

Defeat on the last game-day for the Under 13s [posted 03/09/14]

The Under 13s entertained Prestwick at Shawholm tonight in a rescheduled league match. The visitors had won the Under 13 League Cup final earlier in the week, and again played well in running out 35-run winners. After posting 133 for 4 batting first - with both Cole and Turner retiring after reaching 30 - the Ayrshire youngsters then restricted the 13s to 98 for 3. The second innings also saw a retiree however: Uzzair reaching 32 and then having to depart. There were also useful contributions from *Sobo* (15) and *Frugal* (13).

In the first innings the bowlers had all bowled well enough, with Cole and Turner both batting well. *Sobo* grabbed two of the four wickets to be taken, Uzzair getting one of the others and Hassaan executing a smart run out to dismiss Watson. Joe also bowled nicely, his three overs costing just 12. Defeat by 35 runs then, and maybe a flat finish to an otherwise promising season, after the defeat to Ayr earlier in the week in another rescheduled game. However the side - still very young and more often than not featuring seven or eight Under 11s - only lost three league games in total, and will finish the season in 3rd spot in the table. Much to be optimistic about therefore, and much to look forward to in season 2015!

15s win in double-quick time [posted 02/09/14]

Usually at this juncture in a season the fear when starting matches is that they end up finishing in the dark. This very thought was uppermost in the Under 15s' coaches' minds as they negotiated a reduced eighteen-overs-a-side match with their Prestwick counterparts. As it turned out however no-one need've had any concerns at all as, after having lost the toss, Abtaha's opposite number decided to have a bat first and then Prestwick proceeded to collapse to 25 all out. Yikes! In truth the home side comprised a young and inexperienced line-up, and after the top order struggled, the rest of the batting line up followed suit. Only Calan Turner, who faced 36 balls, really put up much resistance. He'd eventually be seventh out, as the 15s' used seven bowlers, all bar Bilal taking a wicket. But Bilal - who opened the bowling with Uzzair - hardly disappointed with the ball, returning figures of 3-3-0-0-. He bowled a good, tight, line and complemented the same from Uzzair. And if Bilal's numbers were economy personified, it was little brother Hamaad's 4 for 7 that took the main plaudits. 25 all out it was then, and so it was 26 to win. But before getting to the brief second innings, mention of some good fielding from the 15s. When your opposition collapses as Prestwick did it's sometimes hard to stay switched on. But not the 15s tonight. *CJ* took a "hanger" at backward point to get rid of Rao, and Abtaha held on to a couple of decent grabs at mid-off and mid-on respectively. *CJ*'s run out was also nicely executed.

So to the second half. Well maybe less a half, and more a sixth or so. Just 4.1 overs were needed by the 15s' batters to score the 26 needed for the win. *Ihty* winning it with a big 6. However, though the innings was short, it wasn't uneventful. Three wickets fell, as Aliyan and Abtaha who opened, and Ahmed-Raza who went first ball, were all back in the "hutch" before 17 was on the 'board. Extraordinary. After such a good - all-round - performance in the first innings, the run-chase was pretty shoddy. But a win's a win, and the positives far out-weighed the negatives. For Prestwick, hopefully tonight's game provides their youngsters with more experience of playing at an older age-group. And for Turner there was the positive of batting for some time, as well as returning impressive bowling figures of 2-0-5-2. And it was good that, after the game itself finished, both sides were happy to keep playing allowing more players to get a bat and a bowl. Always good to see.

18s in straight-forward win [posted 01/09/14]

It's probably fair to say that no-one predicted that the Hillhead|Renfrew combined Under 18 side were league title contenders at the start of the season. However, and fair play to them, they arrived at Shawholm tonight with only one league game to play having already secured the championship and as the only unbeaten side in the league. Contrast to the 18s who'd lost to Ferguslie on matchday one, and, later in the season, to *Drumps*. The combined side have benefited from the inclusion of Renfrew's "Overseas Amateur" as the only overseas player in the Under 18 League this year, as well as not missing any players through regional or national age-group commitments. However, all that said, they still had to go out and win

the ten games against the other competing sides. Tonight also saw the 18s at near full-strength, with only *Stouty* away.

After the toss, in what was an agreed reduced fifteen-overs-a-side match, the 18s were batting. And right from the get-go, the top order were on their games. Fifteen overs later only the one wicket had fallen - Owais for a run-a-ball 22 - and *Stiffy* and *Rosco* were unbeaten on 30 not out (51 balls) and 19 not out (17 balls) respectively. 92 for 1, or 6.1-an-over, a total boosted by the visitors conceding 21 in extras, including a whopping 21 in wides. 93 to win then, and as importantly a chance for the 18s to try and make the point that they are at least a good a side.

Mullen and "Overseas Amateur" Khan opened the batting for the *combo* side, *Hollywood* and *Ihty* starting with the new ball for the 18s. *Ihty* was quickly in to his stride, but *Hollywood* struggled. The combined side lost their first wicket on 16, and it was their talisman Khan who was out. *CJ* held on, standing up, to a nick off *Willowbobby's* bowling, Dougie having come in to the attack in place of Haider. This seemed to take the belief out of the run chase as Mullen went 13 runs later, another wicket for Dougie, this time James *the Elder* holding on to the catch. Graham had come in at three after Khan's departure, and he and Javed tried their best to up the rate, but the 18s' bowlers were having none of it. Javed was the more fluent, but he departed for 25 (29 balls), bowled by *Ihty*, and it was left to Graham with new partner Wilson, to try and complete a now-forlorn-looking chase. Both batted to the end, Graham finishing 15 not out (32 balls) and Wilson 3 not out (3 balls). Their side was 72 for 3, and the 18s had secured a comfortable 20-run win.

However, though the battle was won the 18s, the war had already been won by their opponents, the Hillhead|Renfrew boys having, as noted, already done enough to secure the league title. Congratulations to them. And here's a final - slightly ironic, maybe - point: the Under 18 League winners will have lost just one game, to us; and the Under 15 League winners will have lost just one game as well,.....guess who to?!? #grrrrr

Coming up just a wee bit short [posted 01/09/14]

The Under 13s were at New Cambusdoon this evening in the Under 13 League Cup. The game was also agreed to be a double-header, doubling as the rescheduled league match after the original match was postponed to accommodate *Eid* celebrations. The 13s lost the toss and were asked to field. Opening for Ayr were skipper Simpson, and Stribling. For the 13s it was the Shah boys who had the new [Ed: actually, not-so-new!] ball. And ball #1 brought drama as Simpson was hit on his pads, trapped on the crease. Big appeal....."Not out" was the decision. And it proved an important decision when, a number of overs later, Simpson retired having passed 30. Stribling, at the other end, didn't last as long however, being bowled by Uzzair for just 1. 15 for 1 at that point. Bhandari was the next batter and he, like Simpson, albeit without the benefit of a life, went on to retire having - in his case - reached 30. The two retirees had given their side a racing start, however after their respective departures, the 13s' bowlers restored order to proceedings and the run-rate started in to reverse. When the eighteenth over was completed (the game being a reduced eighteen-overs-a-side affair given the reduced daylight in September) Ayr had posted 114 for 4. Aside Simpson and Bhandari getting to 30, the next best individual score was Porter's 7 not out. For the 13s, Uzzair, *Sobo*, *Jamesy* and Nabeel had a wicket each, and mention of Uzzair's two catches - one of which was a one-handed "screamer" - and Abdul's grab to get rid of Hendrikse. 115 to win.

The run-rate required was basically a run-a-ball. Not exactly, but simple enough for the 13s to understand! And the run chase started well, well that is after Abdul had gone cheaply, caught and bowled by Bhandari. However Uzzair (30, retired) and *Sobo* (21), aided and abetted by a sprinkling of extras, kept things ticking over such that after nine overs - halfway - the 13s were 58 for 1, needing 57 to win. So far, so - very - good! Uzzair then had to depart after reaching 30, and when *Sobo* was caught behind by Simpson to give Bhandari another wicket the momentum of the 13s' reply was lost. Hamaad was also cleaned up by

Hall for a *Webbed Feet Award* entry, and Joe, after starting briskly with a 4 through backward square-leg, became another Bhandari victim, cleanly bowled by Ayr's strike bowler who'd reverted to bowling *offys* after starting as a seamer! The rest of the 13s' middle order tried manfully [Ed: should that not be youthfully?] to get the remaining required runs, but as each over ticked by the requirement upped. The last over saw 19 needed, and they weren't scored, Ayr running out winners by 18 runs.

So a good game, competitive, and in the balance until relatively late on. The difference between the sides on the night were few, the home side's two high-scoring batters just managing to get those few extra runs. However with nine of the 13s bowling, and 21 runs being gifted in wides, it could be argued the whole team had the opportunity to have changed the result. And therein lies the challenge!

Twilight thriller [posted 27/08/14]

In the end it was an off-drive from *Stiffy* that went to the mid-off boundary that sealed a six-wicket win for the Under 18s tonight in Ayr. However that sentence doesn't do this game justice as it ebbed and flowed between the two competing teams.

After it the toss it was the home side who decided to bat first, and it was eighteen overs-a-side. The 18s looked like they'd made a decent start too, as two overs in they'd restricted Ayr to just 7 for 0. However they'd already dropped opposition skipper Henderson, Aliyan grassing a chance off *Ihty*. Would it cost the side? Answer: yes! Henderson went on to score 36, his side's second-highest score. The top-score gong went to fellow opener Azeem who, like Henderson, capitalised from being dropped, to go on and score 39 from just 35 balls. Azeem's life came courtesy of *Beast* making a *Horlicks* of an attempt at wide long-on, running under the cherry as it zero'd in on the spot he'd likely been standing on before he decided to run in. 🤔 But the Ayr opening partnership was eventually broken, *Willowbobby* enticing the mistake from Azeem to see him play on. 74 for 1 in the twelfth. Ayr, with Khan in at three, must've still had three figures plus in their thoughts at this juncture though, not least with Henderson still there and "in". But then Khan went first ball, chipping a *Hollywood* delivery to *Beast* who hung on this time. 74 for 0 was now 75 for 2. Then it was - wait for it..... - 79 for 6! Khan's duck was matched by Henderson and Cooper, whilst Craig came and went for just 2. Incredible. And the Collapse didn't stop there, 79 for 6 becoming 83 for 8! And then 7 runs later, and off the last ball of the innings, the home side were all out. 90 all out. *Willowbobby* had a "3-for", *Ihty* and *Hollywood* a brace each. In fact, aside *Beast's* four overs going at 6s and Aliyan's two costing 18, all the 18s' bowler did their jobs. And mention in despatches for *CJ* who executed a smart stumping to get rid of Craig, and then calmly ran out Hendrikse on the last ball of the innings.

