

**Back to back,....to back!** [posted 30/08/14]

This was a game where maybe a whole bunch of new records might have been set or existing ones broken. Has a Poloc XI ever scored over 400 in a 50 overs-a-side game? How many Poloc players have scored 173 or more in a *Western Union* match? How many times has a Poloc side won by 316 runs or more? And how many Poloc sides, or indeed any other *Western Union* side, has won their league in three consecutive seasons? Yet all this came to pass today. *The 'Holmboys*, batting first on a still-damp Glenpark wicket, posted a whopping 402 for 7 in the last league match on the season this afternoon, a match that they went in to needing just 1 point from to secure the league title. And in amongst the 402 runs scored was a beauty of a knock from *Rosco* - not content with making a ton, his first hundred, he made it a big one, eventually being dismissed only after having gone past 150 and reaching 173. Well batted! But he wasn't alone. *Stiffy* took his league runs past 400 too, with 86, and *Flanners'* good run of form continued with 30 at the top of the order, scored at more than a run-a-ball. 402 for 7 it was then, with *Rusty* stroking legitimate ball #300 to the boundary - the 59th 4 of the innings no less! A mere 403 to win then..... 😊

After tea it was the bowlers' turn to perform. And perform they did. Glenpark openers Hempsey and Sharma got the score to 20 before the former became the second innings's first casualty, nicking off to *Flanners'* off *Rusty's* bowling. 20 for 1. 15 runs later and number three Goan had joined Hempsey back in the clubhouse and the start of what would be a steady collection of scalps by *the 'Holmboys'* bowlers had begun. 47 for 3 followed, as did 55 for 5. Sharma the fifth batter out, for a top-score of 30. And aside the two "old heads" of Hempsey and Sharma, none of the other Glenpark batters reached double figures, with nine, ten and *Jack* all getting entries on whatever the Greenock equivalent of the "Webbed Feet Award" table is. And when *Willowbobby* cleaned up the last two tail-enders it was 86 all out, and a win by those 316 runs. A win that brought with it the league title,.....again.

What's pleasing is the manner in which this side has won. Consistency over time is surely a measure of real, underlying progress and success, a third consecutive league win pointing in this direction. The side has been well managed by experienced "older heads" too, *DJ*, and on a couple of occasions, Brian, this year, carrying on the role carried out by *Rusty* in 2012 and 2013. The side's results have also seen the continuing development of the club's young players, as well as the integration of new players to the club who've joined us here in the park. No fewer than seven batters scored more than 100 runs, four of them still juniors. *Rosco* and *Stiffy* have had stellar campaigns, both scoring more than 400 league runs and over 900 between them. With the ball, too, league season 2014 has seen young players continuing to learn their trades, and as they do so, make match-winning contributions. *Hollywood*, Aliyan and *Beast* were all regular wicket-takers, and took - in this *Commonwealth Games*-shortened season - 29 league wickets between them at just 12.8. Motassim, with 16 league wickets, and *Mushy* with 12, are also deserving of mentions in despatches when talking about the bowlers' efforts. Stat's aside the manner in which the side has approached games, playing positive cricket, has been a feature, as has the way in which they've played the game. So a good end to a good season.....actually a magnificent end to a great *league* season, with tomorrow bringing another chance of success with the visit of Irvine in the *Western Cup* semi-final.

**Winners again!** [posted 23/08/14]

Going in to today's second-last league game against near challengers Meikleriggs, *the 'Holmboys* were aware that the Paisley side (who'd lost just three matches), along with St. Ninian's (who'd lost just two) were both still in contention for the title should today see *the 'Holmboys* slip up and lose for a second time. However never fear, the win was secured, and with it (given that the Shawholm boys have 3 bonus points from their solitary defeat, compared to St. Ninian's who have just the 1 from their two losses) means that if the side was to lose next Saturday's final match at Glenpark, then picking up just 1 bonus point would see them still finish ahead of St. Ninian's should *they* win, and both sides end the season with two defeats to their name.

