

### **Coldest, wettest season ends with a warm glow** [posted 08/0912]

The bleakest season most can remember came to an end, for the 18s at least, today at Shawholm. Forth Valley Under 18s (a combo side from Stenhousemuir and Stirling County) were the visitors to Shawholm on a beautifully warm day, the first time the side had made a visit. For the *'Locsters* there were four guys playing their last juniors games: *Pasty*, Josh, Saqib and Nick. Nick elected to open with Craig after the toss resulted in the 18s batting first. Josh would be in at four, and Saqib would open the bowling when the time came.

A steady start was made by Nick and *Pasty* against decent-enough seam bowling from both ends by the visitors. Craig was scoring at a run-a-ball - well he was after being dropped at square leg in the first over on just 6. Nick, by contrast, was struggling a bit more to get bat on ball. But the net effect was the side was going along at around 5-an-over from the start. Nick, to be fair, was a tad unlucky on two occasions: an extra-cover 4 was ruled out by a dead ball call after a bail was blown off just before the ball was delivered, and then a free hit was smashed straight back by Nick, only to smack into *Pasty's* helmet backing up! Ouch! Literally. 🤦 So, when Nick was first out for 12 off 28 balls, that probably does him a disservice as if those two balls had turned out differently the stat's would record 20 from 28 balls. *Stiffy* joined *Pasty* in the middle after Nick's departure - LBW to Aslam - but Elliott would follow Nick back to the pavillion in double-quick time, also being trapped leg before by Aslam, second ball. Exit Elliott, enter Josh.

Josh and Craig got their partnership going nicely with sensible rotation of the strike. The run-rate was also being upped nicely as the innings moved into its latter stages. *Joshy's* would be the third - and last - wicket to go down as McPake bowled him. His cameo knock had seen him score 21 from 20 balls and add 71 with Craig. With two overs left *Stouty* was the new batter and *Pasty* was nearing his hundred. Going into the last over he was on 96. A single off the first ball got *Stouty* onto strike. A skied shot was then grassed in the outfield and the boys ran 2. Still on strike it was then "switch-hit" time for Calum, but a mis-hit saw only the single run and *Pasty* needed 3 for his ton. Three balls left. 2 were run off the next ball, and then a single of the penultimate delivery saw him safely to three figures. *Stouty* finished the innings by bunting the final ball for a straight 4. 161 for 3, *Pasty* 100 not out from just 71 balls.

The Forth Valley reply saw Saqib and Saif opening the bowling. Aslam and McPake were the opening bats. McPake, in particular, started positively [Ed: and was playing with an original Gray-Nicolls "scoop" bat - respect!] He'd score a near run-a-ball 25 - including a glorious straight maximum off Saqib - before Akhil cleaned him up. Number three Chandrachud was the other meaningful contributor to the run-chase by the visitors, batting through with the rest of the top and middle orders for an unbeaten 30 (from 46 balls). Around him wickets fell continuously however as partnerships proved hard to build. None of the other Forth Valley batters got into double figures as the wickets were shared around between the eight bowlers used. Eight bowlers that included Mr Black! Understandably with Armour, RJ and Black, NT being thrown the cherry by the skipper Elliott rightly pondered aloud just what *he* had to do to get an over! 😊 Next season *Stiffy*, next season..... As Nick finished his, and the game's last, over, the scoreboard showed Forth Valley on 109 for 7, and the 18s had secured the win - reasonably comfortably - the margin of victory being 52 runs.

### **Long night for the 11s** [posted 07/09/12]

The Under 11s were soundly thrashed in the wee derby tonight when the *Dark Side's* youth wing ran out winners by a whopping 212 runs [Ed: yes, you've read it right, 212 runs!]. *Ouchay*. The 11s batted first and posted just 29, losing seventeen [Ed: again, no typo', 17!] wickets! Every batter succumbed at least once, Ubaid-Raza alone making the "walk of shame" to the non-striker's end no fewer than five times in his five-over spell in the middle with *Jamesy*. Maybe 'twas a game too far for this youngest of young Under 11s.

In the second innings, Clydesdale were simply too good for the *'Locster* bowlers, bunting their way to 161 for 1, three batters getting to or passing 20 with the bat. Carnage.

And the good news is that Monday sees a re-run.....

**Agonisingly close for the 15s** [posted 05/09/12]

At the third time of trying, Ayr finally managed to get a game on at Shawholm in the Under 15 league tonight. And as is so often the case, September threw up a perfectly lovely night. With both teams present-and-correct for a 5.30pm start there was even sufficient day-light for eighteen overs-a-side. Ideal. After the toss it was the visitors batting first. And in the absence of Akhil [Ed: studying for a school test!] Lewis was handed the new cherry. At the other end it would be Aliyan. What a start as well! 🤔 Three balls in and Ayr were 0 for 2! Robbie Henderson and Luke Johnstone both bowled. End of over one: 4 for 2. Then Aliyan opened up with a maiden and Ayr were 4 for 2 after two. An over later and, almost unbelievably, the league leaders were 4 for 3 with Callum Henderson having been sent back to the dressing room too, another victim for Lewis. And so the start of the Ayr innings went on. With Azeem watching the carnage from the other end, after six overs the score was 15 for 4. And at the halfway point Ayr had still only stumbled a little further forward, sitting on 24 for 5. Then as Aliyan completed his fifth over to see his and Lewis's five-over spells completed Ayr were 28 for 6. Astonishing. What total might the New Cambusdoon guys post?

Azeem was still in however and, notwithstanding a few scares early on, had looked untroubled. *Rosco* and Finn were now the '*Locster* bowlers and the question was whether the good lengths and tight lines of Lewis and Aliyan could be maintained. Unfortunately the answer would be no as 62 were plundered by Azeem in the final eight overs. Between them the 15s' change bowlers leaked 61 runs, gifting 12 in wides alone. And these would, ultimately, come back to haunt the side. Finn's four overs cost 20 which wasn't too bad, though 6 wides was arguably criminal. But *Rosco's* four cost 41 unfortunately as Azeem opened his shoulders and found the boundary rope with regularity, picking on anything that strayed down leg in particular. He'd finish 56 not out (from 57 balls), with Gordon the next highest scorer with his unbeaten 8. 90 for 6 was the final scoreboard total; 91 to win.

Ayr had shown how many runs could be scored in a short period of time, and so the plan for the run-chase was to avoid what the visitors from Ayrshire had done, namely lose early wickets. And this was achieved, Ross and *Stouty* batting sensibly to take the side to 36 without loss in the tenth over. Now remember that after ten overs Ayr had been 28 for 6, so 36 for none was a more than decent start. But then *Rosco* went back to a Luke Johnstone delivery and was trapped leg before for 13. 36 for 1. Lewis and *Stouty* then added 4 for the second wicket, the former becoming Johnstone's second victim, bowled playing across the line. It was then three down in the thirteenth over as Finn was dismissed, tamely chipping Gordon to Robbie Henderson at extra cover, to bring *CJ* to the middle to join *Stouty* who, like Azeem had done in his side's innings, was watching wickets fall at the other end. With three overs to bowl the 15s were on 63 for 3, needing 28 to win. Johnstone bowled the sixteenth over and *Stouty* and *CJ* pounced on it. It went for 13, leaking three 4s. Now the equation was 15 needed from 12 balls. 4 runs came from Azeem's last over and so it was 11 to win off the last over. Ball #1 from Robbie Henderson was smacked to the "cow corner" boundary by *Stouty* and it was 7 needed from five balls. Getting interesting you might say! But then Calum missed a straight one, ball #2 from Henderson bowling him, out for 48 from 47 balls. So very nearly a match-winning knock from *Stouty*. Well batted sir. Rob came in, and he and *CJ* tried to get the runs needed from the remaining four balls but in the gathering gloom it was a near impossible task and the guys ended up 4 short of Ayr's 90. *CJ's* 13 from 16 balls had been a great effort too, credit to him for really positive batting and running between the wickets.

A really good game, played in pleasant weather and great spirit. Congrat's to Azeem and Ayr on the win, Azeem's knock being massively important in the context of the top order collapse. Well bowled Lewis too: tough getting a "4-for" and finishing on the losing side.

The same could be said to *Stouty* whose run-a-ball 48 so nearly won it for the 15s. The difference between the sides? Those wides we reckon.....

### **18s continue their winning run** [posted 03/09/12]

After a couple of attempts, the Under 18s finally managed to get their league game over at Hamilton Crescent played this evening. The best that can be said of the game at the city's second-best club is that, as ever, the *West* guys were good fun and the game was played in good spirit, and the 18s recorded the win. The rest is really a tale of season 2012 in microcosm. Dark, rain and tricky conditions.

Winning the toss for the *nth* time, *Pasty* chose to put the home side in. Umeed and Galloway opened for the boys from Partick [Ed: mention of "boys" begs the question, where was Dickson?!?], with *Pasty* and *Mikey* taking the new ball for the 18s. Five overs in and it was probably honours even with the score on 30 without loss. Then over seven saw the breakthrough as *Stouty* made up for an earlier missed stumping to get rid of Galloway by the same method. Umeed was joined by his skipper, Ralston, but the two added just 4 runs before the former pulled a shocker of a half-tracker from Saqib straight to Matt at deep backward square leg where the catch was safely pouched. 43 for 2 and Ralston's new partner was Ata. After two wickets falling for 4 runs, Ata and Ralston settled the ship a little, Ata surviving a big appeal for a catch behind on the way to adding 19 for the third wicket. Third out was *West's* skipper, tamely chipping another delivery from Saqi' to *Ollie* at short cover. McCallum then came and went cheaply for 1, before Godsman became Ata's third partner. And it was Ata who was last out, holing out to *Pasty* at "cow" off the last ball of the innings. 76 for 5 was the final score.

The rain started in earnest as the players took to the field for the second innings. *Mikey* and *Pasty*, as they'd done with the ball, also opened the batting. Unfortunately Mike had only made 1 when he was bowled round his legs bringing *West* the breakthrough. In at three was *Stiffy* who, with *Pasty*, began to accumulate runs at a steady pace. The bowling was pretty good given the bar of soap masquerading as a ball, and 42 had been added when *Pasty* was second out for a top-scoring 23. Elliott then had *Rosco* as a partner for a few overs before *Stouty* came out to join him after Ross chipped Galloway to Stark. *Stouty* started positively, pulling a chest-high no ball from Ata behind square for 4, and he and Elliott batted sensibly - running well - to see the guys home with three overs to spare. The win secured, and everyone happy to be back in the warmth of the Hamilton Crescent dressing room! Elliott unbeaten on 22, and Calum 11 not out.

Thanks to both skippers for getting this game to a completion, and to the *West* groundstaff for their willingness to allow the game to finish too.

### **Big scores, dark night, and white socks!** [posted 30/08/12]

The Under 18s finally got another game played when they made the short trip [Ed: though *long* journey!] to New Anniesland to take on Glasgow Accies in a rescheduled league match. The home side were missing skipper Dowers, Satpute and Allen, fielding a younger-than-usual side. For the *'Locsters Rosco*, Saif and Josh were all unavailable and so also featured some younger players with three Under 15s on parade. After winning the toss - this after the agreement to play eighteen overs-a-side - it was the 18s to bat first. *Mikey* and *Pasty* opened for the side, facing opening bowlers Singh and Russell on the astro-turf wicket. Both started with due care and attention as Singh and Russell bowled fairly good lines, and as they tried to get the measures of the astro-strip and the heavy outfield. Driving on the ground proved tricky, whereas alternately pulling and cutting aerially and dropping and running paid dividends. The run-rate soon picked as both batters "got in", the boundary rope being reached and passed on a number of occasions. Mike was first to his 50, Craig following him shortly afterwards. And as the innings progressed so the run-rate continued to increase. 22 runs had come from the first four overs, 28 from the second four and 38 from overs nine through twelve. The openers then notched up their 100 partnership in the thirteenth over. 150 without loss was then reached in over sixteen. Mike, in particular, was plundering runs

heavily, and neared his hundred. He needed 17 to reach his ton, and was on strike, as the last over started. The first ball was a wide. Then a dot!! 😊 With *Pasty* suggesting from the other end that *Mikey* might be bottling it the taunting had its desired effect. 2 4 2 4 were the next four balls and Mike was on 95 with a ball left. Russell was back into attack and bowling the last over. His final delivery was a decent one and Mike could only squeeze it out onto the on-side for a single. Unbeaten on 96 was a good effort. And from only 56 balls, but, oh, we wonder how he's regretting dooring ball two! *Pasty* was also unbeaten, his 66 coming from 55 deliveries. 180 for 0.