The chase for the 91 runs needed started with Owais and *Stiffy*. Owais started fluently, but would fall first, holing out to a high, one-handed screamer of a catch by Taylor at mid-wicket. An astonishing grab! Owais out for 10. *Rosco* then joined *Stiffy* and, like Owais, started in a hurry. His 10 saw him face just five balls, but unfortunately [Ed: "unfortunately" being the polite word for "brainlessly"!] holed out to Hendrikse off Henderson's bowling when attempting to hit his third leg-side boundary of the over! *Ya diddy!* *Rosco* gone, *Willowbobby* to the crease. 28 for 2 in the fourth was the scoreboard readout. Up with the required rate then, and seemingly comfortably on track. But not for long. Dougie really struggled to rotate the strike, and he'd crawl his way to 9 from 25 deliveries before being stumped by Cooper attempting to come down the track to Hendrikse for the *nth* time,.....and failing. 66 for 3, but now into the fourteenth over. *Beast* was batter #5 and some momentum was needed. Luckily *Beast* was in the mood and he hit a run-a-ball 11 to swing the pendulum back in the 18s' favour. And *Stiffy* was - crucially - still there. Like Dougie, Elliott struggled to rotate the strike - dotting-up 25 times in 45 balls faced - but, unlike Dougie, he managed to put the bad ball away, scoring six 4s in his eventual unbeaten 40. And it was *Stiffy* and *CJ* who were the batters in the middle when the eighteenth and last over was to be bowled. By now it was dark,.....*really* dark! Khan was the bowler. Ball one saw a bye run and it was 4 to win. Ball two was a dot as Elliott played and missed. But ball

three saw the win secured, it being the ball struck through mid-off to the boundary. *The 'Loc* win! *Stiffy* 40 not out, *CJ* with a sheriff too, 3 not out. Good stuff, an exciting finish, and - as importantly - a game played in the right spirit.

13s sneak home [posted 25/08/14]

There was a thrilling end to the Under 13s' match with Glasgow Accies this evening. Needing 32 runs with only three wickets in hand but with 30 balls to be bowled, *Accies'* number nine Wolfson suddenly exploded in to action and hit a 6 and a 4 in over sixteen. And from assuming they were undramatically moving towards the win, the 13s were suddenly looking rattled. 32 from 30 had become 21 from 24, and Wolfson was obviously seeing the wee red ball pretty clearly despite the gathering gloom. Over seventeen then saw Joe bowl four wides - and at 2 runs a-piece - 8 of the 21 runs needed had been accumulated by the *Accies'* tail-enders. Three overs - just eighteen balls - to go, and the equation was now just 13 runs needed. The skipper decided he'd bowl over nineteen. Balls one, two and three and were dots, but ball four went.....for a 4! 9 runs needed, fifteen balls to bowl. Then: wicket! Dangerman Wolfson bowled by an Uzzair slower ball. Last wicket stand! And 9 were still needed as the penultimate over started. This time the bowler was *Sobo*. Forst ball: dot. Second ball, bat on ball and the batters are running. *Sobo*, following through, scooped up the ball and whilst everyone else stopped - including *Accies'* number eleven White! - he proceeded to shell the ball at the striker's end stumps - the only one he could aim at - and when ball hit stump it was all over. White run out without scoring, the 13s win by 8 runs. What a finish!

The 99 for 4 posted, and ultimately defended,.....just, was only possible after Abdul (21*) and Samee (14) had put on 45 for the fourth wicket to rebuild the innings after Hamaad (4), *Sobo* (8) and Uzzair (4) had all been dismissed cheaply. 32 for 3 didn't look good, but the Under 11 duo of Samee and Abdul batted really well to enable a decent total to be posted. Mention too of Joe's cameo 13* from just ten deliveries in the last couple of overs, runs that proved vital in the final analysis. With the ball, in *that* dramatic second innings, Uzzair took 3 for 20 and Hamaad took 3 for 13. *Sobo*, too, was in the wickets, returning figures of 3.2.1-10-2. Hassaan was the other wicket-taker, and also held on to a good catch to dismiss *Accies'* skipper Robinson.

Under 18s win at a canter at New Anniesland [posted 25/08/14]

The Under 18s seem to be just getting in to their stride,.....as the season nears its end! Tonight - the first of three matches scheduled this week - saw a straight-forward win over the river at New Anniesland against Glasgow Accies. Set 76 to beat their hosts in a reduced fifteen-overs-a-side match, the 18s secured a nine-wicket win, accumulating the required runs inside twelve overs. Owais was 28 not out, *Rosco* was unbeaten on 14, *Stiffy* (17) the batter out.

The target of 76 came about after Glasgow Accies posted 75 in their innings. Two wickets were lost *en route* to this by the home side, Satpute going caught and bowled by *Beast*, and Oliver departing courtesy of a grab by Aliyan off *The Enforcer's* bowling. Moir - with 42 - top-scored and it was his knock that meant any kind of total was posted. Top bowling performances were returned by *Ihty* and Aliyan who, though both wicket-less, returned combined figures of 6-2-16-0. A good win therefore, and decent run out in advance of Wednesday's rescheduled game with Ayr, and Friday's rescheduled clash with surprise table-toppers, the Hillhead|Renfrew combined team.

15s cruise to win at Hughenden [posted 22/08/14]

Abtaha Maqsood was skipper on the night as the 15s were again Friday night league action, this time over at Hughenden, taking on Hillhead on their artificial wicket. After the toss the 15s were batting first, and the skipper opened up with Abdullah. However the latter's stay in the middle lasted just the ten deliveries before he was trapped LBW by Ali. 2 for 2. Abataha was then joined by Amaan, and the two put on 47 for the second wicket, both getting past 20 in the process. However the run-rate - whilst not pedestrian in what had been agreed as

an eighteen-overs-a-side game - required to be upped, and after Amaan departed for 23 (39 balls), this was what happened. *Gary* hit a brisk 16 from eleven balls (including a maximum) and then *Ihty* scored a few at a-run-a-ball. 84 for 4 posted. Abtaha had top-scored with 30 (45 balls). Hillhead would need 85 to win.

The second innings saw a re-jig of duties for the 15s, Aliyan donning the mitts, and *CJ* rolling his arm over. Opening the attack were Bilal and Uzzair. And it was the former who ripped through the home side line-up, Bilal grabbing 4 for 8 in just four overs, all four wickets see the batter bowled! A great spell. Uzzair wouldn't be as lucky, his four seeing him finish wicketless, though economical. The other four wickets to go down were shared around - one each for Hamaad, *CJ* and Owais, with one home wicket coming by way of run out, *Ihty* running out Ayub Khan for 3. At 18 for 4 with the heart ripped out of Hillhead's top order it was always going to be hard for the 15s' hosts to chase down the required runs. And so it was as their innings petered out to finish on 46 for 8, handing the 15s a 38-run victory.

Dark Side defeated [posted 22/08/14]

Toytown was the venue tonight for the latest southside derby between the *Rebel Alliance* and the *Evil Empire*, and the good news is that the good guys won! But only just!! In the tightest of finishes, the 11s sneaked home in their run-chase by just the 1 run. It really was a nail-biter as *Sobo* and Abdul slowly-but-surely - batting as the last pair - caught closer and closer to their target of net 75. When they came to crease there was still much to do, the preceding three pairings having mustered net 38 between them, meaning 37 was still needed. Over sixteen saw 8 runs scored, and crucially no wickets lost, before over seventeen saw another 9 runs gathered. Game on! 9 runs from over eighteen, but just the 5 from the penultimate over, meant that 6 were needed from the final six deliveries. And so when ball two went for a boundary 4 - pulled through square-leg by *Sobo* - the pendulum had swung very firmly in the 11s' favour. And it proved a good indicator of the end result as the remaining, required, 2 runs were scored from the last four balls to secure the narrowest of wins. Also in the runs earlier in the innings had been Hassaan Mehmood, whose net 14 proved important at the start of the run-chase.

Going further back, 75 was the target after the 11s had restricted the *Dark Side* to 95 for 4 in their innings, with *Sobo* the pick of the bowlers, returning 4-0-14-2. Though Hassaan, again, contributed, his four overs seeing just 9 runs scored off them. He also executed a run out - one of the four dismissals - getting rid of Sachin Baines. So a good win, on a pretty reasonable late August evening. The win sees the 11s "do the double" over the *Evil Empire's* youngest this season. Now isn't that just dandy! 🤔

Under 18s win close one at Glenpark [posted 18/08/14]

The strength in depth of the junior section was again evidence this evening as an Under 18 side minus senior players *Rosco*, *Ihty*, Owais, Yashy and Dougie won by 9 runs in a closely-fought league game at Glenpark. Batting first the 18s posted 119 for 5 in their reduced eighteen-over allocation, *Stiffy* top-scoring with 37, and *CJ* (24), *Beast* (21), Aliyan (15*) and Bilal (13*) all chipping in with cameos. And as importantly, none of the batters got stuck, the combined total of 73 from the four batters scoring cameos coming from just 54 deliveries! Elliott's 37 was also at nearly a-run-a-ball too. 119 was good score, but would still need some defending, and some smart captaincy.

Hollywood and Aliyan opened the attack after the break, bowling to Gilmour and Briggs. Both were, however, expensive, (their combined eight overs costing 59). The first four they bowled between them saw the combined side race to 23 for 0. What was now really important therefore was some control. Ahmed-Raza and *Beast* were brought in to the attack in search of this, and the two slow bowlers bowled nicely in tandem. 23 for 0 after four becoming 37 for 0 after nine. At this the halfway stage *The Enforcer* was thrown the ball, Rob' bowling in partnership with - first - *Gary* and - then - *Hollywood* in the crucial middle overs. And it was Haider who took the first wicket, bowling Briggs for 22. Briggs had batted patiently as always, but the fact he'd used up 34 balls might, in hindsight, be interpreted as

too slow given the target being chased. O'Connell was the new batter in, and he was immediately more positive, scoring at comfortably more than a-run-a-ball. 65 for 1 had also become 67 for 2 as Briggs' opening partner Gilmour was dismissed by the *James Gang*, caught *CJ*, bowled *Beast* for 40 (43 balls). Gilmour's departure brought Ware to the middle and he and O'Connell would see out the remaining overs. The last over saw 21 needed, and Aliyan was bowling. 5 off the first three balls swung the pendulum in favour of the 18s, and two dots on balls four and five secured the win. With the tension released it was then maybe not a huge surprise when Ware despatched the last ball of the match for a maximum. 110 for 2 the final score, and a good win - by 9 runs - for the 18s. *Stiffy* had led from the front with his 37, before then marshalling the troops well in the second innings to defend the total posted.

13s cruise to straight-forward win [posted 18/08/14]

It was a chilly autumnal-feeling evening at Shawholm tonight, but this didn't seem to put off the Under 13s as they ran out nine-wicket winners against their visitors from Glenpark. After the toss, Uzzair decided to field first. He and *Sobo* then opened the attack for the 13s, with Fischer-Keogh and Forrest the Greenock side's opening combo. Tight opening overs saw Greenock restricted to just 8 runs in the first four overs, and Uzzair had made a breakthrough too, getting Forrest to mis-time a shot to short cover where *Sobo* held on. This brought Love to the middle [Ed: we know, we know, there's a rubbish gag in there somewhere!] Love and Fischer-Keogh then added 9 for the second wicket, the latter being cleaned up by Hamaad. 11 for 2. Young Fischer-Keogh was digging in though, and though he struggled to rotate the strike he proved difficult to dislodge, eventually retiring hurt after smashing the ball in to his own foot! 🤕 His 2 runs had, however, eaten up 45 deliveries. New batter Wilson, batting at four, was however faring better. He scored relatively fluently, hitting four 4s on the way to top-scoring with 21 (27 balls). His dismissal in the seventeenth brought Joe his wicket, as the 13s' *leggie* returned the impressive figures of 3-0-5-1. When the last of their twenty overs had been bowled Greenock had mustered 62 for 4, with only Wilson reaching double figures. The 13s had bowled pretty well, all ten outfielders rolling their arms over, and Nabeel taking the other catch to be held. 63 to win.