Back to today's game then..... After the toss it was Meikleriggs who were batting, Strang and Sturgeon opening for the Paisley side, Motassim and *Abi* with the new cherry for *the 'Holmboys*. A steady start was made, both sides feeling each other out in the early overs. The breakthrough came when Sturgeon was caught behind by *Flanners* off Motassim, 31 for 1. It was then 48 for 2 as Docherty was second out, another grab by *Flanners*, this time Aliyan the bowler. Wickets continued to fall at regular intervals in fact: 65 for 3, then 106 for 4, and 118 for 5, before a 57-run partnership between Warden and Mories swung the pendulum a little back in the direction of their side. But their partnership was eventually broken, and this left time for a few additional runs to be added to allow 186 for 7 to be posted after the last ball of the innings had been bowled. Not a ridiculously high total, but certainly defendable. Would 29 runs gifted in wides come back to haunt *the 'Holmboys* was certainly one question that was going through not a few heads at tea? 187 to win.

The wickets had been shared around, with all the bowlers getting one, and *Uzzi* breaking the trend by taking a couple in his seven overs. *Hollywood* got through fourteen overs, and *Abi* ten as these two shouldered the major part of the bowling burden.

So the question was, would the batters now do their jobs? 15 for 1 with *Rosco* gone quickly wasn't a great start to be fair, but a 44-run partnership for the second wicket between *Flanners* (39) and *Stiffy* (45) settled any nerves. And after *Flanners* was the second batter out, *Uzzi* (20) and Irfan (35) in the boiler room of the innings delivered the goods too to see the side all but home. In fact it was left to a James combo - *Beast* and *DJ* - to see the boys across the finish line, the win being secured inside 39 overs. As with the bowling, pretty much all the batters had contributed, an all-rounder team performance. So all that's needed now seems to be that 1 remaining point. Anyone for a trip to Glenpark next weekend?

#### **Regulation win** [posted 09/08/14]

The Shawholm boys entertained Albert Park this afternoon at the policies in what would turn out to be a regulation win. Batting first after winning the toss, almost all the batters chipped in as a whopping 310 for 6 was posted. Top scorer was *Stiffy* who continued his good *'Holmboys'* form with 69. He was run close in the highest run scorer stakes this afternoon by *Willowbobby* (49) and *Uzzi* (45) however, the two demonstrating just how differently you can accumulate 40-odd runs! Dougie's knock was patience personified, *Uzzi's* was more.....well,.....more IPL let's say. But both were important, and added to the good start provided by *Flanners* (24) and *Stiffy*. 48 were put on for the first wicket, and then Elliott and Dougie had a 105-run second wicket partnership to really take the game away from the visitors from Newlands. And not that the visitors were trying to ensure they'd be chasing a big one, but their gift of 55 runs (yes, fifty-five runs!) in wides certainly helped. It also meant they bowled nearly 60 overs worth of deliveries and not 50! Long day in the sun. 310 for 6 it was then, Noaman (17\*) and *Beast* (22\*) the two sheriffs.

6 for 2 wasn't really the start you want chasing over 300 either, but this was the start the Albert Park side got. And from then on wickets just kept falling. 57 for 5. 76 for 6. 77 for 7. 78 for 8. Etc. 88 all out. Ouch. Only two batters - Zafar (27) and Boyd (36) - got past 5, and *the 'Holmboys'* gift of just 9 wides made them look positively miserly in comparison to what they'd received! A win by a whopping 222 runs, and the opposition bowled out in just the 31st over helps the NRR too, and keeps the side top-of-the-pile. Wickets-wise there were braces for Motassim, Noaman, *Beast* and *Crazy Horse*.

#### **'Holmboys win knee-trembler** [posted 13/07/14]

St. Michael's rolled in to Shawholm today for this afternoon's Western Cup quarter-final clash with *the 'Holmboys*. In their ranks were well-regarded Indian seamer Rohin Thapar, and their Bajan "Overseas Amateur" Dario Cummins. The Shawholm XI showed a number of changes from the side that had seen off Whitehaugh 24 hours earlier, Dougie Willoughby being available again after holiday, *Mushy* having no work commitments, *Muscles* similarly, and *Coya* and *Zee* making appearances. *Uzzi* also made his *'Holmboys* debut after several

impressive performances for the *Panthers*. After the toss, which the visitors won, *the Holmboys* were in the field.