Chasing 181 in eighteen overs was never going to be easy, and in the gathering gloom it was likely harder. The 18s rotated the bowling well and managed to race through their overs pretty well. There were wickets shared around the eight bowlers used, Yash sensationally bringing an end to the *Accies'* innings when he took two wickets in over eighteen and helped himself to a run out into the bargain, and in doing so raced to atop the Under 18s bowling averages for 2012! Love it!! 46 for 9 was the final score as the darkness enveloped New Anniesland and the sides shook hands. A win by a decent margin, and credit to the home side batters who kept going in very poor light. In fact as the second innings came to a close the brightest thing to be seen were *Stiffs'* pristine white socks that were revealed as quasi-bowling boots as he came on to bowl, removing his spikes to do so! Great stuff.

#### **Ayr come out on top** [posted 28/08/12]

The rescheduled Under 13 match with Ayr was played tonight down in Alloway. It was a chilly night, but good to get a game in in this, the wettest of wet seasons. With *CJ en route* Antaha took on the skipper's role and won the toss. The decision was to have a bat. Calum, now arrived, opened with Abdullah after Owais decided he didn't fancy having a go as pinch hitter. [Ed: note to the big fella who didn't get in after opting for a middle order slot - that'll teach you, eh!] The openers benefited from some wayward bowling up-top from the home side's opening bowlers, and it has to be said from Ayr being short four fielders when the game started! The *Cambusdoon Four* arrived in time, mind, having been at rugby practice it's understood. 10 came off the first over, and though Abdullah decided to take a dander to square leg in the second over and was bowled as a consequence, the score had galloped on to 16 for 1 when that over ended. *CJ* was joined by Ahmed-Raza after Abdullah's departure and these two put on 33 for the second wicket, Calum nicking a full-toss and being caught by Simpson. It was a smart grab as Simpson was standing up. Then, as has happened a few times this season, Calum's departure sparked a spate of wickets and a decelerating run-rate. 43 for 2 in the ninth, became 56 for 3 in the thirteenth, and then 68 for 4 when Ahmed-Raza was bowled with the last ball of the eighteen-over innings. Only 12 runs added for that fourth wicket, in 33 balls. The end result of the guys' efforts was 68 for 4, Ahmed-Raza top-scoring with 19.

The second innings saw Ayr looking to get the 69 runs needed, and the 13s trying to avoid the fatal mistake of gifting their opponents free runs in wides. The Ayr bowlers had failed in this, the 13s' total of 68 containing 26 wides and 3 in no balls. The Ayr reply started slowly with Simpson and Bhandari opening. And at 15 for 2 with both openers out, in the sixth over, the match was pretty evenly balanced. It was then 20 for 3 in the seventh when Mahoney joined the Ayr openers back in the pavilion. Boyd and Lynch were the batters in the middle now, and they managed to put on 36 as Abtaha rotated the *'Locster* bowling attack. Along the way however there were wides gifted, and as agonisingly two dropped catches. These would ultimately cost the guys as Boyd went to an unbeaten 17, whilst Lynch top-scored with 28. Lynch was eventually bowled by Owais who then added a run out when he got rid of Jefferson with Calum's assistance. Boyd though was not out when the winning run was hit,.....or should we say gained: it came via a wide! 69 for 5 with seven balls to spare.

#### **11s lose out again,.....but only just!** [posted 24/08/12]

The Under 11s have been on the wrong end of a few thumpings this season, but tonight saw them involved in a thriller!

Glasgow Accies were the visitors to Shawholm, and with Samee and Hassan away, Asim made a welcome return after Ramadhan. After the toss the 11s were batting first. Palsingh and *Jamesy* were the first pairing and put on 21 in their five overs, losing a couple of wickets along the way though. Palsingh scored three 4s on his way to 12. Next in were Asim and Ubaid-Raza, and they - too - lost a couple of wickets in their time in the middle. Only 1 run came off the bat, and the 'board showed 28 for 4 when the third combo of Joe and Abdul took their turn. Joe batted through unbeaten for 4, whilst Abdul scored 6,.....and it was a 6 that got him there! Season 2012's first Under 11 maximum!! 46 for 5 after fifteen. The final pairing pushed the total on to 55 for 6, Moiz ending up not out in this last pairing. Net 25, net 26 to win.

And the 11s started well. *Accies* were soon reduced to 3 for 2. Or at least the scorers thought so. But as the first batting pair for the northsiders came back in after their five overs they informed said scribes that - in fact - they'd only been out twice, one of what looked like two run outs hadn't been. 13 for 2 then, not for 3. And how important those 5 runs added back would be as the visitors ended up winning by 3! At the halfway point the 'board showed 37 for 4, then at the fifteen-over point it was 50 for 6 that showed. 6 needed without losing a wicket for the final pairing of McAllister and Gardee. 2 runs came from over sixteen. Then 2 more off over seventeen, before over eighteen leaked just the 1 run. And no wickets down. 57 for 6 was the scoreboard readout as the final over started - still the 11s just needed the one wicket to get back in front. *Jamesy* was the bowler and he bowled well, but not quite well enough as the *Accies* batters hung on for the win. 58 for 6 and a win by 3 runs. A cracking game on a depressingly *dreich* night, that had thrilling end. Great stuff.

Standout individual performances on the night included *Accies'* Rome returning figures of 4-2-4-0, whilst Joe's bowling analysis showed 4-1-17-2 and Moiz returned figures of 4-0-8-1.

### **13s see off Helensburgh** [posted 20/08/12]

123 for 4 was the Under 13s' total batting first this evening against Helensburgh at Shawholm. Having won the toss, *CJ* then led from the front with another *buntalicious*, retirement-inducing knock. This week's 30+ included a fairly low number of 4s - just the four - and, of course, the now-traditional maximum! Rumours he's now passed his big brother's career Under 13 runs, with still a season to go at the age-group, are - of course - unfounded! After *CJ* had left the middle there were a couple of minor cameos from other *'Locster* batters: Aliyan making 14, and Rorie 11. 123 for 4 then, and something to bowl at. And bowl at it the 13s' bowlers did,.....all eleven (!) of them. In bowling out Helensburgh - who had just the eight players - there were a couple of wickets for Ahmed-Raza and Aliyan, and one a-piece for Rorie and Max, with Joe executing a run out. Only Caskie (19) made meaningful runs for the visitors from the Ardencaple.

### **Under 18s cruise** [posted 20/08/12]

This'll be a pretty short report. Nearly as short as the game, though it was *so* cold, dark and dank at Marress tonight that any game played *couldn't* have been short enough! Brrr, it was chilly. After the toss, the home side were inserted as the skies darkened and drizzly rain looked like morphing into its big brother: lashing rain! But though the run-rate managed by the Irvine|Kilmarnock combined side [Ed: that's *so* long-winded we'll use "Irvock" instead from now on!] was never much above 2 runs-an-over, an early wicket evaded the *'Locsters*. When it came it saw Singh dismissed, Mikey picking up the wicket courtesy of a smart low catch from Gopi. Murray, the other *Irvock* opener hung around a bit, and made 15 - including a flicked-off-his-legs 6 off *Disk* - before being bowled by *Pasty*. The skipper would end up with 3 for 7 in his five overs as a procession of batters struggled on the green-top. Four *Irvock* batters recorded ducks *en route* to their side finishing on 44 for 7 in their twenty-over allocation.

In reply *Rosco* [Ed: who'd kept like he was wearing a blindfold and was standing in cement!] and *Stiffy* knocked off the runs in under six overs. A ten-wicket win. And, pleasingly, the

rain *did* stay away, at least in the main it did. Other positives were Ollie turning over his arm again, Gopi making an appearance after his return from India and a nice wee spell from *Beast*.

### **Under 15Bs lose at The Tryst** [posted 16/08/12]

The Under 15B side were in league action tonight - for the first time - at The Tryst, taking on Stenhousemuir. It was a young *'Locster* side that made the trip, the B League providing a good opportunity for a number of the younger guys to see what cricket against "the big boys" is like. Batting first the home side scored 127 for 1, with Aslem and Chandrachue both retiring. In reply the 15Bs mustered 62 for 7, with *CJ* top-scoring with 19 and Karim accumulating a patient 11. Aslem was the pick of the home bowlers with 3 for 11, whilst all the *'Locsters* rolled their arms over on the night. Scorecard and updated stat's to come.

### **Tough season continues for 11s** [posted 14/08/12]

After last season's Under 11s romped to the league title, this year's side has had things much tougher. The average age - which is great for our future - must be nearer 8 than 11, and each week the youngsters find themselves up against bigger, stronger and, of course, older opponents. Tonight's match at home to Prestwick was no different. Batting first the Ayrshire youngsters racked up a barrow-load of boundaries, hitting fourteen boundaries on their way to posting 123 for 3. Cole top-scored with 38 not out, and Turner - with 22 not out - made a good contribution too. But - and has been said consistently in this column - the 11s do bowl really well. And straight. And the consequence of this is that batters have many more balls to hit facing the *'Locsters* than they do facing most other clubs' Under 11s who spray the ball around all over the place. Tonight saw only 16 wides bowled in twenty overs with seven bowlers used. Pretty good guys. The three wickets to fall saw two run outs from Abdul, and Hassan cleaning up one of the oppo' batters. 124 *was* a big score though, even after accounting for the 15-run deduction for wickets lost.

The 11s' reply never really got started, and against - for them - quicker bowling, they found getting the ball away difficult. Eight wickets fell as only 34 runs were scored. *Jamesy* and Palsingh were not out batters, Joe top-scoring with runs off the bat even if he did lose his wicket once, being run out. Next up it's Clydesdale at home, on Friday night.

### **Bothwell Castle canter for Uddy** [posted 13/08/12]

Despite some heavy downpours in the second city of the Empire during the day, BCP was a picture of evening sunlight loveliness when the 13s rolled in to take on Uddingston in the league. The policies, as ever, looked in magnificent shape, outfield pristine and square looking as well prepared as could be expected in this wettest of wet summers. There'd be no excuses therefore for the batters. There were runs in that there paddock! And the 13s would have first use after winning the toss and deciding to bat.

*CJ* opened with Abdullah and the two gave their side a great start, racing to 42 inside nine overs. Calum was striking the ball well and had found the boundary rope a few times, Abdullah - at the other end - was looking settled and picking up singles and twos along the way in support. There was a little something in the wicket for the bowlers too however, with a bit of uneven bounce. And it'd be a ball that got up a bit on *CJ* that saw the end of his stay in the middle, tamely chipping a delivery from Dunlop back to the bowler who pouched the chance safely. Calum out for 25 (three 4s and a 6), and the team score on 42. 7 runs later and the side was two down, Abdullah chipping a delivery from one of the three Allans in the home side to that man Dunlop again who, as he'd done with the caught and bowled chance, safely held on at mid off. 49 for 2. Aliyan and Rorie then benefited from some wayward bowling as extras pushed the score past 50 and onto 62 before Rorie became the third chipper of a cricket ball to an *Uddy* fielder, this time to give home skipper Balkirishna his first wicket, another caught and bowled. 62 for 3,..... sorry make that for 4,..... no, oops, sorry again, make that for 5, as Lewis and Ahmed-Raza both came and went without scoring. And 2 runs later it was six down as Aliyan was dismissed. This left Abtaha and Owais to bat through to the end of the innings, adding 21. 85 for 6, and only two 13s batters into double figures.

In the reply it's best to say, simply, we bowled short and they didn't miss with cross bat pulls and cuts. Game over thirteen overs into the reply. The target reached for the loss of only three wickets. Now remember that the *'Locsters* batted for twenty overs. Well they managed seven boundaries in that time, four coming from Calum up-top. Whereas the 13s' short-of-a-length bowling to the home side batters saw them rack up no fewer than fourteen boundaries in just thirteen overs. That's really the tale of the tape in this one folks. "Thank you, and good night".

### **15s bounce back** [posted 10/08/12]

After their pants-round-the-ankles-bare-bottom-thrashing at *Toytown* on Wednesday night, the Under 15s were again in league action tonight at Shawholm. There was no Under 11 game, and so the whole focus was on the 15s. And it has to be said with a raucous wedding reception in full flow in the spectator seating, allied to a marquee on the outfield, the 15s were likely playing in front of the biggest crowd seen at Shawholm this season! Think Horse Guards' Parade and Olympic beach volleyball dear reader. The place was jumping!