As it was the run-chase proved uneventful, with Uzzair (26*) and *Sobo* (22) doing most of the damage. They put away the bad balls well, and - in fact - *Sobo* was a little unlucky to be dismissed when he pulled McWhirter, hard, straight to Love at short mid-wicket, the ball basically thudding in to Love's midrift, where it was clung on to. A good reaction grab. *Sobo's* departure gave Hamaad the chance of *sheriff* which he duly took. The winning runs were scored in the tenth over to give the 13s a convincing win. But, boy, was it cold!

Under 15s lose to West [posted 16/08/14]

Tonight saw West of Scotland's Under 15s visit in the league. And they'd return back over the river with the win points after a closely-fought game in which - ultimately - the failure to hold on to catches coupled with none of the batters who got in going on and making a "score" would come back to haunt the 15s. After posting 102 for 8, a total that had been accumulated at a regular pace pretty much throughout, the 15s couldn't quite defend what they'd posted, losing with eight balls to spare. For the 15s, *Ihty* top-scored with 22 from 28 balls batting at three, with *CJ* (19 from 37), Owais (18 from 20) and Aliyan (14 from 14) all getting starts. Aliyan was then the pick of the bowlers, returning figures of 3-0-5-0 [Ed: though inexplicably not bowling his full four-over spell!], with *Ihty* running him close with 2 for 9 from the four overs he bowled.

In his match summary, David James noted, "Dropped catches cost us tonight, simple as that. We actually bowled pretty well and only 5 extras are testimony to that. Our bowlers bowled well up-front, Aliyan three overs for 5 and *Ihty* four overs, 2 for 9. *West* only really had two contributions with the bat, McCallum swung from the hip from ball one and got 50, and Angus Guy batted slowly and patiently for 30-odd not out. He was dropped on nothing by *Ihty* at cover off Aliyan though, and McCallum chipped *Ihty* to mid-off ball #1. Hamaad didn't even move! 🤕 McCallum was then dropped a further three times: by Bilal and Abdullah at

mid-off, and Aliyan a difficult chance at mid-wicket before Aliyan took the most difficult chance of the lot (!) to eventually dismiss him. Catching practice was actually decent on Wednesday night! There also to be a bit of bowler mis-management at the end when *West* needed 8 off last two overs with Angus Guy batting with the tail. Rumours of an Antipodean-inspired decision by Owais to bowl *Sobo* and leave Aliyan to bowl over twenty, however by ball four of over nineteen it was "Game over"! *Aaaargh*, the most economical bowler on the night doesn't bowl his full allocation! 😞 And perhaps our only chance of winning, by then, was getting Angus Guy out. Always easy from the sidelines of course!

"Batting-wise our top four all batted well but none of them went on to post a significant score. Both *Ihty* and Aliyan contrived to get out to Wainwright who ended up getting a "4 for". Overall, definitely an opportunity lost!"

18s win in Ayrshire [posted 14/08/14]

After Monday's big win in Uddingston, tonight saw the Under 18s secure back-to-back wins, again winning convincingly, this time in Prestwick. After a somewhat delayed arrival [Ed: ask Coach Young why! 😞] the 18s were batting and skipper-on-the-night *Rosco* and Owais were the openers. The Prestwick side they were facing was a young and relatively inexperienced one, with Rao away playing for Scotland Under 17s, and established Under 18 performers Pettigrew and Cairns unavailable. The hosts' side therefore featured a number of Prestwick's promising Under 13s and 15s.

The openers got off to a flyer in the reduced sixteen-overs-a-side match, racing to 25 for 0 after just two overs. And this set the tone for the whole innings. Both batters were particularly harsh on any wayward deliveries, hitting 26 4s and a 6 in the innings as both carried their bats. For much of the sixteen overs the two match each other run-for-run, however as the final third approached it was *Rosco* who accelerated. And as the remaining overs ticked down, it was clear that he might, just *might*, reach a century. However, and agonisingly so, the skipper would finish 96 not out. Owais was far from a slouch either, finishing unbeaten on 73. *Rosco* had faced 52 balls, and Owais 44. 185 for 0 was the final score posted, with none of the home bowlers' figures really looking too good. McCreath's 4-0-28-0 was the best of an expensive bunch.

In the second innings, having posted such a big score, *Rosco* was able to rotate his bowlers, and seven rolled their arms over. *Amaan* and *The Enforcer* both grabbed a brace of wickets, with Ahmed-Raza and *Beast* getting one each. In the end seven wickets had been taken - the seventh being a run out executed by Owais. 58 for 7 was the home side's innings score to leave the 18s winners by 97 runs .

Good win on bad night [posted 11/08/14]

The Under 18s went to Uddingston this evening to take on a young Bothwell Castle Policies side. On a dark, damp and cold night they succeeded in returning with the win points. But, at least for a time, getting any sort of result from this game was very much in doubt. Two sharp rain showers drove the players and umpires from the ground, and threatened to put paid to the chances of completing the game. But *Uddy* folk are made of sterner stuff than most and it takes more than rain to call a halt to proceedings in Lanarkshire!

After the toss the 18s were batting first. *CJ* and *Stiffy* opened for the side and put on 47 for the first wicket, just missing out on a 50 partnership when the skipper mis-timed a legside shot and was caught off a leading edge by 'keeper Allan running out towards covers. His 28 had come at more than a run-a-ball, and his dismissal brought Owais to the wicket. He looked in great nick from the start and quickly found the boundary rope on a regular basis as he and *CJ* - who was rotating the strike nicely - pushed the score past 100. In fact they'd put on 88 before, with just a ball left - Calum was run out. Owais by this point had, himself, moved past 50, and would finish unbeaten on 72 (43 balls, and including eight 4s and a couple of 6s). 137 for 2 was the final score, a stiff target for the 18s' youthful hosts.

With time having been lost due to the rain breaks, *Stiffy* opted for a near all-slow bowling attack as *Hollywood*, *Beast* and Ahmed-Raza each bowled their full allotments. And they bowled well, returning figures of 11-4-15-2. They bowled decent length and lines, and the lack of pace on the ball made scoring on the by-now sticky wicket pretty Hard. And with a wet ball the slow bowlers' efforts are all the more creditable. The other bowlers who rolled their arms over were *Ihty*, *Amaan*, the *Enforcer* and *Aliyan*. Uddingston's batters never really got going in their run-chase, and ended up 43 for 4 to see the 18s record a 94-run win.

11s lose in a nail-biter [posted 01/08/14]

Tonight's Under 11 match went down to the wire. The 11s had batted first, lost seven wickets *en route* to posting net 79 under the pairs scoring system, and had Prestwick 119 for 8 (also net 79) with a ball to bowl. *Sobo* was the bowler and Mitchell the Prestwick batter. It was simple: a dot saw a tie, any run saw the visitors win it, and a wicket would result in the 11s securing a last-gasp victory. As it was Mitchell got "bat on ball" and he and partner Walsh made it their respective "other" ends to cue Ayrshire celebrations. The narrowest of wins.

In the first innings, *Sobo* (20*), *Samee* (18*) and *Abdul* (10*) had each made useful contributions in the second half of the 11s' innings after a shaky start had seen seven wickets fall in the first ten overs. Morrison was the main wicket-taker for Prestwick, demonstrating again that he's got a pretty decent future in MLB. 😊 His "5-for" was the stand-out wicket-taking performance, Tennant's figures of 4-0-10-2 being - by contrast - the best bowling performance of the innings. 😊



Morrison also demonstrated decent hockey skills in the second innings, bunting an impressive 58 (63 out once), a knock that included nine 4s and four 6s, and that had - see his wagon wheel - whatever cows were in their eponymous corner running for cover! Aside Morrison's score there was a second exhibition of bunting from Mitchell - the eventual winning run scorer - who made 19 not out. For the 11s Nabeel hung on to a couple of good grabs, though three were grassed, proving costly. With the ball in hand the 11s' bowlers demonstrated good control, bowling just the eight wides to Prestwick's 22, something that actually probably counted against them, their much straighter bowling being more readily despatched by Master Morrison and Master Mitchell. So defeat, but good signs, and as ever in close games, all the players can feel they could have likely found that 1 run that would've made the difference.

Under 13s exit the cup [posted 24/07/14]

Tonight's action saw the Under 13s lose out to Prestwick in the second round of this season's Scottish Cup. Batting second, the 13s made a decent fist of chasing a whopping target of 151. Eventually they'd finish 32 runs short, but it was a pretty good effort. Of course the first half wasn't so smart, with the side letting Prestwick get away to a flyer and then not managing to peg them back. Three of the visitors' top four retired after getting to 30, and though Uzzair rotated the bowlers well none really managed to apply the brakes to the run-rate. A lightning-fast outfield meant there was good value on offer for shots, 150 for 5 being the final scoreboard total.

In the run-chase the 13s got off to a flyer too, Joe and Hamaad racing to 29 for 0 inside four overs. The openers were helped by some wayward bowling, something that lasted throughout the innings, no fewer than 40 in extras being gifted. Joe was first out though with the score on 29, followed by Hamaad 16 runs later. Hamaad was trapped LBW by *McBeth*, Joe was bowled by *Turner*. 6 runs were then added by *Abdul* and *Abdullah*, the latter batting at three. *Abdullah* was then fourth out, having hung around well though struggling a little to get off strike, his 6 taking him 24 deliveries to accumulate. Four down the batters who found themselves together were the *Shah* boys, and they'd see out the rest of the overs, adding 54 in just over six overs. *Uzzair* finished 24 not out (24 balls) and *Sobo*

23 not out (27 balls). 118 for 4 was the final score, 32 short of Prestwick's total, and 33 runs short of the winning post.

So a cup exit, but no disgrace for this young side.

Same old [posted 21/07/14]

A few weeks ago Drumpellier rocked up to play the Under 18s in the Scottish Cup, and the 18s failed to chase a perfectly straight-forward target. Spin forward to tonight's league encounter and it was a feeling of *deja vu* that swept of your scribe as he watched history repeat itself. As last time, the *Drumps'* innings centered on just one knock of substance, and again it was Sajjad who contributed it. He'd eventually swing and miss at three consecutive deliveries in the eighteenth over, before being stumped by *CJ* off the fourth to depart for 47, leaving Muir and Qasim to scurry a few more runs and allow *Drumps* to post 105 for 5. Hardly threatening on a big ground with a lightning-fast outfield. Yet, somehow, the 18s contrived to lose this one. How? Well there are 74 reasons why,.....all of them dots! And the "dotting-up" started right from the start. The top four managed 56 dot balls between them as they amassed just 34 runs off 78 deliveries. And from this point on it was always going to be tricky. The middle order of *CJ*, *Ihty* and *Hollywood* were left way too much to do, but at least the latter two managed to rotate the strike, and up the run-rate. Between them they scored 49 off just 39 balls, though even they managed to fourteen dot balls too. It really is the blight on the 18s' game, waiting for the bad ball and then bunting 4s and 6s, instead of positively rotating the strike and accumulating steadily. And from the get-go.