*Abi* and *Zee* took the new ball, and it was the former who made the early breakthrough, getting *Geddes* to edge one to slip where *Coya* held on. 2 for 1. *Holmes*, the other opener, was then joined by *Crawford*, and these two - well, in fact, really *Holmes* - pushed the total on to 36 before the second wicket was taken. It was *Crawford* who'd depart, for just 3, resulting in the hard-hitting *Cummins* coming in. But he'd last just the one ball as *Abi* trapped him LBW first ball. 36 for 3. *Cummins* departure saw left-hander *Knight* come in, and he and *Holmes* looked comfortable as they took the score past 50. Well, actually, not *past* 50, *to* 50, because it was 50 that was on the 'board when *Knight* became *Abi's* fourth victim, bowled for 6. *Holmes* was still there however, and was still the dangerman. He was now joined by pro' *Thapar*. But just as it hadn't been *Cummins'* day, so it wasn't *Thapar's*, as he cut a *Coya* delivery straight to *Muscles* at point to depart for just 6. *Harrison* then came and went for 3, before *Holmes* finally exited for a well-made 40 (59 balls), dismissed courtesy of a really smart one-handed caught and bowled by *Coya*. The tail then capitulated and 36 for 1 had only been doubled to 72 all out. Tea. After which *the Holmboys* would need just 73 to progress to the semi's.

Chasing 73 can't be *that* hard, can it? Eh, well, ask *Dumfries*, whose failure to get past 55 in their recent Scottish Cup run-chase is a warning to all! And at 3 for 4 in the third over of their reply, there were a few on *the Holmboys'* side who were beginning to think 73 was a very big total after all. *Thapar* it was who was causing the chaos. He'd got *Stiffy* to nick off to second slip where *Harrison* took a good catch, and had then cleaned up *Dougie*, *Coya* and *Irfan* in four balls. Carnage. And so it was that *Uzzi* - batting six - found himself at the crease in the third over. He looked composed from the startt, luckily, and seemed undaunted by the destruction he'd followed. At the other end *Muscles* seemed at ease too, and the two slowly rebuilt the innings: 3 for 4 became 34 for 4. But it'd not get any further as a partnership as St. Michael's skipper, *Bowie*, cleaned up *Muscles* for 9. *Uzzi* was now joined by *DJ*, 39 still needed for the win. The sixth wicket partnership saw 23 added, before *Uzzi* was trapped LBW by *Cummins* who'd come in to the attack, meaning *the Holmboys* were seven down and still 16 runs short of their target. *DJ* had dug in though, and, with *Mushy*, added 15 of the 16 runs needed in exactly nine overs. But the skipper wouldn't be in the middle when the win was secured as, in a typically bizarre finish, he was run out after being sent back by *Mushy* as he looked to secure the 1 run needed to win. This after the ball before had seen 2 runs run, 1 of which was deemed "short" meaning that what had been initially thought to be the end of the match,.....wasn't! A bonkers finish. But the win *was* secured the very next ball. *Zee* was the new batter, and he'd watch from tyhe non-striker's end as *Mushy* stroked a ball in to the on-side to get that 1 remaining, required, run. Win.

Next up is a semi-final tie. And a home tie at that. Opponents as yet unknown, but to be one of *Helensburgh*, the *Bothwell XI* or *Irvine*.



#### **Still rolling.....** [posted 12/07/14]

*Whitehaugh* are latest side to be rolled over by *the Holmboys'* juggernaut, today's visitors to *Shawholm* returning to *Paisley* after suffering a six-wicket defeat. The bare bones of this game are that *the Holmboys* were in the field first and bowled their visitors out for just 127, before then chasing their target down in just over 23 overs. The win sees the side stay top of the division, and is a confidence booster ahead of tomorrow's *Western Cup* quarter-final against St. Michael's. *That* game will be a good test of where *the Holmboys* are, the *Dumfries* side travelling north in good heart, and sitting mid-table in the *WDCU* Premiership. Back to today's game though. After the toss it was *Whitehaugh* who would bat first, *the*

*'Holmboys'* bowling attack being spear-headed by *Abi* and *Motassim*.