Batting first the 15s were immediately in the ascendancy as wayward bowling added to good strokeplay from Akhil and saw them off to a flyer. 24 were taken off the first three overs, and it was 43 for 0 after just six. A change was needed for the visitors - the Ferguslie|Kelburne combo' side - and this came in the shape of Alec English bring Neil Sarode into the attack. The plan: tighten up the bowling and drag the rate back. Unfortunately - at least for the visitors - was that Sarode's first over proceeded to include five wide balls and four no balls and ended up a fifteen-ball howler! Yikes. 😬 However, as is so often the case, it also included a wicket! Akhil innocuously flicking a leg-side delivery straight to Khan at short square leg. Hmm. 59 for 1. It then became 70 for 2 in the tenth when Aliyan was next out. Still ten overs still to go and a score north of three figures very much in the coaches' thinking. Ahem, not so fast, make that 78 for 7! You what?!? Yup, five more wickets and only 7 runs added. All in the space of seventeen deliveries. And unfortunately for the 15s none bowled by Sarode! [Ed: sorry Neil!] And 78 for 7 then kind of dribbled away to 86 for 9 at the close. Mohsi and Ahmed-Raza were the not out batters. Defending 95 - particularly given the [now] quick outfield - wouldn't be easy. Early wickets and tighter bowling would be needed, particularly given 34 of the *'Locsters'* 95 had been gifted as wides or no balls.

The first part of the 15s' objective in the second innings was achieved. Ahmed was bowled in Aliyan's first over, and opening partner Khan managed just 2. Good start. The bowlers then tied down Pritchard who was in at three, with Gilmour - his partner - looking to keep the 'board ticking over. As it was the run-rate required kept climbing and it was beyond a run-a-ball by the time Pritchard was stumped for 7 (from 32 deliveries). From this point the incoming batters had more work to do, *and* from the get-go, than they'd otherwise have preferred. And with Abtaha and Umair twirling away at opposite ends, batters took risks in coming down the wicket to see if they could find the necessary boundaries. And with this approach came chances,.....for stumpings. And *Stouty* delivered the goods: a remarkable six times. Yes, six stumpings for Master Stout. Anyone seen that before? No, me neither.

And the wickets kept falling and the run-rate kept rising. Akhil rotated his bowlers, letting eight roll their arms over. In the end the visitors finished 9 shy of the 15s' total, with Abtaha finishing with a "3-for". Might've been one more too, had Ahmed-Raza - who fielded really well in the covers - held on to a chance. So a win, and a nice bounce-back win at that after Wednesday's shambles at the *Death Star*.

### **15s lose at Toytown** [posted 08/08/12]

Tonight saw glorious weather, and a trip to *Toytown*. The purpose was the rescheduled Under 15 league match between the *'Locsters* and the *Dark Side*. The side that made the trip was missing a few regulars with Ross Armour away with Scotland Under 15s, the two Calums, Lewis and Finn on holiday, and Kess fasting. Hmm, pity that. Anyway, not to worry, bowl

and field well, and then bat sensibly, and "Bob's your uncle". And the first started pretty well, with Clydesdale losing their first wicket with just 6 runs on the 'board, Haider being trapped LBW by Akhil. This brought Ghaffar to the middle. Five overs in and the score had progressed to 23 for 1, with little sign of the carnage that was to follow. Carnage that is, caused in the main by Mr Ghaffar. In fact, nine overs in things still looked okay, the scoreboard showing 51 for 1, as Umair came on for his second over. And what an over! 24 came from it as Ghaffar opened his shoulders and bunted the ball to the boundary. And really from this point on things got little better for the 'Locsters. Ghaffar continued to live a charmed life as his own score progressed past 50. He was dropped three times, and four stumping opportunities went a-begging as his *modus operandii* appeared to be the dash-and-swing. But swing he did, finding the boundary on enough occasions to find himself closing in on a ton. The last over saw Aliyan recalled to the attack, Ghaffar needing 12 for his hundred. Easy-peasy, just bowl full and straight. So, ball #1: half-tracker. 4. Next ball. Single. And a wicket, Ghaffar's partner getting run out trying to get him back on strike. New batter in. Ghaffar's obviously going to be looking for the single, so all the 'Locster fielders are in. Aliyan bowls: swing-and-a-miss. But Adil, 'keeping on the night, grasses it, and Ghaffar trots the bye. Back on strike. Three balls to come, 7 needed for the ton. Full and straight remember Aliyan, full and straight. Ball #4: half-tracker. 6. Single needed for a hundred. Everyone in again, and Aliyan - surely - would bowl that full and straight ball. Eh, nope. Ball #5. Half-tracker. 4. 100 for Ghaffar. Last ball then, and *surely* Aliyan would pitch the ball up?!? Ball #6. Half-tracker. 6! 181 for 4, innings overs. Ghaffar a grubby ton. Well batted,.....we think.

182 to win. A big ask. Akhil and Adil opened, and the former got off to a good start, going at a run-a-ball. But then, with the score on 24 in the fifth over Akhil got a top edge and was caught by 'keeper Haider running back towards fine leg. Out for 18 from 21 balls. Adil was next out - 2 from nine balls - as an iffy start became a poor one. 27 for 2. Umair, in at four, was then run out with only 1 more run added and before you could say, "time to rebuild", it was 28 for 3. Next to go was Akbar, out for 17 after bunting three 4s and 2. And from this point on only Aliyan managed to get into double figures as three of the 15s failed to get past 4. Hmmm. 75 all out was the eventual total as the hosts rotated their bowlers and the 15s struggled to get the ball past the infield. The end came in the last over, Aliyan bowled by Gill and Ahmed-Raza left as the not out batter.

So a pretty disappointing result, only the second of the season in the league for the 15s, but it was always going to be difficult given the people missing. Note to selves: summer's for cricket, not holidays!

#### **Under 11s at East Kilbride** [posted 03/08/12]

Torrance House was the venue for tonight's Under 11 league match, a place as well known for its midges or its midgets! And it was the home side's midget cricketers that came out on top in this game: 85 for 4 beating 51 for 7. The 'Locsters batted first in the game, losing three wickets in the first five-over pairs spell. Abdul Malik and Hassan were the pair, and after a good start, lost a couple of wickets as their overs progressed. 13 for 3 was the scoreboard total when James and Samee replaced the first pairing. The second pair added 15 runs, losing two wickets along the way. So, at the half way stage, it was 28 for 5. The second half saw only the two wickets lost as the batters batted more securely. Joe and Ubaid-Raza were the two not out batters. The final score? 51 for 7. Net 16.

In their reply, the home side's little 'uns started slowly and were 8 for 1 after the first pairing of Haughey and Richardson were done. Hassan had the wicket, bowling the Richardson. The second pairing didn't lose a wicket however, but that said only 21 runs were added to see the home side 27 for 1 at half way. Two wickets were grabbed by the 11s as third pairing - Deighan and Keilly - batted more carelessly, Samee and Ubaid-Raza with one a-piece. This left just the two "big boys" to bat, and they didn't disappoint, bunting the ball like "big boys" do. Belmore (26\*) and Lawell (13) went on a buntathon in overs sixteen through

twenty, and pushed their side's total on to 85 for 4, the fourth wicket going to Joe who dismissed Lawell.

So another loss, but definite improvements. Again the side's bowling was tighter than their opponents: 18 conceded compared to 32 leaked by the East Kilbride youngsters. A good sign. And in the field there was keen fielding, as well as a two or three decent attempts at catches from Abdul Malik and Joe. Keep it up guys!

### **Under 18s win easily at Kelburne** [posted 30/07/12]

The Under 18s had a straight-forward win at Whitehaugh this evening against Paisley side Kelburne. After being asked to bat first, tight bowling from Akhil (5-1-6-0) and Mikey (5-2-5-1) saw a stranglehold put on the Kelburne top order. And it wasn't a stranglehold that the change bowlers loosened either. *Pasty's* 4.4-3-7-4 saw him grab a bundle of wickets, whilst Cammy - with 2 for 12 - also helped himself to a couple of scalps. 35 was all the Whitehaugh youngsters could muster, though it might've been fewer had a couple of poor pieces of fielding been avoided, as well as a catch or two and a stumping or two, better executed. Even in such apparently one-sided matches it's important for the guys to stay switched on and execute their skills as well as they can. But 35 it was, and credit to the bowlers. 19.4 overs bowled, and only the one wides given away. Are you reading this seniors?!?!

Sent in to chase the 36 to win were Saify and Ollie. The latter was adjudged LBW early on, a ball that might've been slipping down, but given nonetheless. And as *OJ* himself remarked post-match, it might've made up for the ball before that *he* thought was a better shout for leg-before! Ollie's departure brought *Stiffy* in. He and Saif added 19 for the second wicket, but didn't see their side over the line as Elliott holed out to Cullum Watson who took a really good diving catch at mid-on off Geddes's bowling. The off-spinner then took his second wicket with his next delivery, *Rosco* unbelievably recording his fourth duck out of four innings in Under 18 cricket this year! A new nickname of "Audi" might be coming his way! [Ed: think about it dear reader!] And tonight's first-baller was one of those you want to forget: shouldering arms to an *offy* who rips one back and nips of your off bail! 🤔 Ross's departure left the stage clear for Matty Stout to knock off the winning runs with a straight 4, and a single through mid-off. A seven-wicket win, in five overs. A decent night's work.

### **Under 11s lose in Burns Country** [posted 27/07/12]

The Under 11s were down at New Cambusdoon tonight, in Alloway, playing Ayr. There were only seven on parade after Nabeel was a late call off due to illness so we wish him well.

Batting first the home side got off to the worst possible start when skipper Ritchie Simpson was bowled second ball by Moiz. But this would prove the high-water mark of the 11s' bowling display, as the Ayr batters generally scored heavily. Simpson, himself, recovered to score net 15, Stribling made 14 and Maxwell 12. But all these guys were out-scored by Bhandari with 23. As has happened in the other games though, the generally straighter bowling of the 11s was more harshly dealt with than the more wayward bowling of their opposition. *The Locster* 11s conceded just 9 in wides, whereas the Ayr youngsters gifted 23 runs via this route. When the first innings done the home side had scored 129, losing just the two wickets along the way. Net 119. Moiz picked up the second wicket too, and had three catches been taken the wickets count might've been a few higher.

Batting second the 11s lost too many wickets, too regularly, to be in with a shout of chasing down 120 to win. But there were still some positives. A few more runs were scored off the bat, and - as noted - the guys weren't put off by the plethora of wides. Nine wickets fell in the twenty overs, with 51 runs being accumulated. So, net 6. A heavy defeat, but still some positives. Next week it's East Kilbride at home.

### **13Bs win at Toytown** [posted 26/07/12]

The Under 13Bs finally got to play their second match of season 2012 tonight when they travelled to *Toytown* to take on the *Dark Side*. Batting first the home side's mini-storm-

troopers managed to plunder 132 runs in their twenty overs, thanks in the main to 50 from Malik. However, *en route*, they lost nine wickets meaning that their eventual net score - under the pairs rules that apply to the Under 13B league - was 87. Still not too shabby. Malik's innings was a boundary-laden delight as he smacked seven 4s and three 6s. He was, however, out - Moiz showing his elders in *the 'Locster* side just how to do it by inducing a careless shot that saw Clydesdale's top scorer sky one that *CJ* calmly pouched. Moiz then proceeded to take another wicket with his next delivery to see him on a hat-trick! But it wasn't to be, as the hat-trick ball was,.....a wide! 😊 Excitement getting the better of young Master Maqsood. Aside Malik's net 45, the next best offering from the home side was Bain's 17 at the top of the order, but he was dismissed twice which took the shine off his innings a bit. None of the rest of the *Dark Side* batters got into double figures, as the 13Bs shared the wickets around. In addition to Moiz's two, there was also a brace for Aliyan, with Ayub and Lewis picking up one each. The other three wickets were neatly executed run outs. What there wasn't was another successfully pouched catch, bar Calum's. There *were* however quite a few grassed opportunities - a few of the 13Bs really need to be popping their brave pills before play starts in future so they can get right under the catches that come their way. Staying alert in the field would help too!