The first half had seen a mixed bag from the 18s too. *Ihty* (4-1-9-0) and the *Enforcer* (4-0-15-1) had bowled well, and *Hollywood* had grabbed a couple of early wickets as he returned figures of 2 for 21. *Beast*, in the only two overs he bowled, was also effective, taking for 1 for 6. In the field, though, it was a lack-lustre affair, with more than one mis-field, and more than one instance of day-dreaming. The field positions were also - at times - a bit adventurous and bit naive, particularly given the length of time *Drumps'* opener was in, and his limited scoring options and zones. Remember, "it's a thinking game"! So a second league defeat, and by just the 12 runs. And when losing by such a small margin it's safe to say that everyone's culpable, and everyone - between them - could've easily changed defeat in to victory. Just 1 run each - saved or scored - and it's a tie, no worse! Time'll tell whether the *Invincibles* will learn.

11s win against the Ayrshire-men [posted 18/07/14]

Jamesy grabbed himself a "5-for", and with it a place on the [Junior Honours Board](#) and the matchball, in tonight's big win over the Irvine|Kilmarnock combined side. But his heroics with the ball would come after 160 for 4 had been posted batting first. Much of the big score was due to the visitors' wayward bowling, extras totalling an enormous 80! However there were also decent individual scores too: Hassaan, Samee, *Sobo* and Abdul all got in to double figures, and no fewer than fifteen 4s were struck. In the second innings, *Jamesy's* "5-for" was the undoubted highlight, but Ubaid-Raza was amongst the wickets, taking 3 for 4. In fact all the bowlers bar Moiz helped themselves to at least one wicket, with a couple of well-executed run outs being thrown in for good effect too. Samee and Andrew were the fielders, both making good throws into Abdul's gloves, who completed the tasks! This was Abdul's best game with the gloves, in addition to his two run outs he kept a "clean sheet" as regards byes. Well done to him.

Kwik Cricket news [posted 13/07/14]



Shawholm was the venue for the latest WDJCU Under 10 "Kwik Cricket" festival this morning, and the club was delighted to host no fewer than eleven clubs. The usual #bluebatbedlam ensued with orange balls flying to all parts as ever. *The 'Loc* Under 10s ended up playing three matches, winning all three. Well, actually, as Grant Cathcart noted in his report, "It all gets a bit complicated..."! Doesn't it always! 😊 What Grant means is that when Moiz and Momin arrived after the matches had started, instead of joining their Poloc club-mates, they actually helped boost the ranks of the opposition each time! Confused? So are we! But great fun in the sun was had by all, and next up on the festival rota this season is Prestwick in seven days time. Thanks as ever to Grant for his organisation of our Under 10s.

Under 15s win friendly [posted 11/07/14]

The Under 15s were over at Meikleriggs this evening, taking on Ferguslie in a friendly - the Paisley club having withdrawn from the league earlier this season. Batting first, a slightly re-jigged line-up posted 131 for 4, with *CJ* top-scoring with a well-made unbeaten 44, and getting good support from Amaan (24) and *Sobo* (17*). *Ihty* also chipped in with a late innings cameo 15 from eight balls. *CJ*'s innings was impressive in that it started hesitantly, Calum not getting off the mark for sixteen balls. But he didn't panic, nor try any rash shots, instead biding his time to get in. His 44 which came off a total of 50 deliveries, therefore came off just 34 once he got up-and-running. There's a lesson in this for a few others methinks! 131 it was. 132 to win.

The Ferguslie reply got off to a disastrous start when Tahir was bowled first ball he faced, leaving Khan with a new companion in the shape of Ahmad. These two then set about the 15s' bowling, and ten overs in the home side had accumulated 60. However two more wickets had fallen. Ahmad was smartly run out by *CJ*, and a second Tahir had been bowled by Ahmed-Raza. But the big-hitting Khan was still there, and looked threatening. He'd reach 43 (from just 34 balls) when his luck finally ran out. *Sobo* was into the attack from the top end, and he enticed the thinnest of edges to *CJ* standing up, and Khan was gone. Credit to him for walking, too. And with him went - realistically - the Ferguslie chances of securing a win. The rest of the order tried hard, but as the run-rate rose so the wickets fell, the side eventually being dismissed for 89 in the twentieth over, to give the 15s the win.

A good game, in great weather, at a good club. What could be better?

How did that one get away? [posted 03/07/14]

The Under 18s somehow threw away the chance to progress in this season's Scottish Cup this evening against *Drumps* in truly astonishing circumstances. In the field first, the 18s allowed former team-mate Sajjad to score 52 out of the visitors' eventual total of 119 all out. After surviving a confident stumping appeal, Sajjad, after starting slowly, then bunted a couple of 6s to get going, but was then dropped twice *en route* to his half-century. He was aided by fellow opener Hamilton who scored 35. Aside these two none of the other batters got more than 6, five failing to score at all. A bizarre scorecard. Lob in the usual Poloc generosity as regards wides and no balls - 10 of the former in this game - and 119 was a bundle more than the Langloan side should've posted. But, hey-ho. For *the 'Locsters* there was a "5-for" for *The Robster* to get his name on the [Juniors Honours Board](#), and *Ihty* and *Hollywood* returned figures of 4-0-12-0- and 4-0-13-0 respectively.

So 120 to win, or 119 would do if the side wasn't all out. A good steady start needed, bat the overs, and keep wickets in hand. Easy-peasy as we sometimes say in these reports. And easy-peasy it was,.....until over sixteen. Fifteen overs in and it was 98 for 2. Just 21 more needed from 30 balls, and eight wickets in hand. Perfect. Until that is something untoward happened. For some unknown reason the bright and positive strikeplay, calling and running simply evaporated and *Mr Dot* entered the building. Of the last 30 balls bowled only nine -

yes, 9! - were scored off. 🤔 How is that possible. And it should be noted that one of said scoring balls was when a *Drumps* fielder threw the ball in to the 'keeper only for it to miss everyone and go for 4 overthrows! So really one eight balls were scored off. The hard work of chasing a-run-a-ball had been done, all that was needed was to hit the ball and run. Instead batters alternately patted back deliveries, or tried to heave balls into the trees. There were even - your scribe kids you not - a couple of *bona fide* "leaves" thrown in. End result: 5 runs short of the win, and the *Invincibles* yet again failing to deliver. We christened this side the *Invisibles* after their week one implosion against Ferguslie, however maybe *Indescribables* might be more apt!

It's probably worth noting who scored a few for the 18s, notwithstanding the eventual team defeat. Owais made 30 (40 balls), and *Ihty* scored 45 (40 balls).

Tonight's defeat leaves the 18s just next week's *Frank Smith Trophy* to aim for on the cup competition front. Here's hoping for a bit more nous.

18s secure back-to-back wins [posted 30/06/14]

Both sides tonight were missing players through holiday absence and/or rep' game selection, and so it was - in fact - a pretty well-balanced pair of sides from *West* and the club that took to the field at Shawholm. The 18s bowled first and quickly had their visitors in trouble, reducing them to 21 for 3. However a recovery followed, and Farndale's 50, batting at four, was the main reason that *West* posted a credible total. 98 all out in fact. Not bad when the next best individual contribution after Farndale's 50, was 12 from former Poloc player Nair. [Ed: good to see you back Gopi!] For the 18s, Bilal Anwar took the opportunity afforded by others' absences to take the bowling plaudits with 4 for 34. There were also a brace of wickets, each, for *Hollywood* and Mr Run Out! 99 to win.

If the *West* innings started poorly, at 44 for 3 it could be argued *the 'Locsters'* innings hadn't started much better. But *Stiffy* was still in. In fact he'd near single-handedly win the game for his side, scoring 58 for 48 balls as others floundered around him. He'd not bat through, but did all but. Ten 4s were struck in his innings, but it would be *Hollywood* and *The Robster* who'd be at the crease when the winning runs were scored, the finish line being reached in the nineteenth over. A good win given the stretched player pool, and congratulations to Bilal (on the "4-for") and *Stiffy* (on his half century) in particular.

Under 13s win well [posted 30/06/14]

This was a good game to win, not least after the disappointment of quite a heavy defeat at *Toytown* last week. The 13s were at the city's second-best club - West of Scotland - tonight, on league duty, and returned with the win! After losing three quick wickets to the sharp seam bowling of home side skipper Barrett however, the win looked a long way off. Uzzair played back and tried to pull a Barrett delivery and was bowled by one that kept pretty low, then Hamaad and Joe were cleaned up by Barrett's extra pace. Yikes! However with the change in the bowling came some calm, and *Sobo* was showing his ability with the blade having survived Barrett's early onslaught, and was slowly building a score. He'd eventually retire having reached 30, and having had Abdul for company for much of the time he was in middle. Abdul then batted with Samee, before being run out. Then it was a case of Samee, Hassaan and Nabeel scoring as many runs as they could as the innings reached its conclusion to allow a defensible total to be posted. And they succeeded in this, eventually posting 91 for 5. Not huge, but defensible. *Sobo's* 30 not out was the standout knock.

Then in the second innings - and with a sense of *deja vu* - the home side also found themselves with *hee-haw* on the 'board but three wickets down. 27 for 3 to be exact. And it was Hamaad that was doing the damage with his offs. He'd had a first-baller in the 13s' innings and so had something to prove. And how. He'd end up with a "4-for" ripping the middle order out, and - aided by good support in the field [Ed: though the *West* seemed somewhat reluctant to run at all, at times!] - he led the side's successful defence of that 91. 59 all out in fact was all *West* could muster, the end coming when Deane was run out by

Joe. A good win then, and importantly an instant bounce-back from last Monday's heavy defeat.

Kwik Cricket news [posted 29/06/14]



Greenock was the venue for today's Under 10 Kwik Cricketers, and, as always, Grant Cathcart reports, "We were at Greenock today in the sunshine, and teamed up with three over-agers from East Kilbride. We made the older boys bat left-handed, or only score on the offside, as well as scoring just the 1 for boundaries, but - still - had three great, winning, games against East Kilbride (though we were docked more runs when Matthew from *EK* bowled out his wee sister!), Uddingston (featuring a player smaller and fiercer than Ubaid [Ed: go figure!], and hosts Greenock. Callum Smith batted really straight and Andrew Harden continues to find the boundary."

Under 15s humbled [posted 27/06/14]

It's been a tough week for the Under 15s. Seven days ago all was well in the 15s' garden: unbeaten and top-of-the-league, still in the Scottish Cup, and with three internationalists and numerous regional and area squad players in their ranks! All was well in the world! But what a difference a week makes. First the holiday season kicked in, or maybe we should say, kicked *us*! Aliyan, Abtaha and *CJ* were missing from tonight's available player pool as a result. Then there was the thumping to *West* in the Scottish Cup earlier in the week that still had scar tissue forming on it. And now, tonight, the side's arguably reached a new low, being thumped by *Ayr*, by.....wait for it.....the same 86-run margin as the 11s were losing by down on the coast. *Ouchay!*

This was a painful defeat as 153 for 3 dominated 67 for 8. In the first half only maybe Owais's bowling figures of 3-0-10-0 pass muster, the same player then top-scoring the second innings with 25. However 25-and-out was never going to be enough and the side needed one of the batters to replicate what *Ayr*'s Harry Lynch had done batting through for an unbeaten 81. Well batted him. The 15s' scorecard by comparison looked like someone was trying to send a code in the middle order as 7, 1, 1 was followed by 7, 1, 1! Carnage. And only Joe Spence resolutely refusing to give up his wicket saw the innings prolonged, Joe facing 32 deliveries for his 7, eventually being bowled by Meali. Of the others, none hung around longer than to face eight deliveries. Bonkers. So a humiliating loss, and the division's now wide open again. Let's hope we see a response this week at practice, and in the next match.