After a steady start that saw 41 added by the experienced Burgess and young Bryson, it was the former who was the first batter to be dismissed, *Rusty* getting his scalp after being brought in to the attack second change. *Rusty* also grabbed the second wicket as he got rid of Bryson too. Both *Abi* and *Motassim* had bowled well - neither leaking more than 4-an-over - but it was the change bowlers who'd get the wickets. Also in to the attack was *Hollywood*, and he would get the wicket of Whitehaugh skipper Miller for just 4. From 41 for no wicket - a good steady start - suddenly the visitors were 57 for 3. Bennett and Ogilvie steadied things however, and added 24 for the fourth wicket, Bennett departing courtesy of an Irfan stumping and giving *Rusty* a "3-for". *Rusty* will likely suffer from DOMS [Ed: look it up mate!] come Monday after his fifteen-over spell, but it was critical in both restricting Whitehaugh and taking wickets. His final figures were 15-5-34-3. Well bowled. Also getting a "3-for" on the day was *Beast*, though he needed just the seven overs to get his trio. 3 for 16 from seven overs were his figures as he got three of the last four wickets to go down. And those four fell in a hurry, 114 for 6 becoming 127 all out. 128 to win then.

*The 'Holmboys'* reply was played out in on-and-off drizzle, but this wouldn't dampen the side's spirits as their target was reached inside 24 overs. *Stiffy* (39) and Brian (22) gave the run-chase a good start, and snuffed out any thoughts Whitehaugh might've had of winning the game. 61 was the opening partnership, the combo being split up when Elliott was bowled by Campbell. *Flanners* was in at three, and on his return from a long spell on the sidelines through injury, he made 23, at more than a-run-a-ball. Irfan then did likewise, after Brian had been caught by Bryson off Miller's bowling, scoring 22 in just 30 balls. By the time both *Flanners* and Irfan had been dismissed the finish line was absolutely in sight and it would be a family affair that saw the side home: *DJ* and *Beast* putting on the few additional runs needed to secure the six-wicket win that sees *the 'Holmboys'* stay top of the pile.

#### **Juggernaut rolls on** [posted 05/07/14]

This was another thumping win for *the 'Holmboys'* as the Williamfield XI was skittled for just 107 inside 33 overs and then the required runs were rattled off in just seventeen overs. The juggernaut rolls on. And it rolled on today under the skippering [Ed: is that a word?] of *Rusty*, in both Brian's and *DJ*'s holiday absences. And after he'd guessed "heads" or "tails" his side were in the field first. And the breakthrough came quickly enough, 19 for 1 as a quick in-road was made. The batter to go was home skipper Lees, caught by *Stiffy* off *Motassim*'s bowling. Corder and Morton then steadied the ship though with as partnership of 29, before Morton was the second home batter to get out, caught behind by Irfan off *Zee*. 48 for 2. Another 23-run partnership followed, but - like its predecessor - it didn't burgeon in to anything of real significance. In fact two wickets would fall in quick succession to see Williamfield slip to 74 for 4. And these two wickets seemingly triggered a collapse as the rest of the line-up crumpled and the home side were bundled out for 107. The collapse was instigated by *Mushy* who, bowling second change, ran through the tail to take a second consecutive "5-for". This means his last two week's work have seen him return combined figures of 21.2-6-36-10! 🤔 108 to win.

Chasing low scores can sometimes be tricky. And what's needed to avoid the *banana skin* that so often trips up low-score chasers is a really positive start. Step forward *Rosco*. He simply tore into the home side's opening bowlers, smacking Aitken out of the attack in just two overs as her first two went for 25. He raced to his 50 in no time, and no matter that *Stiffy* (5) and *Doogie* (3) didn't hang around long to watch the fireworks up close, the winning post was passed in just seventeen overs. *Rosco* did get out just before the end - for 65 - and so it was *Stouty* (22\*) and Irfan (5\*) who were in the middle when the handshakes were exchanged. A thumping win then, and that juggernaut rolls on.

#### **Glenpark seen off** [posted 28/06/14]

Today saw Glenpark visit Shawholm on league business on another pleasantly warm, if overcast day. *The 'Holmboys'* were under new management for this match, with *DJ* away

Brian was skippering. There were also a number of other changes to the eleven that had won at Meikleriggs seven days previously, with the start of *Ramadhan*, and the holiday season getting underway, both accounting for some players' unavailability. But it was still a well-balanced and strong side that took to the field, and after the toss had been won by the visitors, the boys were in the field first.