Net 87 it was then; net 88 to win. Ayub and Owais opened for the 13Bs and gave their side the best possible start. No wickets down after their five overs, and runs on the 'board! Ideal. After a tentative start both started to play positively - both in defence and attack. Four 4s and a 6 were hit by the pair as Owais out-scored Ayub 15 to 13. Aliyan and Abdullah were next in for the side, and they too batted sensibly - at least after Aliyan had got cleaned up early on by Dhami they did! Both got nicely forward to the good balls, and used the pace on the ball from others to scamper runs. Abdullah, by virtue of keeping his wicket intact, top-scored in this pairing, his 9 bettering Aliyan's net 4. Halfway through then, and the 13Bs well-placed. The third pair saw Lewis and skipper Abtaha as the combo'. And from the first over Lewis realised they were in a real game as he was pinned by a short-pitched delivery from Malik. But, after a moment to recover, he won back the initiative as the first over went for 14 and no wickets fell. We like a brave cricketer! In fact the only wicket that did fall in the third quarter of the innings was on the last ball when Abtaha, who'd played really positively and struck the ball nicely, including a beautiful cover drive for 4, was bowled trying to pull a delivery that cramped her up. Still this was only the second wicket to go down and we were in the fifteenth over. So it was left to the final pairing of *CJ* and Palsingh to see their side safely to the finishing line. And this they did, batting sensibly, putting away loose deliveries when they came but defending when appropriate. Calum hit an unbeaten 26, Palsingh played to his strengths and scored 3 not out. Well batted both, in fact *all*.

What a difference it makes when the batters bat sensibly. They take no liberties with straight and full bowling, defending it really positively. But then, when the ball's there to score from, they hit it hard, playing proper shots, calling clearly and running hard. Lessons learned? Time will tell. Keep out the good ones, score off the rest. Sounds simple.

We should finish with a quick word of thanks to the Clydesdale coaches however who agreed, at very short notice, to switch this match to Titwood after Shawholm was required for a cup quarter-final for Langside College CC. Thanks to David Hart and Steve Taylor - good to get a game in, in this the otherwise wettest of seasons!

### **11s lose at home to *West*** [posted 20/0/7/12]

The Under 11s came up against another bigger and older side tonight when West of Scotland's Under 11 side came a-calling. Batting first the *Locster* 11s struggled on both the difficult deck, and against quite quick bowling. They lost only the seven wickets, but could must only 27 runs. This meant under the pairs scoring system that the net score was in the red, -8. Oops. But not to worry. Some real positives. All the 11s batted bravely and stood up to the bigger opponents' quick bowling. Calling between the batters was better, and a number of decent singles were run. So, positives. On the downside there's still an apparent

reticence to really *hit* the ball when playing their shots. Keep out the good balls, play straight - sure - but remember to *hit* the ball when it's there to be hit.

In the second innings, *West's* batters enjoyed the more consistent line bowled by the *Locsters*. Their bigger batters found the boundary "rope" on a number of occasions, and their eventual score of 108 for 4 reflected this. But the 11s' bowling was good and straight with only 7 runs conceded in wides. Pleasing. A few no balls were also conceded, however these were mainly balls that didn't bounce, as opposed to anything else. Note to self: roll the wicket more! *Jamesy* picked up a couple of the *West* wickets to fall, both in the same over, and Abdul grabbed a stumping, 'keeping. Another of the wicket to fall was courtesy of a Moiz/Abdul combination to run out Kumar. And mention of Kumar brings to mind an amusing scenario that played out a couple of times in this match. Kumar was batting in a pair with Shafar. And twice, both batters - a opposing ends - ran a 2 but were "1 short". Result? No run. Twice! You couldn't script it! Under 11s, you gotta love it! And, whilst on the subject of events of note - and mention of Master Shafar - his diving catch is worthy of mention in despatches, a really good grab.

So defeat, but not disgrace. Good bowling from a very young side that contained two 7 year olds, three 8 year olds, and one 9 year old! The future is bright, and with a number of years left at this age-group, these youngsters are getting invaluable experience that, in time, will bear fruit as regards winning games. For now we concentrate on learning the basics, and developing our skills. Well played guys!

#### **Under 15s win again at Glenpark** [posted 20/07/12]

The Under 15s were again down at Glenpark. This time it was league business, after having beaten their hosts earlier in the season in the national knockout cup competition. That night Greenock were without a couple of Under 15 regulars who were in the side tonight. By contrast the *Locsters* were missing skipper *Rosco* who's gone to play rugby in South Africa. [Ed: isn't it the cricket season?] After the toss it was the *Locsters* who were batting, and Akhil and *CJ* opened up. Quickly, however, it became clear that the wicket wasn't going to be easy to score on and, seven overs in, it was just 21 for 0. A steady if not spectacular start. But then the wickets started to fall. It was 27 for 2 in the eighth with the two Calums back in the pavilion: *CJ* for 6, *Stouty* for 1. This brought Lewis in but he managed just 8, though it'd be the thirteenth over before the third wicket fell. Unfortunately however, as in the eighth, there'd be more than one wicket to go. Finn and Akbar - in at five and six respectively - *both* coming and going for ducks to see all bar Akhil of the top order out. Akhil was literally holding things together single-handedly. His eventual score of 32 being the standout score, in both innings. Aside from this, only Adil - with 10 - made it to double figures. 81 for 9 was the eventual score, hardly in the realms of unbeatable it'd be fair to say. So, could the home side chase it down? In Flack and Armstrong they certainly had to potential manpower to win the game at both a canter and in double-quick time.

But, remember, the wicket wasn't a easy one. And when Flack was out having made just 2, there was the beginning of hope. Fellow opener Ware also made just 2, and so Armstrong, at three, had everything to do. And he came up with a more than decent effort. Eventually bamboozled by Abtaha's *leggies*, and bowled round his legs, he'd made 29. As in the *Locsters'* innings however his was really the only score of substance. Two others got into double-digits: Small (10) and Wylie (14). When the final delivery of over twenty had been bowled the scoreboard showed 79 for 8, and a narrow 2-run win for the 15s. Sneaked home! Akhil followed up his 32 with 3 for 14 with the ball, Aliyan took 3 for 8 and Abtaha added to Armstrong's wicket by dismissing Greenock's own leg-spinner Goan, to finish with a brace of wickets. She also took a more than decent catch at point to cap a good personal display.

So nice to win; nice to win a close one. Bowling just the two wides helped, as did generally good bowling. The batting performance remains a disappointment however, with three ducks - two of the top six - not really being good enough. On difficult decks players' concentration

and application will be tested and the 15s' were found wanting. Back to practice. But a good win nonetheless against the side that were, before tonight, the unbeaten league leaders.

### ***Drumps beaten by 18s*** [posted 16/07/12]

123 for 3 proved more than enough batting first for *the 'Locster* 18s tonight at Shawholm, as Drumpellier were seen off by 40 runs in the end. Some good bowling, and excellent catching saw to the visitors in their run-chase. Cammy and Mike put a stranglehold on the *Drumps* batters in the first six overs, as Pyne and Davidson struggled to score on the tricky deck. 16 for 1 was the score when Mike's third over was bowled and the first bowling change was made. The wicket fall to had been Davidson's, caught and bowled by Mikey. This brought Abdul Sabri to the middle, *Drumps'* most dangerous batter. He too, however, struggled to get started, his first seven balls seeing dots recorded in the 'book. And he'd managed only 7 from his first twenty deliveries. As he and Pyne tried to get going, the required run-rate remorselessly increased. Sabri was gifted three lives too during this phase of the innings, Calum missing three stumping opportunities that would've seen Sabri Snr. back in the "hutch" cheaply. However these weren't taken and Sabri eventually got his eye in, sending two *Pasty* deliveries over the long-on boundary. The skipper was into the attack and bowling in tandem with Josh who'd taken over from Cammy at the scorebox end. Pyne was then dismissed, bowled by *Pasty* for 12, before Sabri miss-timed one attempted bunt too many, holing out to Mike at long-on - a real skyer that was really well taken. Two for *Pasty*, *Drumps* 59 for 3 in the fourteenth. And Mike wasn't the only fielder to hang on to a decent catch, Saif's diving catch later on in the innings was also in the "more than decent" category. From this point on winning it was really out of the equation, and Drumpellier's middle-order and tail came-and-went with gay abandon, as each batter tried manfully to up the run-rate. But to no avail. 83 for 7 was the score when their twenty-over allocation was used up. A win by 40 runs as noted.

The target of 124 to win had been set by a decent batting performance on a difficult deck. *Pasty's* 52 was the top score, Mikey chipping in with 22,.....before he chipped *out* to Sabri off Pyne's bowling. Saif scored 16 before Sabri bowled him, and this left the not out batters as Calum and Josh.

### ***Under 13s win big on the north side*** [posted 16/07/12]

The margin of victory was a whopping 66 runs, and - for once - the scorebook didn't lie. The *'Locster* 13s were much too strong for their hosts at Hughenden this evening, the Hillhead|Weirs combo' side that's playing in the 2012 Under 13 league. Batting first the 13s were greatly assisted by a humungous 38 extras - Nearly 40% of their eventual score of 101. But along the way there were two good individual performances from the batters too. Aliyan, back from his holiday, top-scored with an unbeaten 24 batting at five, whilst *CJ* continued his good run of scores with 20 at the top of the order. *CJ's* knock included the usual high percentage of boundaries, this week he struck four 4s in his *score*. [Ed: nice pun we think; score - get it!] Aliyan's 24 was, by contrast, a tad more sedate, including as it did, fifteen scoring shots. Aside these two, the others getting to the middle were Lewis, Rorie, Kess and Ahmed-Raza. 101 for 4 was the final score as the first innings ended. 102 to win.

The hosts' run-chase started badly though. Not because they lost wickets, actually they didn't. Rather because the first four overs of the Hillhead|Weirs innings were maidens! Kess and Aliyan delivered those 24 balls, and all were dots! Well bowled. This really put the home side behind the black ball in terms of then needing 102 from only sixteen overs. But for the 13s what it did was allow everyone to get a bowl, with all ten outfielders rolling their arms over. As their oppo' tried in vain to up the run-rate, wickets started to fall. None of the batters would get to double figures, three were run out! Owais executed two of the three, Ahmed-Raza the third. With the ball there were some remarkable bowling figures returned. Aside Kess's and Aliyan's 2-2-0-0, there was 1.3-0-1-3 from Abtaha, and 2-1-2-1 from Ayub. Catches also win matches the saying goes so mention of grabs from Lewis and Kess, with *CJ* adding to his runs with stumping off Abtaha's bowling, one of her "3-for". In the end

Hillhead|Weirs could muster just 35, 20 (!) coming in extras. A win by 66 runs - comprehensive.

### **Under 11s play again!** [posted 13/07/12]

The Under 11s were again the only club side to play a game this week. And today it was a trip to Prestwick on the coast that beckoned. Hopeful of some coastal warmth and sunshine it was, therefore, a tad distressing to see a black cloud sitting directly over the Henry Thow Oval. An arrival it has to be said that was late after Master Scott forgot to mention that he was going direct and so his team-mates had been waiting in vain for him back at Shawholm! Anyway back to the arrival. And that black cloud. Black it certainly was, and - right on cue as if recognising the *'Locsters'* arrival - as soon as the guys walked in to HTO it started to rain. Not heavy stuff mind, just enough to empty you out to the middle and get started. And then of course, a third into the first innings the heavens open. Scorebooks turn to papier-mâché, balls to bars of soap, and coaches' hopes to despair. **#Scottishsummer** indeed! Anyway after ten or fifteen minutes respite back in the pavilion the rain again turned to drizzle and it was back out. The home side were batting and, at the rain break, were 45 for 3 and batting okay. But the 11s were still in it having taken the three wickets. Unfortunately however the Prestwick big hitter hadn't been out to the middle yet. Cole did, however, come in in the last pairing with Morrison. He proceeded to bunt the ball to all parts, scoring a quick-fire 28 (out once) that including a myriad of boundaries. Throw in 40 in extras, mainly wides, and Prestwick managed to post 100 for 4, or net 80. For the *'Locsters'* there was a wicket a-piece for Hassan, Samee, James and Abdul.

So to the 11s' innings. Unfortunately the story of the innings was wickets falling. Only Joe and James managed to bat their allotted overs without being dismissed, and in tricky batting conditions against good bowling in the main, scoring runs off the bat proved hard. In the end analysis nine wickets fell and only 28 runs, including 17 in extras. Just the one boundary was struck, Abdul pulling a 4 late on. For Prestwick Morrison took 3 for 10.

The eventual margin of defeat was 97 runs. A big loss, but let's remember that this is a very - very - young Poloc Under 11 side and for most playing tonight they'll have a number more years at this age-group.