11s come a cropper! [posted 27/06/14]

The Under 11s lost their unbeaten league record this evening, and in style! *Ayr*, the other unbeaten side in the division, ran out easy 86-run winners at New Cambusdoon as the bowling unit was slayed to all parts, with a super-quick outfield giving real value for shots. Eight *Ayr* wickets were taken, and there was a good debut bowling performance from Andrew Harden, and some smart catches taken and good run outs executed. But the harsh reality is that the boundary rope [Ed: if there'd been one!] was crossed on many, many, occasions by the home side's batters. Four batters got to 20 and beyond, and the end result was a whopping 164 for 8. Big! In their reply, the 11s got off to the worst possible start, with two wickets falling in the first over, and four in the first pair's five-over allocation. And this pattern continued with only *Jamesy* (11*) and *Sobo* (13*) remaining unbeaten. 88 for 10 was the final damage and the margin of the win didn't exaggerate the difference between the sides, For *Ayr*, Ryan Stribling was the stand out player, scoring an unbeaten 25 and taking two wickets in the 11s' innings.

Thumped! [posted 24/06/14]

Okay, so Aliyan and Abtaha were away, and there were two afternoon call offs that resulted in just nine players taking to the field - all frustrating, granted - but none of these are

excuses for a truly horrible performance by the Under 15s in tonight's Scottish Cup quarter-final. Batting first it was important a good start was made: 0 for 1, Owais cleaned up. Not ideal. Then when two of the other top four batters were gotten rid of without getting to double figures, it was clear that posting anything like a decent total was becoming less likely each time those bails were dislodged. *Ihty*, scoring 15 at three did as well as anyone, but the standard really wasn't that high. All out 42 inside sixteen overs. Shambolic. Extras second-top scorer with 11! And in a manner as unsurprising as night following day, the 15s' opponents strolled to the win, reaching 44 [for 2] in the tenth over. Home win, away defeat, dumped unceremoniously out of the cup. Only *Ihty* - again - with figures of 4-1-7-0 can really hold his head up, though Uzzair's 3-1-13-1 weren't horrible.....unless you're defending 42 of course! For those of a certain age amongst this column's readership you'll know that 42 is the answer to the "ultimate question". And after tonight we know what that question was: "If the 15s were to have a truly shambolic day at the office, what might they score?" Answer: 42! Thank you and good-night and it's now only league cricket the side has left for this season. Back to practice tomorrow night.

18s get their first win [posted 23/06/14]

The Under 18s were in league action this evening over at Bellahouston Park where they saw off, with some degree of comfort, the Victoria|Active Life Club combo side. Batting first the 18s' hosts were eventually bowled out one delivery shy of their full allocation of 120 balls, having amassed 93. From 45 for 7 after a shaky start this was a decent effort, 25 from Khan (batting at nine) and 21 not out from Muhammad (batting at ten) being the two reasons why credibility was achieved. For the 18s, eight bowlers were called upon by the skipper, and four took wickets. There were "3-fors" for Aliyan and *Ihty*, with a brace for *Hollywood*. *Ihty's* figures of 4-0-5-3 were the standout numbers on the night.

The 18s' run-chase started shakily too, Owais being run out by Khan for just 1 to leave the side 1 for 1. However a partnership of 32 between *Stiffy* and *Rosco* steadied the ship, and after the latter departed - LBW - Dougie joined the skipper and a 62-run partnership saw the side home. Only 13.1 overs were needed meaning the team was back in time for the 8pm World Cup games! Elsewhere on the night, there was a surprise defeat for Ferguslie's Under 18s who'd fielded just seven players in their game against Glasgow Accies.

Under 13s lose to the *Dark Side* [posted 23/06/14]

Toytown was the venue for tonight's rescheduled Under 13 league match between the 13s and the *Dark Side*. However the start was delayed as *Diddy* Young [Ed: no, no typo!] had somehow got it into his head that the game was at Shawholm. Anyway, confusion corrected, and the game got underway just before 6.30pm. Luckily it was another warm and bright night, so there was no real drama. Thanks, however, are due to two space shuttles sent from the *Death Star* that helped transport the 13s over-by. To the game: the 13s were in the field first after Uzzair won the toss and inserted the home side. The opening bowling combo of the skipper and *Sobo* then bowled tidily to restrict *the Dale* openers to just 12 for 0 in the first three overs. And with the usual skinny ground schematic in use, the *uber* small square boundaries were resulting in boundaries almost any time a cross bat shot was played. The *Dark Side* openers also played and missed regularly enough to both Uzzair and *Sobo*, but unfortunately none of the deliveries took the edge. And thereafter, after settling in and the change bowlers coming on, Masters Walker and Cairns started to accumulate runs in their usual fashions. [Ed: think Chris Gayle and Shivnarine Chanderpaul for ease!] Both would eventually retire after reaching 30, both - spookily - in just 24 deliveries. And a third home batter would retire too: Khan also making 30, albeit taking one more ball to get there. There after it was a different story with only one more of the five *Dark Side* batters to get to the middle scoring in double figures, Anderson with 13 not out. 146 for 3 was the final score, a mere 94 of which came from boundaries!

147 to win. Two overs and five balls in to the 13s' reply and at 27 for 0 things looked good. And even five overs in at 39 for 2, the side were still up with the rate. However Uzzair had departed for 22 (13 balls), following Abdul back to the "hutch". Uzzair's departure also saw

the run-rate slowly decelerate. From being 39 for 2 after five - in effect 8-an-over - the side had only reached 55 for 6 by halfway. Only 16 runs added in the second five runs. And this pattern continued in the second half, as two more wickets fell and only 26 runs were added to leave the 13s 81 for 8 when "Time" was called. Hassaan had joined Uzzair in getting to double figures, and Nabeel shown stick-a-bility in facing 31 deliveries for his 8 not out. So defeat, and by 65 runs, but no disgrace for the side which, again, featured just the three "genuine" Under 13s, the other eight being Under 11s and younger. Great experience for them.

11s stay unbeaten [posted 20/06/14]

The Under 11s took on Prestwick in the sunshine tonight, and would return from the coast with a good win. With lots of "regulars" unavailable - Ubaid, Nabeel, Moiz, Abdul, Dylan and Michael - and a couple of other similarly not able to play, there was a welcome return to competitive cricket for the Rana brothers. Batting first after losing the toss, the 11s would lose six wickets on their way to posting a net 74 (under the pairs cricket scoring system). The biggest contributions to this total were Abdullah's 14 not out, and Hassaan's 15 and *Sobo's* 13. Only Abdullah and *Jamesy* didn't lose their wicket, so well done to both for being the exceptions.

Defending net 74 would need good bowling and fielding, and hopefully a good start. And the last thing was exactly what was achieved, *Sobo* bowling his opposing skipper, Turner, twice in the first over. A really good start. But Prestwick would claw their way back in to the game, and would reach 63 for 3 in the fifteenth over. Net 48, and so 24 were needed from five overs. Right in it, as they say in sporting *parlance*. But then wickets started to fall. Incredibly in fact, eight would fall between over fifteen and the end of play, including two off the last two balls of the home side's innings, bowled by *Sobo*. Trapping Morrison leg-before, and then bowling Mishra, meant that *Sobo* completed a "5-for", and will start his next Under 11 game on hat-trick! Well done Sohaib. But Sohaib wasn't alone in returning really good bowling figures. Samee took 2 for 11 in his four overs, whilst *Jamesy* bowled his four for just 11!

So a sixth win, from six games, and next week the team go to Ayr.

South Glasgow narrowly defeated at Shawholm [posted 15/06/14]

Shawholm hosted a match between South Glasgow Under 14s, coached by David James, and the *Western Warriors* Under 15 regional side. The South Glasgow side featured no fewer than five Poloc players: Calum James, Abdullah Malik, Aliyan Qureshi, Joe Spence and Ahmed-Raza Hanif. The match was a cliff-hanger as the younger area squad side ran their older opponents close, losing by just 1 run. There's a fuller [report](#) on the west junior cricket website, and it highlights some strong contributions from the club's youngsters. Aliyan and Ahmed-Raza both bowled impressively, returning figures of 7-1-16-1 and 9-0-27-2 respectively, whilst *CJ* and Abdullah opened the South Glasgow innings in their run-chase, putting on 43 for the first wicket. *CJ* eventually top-scored with 34 (52 balls), adding 47 for the second wicket with the *Dark Side's* Zain Ashraf. Aliyan, meanwhile, added a useful 19 in the middle order to add to his good bowling.

Under 11s march on [posted 13/06/14]

The Under 11s won again tonight, and have now won five from five in this year's league campaign. And it was another win built on tight bowling and sensible batting. The bowling unit managed to take eleven Uddingston wickets as the visitors from Bothwell Castle Policies mustered 67 for 11 to post a net 12 under the pairs cricket scoring system. For the 11s Moiz grabbed the headlines with a "4-for", just missing out on getting his name on the [Juniors honours board](#) with his figures of 3-0-3-4. There were also a couple of wickets-a-piece for *Sobo*, Nabeel and Hassaan. Then in their run-chase, the 11s batted sensibly again, losing just the three wickets - Dylan, *Jamesy* and Abdul - *en route* to finishing on 124 for 3. Four batters finished scoring in the teens - Hassaan, Moiz, Samee and Abdul - as the bad balls were put away effectively by the 11s.

15s somehow manage to hang on! [posted 13/06/14]

In a change to our scheduled programmes - as they say on TV - tonight's Under 15 match report comes courtesy of our on-site roving reporter. In terms that might well conjure up images of *Grandstand's* old teleprinter, here's what was filed: "Just sent scorecard. **Stop.** ... Some edited highlights. **Stop.** Poor batting performance on reasonable astro-turf wicket. ... **Stop.** Owais out cheaply, soft dismissal chipping ball back to their opening bowler Aziz who was pick of their bowlers. **Stop.** Uzzair and *Ihty's* stat's speak for themselves, too many dot balls. **Stop.** Kept finding fielders and not rotating the strike. **Stop.** ... There was even a maiden played out at over 16. **Stop.** ... *Ihty* out to great one-handed catch at square-leg smashing a long hop from leg spinner Clarke. Some positive batting from Aliyan and *CJ* led to a defendable but below par score posted. **Stop.** ... Good effort in the field though and a match-winning spell from Abtaha. **Stop.** *Ihty* bowled too short in first spell but he and Aliyan kept the run rate in check although home openers were reasonably untroubled. **Stop.** Good tight spell from Uzzair continued to build pressure, almost undone by a couple of poorer overs from Bilal and Amaan, but Abtaha turned the game. ... **Stop.** Key wicket of Aziz was great one-handed catch over his head by Owais running backwards at mid-on. **End.**" And for the avoidance of any doubt whatsoever, if you've just read the above and just don't *get* it, relax it's a 40-something's joke!