Glenpark's openers Flack and Hempsey started confidently, and with a fast outfield after the recent dry spell, the ball was racing to the boundary off the seamers. 43 for 0 was the score ten overs in, and both openers looked reasonably well set. However after recording their 50 partnership, Flack and Hempsey were separated, the former needlessly running himself out when he hit the ball straight to Zaeem who executed the direct hit really well to send Flack on his way. 60 for 2 quickly followed as Goan was trapped LBW by *Coya*, Brian having turned to spin after the opening bursts from the three seamers tried. At the other end was *Mushy* and he'd get in on the act soon enough, bowling Hempsey for a well made 38, the Greenock veteran inexplicably playing all round a bolt straight delivery. 72 for 3 and two new batters in and the good work of the openers undone. And when it quickly became 72 for 4 a mini-collapse had taken place. However McMichael and Chris Hempsey (now in) stabilised things, adding 23 for the fifth wicket. However when that fifth wicket fell with the score on 95, another - again - quickly followed, and it was 97 for 6. Then when Hempsey was adjudged LBW with the score having reached 112, the momentum he'd brought to the innings very quickly petered out. 112 for 7 became 118 all out in just about the space of two overs. The final wicket to fall was another for *Mushy*, and his fifth of the innings! [Ed: one assumes that explains the missing match ball after the game then!] Well bowled to him, his figures of 11.4.5.17.5 being the clear standout ones. Glenpark will've been disappointed to have been dismissed for 118 after the good start they'd made, however middle- and then late-order collapses pud paid to hopes of a higher total being posted. 119 to win.

*The 'Holmboys'* reply started with the skipper and *Stiffy*. And, like Glenpark's openers had done, these two provided their side with a solid-enough start. 29 were put on before Brian's was the first wicket to go down, umpire Wylie adjudging him to be LBW off Sharma's bowling. *Stiffy* was then joined by *Coya* and these two added a further 52 runs for the second wicket, the game's second 50 partnership. *Stiffy* was the one to go, miss-timing a shot that saw him caught at short cover by wicket-keeper Flack after making 37. *Coya* however wasn't for leaving the middle and he went on to see the side across the finish line with a beligerent 54 not out (41 balls) that included nine 4s and a 6, and only twenty scoring shots in total. In with him at the end was *Doogie* who was unbeaten on 5. A win by eight wickets, with over 30 overs in hand. A comprehensive win.

So the side continue to press for top spot in the league, today's win leaving them still having only lost the once on league business this season. *Mushy's* "5-for" was maybe the *MoTM* performance, with *Stiffy's* and *Coya's* knocks coming close runners-up. Next week it's a trip to New Williamfield.

#### **Another good win** [posted 21/06/14]

After last Saturday's fairly one-sided match at home to The Tryst, today's Shawholm XI game away to Meikleriggs was an altogether tougher assignment. The hosts included in their side a blend of the experienced (in the shapes of Sandy Strang, David Sturgeon and Tim Preston-Jones) and the promising (in the shapes of Taimoor Ahmed, Haroon Tahir and Nadia Wheeler). And so with Brian leading *the 'Holmboys'* in *DJ's* absence the scene was set for a bigger challenge.

Losing the toss the side found themselves in the field on another beautifully warm summer's day. And it'd be a long spell out in the sunshine as their hosts batted sensibly, scored consistently, and accumulated 204 for the loss of just the four wickets. Mainstays of the Meikleriggs' innings were two big scores from the side's two veterans: Strang, opening the batting with skipper Sturgeon, would make 81 before being dismissed by Dougie Willoughby, whilst Preston-Jones made 71 before he was stumped by Brian off Aliyan's bowling. The two

had added a whopping 120 for their side's second wicket. However, and importantly, though the two home batters made big individual scores, the run-rate was never frightening. And 204 for 4, especially given the fast outfield, was eminently chaseable. And so it would prove.

The four wickets that did go down were claimed by *Coya*, Dougie and Aliyan, the latter getting a brace. And it was spin and slow bowling that proved the key to restricting the run-rate. Between them, *Coya*, *Hollywood*, *Beast*, *Blue Knee*, and Dougie would bowl 38 of the overs, all at an economy rate of just 3.3. *Coya* in particular was particularly frugal, returning figures of 15-3-35-1. 205 to win then.