### **Finally, some cricket!** [posted 06/07/12]

Tonight saw cricket played at Shawholm for the first time for two days short of a fortnight! And for the Under 11s, it was only their third match (!), and the season's half done. Weirs were the visitors in the match which was a league encounter. Batting first two wickets were lost in the first five overs as Moiz was bowled around his legs a couple of times. Moiz was batting with Joe who looked comfortable and scored 9 not out. With the first pairing done the scoreboard showed 221 for 2, net 11. The second pair of Fraser and Palsingh was more successful in terms of wickets lost, with only the latter being dismissed once. Ten overs in the side had scored net 18. Then, unfortunately the roof kind of fell in. Eight wickets fell in the second half, and with twenty of the 60 deliveries bowled also being wides, getting the scoreboard ticking over was tricky. Only 2 runs came off the bat in fact in this second part of the 11s' innings. The end result was that 260 for 11 was the damage when the twentieth over was complete. Net 5.

Defending such a low score would need wickets, and lots of them. Weirs, however, didn't concede one until the thirteenth over as they scored more heavily than the *'Locsters'*, enjoying the straighter bowling and finding the boundary rope on a regular basis. Eight 4s were hit compared to just the two that Joe had hit in his innings. And in fact there would only be two wickets taken. As well as Moiz bowling Ashraf, Fraser took a good diving catch to dismiss the same batter, this time off Samee's bowling. In the end Weirs' batters mustered 274 for 2, net 64 seeing them winners by 59 runs. There were some good bowling figures returned however: Joe's 3-2-2-0 being best from an economy perspective, Samee's 1 for 6 in his three being equally good.

### **18s defeat under-strength Uddy** [posted 25/06/12]

The main things to say about this game are that it saw a *'Locster* win, it was played on a shocker of a deck, and Elliott smacked an unbeaten 70 amidst generally pretty poor standard fare. So the positives: the win, and *Stiffy* notching up a half century. Batting first the side had posted 144 for 7 as only Elliott managed to escape the traps that awaited in the deck. Played on a green, unprepared deck that still looked pretty damp, batting was north of difficult with balls variously shooting and stopping, as well as making seamers look like spinners such was the sideways movement off the wicket. Nine of fourteen wickets that fell saw batters bowled, and though it's fair to say there were maybe a couple of poor shots played, by far the main reason was batters being beaten by the pitch. Elliott's 70 was the mainstay of the first innings and saw nine 4s bunted, as well as a maximum. The only others into double figures were Mikey and Matt, the former getting his now mandatory life early on as an aerial off drive was spilled by mid-off.

The *Uddy* reply started in bizarre fashion. In keeping with what was generally poor standard fare, Cammy's first over was a ten-baller that went for 4, all wides. Not to be outdone, Gopi opened from the river end with an eleven-ball effort that cost 9! You what?!? 13 for 0, pretty much all gifted. Cammy's second over only contained 3 runs in wides, but it also contained the first wicket. With almost the first ball *Disk* had bowled in Dennis Eyles' vicinity he made the breakthrough as the ball jagged back markedly and bowled the *Uddy* skipper. Another victim for the deck. But also showing what happens if you bowled straight! And Cammy grabbed the second wicket in his third over, this time Dunne as he became yet another batter clean bowled. From here it was a case of wickets tumbling. Saqib came in to the attack and caused havoc with his left-arm spin. He'd grab a "4-for" as he got through the rest of the visitors' top and middle order. 4-0-14-4 would be his eventual return. He just couldn't grab that final wicket to get on to the [junior honours board](#) however, the last Uddingston wicket being secured when Saif ran out Sheikh with the scoreboard showing 54.

So a win, but not really much else to warm the coach's heart. And as for *that* wicket..... 🤔

### **We've seen this before somewhere** [posted 25/06/12]

The first game of the season this year for the Under 13s was their cup match at Meikleriggs. That day Ferguslie didn't field a full side, batted first and posted a chaseable total. Then the 13s failed in their run-chase after *CJ* had given them a great start with a quick-fire 31 not out that had seen him retire, the rest of the batting line-up failing to fire. Scroll forward two months and it was *Groundhog Day* down Paisley way as, again, Ferguslie didn't field a full side, batted first and posted a chaseable total. Then, again, the 13s failed in their run-chase after *CJ* had given them the same great start with an even quicker-fire 31 not out that had seen him retire, the rest of the batting line-up failing to fire. *Déjà vu* all over again as the saying goes.

This time Ferguslie's first innings yielded 104, with Timur Ahmad top-scoring with 33. For *the 'Locster* 13s there were a couple of wickets for Kess in a decent-enough bowling display that saw nine bowlers used. And in fact only if you were trying to look for some fault might you suggest that gifting 22 in wides could be criticised and improved upon. But if we're looking to improve then there's something to work on. *CJ* grabbed another couple of stumpings in the first innings too, to get rid of Wainwright and Macrae. Ahmad's 33 included four 4s.



105 to win. Calum (pictured left), as he'd done - and as trailed already - got his side off to a great start. Just like back in late April he took the *Feegie* attack apart. And this time the carnage was even greater. 31 from just eleven deliveries, and eight scoring shots. Poor Ahmad bore the brunt of it too, his first over - and the first of *the 'Locster* innings went for 24! 4 6 . 6 4 4 Thanks very much. Makes chasing 104 a little easier when you knock off nearly a quarter in one over. So suddenly the equation was 81 needed from nineteen. Then by the fifth ball of Ahmad's second over *CJ* was gone, "back in the hutch" having retired on 31. 31 scored in next to no time. But at the other end, even this early on, it was clear others weren't seeing the ball quite as easily. Darren Spence's opening over at the other end from Ahmad had gone for just 1. Then he bowled his next two for zip-zap-zero to finish with figures of 3-2-1-1. And wickets had started to fall. And they didn't really stop. In fact when they slowed in their regularity all that really happened was that the 13s struggled to score. Aside Calum's 31, the next highest score was 7 - from both Kess and Ayub.

A number of the batters looked comfortable enough as regards staying in, the difficulty was in rotating the strike and getting runs on the 'board. As it was the side would eventually be bowled out for just 77, with four batters failing to get off the mark.

So a defeat in the end by 27 runs. No disgrace, but clearly work to be done on getting off strike, and on the bowling side, restricting the number of "freebies" gifted to opponents in the form of wides.

### **We never learn!** [posted 20/06/12]

The Under 15s crashed out of the ECB Under 15 National Club Championships at the quarter-final stage this evening as they went down by 18 runs tonight against Prestwick at Shawholm. Not even scoring 138 was enough as they chased 157 to beat their Ayrshire visitors having bowled and fielded horribly in the first innings as Prestwick racked up 156 for 4.

Prestwick batted first after winning the toss and openers Rao and Pettigrew put on 47 for the first wicket, starting tentatively but soon getting into their strides as *the 'Locster* bowlers continually strayed in their line and length allowing Rao and Pettigrew to put away plenty bad balls, something they did with gusto. Pettigrew was first out with the score on 47, tamely chipping Akhil to *Rosco* at short cover. Rao however never really looked too troubled as he cruised to a 34-ball half century that saw him retire. And after his departure, Miller and Baillie just carried on bunting bad bowling to all parts. Baillie's 21 came from just eleven balls, Miller's unbeaten 32 a more conservative 42 deliveries. Throw in 27 in extras, including only 2 in leg byes, and the final damage was a whopping 156! Ouch! And the frustration is that it really was poor bowling that was the cause, allied to lacklustre fielding. What ever happened to that most basic of *basics*: "walking in with the bowler" so that you're on the move and ready to get on to balls hit in your direction? Instead, most of *the 'Locster* fielders looked liked competitors in an outside game of musical statues! The only thing being there was no music! So many balls hit straight to fielders who were either day-dreaming or standing still. Neither a good idea. Lots of work needed on this awareness, as well as no

little work to be done on basic speed and fitness, and throwing, to get around the outfield better. 157 to win it was then.

And *the 'Locster* reply didn't start that well: Akhil was trapped LBW by Pettigrew for just 1 and so Calum was in early, at three, joining *Rosco*. 8 for 1. 42 were added then for the second wicket before Ross mis-hit a tame full-toss from Rao and was caught by the same player to depart for 30 from 25 balls in the middle of the ninth over. 50 for 2. Calum and Lewis then added just 5 before the latter was bowled by a delivery that kept pretty low. 55 for 3, and Akbar in to join Calum. Akbar's first ten deliveries brought him 10 runs: for the avoidance of doubt, that's eight dots, a 4 and a 6! At the halfway point in the second innings the scoreboard showed 64 for 3. Still 93 runs needed at over nine-an-over. Unlikely you would think. And certainly this was the thinking as Calum departed for 25 from 26 balls in the thirteenth over. Three more wickets then fell in quick succession as 89 for 4 in the thirteenth became 91 for 7 in the fourteenth! Yikes. Fifteen overs completed saw the scoreboard show 104 for 7. Now it was 53 needed from just five overs.

Then over sixteen happened.....

McCreath was the bowler and Akbar the batter. The over went as follows: no ball, wide, 4, dot, 6, wide, 6, wide, 6, 6! Bonkers. 32 off the over!! Suddenly the equation's 21 needed from four overs. Unbelievable. But, and it was a **big but**, Akbar was now on 49 and just 1 run away from retiring. Then over seventeen saw Robert bowled and Ayub in. Eight wickets down. One more wicket falling at the other end and Akbar wouldn't have to retire - hmmm, dilemma. Now presumably at this juncture dear reader you're thinking what everyone else was thinking. "Have a dart Ayub!" If he gets out swinging the game's still on and Akbar can keep going. Presumably Akbar's thinking this too? Get Ayub on strike 'til he's out. Eh, no..... 😬 Ball five of over seventeen sees a legside wide bowled to Ayub and Akbar takes the single! Now he's on strike. Does he remember that 1 more run and he walks?!? Apparently not. 😬 Ball six: huge swing, miss, out! Sigh. A buntalicious 49 from just 23 deliveries, 48 of them coming in boundaries (three 4s and six 6s!). Nuts.

The final 15s' wicket fell when Ayub cut the first ball of the eighteenth over to point where Baillie pouched the catch safely. 138 all out. 19 runs short of the target; seventeen balls unused. Again, sigh. But let's not fool ourselves, the damage was done in the first half. And as the 18s had found on Monday night, it's no good scoring at seven- and eight-an-over and losing comfortably. We just have to bowl and field better. Everyone's culpable, everyone can fix the problem.

Congratulations to Prestwick who now join Drumpellier in the Finals Day of the cup,.....at Shawholm! The final [sic!] ignominy.

### **Bowlers hide your faces** [posted 18/06/12]

Just six runs shy of 300 were scored in tonight's Under 18 league match at Meikleriggs. But before anyone starts fantasising about magical batting, this columnist wants to dispel any such delusions. To be fair a few decent shots were played. But the key word there's "few"! So if that's being *fair*, being honest now, the truth is that there was some pretty ordinary batting on show, mixed with some bunting, but given the bowling and fielding that was "on parade" this was more than sufficient to see two big totals racked up. None of the ten bowlers who rolled their arms over tonight amidst the midge clouds went at less than "fives" as they displayed economy rates that would embarrass a *Hummer*. Both sides will likely lose matches this year of this part if their games doesn't improve dramatically. And if the bowling was bad, the fielding was little better. In the first half, as the Ferguslie 18s racked up 160, there were numerous occasions of "bottling" out of catches, balls escaping ground fielders, general lethargy and wicket-keeping that suggested *County's* latest gloves might be *Tefal* coated! 😬 Not good. That said, [Ed: and it *was* said by the home side ump' during the innings break!] cricketing karma kicked in in the second half as the Paisley boys' catching and

ground-fielding was without doubt even worse, hard though that might be to believe. Catches were grassed left-right-and-centre - culprits included Wheeler (twice!), Darroch, Tahir, English,.....and so it went on. In fact the catching was so bad, your scribe remembers two occasions - one in each innings - where a ball landed between converging fielders, landing without a hand touching, the fielders within a couple of feet of it! Truly horrible. And on the subject of fielding nightmares did one home side fielder really escort a ball over the distant cow corner boundary rope to avoid a very long throw back? Surely not!?