An exciting finish,.....from nowhere! [posted 12/06/14]

To suggest a five-wicket wicket chasing 116 to secure victory, when a side was 106 for 0 after sixteen overs, was a cliff-hanger might seem odd, but this was the game that proved an exception to a rule. After being set 116 to win when the home side had posted 115 for 3 batting first, the 15s were seemingly intent on a very accomplished run-chase. A good start - 30 for 0 in four overs - followed by decent momentum being maintained through the core of the innings - 62 runs in the next ten overs - was suddenly unravelling in utterly bizarre fashion when the final over started. Somehow the 15s had contrived to five wickets in thirteen balls with only a handful of runs still needed. And when the final over started, 4 runs were still needed, Aliyan and Abtaha together at the crease. Ball one of over twenty then saw controversy as Aliyan stroked what looked like a boundary 4 through extra cover only for the home side fielder, Miller, to confirm that his diving stop had seen the ball prevented from crossing the boundary. 3 runs had, however, been run in the intervening period. Scores tied, 1 needed from five balls and Abtaha facing her first ball. Davidson was the Ayr bowler and, cool as you like, Abtaha stood still and smacked a 4 right back through the same extra cover region that had seen ball #1 go across it. 15s win! But, *just!*

Looking back over the run-chase, to earlier - les frantic - part, Owais's unbeaten 52 from just 41 balls had seen the side off to that good start. Uzzair who opened with Owais was more watchful, and would eventually depart for 24 (48 balls). A better scoring rate, but still room for improvement as regards strike rotation, finding gaps and - maybe especially - calling and running. But the 24 were important. The rest of the line-up, bar Aliyan and Abtaha all came-and-went pretty quickly, *CJ* and Abdullah both securing *Weebbed Feet Award* entries. The latter was cleaned up ball #2, however *CJ* was unlucky to get run out going to the "safe" end by a loopy direct hit.

Earlier, in the first innings, Ayr had eventually posted 115 for 3. "Eventually" in that after six overs they'd scored just 15. *Ihty* (4-0-11-0) and Aliyan (4-0-13-2) continued in the good form with the ball that's characterised recent outings. The change bowlers, however, fared less well. All were reasonably expensive, though it should be pointed out that both Lynch (50*) and Davidson (46) rode their luck at times with big shots to "cow" against the spinners. But credit to them both for hanging around after struggling at the start, and not throwing their wickets away. Also worth a mention in despatches for the home side were Hendrikse and Miller - with the ball - as they returned figures of 4-0-17-0 and 4-0-12-0 respectively. In fact, if truth be told, the simplest way to sum up the difference between the two sides tonight was that the 15s gifted Ayr just 7 in wides and no balls, whereas Ayr gave away the bountiful total of no fewer than 18 runs in these ways.

Next up in the cup is an away trip to Hamilton Crescent.

Poloc youngsters feature in *Western Warriors* win [posted 08/06/14]

Ihtisham Malik, Aliyan Qureshi and Owais Shah were all in action today for the *Western Warriors* Under 15s in their inter-regional tournament game at Lochlands in Abroath against the *Caledonian Highlanders*. And in a convincing nine-wicket win, all three played a part. *Ihty*, opening the bowling, returned figures of 10-2-18-1 to restrict the *Highlanders'* batters, and Aliyan, bowling as third change staked a claim to get thrown the ball a little earlier by turning the screw late on the *Highlanders'* innings of 132 for 8 by producing figures of 6-2-11-0. Good bowling from both players. Then in the run-chase, after an opening partnership of 52, Owais joined Ferguslie's Taimoor Ahmed in the middle and the two youngsters saw their side home with no further dramas, Owais finishing 42 not out (77 balls) and the *Warriors* winning in 37th over.

Kwik Cricket news [posted 08/06/14]



Not in the least put off by yesterday's monsoons, or today's heavy showers, the intrepid Under 10s were at the West of Scotland Kwik Cricket festival this morning. Grant Cathcart reports. "Somewhat surprisingly given the monsoon yesterday, Kwik Cricket went ahead as planned at *West* this morning. Sammee, Hassaan, Moiz and James were joined by three *EK* players and played really well against *Ayr*|*Prestwick*, *West of Scotland*, and *Kelburne*. Snorkels were issued during the last game at one point as the rain lashed down. The bowling and batting was too good for their first two opponents, however the third game was much tighter. Needing 9 off the last over, Hassaan and James chipped away at it until 2 were needed off the last ball. An easy single became a winning 2 as James went for it and the fielders panicked with their throw-in. Next week, *Ayr*." Thanks to Grant for organising our youngsters as always.

Good win for the 11s in the sunshine [posted 06/06/14]

The Under 11s were the only junior side in action this evening and they took the opportunity of being the focus of attention by romping to a huge 152-run win over the *Irvine*|*Kilmarnock* combined team at *Marress*, on a beautifully warm summers evening. After the toss, it was the 11s who were batting first, and they proceeded to enjoy themselves in the sunshine. Only one wicket was lost in the innings - *Jamesy* getting caught and bowled by home side skipper *Owens*. The rest of the guys all got sheriff badges! [Ed: next week JDC!] On a quick outfield no fewer than fifteen 4s were struck, and one - by *Abdul* - huge 6! And not the expected pulled maximum, no, this was a maximum struck over extra cover no less! Impressive. *Abdul's* 24 not out was the pick of the scores, with *Sobo's* 18 running him close. In fact no fewer than five of the batters made it in to double figures and beyond on a night where everyone looked like scoring runs. 154 for 1 was the final score - net 149.

In their reply, the home side got off to the worst possible start when *Hurford* was bowled in the first over. This kind of set the tone for whole innings at it would turn out, with the value accruing from good shots almost immediately being negated by a dismissal. 4 runs forward, five runs back. In the final analysis the home side's innings closed on net -3, ten wickets having being lost as 47 runs were accumulated. The strength of the 11s' bowling told too: only seven wides were bowled, and just two no balls. Great stuff. And on debut for the 11s, *Dylan* returned figures of 2-1-2-0, this in addition to his 3 not out. The pick of the bowlers - both were "3-fors" - were *Moiz* and *Sobo*. *Nabeel*, too, impressed with his figures of 3-0-6-2, as did *Sammee's* with 2-1-1-2. An all-round "professional" job done then, and a fourth consecutive win. Next week it's *Uddingston* at home.

Under 13s progress in the Scottish Cup [posted 01/06/14]

Torrance House was the venue for this afternoon's Under 13 Scottish Cup match against East Kilbride. Batting first, after losing the toss, Uzzair and *Sobo* opened for the 13s, and started cautiously. They'd added 20 in the first four overs to give their side a good steady start when Uzzair was first out. He tamely chipped a catch to Meikle, off the bowling of McCann, and departed for 9 (from fourteen balls). *Sobo* and Abdul (promoted up the order) then added 15 in another four overs before their partnership, too, was ended. Again *Sobo* was the not out batter, Abdul giving Murphy a wicket, being caught by Kiely for 2. Hamaad and *Sobo* then put on the defining partnership of the 13s' innings. Both were looking in little trouble, and putting away bad balls. There was also some good running between the wickets. But *Sobo* would have to leave centre-stage eventually, as he reached 30 and retired. This allowed Samee in, and he and Hamaad continued to accumulate runs. However having pushed the total on to 91, Hamaad mis-timed a shot off Hawkins and was caught by McIntyre for a well-made and important 25. Hassaan joined his brother at this juncture, but he'd make just the 1 before he was cleaned up by Kiely leaving time for *Jamesy* to record a cheeky wee sheriff and the side post 103 for 4. The 13s total had benefited from 27 extras, of which 23 were wides or no balls. These'd later prove vital.

The East Kilbride reply started quietly, Uzzair bowling five dots to McCann. But then on the last ball of the first over the home side's opener tamely chipped a ball to mid-wicket. Hamaad was under it, and even Uzzair himself had time to get to it. But "Hamaad's" was the call, and,.....it went down. Pity. And a *real* pity when, having faced just another eighteen deliveries, McCann departed having raced to an unbeaten 32! Talk about a costly catch! East Kilbride were rattling along. 32 for 1 after five, then 53 for 1 after ten. 50 needed in the second ten, lots of wickets in hand. And Hamaad's drop wasn't the only disappointing aspect of the 13s' fielding effort. There were mis-fields and other dropsd galore, with no-one aside *Jamesy* and Ubaid-Raza exempt from holding their hands up in this regard. But at least the 13s were bowling straight. Particularly Nabeel who'd been brought in to the attack when it looked like East Kilbride might romp home. He'd bowl beautifully and return figures of 4-2-4-0 to take the heat out of the situation. And when Kiely departed as the second East Kilbride batter to reach 30, incoming batters found it much harder to score from ball one, particularly in the wet conditions. And so it was that when "Time" was called, the 13s had won by 13 runs. A good game, an exciting end, and pleasing to win. But there's much work to be done in the fielding department this report thinks! Next up in the cup it's either Prestwick or West of Scotland, at home.

11s march on [posted 30/05/14]

The club's Under 11s continued their good run of form tonight with a home win over near-neighbours Weirs at Shawholm. The 11s batted first and, as they've done all season, batted resolutely in losing only two wickets *en route* to posting a challenging net 80. The only two batters dismissed - both caught [Ed: one a genuinely good grab!] - were Moiz and Samee. But they were also the side's two top-scorers, Moiz with net 14 and Samee net 16. *Sobo* was the other 11s batters into double figures, scoring an unbeaten 10 batting with Abdul in the final pairing. 81 to win then for the visitors from Albert Park.

But the winning post would always seem a distant image on the horizon for Weirs as wickets fell at regular intervals. In addition to Nabeel's run out, there were wickets for *Sobo* (3), Moiz (1), James (1) and Samee (1), and none of the 11s bowlers' economy rates was more than 5-an-over. With only 4 runs gifted in wides, 2 in no balls, this was a disciplined performance with the ball that some of the clubs' older teams could look to mirror! Well done. When their twenty overs were done-and-dusted, the 11s had restricted Weirs to net 22, with seven wickets being taken. For the Albert Park side, Dryden - with net 12 - was the top scorer.

Under 15s miss out [posted 30/05/14]

The Under 15s made the trip east to Edinburgh to take on Grange in a quarter-final tie in the ECB National Club Championship this evening. And on a glorious evening, blessed by warm summer sunshine and a cloudless blue sky, where better to spend your time than at the

spiritual home of Scottish cricket,.....Newfield! Yup, the match, though a Grange home game, was - in fact - played at one of Edinburgh Academy's school grounds. And the ground, in particular the wicket, would play its part in determining that the game would be a little attritional, and a lot low-scoring [Ed: does that make sense?!?] lush, long and hairy outfield grass meant that boundaries would be few and far between, save for the bunted cross-bat variety, and the dead wicket meant that there'd always be the risk for batters of one keeping low and finding them out. To the game then.