The run-chase was started by Brian and *Rosco*, the pair putting on 58 for the first wicket. 11 runs later and both were out however, and Meikleriggs likely thought they were in the game with two new batters at the crease. *Coya* and *Blue Knee* were that pair, but they'd only added another 22 when the former departed for 9, caught and bowled by young Haroon Tahir. This brought *Stiffy* to the middle, playing against his former club. Elliott would proceed to steer the side across the finishing line with an unbeaten 52. Firstly in conjunction with *Blue Knee* - who made 56 - and then with Dougie and *Doogie*. [Ed: we've been hoping for a Dougie|*Doogie* combo all year!] Euan and Elliott's partnership for the fourth wicket was 88 and proved the key one, adding to the half century stand the openers had put on at the start and that had given the side the base from which to push on. And by way of footnote to *Stiffy*'s innings, it came after he was involved in a car-crash of a collision with Dougie in the outfield, when both went for the same high catch. Crash! *Stiffy* carried off with nicely-developing black eye and a decent amount of blood loss - which makes his subsequent knock [Ed: pun *intended!*] all the better.

A good win then, and the side continue to press for top spot in the division, their only loss having come at home to St. Ninian's a week or so back.

#### **A little one-sided** [posted 14/06/14]

This report's title isn't in any way meant to be conceited. Rather it's probably just a reasonable comment on *the 'Holmboys'* 272-run win over visitors The Tryst today. Last season's league meeting between these two sides saw *the 'Holmboys'* make 262 before bowling The Tryst out for 47. That game seems close by comparison to today's encounter in which *the 'Holmboys'* batted first and amassed 303 for 4, before then skittling their opponents out for just 31.

The 303 for 4 featured 74 from *Rosco*, and an unbeaten 72 from *Coya*. But, really, nearly all the batters made contributions, none scoring fewer than *Stiffy*'s 21. It really was a run-fest from the get-go. The openers - Brian and *Rosco* - put on 128 for the first wicket, before the innings finished with a second three-figure partnership, this time between Dougie Willoughby (28\*) and *Coya*. For The Tryst, none of the bowlers will likely want their figures reproduced here!

The reply, played in the glorious sunshine, saw wickets tumbling right from the start. 5 for 1 became 11 for 3, and then 24 for 5. And it was proving Motassim's day as he'd grabbed three of the five to fall. He'd then go on to record a "5-for", as the tail didn't wag, The Tryst collapsing further to 31 all out. And of those 31, 13 were actually extras! Top scorer on the day for the visitors was Gardner, with 5. Next up for the side will be the much sterner test of Meikleriggs, in Paisley.

#### **How did this one get away?** [posted 31/05/14]

Here's the scene early afternoon at Shawholm: St. Ninian's - the visitors - were 74 for 8, the only recognised batter still in being Mitchell Rao (their number six). He was batting with number ten McDowell, with only young McCrath, the last batter, still to come in. Motassim and *Ihty* had skittled the visitors' top order, and along with the other bowlers, had seen the St. Ninian's line up capitulate with four ducks, and two other single figure scores. A matter of

time, surely, before it was tea-time, and then but a little while the home win would, of course, be recorded. Eh, no. Not so fast. In a quite remarkable turnaround, Rao and McDowell added 58 for the tenth wicket, before Rao put on 36 with McCrath, Rao being the last batter out for a critically important 62 (90 balls). And words of praise for McDowell and McCrath who faced 58 balls between them, scoring 20. Astonishing. What had happened? Hard to say. Plenty bowlers tried to get the last two wickets needed, seven rolling their arms over. But get them they couldn't. However in trying, and in bowling over-and-over trying, not only did the tail wag and Rao, McDowell and McCrath score runs, but the criminally-high number of wides continued to increase. When the tenth wicket was eventually taken, an astonishing 35 runs had been gifted to St. Ninian's. That's 22% of their total! And how those 35 runs would come back to haunt the side.

After tea, *the 'Holmboys'* reply started with Brian and Doug. But the openers could manage just 19 before Brian was first out, trapped LBW by Ahmed for 3. Doug and *Stiffy* then added 39 before their partnership was broken too, Doug becoming Rao's first wicket. Rao would then bowl Elliott too, before dealing with *Doogie* and both *DJ* and *Beast*. After his 62, Rao now had a "5-for". But he wasn't finished! Oh, no, he'd go on to grab seven! 7 for 31 as wickets kept falling and *'Holmboy* batters just couldn't hang around. 63 for 3 was the score when *Stiffy* departed, before stabilising to 112 for 5 at one stage. Five wickets still in hand, and just 47 runs needed. But that one big - match-winning - partnership eluded the guys. 125 for 6 became 129 for 9, before the final wicket fell with the score on 137 (Motassim caught and bowled by Ahmed to give *him* a "3-for") and with it the win for St. Ninian's. A 21-run defeat.