To the scores. As noted, Ferguslie bunted first and racked up 160. This was thanks in no small measure to 25 generously gifted extras, as well as the aforementioned bowling and fielding horror show. Twelve 4s and four 6s were scored in the first innings, Michael English helping himself to 70, as he took full advantage of the *Toytown* boundary towards the RAH. The second innings saw nearly as much cross-boundary ball fetching too: the 18s managing ten 4s and three 6s. It has to be said again, the bowling really was brutally bad. In *the 'Locsters'* innings a few guys got starts but none hung around as long as English had done. Five got into double figures, but none went on. A decent start had seen 45 scored off the first five overs as the boys threatened to chase down the huge target. Mikey had again managed to corner the strike, *Pasty* being first out in the sixth over having faced just seven balls. He went mis-pulling a rank half-tracker from Dean Kennedy. Master Kennedy should, however, get a word of praise here, being the only player apparently able to hold on to the wee red sphere. In fact the ball seemed to follow him in the air, catching no fewer than four *'Locster'* batters. That said he was also guilty of arguably the "didiest" moment of the second innings. After bowling an in-swinging ball that then straightened off the wicket and rapped Mike on the front pad, shin-high, in front of middle there was silence. Three balls later as he collected his cap from the Poloc umpire he observed "That was out wasn't it, I don't know why I didn't appeal - I'm always forgetting!" You couldn't make it up. A genuine *jaffa*, no appeal. 🤔

Mike was then second out with the score on 48, and from then on there was a series of cameos from *Stiffy*, Saif, Matt and Cammy.

As it was the second innings saw the 18s end on 134, some 26 runs short of their opponents' total. Makes you wonder again about those 25 extras, those fielding errors and missed catching opportunities. 134 scored and a comfortable defeat. Sure they've lost some bowlers and there were a couple missing tonight, and Ollie's still injured, but when called upon we've gotta be bowling better lengths and lines, and the need for the fielders to back up their bowlers is all the greater. Message to both sides.

### **Outclassed** [posted 18/06/12]

It's no disgrace losing to a better side. And this is likely the easiest and shortest way to describe tonight's Under 13 home defeat to West of Scotland. *The 'Locster'* 13s were much-depleted with Aliyan on holiday, Ahmed-Raza, Jonathan and Ayub unavailable, Owais an afternoon cancellation and Kess a late call-off. And so it was that Moiz and Nabeel made their Under 13 debuts. And both performed admirably well, the former getting a wicket,.....the latter two! Good signs.

Batting first the northside visitors scored 98 for 9 with just two batters being allowed to get in to double figures: Guy with 27, and.....the other Guy [Ed: literally!] scoring 16. Nine of the 13s bowled, and no fewer than seven took wickets. There were two for Nabeel as noted, Abu-Bakr doing similarly. There were also two catches - one a prodigious diving effort - from *CJ* to add to his stumping of Coats. Others hanging on to catches were Mohammed and Abtaha.

The 13s' reply in search of 99 to win never really got started with the top order failing to fire. In all, five *'Locster'* batters would fail to get off the mark, with only Abu-Bakr getting to double figures as he bunted a quick 14 that contained three boundaries. Like the 13s, West also used nine bowlers, six of them taking the nine wickets to fall. In the end Moiz and

Nabeel - the future! - were not out as the final ball was bowled and just 45 was on the 'board. Not really a contest it must be said, *but* invaluable game-time and experience for a very young Under 13 side. And in particular for the Under 11s "on parade" a glimpse of the standard that lies ahead. For the more experienced players in the side tonight, a reminder - again - that there's a lot of work to do on the basics of batting, in the main finding ways to rotate the strike and score singles. Too many dots, as the saying goes, will always hurt you. Time's on most of the guys' sides though!

### **Ayr seen off as Under 15/16 side gets first league win** [posted 14/06/12]

It seems like ages since the junior season-opening match at Old Anniesland back in mid-April. That night it was the Under 15/16s on parade. Now, almost two months [Ed: and about two feet of rainfall!] later, the side was playing its second league game. Ayr were the visitors, and in a close match *the 'Locsters* came out on top by 10 runs. Batting first, skipper Yash Singh led by example top-scoring with 32. He was given good support by Akbar Shahid with 25, their third-wicket, 61-run, partnership being important after two early wickets saw Elliott Rousen (9) and Lewis James (1) perish early. Adding in 31 in extras, the first innings ended with the side just four-down and 101 on the 'board. 102 to win.

The Ayr reply started horribly: 8 for 3 was the damage early on as Elliott's two quick wickets and Umair Amin's running out of Luke Johnstone set the visitors back on their heels. Baines and Rennie then put on 38 for the fourth wicket and got their side back into the game. But wickets then fell on a fairly regular basis and with each the Ayr boys' chances of winning took a knock. 91 for 8 was the final damage, a win by 10 runs for *the 'Locsters*.

A good win, with both sides having a mix of experienced and inexperienced players. And good to get another league match played after the long lay off.

### **13Bs lose by just 1 run!** [posted 14/06/12]

It was a crisp and clear evening down on the coast tonight, and with a bracing wind cutting across the New Cambusdoon ground it was just as well that the match on view had some excitement in it to keep players, umpires and spectators alike interested! It was the Under 13Bs league match against hosts Ayr, and the game went down to the wire. Batting second, Ayr had had a terrible start to their run-chase being six wickets down in the first half. And in net terms, the Ayr total was still in negative territory as over eleven started. Seemed like the 13Bs were in *Easy Street*. Eh, nope. The second half of the second innings saw a whole different game play itself out. Only one more wicket was taken as loose bowling added to a dropped catch and some missed run out opportunities to eventually give the home side the win. And by the narrowest of margins: just 1 run. And under pairs cricket rules even once Ayr had nudged ahead with two balls of the last over to go, there was still a chance for *the 'Locsters* if bowler Rorie McWilliam could just eke out another wicket. But it wasn't to be and Ayr won by a run. It was unlucky for Rorie too, as he was the standout bowler on the night, returning really impressive figures of 4-1-5-1. Ahmed-Raza Hanif was the main wicket-taker, taking 3 for 18.

In the first innings *the 'Locsters* had lost only three wickets in accumulating their total of 69 for 3. Ironically the barrowload of wides bowled by Ayr likely helped them in the end analysis as deliveries just couldn't be hit. Poor Max Turnbull and Humza Hussain - the second batting pair - saw thirteen of the 30 balls bowled to then signalled as wides! The scorecard shows that the wides score was Ayr 28, Poloc 15 - as noted it's a tad ironic that many of the 13Bs' straighter deliveries likely went for more runs than the much more widely sprayed Ayr bowlers' deliveries did. In the first innings Calum James top-scored with 18 not out, the next highest scorer making just 6. Of the net 54 posted by the 13Bs, no fewer than 33 came in extras.

So a cold night, an exciting finish, but ultimately a defeat. Could be worse though, it might've been raining!

### **Winning starts at Hughenden** [posted 08/06/12]

The focus of attention tonight was on the Under 15s at Hughenden. After last Friday's poor performance against Drumpellier at Langloan, and the defeat this accrued, it's nice to report on a straight-forward win. Hillhead were the oppo' and the game was over in the west end at Hughenden. Weather conditions also dictated that the game be played on astro-turf. Never ideal, but it's a game. Batting first the 15s went with a new batting order. Akbar (19) and Robert (14) opened the innings and got the guys off to a decent start. Rob had to retire on 14 however, and then bizarrely so did Mohsi - in a three - after reaching just 4. Then when Ayub (1) and Amit (0) were both run out, as well the 'card looking pretty wacky, the side were suddenly a few too many down. Umair then came and went for 3, leaving Calum and Finn to try and rebuild. This they did, batting together - unusually - as numbers seven and eight in the line up. Calum would hit an unbeaten 23 and Finn 15 not out as the total went past 100. 114 was the eventual total when time was called and it was over to the bowlers to defend this.

As the batting line up had had an unusual look to it, so too the bowling analysis. All ten *'Locster* outfielders rolled their arms over, each bowling two wickets. And the ploy seemed to work as Hillhead were restricted to 62 for 9. There were two wickets a-piece for Amit, Ayub and Robert.

So a convincing win, and the 15s are off-and-running,.....well at least walking, in this year's Under 15 with their first win under their belts. Next week's a bye week, though there's an Under 15/16 league match, so there's plenty practice time in the next seven days for the side.

### **13s beaten up in Greenock** [posted 04/06/12]

Granted there's nothing unusually about a beating of teenagers in Greenock, but this one involved *the 'Locster* 13s. After last Monday's encouraging win at Prestwick it's disappointing to report on the reappearance of those old, familiar batting frailties. Accepted, down at *Midge Central* you don't want to spend too long sweating under a cricket helmet for fear of having your face gnawed off, but for only one batter to get into double figures is pretty poot. Rori's excused being a subject for this rant, but the others should take heed. Play straight. Play straight. Play straight. Defend good balls. Seven batters bowled suggests the very opposite was being done. That's why we net. That's why we encourage juniors to take advantage of our many coaches, in particular Carl Huyser. Get down to the club and groove your defences people, and concentrate out there in the middle. As I say Rorie's excused on the basis he top-scored with 15, though - this said - he was one of the seven who had their stumps re-arranged. Harry Briggs was destroyer-in-chief with a "4-for".

The Greenock reply was a leisurely stroll - 13.4 overs - to the finish line as Briggs (22\*) and Currie (19\*) guided their side to victory by nine wickets. Rorie was the solitary wicket-taker, bowling opener Nowell for just 3. But it was never likely 67 would be defended, and the message from this one is to improve our batting: technique and mindset. Enough said.....

### **11s thumped at home** [posted 01/06/12]

Forget the scoreline in this one people and concentrate on the fun. And it *was* fun! It was warm and sunny, the ground looked magnificent and there were sixteen - seventeen if you include Hassaan! - youngsters playing cricket! Ideal! The result, for what it's worth, was a thumping - Ayr, the visitors, winning by a whopping 114 runs. But given the side fielded tonight must have been one of the youngest ever assembled, maybe that was bound to happen. What's also bound to happen is that the 11s will be better as a result of getting a game under their belt - no fewer than three of the eight on parade never having played in an organised hardball game before. And amongst the assembled players are one or two nuggets! And most have another three years at this age group!

In the game itself the scoreline was pretty one-sided, but in fact it was actually two of the Ayr players - Simpson and Bhandari - who did the damage. With all the other Ayr batters

amassing only 3 between them, the 62 runs scored by the aforementioned duo, simply took the game away from *the 'Locsters*. And then with the ball in hand, Master Bhandari turned out to be a "big boy bowling quick" who, at Under 11 level, so often takes wickets. And he did this evening, grabbing a "3-for". None of *the 'Locster* 11s could really muster the strength to get the ball through the inner ring of Ayr fielders, and three run outs reflects the fact that it seems yet another generation of young cricketers has forgotten that you can't run holding your box inside your boxers! Remember people: Friday night is Y-front night!!! [Ed: it *is* funny though, watching them try to complete twenty yards whilst simultaneously trying to recover a box from inside a trouser leg!]

Bowling-wise, James and Moiz were the most consistent in terms of line-and-length, whilst Samee, with two, was the bowler who took the most wickets.

Well played to the Ayr boys, especially young Simpson and Bhandari: this scribe watching on jealously as the former managed to skipper his side, open the batting, open the bowling, and then wicket-keep! *Pairs cricket*, with your dad as ump': you gotta love it! 🤔

### "The Unavailables" [posted 01/06/12]

Who actually knows if it made a difference, but it makes for a better storyline, and rant! So here goes. Where were Messrs. Armour, Stout and Mansoor? Rumours of a party preventing some from playing for their club in arguably one of the two or three toughest league games of the year? [Ed: though what self-respecting party starts before 9pm!] Others exhibiting that far-too-common of Poloc junior responses to selection: Yes,...eh, no,...I think so,...no. Not very helpful! And so it was that the side that travelled to Coatbridge to take on Drumpellier was weakened as a consequence. And self-fulfilling prophecy later, the eight-wicket defeat materialises. What might another 30 runs have done? Or another couple of front-line bowlers? Who knows. What is known now is that, already, one game in, the 15s now need someone else to "do them a favour" to win their league.

To the game itself: batting first, the 15s' top-order failed. Akhil, *CJ* and Lewis each got started only to get out cheaply. 5, 9 and 7 wasn't really what was needed. Then, after Umair had departed for just 2, Finn and Aliyan demonstrated no little determination in restoring some credibility with a 27-run partnership. This was broken though when Aliyan's rush-of-blood-to-the-head saw him bowled by Allison. After this it was house-of-cards stuff with 58 for 6 becoming 62 for 9! Rob and Akbar both blobbed, Mohsi and Abtaha were the not out *sheriffs* at the end. 72 for 9. Hardly impressive. Pity.

