

Frank Smith Trophy win! [posted 13/09/15]

The club secured only its third-ever win in the Frank Smith Trophy today, with a six-wicket win over local rivals Clydesdale in the final, at Titwood. A "six-wicket win" sounds comfortable, but this was a thriller that, for much of the second innings, saw *the 'Loc* as second-favourites. Set 131 to win, victory was only secured with two balls to spare, a scrambled single from Aliyan seeing the side across the winning line. Yet for much of their run-chase it looked like Clydesdale were in the "box seat". 13 for 2 after five overs wasn't a great start chasing 131, and 42 for 2 after ten overs - though better - didn't suggest that the pendulum had swung that far in *the 'Loc's* direction. However with wickets in hand, and batters "in", the run-rate accelerated from the halfway stage with 42 added in the third quarter of the innings. Then, though Owais (37 from 40 balls) had been dismissed, *Stiffy* (54* from 49 balls) steered the side to the win, the third-last ball of the final over being squirted out in to the offside to let Aliyan (13* from eight balls) and Elliott scurry the winning single. A thrilling finish then, that had seen 35 scored from the final sixteen deliveries!

131 had been set as the target after Clydesdale had posted [Ed: obviously!] 130 batting first. Their total centred on Ghaffar's 40-ball 41 and Ashraf's 27-ball 29. However credit to *the 'Loc* bowlers who'd dug in despite not making an early breakthrough - the first *Dale* wicket not falling until the tenth over, when Ghaffar departed to a smart catch at short cover by *Stiffy* off Aliyan's bowling. *Stouty* would then have a hand - literally - in each of the other three Clydesdale wickets to fall, two catches and a stumping seeing the departures of Dhami (12), Ul Haq (11) and Ashraf (29). Chaudhry (17*) and Ahmad (3*) then batted out the remainder of the overs to see 130 for 4 posted. For *the 'Loc* none of the bowlers were particularly expensive, with *Beast* likely the standout performer - opening the bowling - and returning 4-2-16-0. In fact if there was a criticism - in both innings in fact - it was likely in the ground fielding and catching departments. *The 'Loc* dropped three catches, Clydesdale two. And in both teams' cases, likely the drops cost them. There was also some expensive ground fielding errors, *the 'Loc* fumbling a number of ground balls and gifting runs in over throws, *the Dale* shipping balls over the boundary rope to concede unnecessary additional runs. This said, the batters' running between the wickets - again by both sides - was good, and fielders were put under pressure.

So a good game between two well-matched sides, with *the 'Loc* just coming out on top, and fitting that *Stiffy* was asked by *Beast* to collect the trophy after his match-winning knock and in his final junior match. #Toffee!

Long journey pays dividends [posted 04/09/15]

After battling through tea-time rush hour traffic [Ed: after the obligatory late arrival by one of the team!] the Under 15s eventually made it to Helensburgh for their re-, re-scheduled league clash with the Greenock|Helensburgh combined side. And with fingers-crossed behind their backs the coaches agreed to give sixteen overs-a-side a go. And at just before 8.30pm when the last ball of the second innings had been bowled this just about (?) looked like a reasonable decision.

After the toss the 15s were batting, and *CJ* and Abdullah opened up. *CJ* was immediately in the runs whilst Abdullah struggled to get going. However that said Abdullah looked in no trouble before he was cleaned up by Gumbrell for 8 in the seventh over, whereas *CJ* was beginning lives. Nicks off Chambers went through either vacant first slip, or the 'keeper's hands! And throw in a drop at extra cover and *CJ* likely thought it was his night. And after Amaan had come-and-gone cheaply [Ed: he'd replaced Abdullah] *CJ* and new partner Aliyan really cashed in. Both were running really well between the wickets, and their 65-run partnership in just over six overs included eighteen singles as well as four 4s and a three maximums. And mention of the maximums, one was *huge*, bouncing off the clubhouse roof as it continued on its way onto the rugby pitch beyond! BOOM! But *CJ* wouldn't make it a second 50 in the week as he holed out - needless to say at "cow" - to Chambers off Gumbrell's bowling. 99 for 3. This just left time for Dilina to partner Aliyan in putting on 9 more runs to see the innings close on 108 for 3.

The reply by the combined side would likely stand or fall on the shoulders of Chambers, their main batter. And in this regard - and having posted such a big score - Aliyan managed his bowlers, and field placings well such that Chambers would face just 32 balls before getting out in the penultimate over, having opened. His 32 deliveries faced brought him 28 runs, and - all-in-all - that was just fine for the 15s. At the other end from him, Chambers' partners struggled to rotate the strike for him, with Aliyan's field pressing hard to save 1s and his bowlers backing him up in the main by bowling good lines and lengths. Bull scored 5 from 27 balls, and Stewart made 13 from 23. Again, ideal from the Under 15s' perspective. 68 for 4 was the eventual reply, Chambers having been bowled by Joe to top-score with his 28. A win by 40 runs.

Dropped catches rued [posted 02/09/15]

The GHK|Hillhead Under 18 combined side are likely back in the city's west end ruing the fact that they dropped Owais in the first over of tonight's rescheduled league match at Shawholm. Then, to add insult to injury, they dropped him again mid-innings. Both lives were capitalised on by Owais as he raced to a 38-ball ton, reaching his hundred with an eighth 6 to add to his nine 4s. 101 retired it was as Owais took the applause of team-mates in just the tenth over. At the other end - and hardly batting sluggishly - was *CJ* who, himself, scored an unbeaten half-century, his 56 coming off just 35 deliveries. The other batter to reach the middle was the skipper, *Beast* bunting a cameo 28 (eighteen balls) to contribute to the 199 for 0 that was ultimately posted. For the visiting bowlers it was a tough shift, not helped by those drops, and some erratic fielding.