Now remember that wide count? We leaked 35 in wides. St. Ninian's leaked just 13. Difference - "do the math" as they say - 22! So where was this one lost? Well, firstly, it should be said that Rao can claim he won it for his side. But this said, plenty *'Holmboy* batters got in (five got into double figures), but none made the kind of telling contribution that Brian had done last week. The largest partnership was also just 39. And then there were those wides.....

### **Convincing home win** [posted 24/05/14]

There was one change to the side that had been frustrated by the weather seven days previously at Whitehaugh: Dougie Willoughby coming back in to the side replacing Abi' who had been unavailable for selection when the side was picked. Williamfield were the side's opponents, and, as at Whitehaugh, *the 'Holmboys* batted first. And again it was *Rosco* and Brian opening. The two put on 21 for the first wicket, *Rosco* departing courtesy of a catch by Ferrie off Corder's bowling in the fifth over. 18 runs later and the side were two down, this time *Stiffy* was the one to go - for 3 - bringing Brian his third partner inside ten overs. But partner #3 didn't last long either: Dougie departing in the thirteenth over for just the 1. 47 for 3 was not a shocker of a start, but another batter had to help Brian out a bit if a decent total was to be posted. *Doogie* was next to have a go, but after he'd got in to double figures - and the total had moved on to 67 in the twentieth over - he, too, was dismissed. The skipper was in at six, and, rolling back the years, *DJ* and Brian took the score past 100, and their partnership past 50. In fact there were not separated until the 38th over when *DJ* was bowled by Ferrie. Brian followed his skipper back to the pavilion just under eight overs later, having reached 73, and was sixth out with the score on 171. He'd added 59 with *DJ*, and then 45 with *Beast*. A really important knock with wickets falling at fairly regular intervals at the other end, particularly early on. The remaining five overs saw 31 added and the side post 202 for 7 when "Time" was called. *DJ* (24) and *Beast* (25) had contributed important cameos to add to Brian's efforts. 203 to win.

The Williamfield reply got off to the worst possible start when - at 8 for 3 in the fourth over their top three had all been dismissed. Motassim, with two, and *Doogie*, with the other one, were the wicket takers. It was always going to be hard to win from this start, and so it proved. Haider came in to the attack and caused mayhem, his off-spin securing four victims, whilst Motassim grabbed a third wicket for himself when he trapped Corder LBW. Aliyan's

good early-season wicket-taking form continued too with two late wickets, whilst *Ihty* got six overs under his belt, leaking just 9 runs in the process.

Williamfield were eventually dismissed in the 27th over, having reached 72. Last man out, Ashworth, was Aliyan's second wicket, and with it came the win. A solid start, the win being secured thanks to Brian's cornerstone knock and the opening bowlers blowing the oppo's top order away so quickly.

### **Rain beats *the 'Holmboys*** [posted 17/05/14]



Despite both sides' best efforts, it was the weather that won at Whitehaugh today, persistent rain eventually seeing the match with Whitehaugh abandoned. *The 'Holmboys* were batting first and started well, putting on 59 for 0 in fifteen overs. *Rosco* (38\*) and Brian (19\*) were the openers and had set a really good base from which to post a decent target. But the weather was having none of it and, after taking an early tea, the decision to "pull the plug" [Ed: pun *intended!*] was taken. Game abandoned.

### **The Shawholm XI progress in the Western Cup** [posted 11/05/14]



After yesterday's entire card of Western Cup group stage matches were washed out, the draw was made for the last sixteen knockout round. This saw *the 'Holmboys* land an away trip to Gourock Park to play Inverclyde on Sunday June the 8th. Last season saw a run to the quarter-finals in this competition where it took Hillhead's 1st XI to end the Shawholm boys' stay in the tournament.

### **Comfortable win on matchday two** [posted 03/05/14]

The Shawholm XI made the short trip to Renfrew today for the second group-stage match in this season's Western Cup. Their hosts were Deanpark at the King George V Playing Fields. Looking to bounce-back after last week's frustrating close defeat against Tiwood, the side was in the field first. There were four changes in the line up from seven days previously: Motassim, Abi, Scotty and Haider all coming in to the side. And it was Abi and Motassim who opened the bowling for *the 'Holmboys*; Black and the first of three Majeeds opening for the home side.