To win, to defend 72, was going to need the *Drumps* top four batters to be gotten rid of a.s.a.p. Akhil, who was hooping the cherry around all over the place, did his best to achieve just this too. He cleaned up both Allison (0) and Pryde (8), but just couldn't grab the one or two additional wickets that would've got his side in amongst the Drumpellier tail. His figures of 4-0-5-2 reflected just how unplayable he was on the night. Sadly the other bowlers were considerable more playable! Aliyan's only over cost 14, whilst Lewis's two went for a *buntalicious* 16. Pyne (32\*) and Sabri (26\*) - batting at one and four respectively - saw their side home with nearly four overs to spare - an eight-wicket thumping.

What might one or two additional wickets have accrued? Or one or two, or even three, additional available players to pick from. Methinks I might call off cricket myself next Friday and go party! 🤔

### 13s sneak home in a close one [posted 28/05/12]

The Under 13s have taken some stick from this reporter in recent weeks, and rightly so! However just as important is to praise when praise is due. And winning a tight game normally accrues just this. The margin of victory for the 13s down at Prestwick tonight was just 4 runs, as the home side just failed in their attempt to reach a round 100 to win. Batting first the 13s had posted 99 for 3, with two retirals - Aliyan and Kess. But this doesn't really tell the tale of the tape as, at 13 for 3 early on, with *CJ*, Lewis and Rorie back in the "hutch",

the thought of 99 for 3 must've been pretty far away from most observers' minds. But Aliyan and Kess - in at four and five - showed decent application in scoring, respectively, 31\* and 30\* to guide their side to a more-than-respectable total. Ahmed-Raza was the not out batter at the end of *the 'Locsters'* innings, a cheeky 3 *sheriff*. For Prestwick, there was a wicket a-piece for Parker, Morgan and Turner, with all of the seven home side bowlers used bowling reasonably.

Turner and Miller opened for Prestwick as they looked for 100 to win. But they, too, lost early wickets and fell to 16 for 2 before 38 was added for the third wicket. Turner went on to top-score with 26, whilst, when the end came, number four Morgan was unbeaten on 18. But the middle order really failed to fire for the Ayrshire guys with three ducks between them, and no-one bar Turner and Morgan managing to get into double figures. So a good win secured, and especially pleasing after the chaos of last Monday's thumping by the *Dark Side*.

The Prestwick wickets were also shared around, the bowling analysis showing that Kess, Aliyan, Ahmed-Raza, Abtaha and Jonathan all picked one up. Aliyan's figures of 4-0-13-1 were likely the stand-out ones, although Jonathan's solitary over (over sixteen) going for just 3 was also pretty important in the run-in. Well done guys, and let's hope we kick on from here.

### **Under 18s season starts with a win** [posted 25/05/12]

Tonight saw another warm and sunny evening greet players and spectators alike at Shawholm. The scene was set for the first round clash in this season's Frank Smith Trophy, Renfrew the visitors. Winning the toss, *Pasty* elected to have a bat and it would be him opening with Mikey. The two put on 54 inside seven overs to give the 18s a fast start, the partnership being dominated by Mikey both in terms of balls faced and runs scored. In fact when *Pasty* was first out with the score on 54 - miss-pulling his name-sake, Renfrew's Craig Young, to Ahmed at mid-off - he'd faced just fourtween deliveries and made 9. Mikey by contrast was racing along and had already despatched three deliveries for maximums. *Rosco* came in at three but departed sharpish, bowled by Renfrew skipper Murray, meaning Elliott was Mike's new partner. These two added a healthy 94 for the third wicket, Mike - who'd been dropped on 44 and 72 - departing, bowled by Black, for 82. His innings had come from just 63 balls and had included seven 6s and six fours at an impressive strike rate of over 130. That said his knock also included a whopping 34 dot balls leaving him with a shots scored from (SS%) percentage of 46%. Turning half of these into singles would've seen Master Allcock near to his ton. Elliott would also eventually depart, his dismissal being in the bizarre category, a fierce on-drive from Calum striking him, then deflecting off the bowler (who knew little about it either), and rattling in to the stumps at the bowler's end to see *Stiffy* run out. [Ed: is this the second time, *this season*, this has happened to Elliott?] Elliott's departure let *Joshy* and Calum face a few balls, the latter entertaining the crowd with a switch-hit 4. 170 for 4.

Renfrew opened their innings with Black and Murray. For the 18s it was *Joshy* with the new ball, *Disk* his opening partner. And it was the latter who made the break-through, cleaning up Renfrew skipper Murray in the fourth over with the score on 11. 32 were then added by Black and Shah who was batting three. In particular they were particularly harsh on a crazy over from Cammy. After bowling his first two overs for just 3 runs, his third over went for 23! It had everything: wides, no balls, boundaries - you name it. But this wasn't alone in the file labelled "odd". Gopi's third over gave us that rare event, the 5-run penalty, with a delivery canoning into *Rosco's* helmet! It was all happening. Shawholm for thrills. This same over also ended with Gopi getting a wicket, and he followed this up with another with the first ball of his fourth over - hat-trick time! But it wasn't to be as Ahmed kept out Gopi's delivery with the 18s crowded all around like vultures round a carcass. [Ed: no slight intended to Mr Ahmed!] With everyone getting a chance with either bat or ball on the night - bar the unlucky Ollie who was a "DNB" in the first innings, and still can't bowl because of his back troubles - there was just time for *Pasty* to bowl himself,.....and help himself to a cheeky wee "5-for" into the bargain. And to complete the spooky "funnies" on the night, after the

first innings saw Craig Young claim Craig Young's wicket, the second innings scorecard had a similar entry, "Craig Young, bowled Craig Young). Cue *Twilight Zone* music!

And so with Mike's 82 and the skipper's 5 for 3, there are two new entries to our [Juniors honours board](#). Next up for the 18s is Monday night's league opener against East Kilbride.

### **Glenpark glee for 15s in the Scottish Cup [23/05/12]**

Greenock were the hosts in the second round of the Under 15 Scottish Cup. After winning the toss, *Rosco* decided to have a bat. And this looked a good idea when he and Akhil got off to a fast start, the first two overs yielding 9 runs. This said there was a hint of what was to come in the second over when Ross mis-timed a Smith delivery and tamely chipped it back to him, only for the Greenock opening bowler to spill the chance. A sign of things to come in the sense, I should add, of the skipper being out-of-sorts with the bat in this one. And so it was that he was trapped leg-before by Currie in the next over. Ross's departure brought Calum in and he played in his inimitable style, i.e. it was all-guns-blazing and a strike-rate of 100+. But tonight wouldn't be his night either as, after reaching 18 in double-quick time, he holed out to mid-off. 51 for 2 in the eighth. With Lewis away on a school trip [Ed: imagine that in the cricket season!] Umair was promoted to number four and he and Akhil put on 30 before the latter said hello to his fourth partner of the evening, Umair being run out by Briggs for 8. And partner number four was Finn Taylor. Finn and Akhil nearly matched Akhil's and Umair's partnership, but when the two had added 29 Akhil - having progressed to 46 - became the second *'Locster* batter to hole out to mid-off, this time courtesy of a very good overhead grab by Small [Ed: who isn't, really!]. 110 for 4 in the eighteenth. Next in was Mohammed Mukhtar, on debut. What was needed at this juncture was "bat on ball", and scurrying. Unfortunately what transpired in the last two overs were nine dot balls! Ouch. Still 116 for 4 was certainly competitive, though could've been so much more. Akhil's 46 was important, as were Calum's 18 (from twelve deliveries) and Finn's 14 not out.

Greenock's reply saw Flack open with Briggs. As *the 'Locsters* were without Lewis, so Greenock were missing Reiss Armstrong. Flack started aggressively, and after three legitimate deliveries the home side were 9 without loss, Flack having despatched two half-tracker looseners from Akhil to the square-leg boundary. At the other end though, Aliyan was bowling with a bit more purpose than of late, and he had more luck tying up the Greenock openers. And it was Aliyan who made the breakthrough, bowling Briggs in the sixth over with the score on 29. Then, without another run having been scored, the key wicket of Flack was taken. *Rosco* had brought himself on, and the part-time seamer cleaned up his opposite number with a good full and straight delivery. 29 for 2. Given the reliance the Glenpark side places on Flack's runs, it was always going to be difficult from this point on. And so it proved. Only two other Greenock batters got in to double figures as wickets fell at regular intervals. Umair came in to the attack and really throttled things with his slow left-arm stuff. His figures ended up as 4-0-9-3, and he helped himself to a run out into the bargain! Well bowled. Finn Taylor also rolled his arm over on the night, taking 2 for 19 bowling the last four overs from the west end of the ground. When Stewart was run out on the last ball of the innings, Greenock had mustered 84, losing nine wickets along the way.

A good 32-run win for the 15s then and they now await the winners of the Prestwick versus Ayr second round tie.

### **A pants-round-the-ankles, bare-bottomed thrashing! [posted 21/05/12]**

After waiting what seems ages for some decent weather to arrive and play cricket in, when it duly came this evening all that happened was the bright light in the sky illuminated the shortcomings of the Under 13s. Hard to think the last time we were thumped by over 100 runs in an Under 13 match, never mind at the hands of inhabitants of the Crossmyloof *Death Star*. Yup, it was no other than Clydesdale's Under 13s who, tonight, came, saw and conquered - nay, annihilated - their *'Locster* counterparts.

Batting first the visitors dominated from the get-go. Openers Amin and Malik both retired after reaching the 30 mark, and every other batter coming after them who was dismissed also made it to double figures. Throw in no fewer than 29 in extras - **all** wides! - and it really was a big total that resulted. 150 for 2 no less! Yikes indeed. None of the 13s' bowling figures looked too clever in the cold light of day after the game either; Aliyan's economy rate of 4.3 being the best on show, but he was the only bowler not to go at 6s! What's going on people? You'd think we hadn't practised all winter! Never mind, good weather set for Wednesday and it looks like being back to basics drills with the ball in hand.

Mind you, maybe - after seeing the batting card - there's more work to do on the batting front. If virtually none of the bowlers could return figures of less than 6, then the very opposite was the case when it came to the batting - all bar two couldn't muster *more* than 6! Seven of ten batters dismissed had their stumps re-arranged which suggests to this scribe that - just maybe - there's some poor shot selection and execution going on. Q. What's wrong with playing straight? A. Nothing. Dhami and Sadiq tore through the 13s' line-up and took four wickets each - well bowled to them, and dare I say bragging rights for these two *Storm Troopers* for the remainder of their junior cricketing careers!!

This result should hurt, and should also - it's hoped - help some of this group reassess just how good they really are compared to maybe how good they *think* they are. Time'll tell. But let's start with getting to practice on Wednesday and working hard. The weather's set fine, so that's a plus too!

As for tonight's thrashing: painful.....

[Ed: is there a common theme running through this season's two Under 13 match reports so far?]

#### **FST hoo-doo continues** [posted 20/05/12]

We've had so many bonkers Frank Smith Trophy games that've seen the club fail to win this particular tin cup over the years that - maybe - it didn't need to take yet another script from *Tales of the Unexpected* or *The Twilight Zone* to reinforce the belief that this just isn't something our 18s are destined to win. Today's semi-final defeat by 4 runs to Ferguslie was just the latest of bizarre defeats. After restricting the *Feegie* boys to just 104 in their innings - this despite Ashar bowling his one over for 13, an over that started with eight (yes, 8!) consecutive wides - the boys just failed to close out the match in the run-chase. They finished with fewer wickets down too, meaning equalling Ferguslie's 104 would've been enough to progress to the final. [Ed: And, incidentally, Ferguslie cruised to the win in the final, beating a much younger and inexperienced Prestwick side.]

