

West sneak home [posted 30/06/13]

Not even a torrential rain storm that forced the players from the field around half two could diminish the enthusiasm of the young Academy side for completing today's Sunday League match against the city's second-best club. West of Scotland were the visitors to the ground in the first Sunday League game to beat the weather [Ed: and an opposition concession!] for a few weeks.

The Academy batted first in challenging conditions - a steady drizzle being in the air from the start. But the game got going nonetheless and it was *Muscles* and Owais who opened. Both would, however, go cheaply - 6 and 9 respectively - which meant that to all intents and purposes the side's openers were *Mikey* and *Beast*. Well actually that's a tad harsh because the scoreboard read 55 for 2 when the combo got together, *West's* generosity on the extras front already have become apparent. A whopping 43 - the second-top score - would eventually accrue to the Academy, thanks in the main to 29 wides! Yikes. Back to the batters however: Mike and Lewis batted either side of the rain break (that saw tea taken - thanks to Mr. & Mrs. James as ever!) and put on 66 for the third wicket. Mike it was who succumbed, clearly failing to have attended *Youngy's* sweep shot master class and departing to a top-edged attempted sweep for a nicely-compiled 58. His half-century included seven 4s and a couple of maximums. It was then quickly 121 for 4 as Akhil was trapped LBW for zip-zap-zero having forgotten to get forward to a Cox delivery and this resulted in the *James Gang* taking centre stage. Between the three of the gang on parade today, 49 runs were scored off the bat, this before the tail then failed to wag and the side capitulated to 176 all out in the 37th over when - at one stage - nearer 200 looked on. But would not batting their overs cost them?

Short answer, three letters beginning with "Y". Pity that. *West* would get home with an over to spare chasing 177 for the win, reinforcing the suspicion that batting their overs may well have been enough for the Academy guys to have secured the win instead. Yup, a pity that. It wasn't that they bowled badly either, and Ahmed-Raza in particular can be really pleased in returning figures of 6-2-17-3. *Beast*, too, whose seven overs cost just 23. But in the end it just wasn't enough. There were decent contributions from a few *West* batters to mention in the passing too: 49 from Chris Ross and 42 from Andrew Galloway being the standouts.

Dumfries defeated in thriller [posted 09/06/13]

The Academy XI took on the guise of the Sunday XI at Nunholm today as a young side under the watchful eye of David James took to the park for this season's second Sunday League match. Also in the side were *Muscles* and *Mikey* to add some ballast. The other eight selected were juniors, the youngest being the trio of Under 13s: Ahmed-Raza, *CJ* and Aliyan.

The home side had first use of the wicket, batting first on another glorious day at the beautiful Dumfries ground. Akhil and Aliyan opened with the ball for the Academy, Brockwell and Dunbar their adversaries for the home side. And the breakthrough came with the score on just 10, before a clatter of wickets then saw Dumfries slump to 23 for 4. The Academy side on top, four Dumfries batters - Dunbar, Williams, Richardson and White - all out for ducks. Ferguson (25) and Brockwell (45) stabilised things however and put on 41 for the fifth wicket, before 49 was added for the sixth. The home side was slowly but surely recovering from their poor start and looked better placed to post a decent target. 53 added for the seventh wicket simply reinforced this momentum swing, before a couple of late wickets saw 184 for 9 being eventually posted. This was a pretty decent effort in 40 overs, and particularly so given the start. For the Academy there was a "5-for" for Akhil - 5 for 50 in eight overs, figures that were only really spoiled near the end when Dumfries's "Overseas Amateur" bunted the bowling around a bit. Still, a "5-for's" a "5-for" as they say. Well bowled. Aliyan's 4-2-15-1 was also impressive, opening the bowling, whilst *Muscles'* 5-0-39-1 wasn't! 🤔

In reply the Academy side batted sensibly, and wickets never really fell in clusters. 29 for the first wicket was a decent-enough start, *Rosco* being the batter out. *Muscles* and *Mikey* then

added 26 before the former departed for 33. 56 for 2. Mike welcomed *Stouty* as his new partner at this point, and in fact would go on to bat with four more teammates as his unbeaten 92 anchored what ended up as a really good run-chase. 199 for 6 was the scoreboard reading when the finishing line was crossed in the 39th over, *Disk* (22*) continuing his new role as "the finisher" in limited overs games.

A good win therefore, but far more importantly good longer-game experience for the youngsters making appearances. Thanks to Dumfries for selecting a side with a similar composition and - thereby - making it a well-match contest, and - as ever - for presenting their ground in such magnificent condition. A good day out.