The breakthrough wasn't long in coming either, Abi dismissing Majeed without scoring to see the Renfrew side 0 for 1. Two wickets in the fifth over then saw the home side in more trouble at 16 for 3, Abi claiming what might be the fastest "3-for" of the season. A bit of stability was then restored as Black and Goodman added 15 for the fourth wicket, but when this developing partnership was broken by Motassim, wickets started falling at regular intervals again. 50 for 5 became 64 for 6, then 81 for 7 and 84 for 8. It looked like Deanpark might struggle to reach three figures at this juncture, but Phillips and Matsagar stuck in and took their team past 100. In fact they'd add 30 before Matsagar departed, a fourth for Abi and the first of two catches for Brian to finish the innings. The second saw Aliyan grab his second wicket of the innings as last man Majeed went for 0. In something of a spooky coincidence, the first wicket to fall was a Majeed for a duck, the last was a Majeed for a duck, and in the middle there was a third duck for the third Majeed. [Ed: wonder who gets the MoTM award in the house tonight?]

118 to win then and it was Brian and Dougie who spear-headed the run-chase. And a good steady start was achieved, nearly 50 being put on the 'board before the former was bowled by Khasiya for 24. Dougie's new partner was Scotty, making his 2014 debut, and he played in typically belligerent fashion to score an unbeaten run-a-ball 35 to see the side across the

finish line inside 25 overs. Dougie just missed his maiden Poloc half century, finishing 49 not out at the other end.

So a good win for *the 'Holmboys*, and importantly a quick bounce-back from last week's disappointment of "so near, yet so far" at Titwood on matchday one.

### **Defeat from the jaws of victory** [posted 26/04/14]

For long parts of this opening Western Cup group stage match it's fair to say that the good guys were in charge. Batting first their hosts - the Titwood XI - were 40 for 2 early on, before then slipping to 100 for 6. In amongst the early wickets were *Doogie*, Aliyan and Dougie, the latter then going on to record a "4-for" with what had been previously thought to be "occasional" spin. But after a "3-for" last week in the pre-season match and today's four, it seems Master Willoughby is, in fact, the club's premier wicket-taker! 4 for 32 in his eight overs was a good return, with Hasseeb and Noaman, both on competitive debut, bowling fourteen overs between them for just 33 runs in a really economic combined spell. There were also two run outs in the first innings, with Matty Stout and *Doogie* executing one each respectively. When the 240th legitimate delivery had been bowled, and "Time" was called, the *Dark Side* had posted 155 for 8. Likely this was a few more than 100 for 6 suggested could be racked up, but it was still, at less than 4-an-over, beatable. Tung had top-scored for Titwood with 30 not out, Forsyth's 20 being the only score to get to.....a score. 156 to win.

The run chase started well enough. Brian and *Rosco* put on 23 for the first wicket, the former being bowled by Ul Haq. *Rosco* however continued on, and after losing Dougie as a partner (bowled for 1), he put on 25 with the skipper before *DJ* departed for 19. 62 for 3. 33 runs were then added with partner number four, before it was *Rosco* who went with the score on 124. 95 for 4 then. 61 to win, six wickets in hand. "Toffee!" as a certain former member might say. Eh, no. Unless you mean the side would literally get stuck, as in sticky toffee! 124 for 5 then became for 6 when *Doogie* went for a near run-a-ball 46, and Noaman followed without scoring. Still 32 to get, but now just four wickets in hand.

Wickets and runs continued to be lost and accumulated respectively as the overs ticked by so that, with nine down, and Willie and Aliyan at the crease, 12 runs were still needed.

Chance for glory. And the glory was gained,.....by the Dark Side, Willie being run out by Forsyth to see the home side win by 9 runs. 10 runs of the win, and *the 'Holmboys* left to wonder how they missed out. The last six wickets had fallen for 22 runs, 124 for 4 becoming 146 all out. Ouch!

Some positives on the day however: firstly getting the game in when many other matches were cancelled. Secondly the first innings bowling from the majority of bowlers used.

*Rosco's* and *Doogie's* knocks were also good, though neither made the really big score that might have secured the win points. Something to build on certainly though.