After being duly informed just how many age-group internationalists the home side skipper didn't have at his disposal on the night, Owais was so rattled that he guessed wrong at the toss and was invited to bat first. He opened with Uzzair. And Owais got off to a good start, getting to double figures at a run-a-ball, and the side were 13 without loss after two overs. But then the wicket claimed its first victim of the night as Owais chopped on a wide delivery from Hancock that didn't really get up. 14 for 1. *Ihty* joined Uzzair in the middle. The bright start then fizzled out as 13 for 0 after two, meandered its way to 37 for 1 in the tenth. *Ihty*, after a cautious start, was scoring relatively freely, picking the bad balls to hit, but Uzzair had got stuck. The long outfield didn't help his game, but when he was second out, in the tenth over, accumulating his 6 runs had eaten up 26 balls. 37 for 2 then, and half the overs used up. *CJ* replaced Uzzair, but he - like Uzzair - struggled to rotate the strike, scoring off just four of his first twelve deliveries. He'd eventually get going a bit, such that when he was third out his 9 had come from 16 balls. At this stage - 59 for 3 in the sixteenth over - getting to 80 looked 50:50. But Aliyan and *Ihty* - who was still there - had other ideas, and they'd add impetus to the stuttering 15s innings. The remaining 28 balls of the innings would, in fact, eventually accrue 34 runs as, finally, some urgency was injected into proceedings. Aliyan's arrival was the catalyst as he and *Ihty* scurried between the wickets and despatched bad balls to the deeper [Ed: pun intended!] parts of the outfield. Both batters would be dismissed as the number of remaining balls reduced, but their approach was adopted by both Amman and Abdullah who came after them. And so when legal delivery 120 had been bowled, the 15s had posted 93 for 6, Abdullah out off the last ball, *Ihty* top-scoring with 36, Aliyan's run-a-ball 12 being as important to the almost-presentable total being posted.

So 94 to win. Factoring in the wicket and state of the outfield, 93 was probably 105 or 110'ish elsewhere, but - still - it was lite, and winning would need all the 15s' bowlers to execute their skills really well, in addition to an all-round good fielding effort being put in. As it would turn out, only really half of this happened. The half that did, was that Aliyan and *Ihty* continued their attempt at snatching a win from likely defeat for their side by returning combined bowling figures of 8-2-16-1, Ahmed-Raza returned figures of 2-1-6-2 and there was a good early grab by Owais to see opener Mullins dismissed with the score on just 4. But there was also the other side of the coin: it hadn't been the Shah boys night with the bat, and it wasn't with the ball either as their combined four overs cost 32, and Owais put down a hard chance, but a chance nonetheless, at extra cover. There were also chances grassed by Abtaha and Amaan. One of those given a life was Grange's top-scorer Crawley, who'd eventually retire having scored 52 (47 balls), but was given a life on 44. His innings was also an example of how, if you take time to get going and eat up balls, you've got to try to hang in and make up for it by accelerating later on. Crawley's first eighteen balls saw him score just 11, his last 29 balls saw him score 41. He was helped, of course, by the wayward change bowling, lack of control that also saw 14 runs leaked in wides and no balls. Crawley would eventually depart though, retiring after getting to 50, and bizarrely even then the game wasn't completely over. This was because Grange's other opener Dickinson was apparently trying to ensure a tight finish. Single-handedly given the change bowlers' profligacy, Dickinson was trying to keep the run-rate down. His 41-ball 9 featured no fewer than 33 dot balls, and was only ended when he decided to wander past an Ahmed-Raza delivery and was stumped. His dismissal was likely better received in the Grange changing room than the Poloc huddle! Hancock and Appleton were the new batters, and though the latter would come-and-go for a three-ball duck, the former bunted his way to 15 from eleven deliveries to secure his side the win with eight balls to spare.

Defeat then, and appropriately so given only really four or five of the 15s played to their potential. Intisham and Aliyan were exceptional with both bat and ball, and nearly - somehow - dragged their side to a win. Ahmed-Raza, too, bowled nicely, and Abdullah and Amaan get pass-marks for both their late over accumulation of runs against the returning Grange opening bowlers, and general ground fielding. The rest however must think on the areas for improvement, and how they'll, both, improve their core skills to be able to better execute them, and improve their match-management to be able to adapt to situations they find themselves in in games. It's back to league action next week, with the only cup still to be competed for the Scottish Cup.

Thumped! [posted 29/05/14]

This was one to forget. And how. A thumping eight-wicket loss to West of Scotland over on the north side, the hosts chasing down 54 to win inside nine overs! *Ouchay!* Here are the bare facts: the 13s were the side in question, the ECB Under 13 Cup the comp'. The 13s batted first and quickly slumped to 7 for 3, then 25 for 5. The top order had been pretty much dismantled, most the victims of poor shots, and departing having been caught. Only Joe - who got a yorker from Barrett - might feel he was gotten out. Then after the side had collapsed to 25 for 5 the late order batters did really well to somehow post 53. This said, the top score was still under 10, and extras - with 23 - were required to avoid real embarrassment. There were four blobs to report too, Messrs. Anwar, Spence, Khan and Hanif all securing entries on the Webbed Feet Award table. For *West* none of bowling figures stood out,.....there were *all* good!

54 to win. Hardly a challenge [Ed: ask Dumfries mind!] Really the only chance was early wickets combined with the home side's batters being as poor as the 13s' batters had been. Or at least - and to be more precise - as poor as the top order had been. And at 8 for 2, with Safar and Green both out - there was just the smallest glimpse of something really bizarre brewing. However the two "big boys" of the home side, Messrs. Guy and Barrett, steadied the ship and saw their side home. But not without mishap. Whilst they bunted a long ball, they were also dropped three times, and played and missed more than once or twice in the face of Joe's *leggies* and Hamaad's *offies*. What might've been had one or more of the catches stuck? Who knows. As it was the scoreboard didn't lie: the first half's shambolic start meant that it was always going to be north of tricky to win this one, and 53 was never really ever going to be enough.

But as always there were positives - again the side was filled with Under 10s and 11s, with only the two genuine Under 13s in the line-up. The youngsters all did well, and they were the batters in the tail who dragged that disastrous start back to enable something just about acceptable to be posted. Next up for the 13s is East Kilbride on Sunday in the Scottish Cup.

Two from two [posted 23/05/14]

After last Friday's derby win over the *Dark Side*, the Under 15s welcomed Glasgow Accies to Shawholm in a rescheduled league game. The visitors would bat first and - thanks to Oliver (37) and Russell (22), as well as wayward bowling (23 wides!) - they posted 110 for 7 in their twenty overs. The seven wickets were shared around, with *Ihty* getting a brace, and there being one each for Aliyan, Abtaha, Uzzair and Hamaad. Abdullah grabbed the other with a run out, getting rid of Percival. In reply the Under 15s cruised to the win, any early nerves being calmed by the 79-run opening partnership between Uzzair and Owais. It was Owais whose dismissal ended this partnership, caught by Russell off Percival's bowling for a 32-ball 44. Uzzair though would carry his bat, ending unbeaten on 42. He'd been joined by Intisham after Owais's departure, but *Ihty* couldn't reproduce last week's fireworks and went for just 3, leaving *CJ* to secure a cheeky wee *Sheriff*, finishing 1 not out.

The win was secured in the sixteenth over, the margin: eight wickets.

Easing to the win in East Kilbride [posted 23/05/14]

The first thing to say about this Under 11 League game at Torrance House is that the midges were very shy. Maybe 'cos it was pretty chilly, but - hey - what a relief. Talking of midges also brings to mind the evening's funniest comment - of which, with Under 11s, there can be many! After a few overs of East Kilbride's reply there was a call for midge repellent by a couple of the fielders. Grant Cathcart was the man in charge of the can, and so the fielders all trooped over to him. First there was Hassaan who, when asked by Grant where he'd like the repellent sprayed - Grant thinking body-part - was dutifully informed by Hassaan, arm outstretched pointing to mid-off, "Over there please"! You can't script that kind of stuff! Anyway, back to game. In the end analysis it was a pretty one-sided match, with East Kilbride's bowlers struggling a bit. In all - out of 120 deliveries - 53 were either wided or deemed no balls because they bounced more than twice. This obviously gifted the 11s a lot of runs, but also made getting any kind of rhythm to the batting effort very hard. As it was only one 11s' wicket fell: Samee being bowled. The other seven all kept their wickets intact, and this, plus the extras gifted and a couple of decent individual knocks, saw 117 for 1 posted in the first innings. Sohaib top-scored with 19 not out, Abdul and Hassaan both scoring unbeaten 13s.

In reply East Kilbride's batters kind of followed the lead of their bowlers, and wickets just kept on falling. Seventeen in all, with Haasaan grabbing four, and Nabeel three. In fact every 11s bowler took at least one wicket as the opposition were restricted to 33 for 17. The result: a 164-run win. A good run out though on a dry evening, and good to see the bowlers bowling so well. In the field there were three run outs executed, by James and Moix, with two. And Abdul had a stumping or two, as well as a catch.

Horror ending [posted 19/05/14]



Some match reports probably should have some warnings attaching to them. And if this was the protocol, this one might be an 18! Just how did we lose it?

A new season of Under 18 League cricket started this evening with a trip for the 18s to Meikleriggs to take on defending champions Ferguslie. And if the weekend swagger was anything to go by this would be game #1 of an *Invincibles*-like season in which this side would sweep aside all-comers. Eh, no:

schadenfreude! 😏 One game in to the new season and the 18s are 0 for 1. In summary, after restricting their hosts to just 94 for 5 in their innings, the 18s somehow managed to turn 48 for 2 in the ninth over into 90 all out in the twentieth, and defeat by 4 runs.

And yet three hours earlier things had started off so well. Ferguslie were reduced to 12 for 2 early on with both Kennedy (1) and Preston-Jones (5) out before five overs were bowled. Then it was 37 for 3 when Khan's became the third wicket to go down. Kennedy had been run out by a direct hit from *Stiffy*, Preston-Jones had been bowled by Haider and Khan had departed courtesy of a fantastic caught and bowled by Aliyan. All good. At this stage Hamza Tahir was in with Ahmed, and it was during this partnership that - arguably - the first seed of the plant that is defeat - was sown. After Aliyan's sensation "C&B" dismissal of Khan the same fielder somehow contrived to drop a dolly at mid-off to get rid of Tahir. And this would prove extremely expensive with Tahir being only one of two home side batters to get in to double figures, top-scoring with an invaluable 62 from just 59 balls. Ouch! The brilliant we love, the regulation we insist on! Better consistent than mercurial. Tahir's 62 represented

two-thirds of his side's eventual 94 runs, and meant that instead of chasing hee-haw [Ed: a cricketing technical term!] the 18s' target was 90. Still, a score that should be passed.

In the bowling department Haider's figures of 4-0-10-1 stood out, whilst Owais grabbed 2 for 11 in his two overs.