But as hinted, Ashar's bizarre over wasn't alone on the day to be filed as "silly". Haris and *Pasty* were batting well, after Scotty had inexplicably tried to hit his third ball for a maximum and holed out to Michael English at long-off, and had put on 43 runs in what was a developing partnership. Then Alistair Preston-Jones bowled a half volley to Hari' who smacked it through mid-on direction,.....only for it to hit *Pasty* in the legs, backing up, and pop up to give Preston-Jones a simple catch. Un-be-lievable. We *really* aren't meant to win this thing. After Hari's departure there were cameos from Mikey and *Stiffy*, both at pretty much a run-a-ball, but these, too, were in vain as wickets continued to be taken. With two overs to go, 14 were needed for the win, spookily the 18s' score being on 90, just as Ferguslie's had been at the end of over eighteen too. However it wasn't to be as two wickets fell in over nineteen, and the boys finished 4 short. Another year gone - this was the playing of the held-over 2011 Finals Day - and another case of what might've been. Credit on the day to Ferguslie for keeping their cool at the end, and to a number of the 18s who put in decent performances: Mikey and Usman took "3-fors", *Disk* bowled five overs, 1 for 21, and Hari's four overs were as economical as ever. In the run-chase, *Pasty's* 25 was fine, if maybe he tried to "have a dip" too early, Mikey's and Elliott's cameos nearly brought the game back to *the 'Locsters*, and Hari' was dead unlucky as to how he departed. But the bare facts are

that we lost a game we should've won, and aside Ashar's "mad" over, we should still chase 5-an-over to win - too many dot balls, and Scotty maybe left wondering what he was thinking - if anything - trying to hit ball #3 over long-off's head.

### **More than just a Stout performance sees the 15s through in the cup** [posted 06/05/12]

We imagine it must hurt just that little bit more when a former teammate plays a key part in beating you playing for another club. [Ed: and we use the term "imagine" advisedly as we await one or more of Messrs. Bawa, Beg, Ullah or Umeed to actually do this! 🤔] But hurt we *imagine* it must. And so it likely was for the Clydesdale contingent as they looked in the scorebook to see "J Iscariot +, retired 53 (24)". Or, as it said in the Poloc book, "CRM Stout +, retired 53 (24)". Yup, Calum Stout's blistering - and retirement-inducing - half century was the stand-out knock of this morning's Under 15 cup match at Shawholm. Batting first, *the 'Locster* 15s posted a mammoth 155 for 3, setting their visitors the imposing challenge of chasing 156 to win, at nearly 8-an-over. Calum's 53 was a swashbuckling affair as you'd likely have guessed, with seven 4s and two 6s. These, in amongst - it has to be said, a few - not that many, mind! - swings-and-misses and a couple of aerial edges that landed safe,.....today. But take nothing away from Master Stout's intent, nor his general ball-striking. One particular maximum would've been a 6 pretty much in any ground. But he wasn't alone, and - in fact - his smash-bang-wallop had, in Akhil Ahmed's patient 41, the perfect foil. Ross Armour also chipped in with a useful 29 at the top of the order before being bowled by Margiotta.

In the reply, the *Toytown* batters were never really up with the required run-rate; that said all the batters batted with good intent, with Owain Taylor, as ever, being the *busiest* batter on show as he stole singles left-right-and-centre and kept good momentum in his side's reply. But as each over went by the required run-rate crept up just a little more. 6-an-over is usually good enough, just not when you're chasing 33% more. 121 for 4 was the Clydesdale Under 15s' eventual total when "time" was called, with Taylor unbeaten on 34. Akhil was the best bowler for the 15s returning figures of 4-0-18-3, whilst Lewis James's three overs cost just 12.

And so the 15s progress to the cup's next round where they take on Greenock at Glenpark [Ed: note to self: buy midge spray], the Clydesiders having beaten West of Scotland in their first round tie. For both sides this morning there were obviously plusses and minuses. Neither side's bowlers showed sufficient control as no fewer than 44 wides were conceded, resulting in over seven extra overs being bowled! Improvement in this department is definitely needed. And for *the 'Locsters* some of the fielding - or more specifically awareness and concentration in the field - has to be improved. Catches, too, have to be taken. Ross Bain dropped Ross Armour early in his innings, whilst Umair Amin spilled straight-forward catches at mid-on that would've seen the backs of both Taylor and Mahmood.

But a win's a win, and in the mini-series that is *Rebel Alliance* versus *Evil Empire*, the score in 2012 is 2-1.

p.s. why does everyone in the Clydesdale side have the same nickname: **Buddy**?!? Just asking.....

### **Under 13s crash out of the cup** [posted 30/04/12]

There are some talented youngsters at the club these days, and many are in the Under 13 age-group. But, sometimes, just sometimes, in life a reminder's given that you're maybe not as good as you might've thought you were. Tonight - the season-opening Under 13 game of 2012 - might be just such an occasion for *the 'Locster* 13s. Bowling first on yet another bitterly cold evening, the youngsters' good start quickly evaporated in a plethora of wides as bowler-and-bowler apparently found it impossible to direct the wee red sphere in even a straightish line towards the batter. No fewer than 17 runs were leaked in wides, a stat' that

also resulted in the youngsters bowling the equivalent of almost three extra overs at their Ferguslie hosts. And it wasn't the "change" bowlers who were to blame - Masters Sajjad, Qureshi and McWilliam - frontline bowlers all - contributed no fewer than 13 of the wides. Ouch! And with only Haroon Tahir contributing anything much with the bat - a retiral-inducing 30 - the Meikleriggs youngsters were pretty much reliant on *the 'Locsters'* generosity of spirit and crookedness of arm to see them post 92. Way too many given the circumstances. Credit though to Master Tahir who *did* bat well in amongst the poor bowling by the 13s. He got some support from Gary Pritchard (17) and Shoaib Kghan (14) but, really, the eventual total really shouldn't have started with an "8" never mind a "9". 93 to win.

Before detailing the eventually unsuccessful run-chase, mention of two really good bits of fielding in the first did. Abu Bakr Rana, on debut, did really well with a stop, pick up and throw to *CJ* to get rid of Timur Ahmad, whilst Ravidu Jayaratne's chase, diving stop on the backward square-leg boundary, and accurate throw from the boundary to *CJ* was brilliant and saw the back of Daoud Tahir. Never run to a Jayaratne arm!! Ravidu, in fact, was likely the stand-out bowler on the night in terms of overall accuracy, his figures of 4-0-19-1 belying how well he bowled. And no wides to boot! Watch and learn others. Abtaha Maqsood, too, bowling the last over for just 3 runs is worthy of plaudits.

To the second innings. In the gathering gloom, *the 'Locsters'* were given a cracking start as Lewis Macdonald provided the perfect foil to *CJ* as the Ferguslie opening bowlers were seen off. Lewis was nudging and nurdling, Calum was bunting. And bunt he did, all the way to 31 which saw him retire. His innings had seen him hit a 6, and four 4s, and came off just 26 deliveries. When he retired Aliyan came in. And as he swaggered out to bat the Coaches' words ringing in his ears were "concentrate". The result? He ran himself out. Lewis flicked the ball to square leg and Aliyan just set off from the bowler's end. Comfortably out courtesy of a simple piece of fielding by Haroon Tahir. You diddy! Aliyan's demise [Ed: that's three innings now for him already this season, and a total of just 2 runs have been accumulated - time for more graft, less swagger!] it was Kess who came to the middle. At this juncture the game was still there to be won. 41 for 2 in the eighth over. "Toffee!" Yup, as in stuck!! Over nine was a maiden. Overs eleven and twelve produced only 4 runs. But, despite this, after fifteen overs the equation was still only 23 needed from 25 balls. And after seventeen overs it was 11 runs needed from eighteen deliveries. Surely *the 'Locsters'* game for the taking? Not if over eighteen sees two wickets and 1 run it's not! Then over nineteen sees another wicket and 1 run. A picture and pattern emerging..... And so, despite Abtaha's best efforts coming in with just an over to go, the match just drained through the 13s' finger tips. Defeat by 6 runs.

And what are 6 runs in this game? They're a third of the wides bowled! They're a single every three overs over the course of a T20 match. Etc, etc. A little harsh on *CJ* too after his heroics. But it's not all doom-and-gloom: Calum's knock was impressive, Ravidu's bowling and fielding lit up proceedings, Lewis Macdonald's technique continues to impress, and Ahmed-Raza displayed pleasing calm out in the middle. And, of course, it's a youngish side - that said with the Under 13s only being a two-year age-group, in the blink of an eye young players are soon moving on up again. Time to apply in games what we know this group of talented youngsters are capable of, and what their swagger and chat suggests they think - let's start with getting to practice on Wednesday and bowling straight! 🤪

### **Pre-season defeat for the 15s** [posted 27/04/12]

The sun shone tonight. A bit like it does, we suspect, in Siberia! Brrrr,....still chilly. But good to be out playing again, even if thermals and not t-shirts remain the order of the day. The occasion for the day's play was an Under 15 pre-season friendly down at New Cambusdoon against Ayr. Ayr are strong at this age-group and so it'd be a decent test for *the 'Locsters'* in this the side's first run out of a new outdoor season. And with a couple bodies still being elsewhere and not available, the game was also a chance for a number of last year's Under 13s who were making the step up in 2012 to see what the new older age-group standard was like.

The toss saw the 15s batting, and skipper *Rosco* opened with Lewis. And a positive started accrued with 24 being put on before Lewis was bowled by an Azeem delivery, playing around a straight, full delivery. Ross continued, however, to score freely and look set for a decent knock, but was fourth out for 26 at a time when he looked to have got the measure of the early-season deck. Between Lewis's and Ross's departures, Akhil had come and gone without troubling the scorers and Karim had been and departed too. After *Rosco* was dismissed the run-rate fell, with the middle and late order batters struggling to breach the infield ring. The twenty-over allocation was at least - unlike the evening before at Old Anniesland - used, but eight wickets had fallen when "Time" was called on *the 'Locsters'* innings, Kess and Aliyan being the two not out batters at the crease, and 71 the accumulated runs.

In reply Ayr, too, got off to decent start as Aliyan struggled with his line and length and was punished accordingly. At the other end, and by contrast, Akhil was bowling well and when he took two wickets in two balls, on his way to returning figures of 4-1-10-3, the 15s were very much in the game. Ayr's good start had come to an abrupt stop and the home side were 29 for 3. But Akhil's three-wicket burst would be the high-water mark of the second innings from a *'Locster'* point of view. Only Abtaha managed to grab another wicket after that as Ayr cruised home with five overs to spare. Akhil's bowling figures were the standout ones, Aliyan's 0 for 21 in two, the opposite. Line and length Mr Qureshi, line and length.

So two games in two days. Two defeats. And no bad thing there's been a "wake up call" for *the 'Locsters'* that all the good technical work in the world done out-of-season counts for nowt if, as soon as the action starts for real, old habits rematerialise. Luckily 'twas just a friendly tonight, but the real games start soon! A final word: good to see Finn Taylor make his Poloc debut - welcome Master T.

**ABC** [posted 26/04/12]

**Anniesland Baltic Cricket.** Let's start with the positives: it was a game of cricket. It didn't last too long. No-one caught hypothermia. Bar these three it's tough trying to think of much else that was good about season 2012's opening match. Even the rugby players practising on the rest of the rugby pitches at Old Anniesland looked cold! And cold it was. 8C max'.

And there was little to cheer the cockles of any of the hearts of the [few] spectators who braved the elements. *The 'Locsters'* won the toss and opted to bat. What would another winter of hard graft indoor reap by way of reward the Coaches wondered? Answer: zip-zap-zero really if truth be told. Cross-bat hacks still predominated proceedings in the 15B's innings, as did lack of foot movement and poor calling. The result - perhaps inevitably, though maybe not assisted by hugely variable bounce on the Old Anniesland astro' - was a run out and no fewer than seven other wickets falling by way of the batter being clean bowled. How very depressing. Two *'Locster'* batters got into double figures: Lewis reaching 14 and Akhil 16. And Yash Singh was unbeaten on 9 when the innings closed with Owais Mohsin being the third batter not to trouble the scorers. On debuts, Calum Stout had bunted a couple of boundaries before being cleaned up, whilst Abtaha Maqsood was one of the Webbed Feet award entrants on the night.

84 all out was the damage. 85 to win. When Akhil cleaned up Revie with GHK having yet to score there was hope 84 might be enough. But this would be a solitary highlight as Hussain (50\*) and Stubing (26\*) saw their side home without much further ado. Unless of course you count two poor drops in the field as being worth mentioning?!? Cold hands likely don't help, but the opposite of the phrase "catches win matches" likely comes into play here. Eight bowlers rolled their arms over in the GHK innings, some rusty-looking figures accruing. Again a wind-chill factor of near Kelvin likely didn't help, but still much work to do if the side's to make better inroads into opponents' batting line-ups than was achieved tonight.

88 was the score reached in winning the game, as Hussain reached his 50 with a bunted 4 through long-off. A win by 9 wickets. Comprehensive. There's an immediate chance for

some of those on parade at Old Anniesland to make amends with Friday's Under 15 friendly down at Ayr: here's hoping for better weather, and better cricket! Well done to GHK on their win.