding and it was an entirely satisfactory performance defending their total.

So a good start, but much still to improve on though and no complacency allowed. Thanks to Dan and Stuart for transport services rendered, and to Dan for scoring/umpiring.