And the start of the run-chase was good. 32 for 0 in the fourth and cruising. However Hamza Tahir was now into the attack, and as has been the case too often over the years, *'Loc* batters appear to have only one game plan against him: block or swing. Elliott was first go, LBW to Hamza Tahir. Then Owais became the second Tahir victim, however his conqueror was Haroon not Hamza. [Ed: and a third Tahir was in the Under 13 side at Shawholm!] Back to the game. 32 for 0 was now 32 for 2. Dougie and *Rosco* then added 16 for the third wicket, Dougie becoming that third victim,.....and the third to go leg-before. In fact LBW would be the dismissal mode of choice it would turn out, no fewer than five batters going this way. [Ed: and of course none think they're out, the most common comment being something along the lines of having "smashed it"! With all due respect, smashing it usually sees the ball in question cross a boundary rope, and not an umpire's finger raised!] But five LBWs it was, the others to kick the ball and not hit it being *Rosco* and *Ihty*. In amongst the falling wickets by way of LBW - 48 for 3 becoming 68 for 5, 89 for 8 and eventually 90 all out - there was also a suicidal run out by *Stouty*, and three *'Loc* batters cleaned up. When the end came, it was cruel. Over twenty started with the 18s needing just 5 to win. Aliyan was in, and was the fifth of the batters to get in to double figures. The Ferguslie opening bowlers were all bowled out, and it was fourth-change bowler English who would bowl the last six deliveries. Aliyan was on strike, on 12 (from fourteen balls), and it seemed that the winning line would still be crossed. However no-one had factored in English's skills with the ball in hand: ball #1, a full-and-straight yorker - result: Aliyan cleaned up to complete "Operation Team Choke" and deswagger the swaggering.

Defeat. Pity too, because in parts the cricket played was good. Much of the first half: particularly the early overs. Some of the batting, until that is batters got out. And whilst some of the home side bowling was good, and in particular Hamza Tahir is a "proper" bowler, it should still have been a regulation run-chase for a batting top-seven featuring six *Western Warriors* Under 18 players. But it wasn't to be: poor shot selection, poor decision-making and poor game management had turned victory into defeat, and it's now a much harder season all of a sudden. And the bounce-back starts tomorrow!

Under 13s win comfortably [posted 19/05/14]

The Under 13s, after three weeks of League Cup matches, saw a new league season kick-off tonight, with Ferguslie the visitors at Shawholm. Winning the toss, visiting skipper Scott Glassford elected to have a bat and so the 13s were in the field. 9 were put on for the first over, before a 41-run partnership between Glassford and Daoud Tahir took Ferguslie to 50 without losing a second wicket. 50 for 1 then became 50 for 2 however as Glassford departed calmy caught by Uzzair on the mid-wicket boundary. Tahir and Smith then added 18 for the third wicket, this time Tahir being dismissed courtesy of a Uzzair grab.

From this juncture wickets pretty much fell in clumps: 76 for 4, 5 and 6. Then 78 for 7, 81 for 8 and 9, before Glassford was last man out, the score still on 81. Hassaan had taken a "3-for", with Hamaad a brace. The other wickets were shared around between Sohaib, Nabeel, Moiz and James who got one each, the other wicket being a run out executed by Uzzair. Uzzair then led from the front with the bat too, scoring an unbeaten 33 as he and *Sobo* batted without any real dramas to get the run-chase off to the perfect steady start. Uzzair would eventually retire having reached 30, the only things still to be decided at that juncture being whether everyone was going to get soaked with gathering black clouds and thunder suggesting this was a possibility, and whether Sohaib would also get a retirement-inducing 30. As it was the rain stayed off, and *Sobo* got his 30, in fact 31 after hitting the winning runs courtesy of a boundary 4 pulled through square leg.

So a good start to their league campaign, and some good bowling and batting. In particular - as we've done already this season - it's worth highlighting that - again - eight of the starting line up remain Under 11s.

Is he a bowler or a batter? [posted 16/05/14]

Ihtisham Malik's best known as a bowler, but maybe after he smacked an unbeaten 59 from just 65 deliveries in tonight's league season-opening defeat of the *Dark Side* he might be for suggesting he's an all-rounder at the very least. And it *was* an all-round performance, *Ihty* taking 3 for 25 in the match as well. Back to the start then. Clydesdale had first use of the deck and would post 127 for 6. *Ihty's* 3 for 25 was perhaps the stand-out bowling performance, but Aliyan's figures of 3-0-13-0 and Uzzair's 4-0-11-1 were equally important in the any end analysis. For the *Toytown* youngsters, their total of 127 owed much to Luke Macias's 47 (from just 40 balls), with none of the other Clydesdale batters getting past 16. In fact extras were second-highest contributor to the home total, coming in at 18. 14 in wides will, in other games, cost the 15s dearly and so whilst the win was eventually secured tonight, the bowlers need to work on this part of their game.

The second innings saw Owais open with Uzzair, but Uzzair would be quickly back in the changing room when he was run out without scoring [Ed: cricketing karma after he'd been the older brother running out a wee brother in the last Under 13 game! Stop sniggering Sohaib! "Schadenfreude" Go look it up reader.] 2 for 1 then, and *Ihty* joined Owais in the middle. This was the key partnership as they added 89 for the second wicket. Owais's was that second wicket, he too being run out to make it a full-house in the Shah household over the last two weeks! His 42 had come just 39 balls, and had included seven 4s. The equation at this juncture was that 37 runs were needed from 25 balls. *CJ* kept the momentum going with 7 from seven balls faced, and Aliyan would score 5 from three. But it was *Ihty's* night, and he it was who hit the winning runs on the second ball of the twentieth over to see the side reach its target, and to leave Ihtisham unbeaten on 59 from just 65 balls, an innings that included four 6s and two 4s. Well batted sir!

Always good to win in the derby, and tonight was no different. Good performances from individual players too, but it was the team as a whole whose efforts saw the side across the winning line.

Under 11s see off the *Dark Side* [posted 16/05/14]

A new Under 11 league season got up-and-running tonight with a derby day opening day clash with Clydesdale. The 11s showed no new faces from last season, with all eight on parade today still being age-eligible for this age-group. And, in fact, all bar one can play again next season! Back to the game. Sohaib was the skipper and after Uzair Khan, his *Dark Side* equivalent, lost the toss Sohaib decided to put the visitors in. Batting first were Baines and Srawar. The former swung from the hip from ball one, his bat arc suggesting the Police Dog kennels were his preferred scoring zone. And his intent paid off, at least after he was trapped LBW first ball. Thereafter he hit three 4s on his way to net 12, putting on net 24 with partner Sarwar who played considerably more sedately on his way to 6 not out. The second pair of Khan and Karkar then added 14 in their five-over allocation, losing two wickets along the way, both in the tenth over, to see Clydesdale on net 28 at halfway. The second half of the first innings was altogether less productive for the visitors - Coburn, Johnson, Koteeswaran and Sethi batting as two pairs and somehow conspiring to see net 28 end up as net 24 with wickets falling at regular intervals in overs eleven to twenty, including on the last ball of the innings, Sohaib cleaning Sethi.

The target was net 25 therefore, and as ever the key was not losing wickets whilst punishing the bad balls when they came along. And this is exactly what happened. Only two wickets fell: James and Abdul being the two batters to lose a life. This said, all the batters did what was required and the eventual 28-run win reflected this. Sohaib top-scored with 13 not out, this to add to his bowling figures of 4-1-7-2. Nabeel, too, recorded really good bowling figures, returning 4-1-4-1, whilst James's three overs saw only 6 runs leaked.

A good win therefore on day one, and encouragement for the season ahead.

Under 13s lose in derby [posted 05/05/14]

The second group stage match in this season's Under 13 League Cup took place this evening and the Under 13s were over at *Toyown*. Up against a well-drilled and older *Dark Side* unit, a side featuring no fewer than eight Under 11s acquitted themselves really well. Batting first after the toss, a total of 91 was posted. This was thanks in the main to skipper Uzzair's unbeaten 30, and a quick-fire 10 in the middle order from Samee. Around these two double-digit scores there were bits-and-pieces of good cricket played on the batting-front, though nineteen wides being bowled meant that rhythm was difficult to find for the batters. In fact 42 extras would eventually find themselves included in the Under 13s' total come the close of their innings. Two of the wickets to fall were run out, both avoidable, as poor calling proved costly. And in the Shah household this evening this reporter suggests there might be some finger-pointing of blame towards one brother from the other. Enough said. For the *Dark Side* Koteeswaran's 2 for 5 were the stand out bowling figures, though Khan and Adams also grabbed a brace each.

92 to win. Tight bowling needed. And tight bowling was delivered, the eight bowlers used by Uzzair bowling only seven wide deliveries in comparison to their hosts' aforementioned nineteen. Uzzair led from the front with the ball too, his three overs seeing him take 1 for 8. But the target would eventually be reached, in the seventeenth over when Samee's first delivery was despatched to the mid-wicket boundary by Geddes who'd batted through for an unbeaten 19. He'd opened with Walker who, for maybe the first time ever against *the 'Locsters* had been dismissed. Master Walker was deceived by a slower delivery from Sohaib and was cleaned up. As Uzzair had done for his side, so Cairns did for his *Storm Trooper* brigade with a retirement-inducing 31.

Defeat by eight wickets in the end then. Sounds worse than it was, and next week the group stages come to an end with a trip to Ayr.

Season 2014 underway! [posted 28/04/14]

A new junior cricket season got underway tonight on a chilly and fairly dark and dank late April evening. But the overhead and atmospheric conditions weren't going to put a dampener [Ed: pardon the pun!] on the Under 13s' enthusiasm for the task of kicking off a new season. The match was the first Under 13 League Cup group stage match, the opposition were Prestwick. After the toss it was the Under 13s who were batting and the Shah boys strode to the middle. After a cautious start Sohaib was the first to go, bowled by Turner for 6, the total having reached 13 in the third over. Sohaib was replaced by Hamaad Anwar, on debut, but he'd not last too long and was run out for just 2 in the fifth over to leave the Under 13s 20 for 2. Uzzair now had his third partner in the shape of Joe and these two put on 48 and looked fairly set, their combo only being ended by Uzzair's retirement having reached 30. Joe then batted with Abdul - briefly - and then the Mehmood brothers. Scoring runs proved difficult as the innings came to its conclusion however, with the Prestwick opening bowlers, Turner and Cole, back in to the attack. In fact the last nineteen deliveries of the Under 13s' innings saw only 1 run scored. And when "Time" was called, the scoreboard read 75 for 4.

For Prestwick, Calan Turner's figures of 4-3-4-1 were the standout ones, with his team-mates putting in a really good fielding display, one that saw a number of genuinely good stops and a cracking catch from Cole to dismiss the unlucky Abdul who pulled a Tennant half-tracker straight to Master Cole at square leg. Out!

The Prestwick innings started cautiously, with Rao and Clelland opening. They'd put on 21 when Clelland let a Sohaib delivery sneak under his bat to give the Under 13s the breakthrough. And 21 for 1 quickly became 31 for 4, with the seaside youngsters suddenly looking a little rattled. Hamaad had taken two-in-two, and there was home ground hope that a win might be secured. And then it was a case of what might have been. Hamaad was

again the bowler, with Cole the new Prestwick batter. Hamaad dropped one a little short, Cole - just in - mis-timed the pull and the ball looped to Samee at mid-wicket. "Catch it!" was the cry. Samee got both hands to it, but unfortunately it didn't stick and Cole got a life. The next two balls Cole faced went for 6 and 4, and suddenly the pressure was off, and Cole would go to top-score with an unbeaten 21 and see his side home. Maybe a case of what might've been, illustrating that [just maybe] catches can win matches. As it was Prestwick reached their target without further mishap and returned south-west with the win.

A good game, and good for the junior season to get up-and-running. For the Under 13s some good signs: Joe's and Hamaad's bowling, and Joe's and Uzzair's batting. It was also good to see five, still Under 11 players playing at this level - all bodes well.