In their reply the combined side didn't just throw things away however, Holland (46*) and Soni (19) putting on 63 for the only wicket to fall. Lewis was able to rotate his bowlers well, nine players getting to roll their arms over, *Gary* (2-1-4-0) and Abtaha (2-0-7-0) spearheading the attack and returning the best figures. The only wicket fall saw Uzzair execute a neat stumping off *Beast's* bowling to see Soni depart. In the end the visitors scored 88 for 1, to see them lose by 111 runs.

Good to get a game in, and one played in pretty decent weather and in good spirit.

Sound familiar? [posted 31/08/15]

The Under 18s have seen this before! On July the 20th the side travelled to Prestwick to play a schedule league match, only for the game to be abandoned after *the 'Loc* had batted. Tonight's rescheduled match followed a spookily similar pattern. Losing the toss, the side were batting first and, as had happened back in July, a top order collapse followed. Back then it was 22 for 3, tonight the guys decided that wasn't bad enough so opted for 10 for 3! *CJ* (6) was the first casualty, cleaned up by Turner. He was followed by Aliyan first ball - doh! - before the skipper decided he'd like to join the rest of the *James Gang* in the pavilion, cleaned up by Macbeth. Some rebuilding was needed then, and Uzzair and Abdullah tried to do just that, but Uzzair got ahead of himself and - having reached double figures - made the rash decision to charge Miller and was stumped by Watson. *Ihty* was next out, missing with a big heave to give Rao Snr. a wicket. And without a run being added Abdullah went courtesy of a sharp catch at short cover by Miller off Young's bowling. 52 for 6. The seventh, and final, wicket to fall in the reduced fifteen overs-a-side match was *Robert's*: bowled by Young for 4. This left Shehroz (9*) and Bilal (0*) with the sheriff badges and the side had posted just 65 for 7.

Then it rained,.....heavily! Match abandoned. Again.

Semi-final defeat for the Under 18s [posted 30/08/15]

The Under 18s lost out in their Scottish Cup semi-final today, losing to Clydesdale by 34 runs after failing to chase 134 to win. In the field first, the 18s started really well, restricting the *Dark Side* to 43 for 3 in the tenth over. Ghaffar (10, Dhami (4) and Ashraf (1) were all gone, and at this stage in proceedings *the 'Loc* were maybe slight favourites. However a strong

second half to their innings by the hosts saw them rattle along and eventually post 133, the last five overs alone going for 43 runs! Aside letting their grip on the innings go, the cardinal sin for the 18s - remembering how disciplined their bowling had been at Inverleith in the quarter-final - was to gift 20 runs to their opponents in wides and no balls. All the bowlers were offenders, with Lewis the main culprit, leaking 5 wides in his four overs, this despite taking 3 for 30. Expensive.

Now to their reply. Well let's say it didn't start well as Ghaffar won the contest with Owais hands down, getting Owais to play an unnecessary pull-shot third ball that was miss-hit to Bain, who held on to see Owais "back in the hutch" having not disturbed the scorers. 56 runs were then added for the second wicket, *CJ* departing after a well-made 34 (37 balls). His partner was Uzzair, but unfortunately he'd not managed to accumulate as quickly. After Lewis came-and-went for 2 (four balls), run out by Taylor, Uzzair was caught and bowled by the same player, dismissed for 17 (33 balls). 67 for 4, but into the fourteenth over. After Uzzair's departure the rest of the order were looking to score quickly if any chance of a win still remained. And despite a much better run-rate being achieved, none of the batters could play that really special innings, with no boundaries being scored to help things along. And when the 120th legitimate delivery had been bowled the side were 35 runs short of their target, and it would be their opponents who progressed to the final.

A good run in the cup ends therefore, and what's left is perhaps a thought of "what might've been", not least with the side's two elder statesmen, *Rosco* and *Stouty*, both being unavailable today.

Hard to put in to words! [posted 26/08/15]

This reporters watched some funny ol' games of junior cricket over the years, but tonight's Under 18 Scottish Cup quarter-final at Inverleith in Edinburgh, against SMRH, is right up there amongst the oddest. How exactly once the dust had settled, and in the gathering gloom, the 18s had won is still hard to fathom. Of course, "why" they won is easy: they scored 2 more runs than their hosts. That bit's simple. However, "how" that was the eventual result is far harder to articulate. But let me try.....

Batting first the top order simply capitulated. Owais (2 from nine balls), *Rosco* (4 from five balls) and *Beast* (0, a first-baller) came-and-went for hee-haw, quickly. 15 for 3 in the fourth over. Then *Ihty* (3 from thirteen balls) and *CJ* (4 from eleven balls) came-and-went for hee-haw,.....only slowly! And that's maybe worse. Aliyan, not to be outdone in the dotting-up and leaving-the-ball stakes that was clearly being run then scored 7 from seventeen, before Amaan looked like Brendan McCullum in comparison, with 11 from 22 balls. And to finish things off Uzzair and *Roberto* mustered 9 not out between them from nineteen balls faced. Just as well SMRH thought they'd help the 18s out by chipping in 14 runs in wides and no balls then, given only 40 had been scored off the bat. And let's be clear the wicket was fine and the outfield was dry, if a tad hairy. Why exactly, then, the 18s seemed to suffer from collective amnesia as regards how to rotate strike, work in 1s and 2s, manage a limited overs innings, etc. is a mystery. 55 for 7, with 15, in total, in extras.

And how those extras would haunt the home side.

To the second innings then [Ed: this, it's rumoured, after a Sir Alex'esque "chat" from the Coach during interval!] The instructions were clear: quicks bowl quick; seamers hit the seam and your lengths; slow bowlers bowl to your fields; and *everyone* bowl full and straight. Fielders: put in the effort, stay switched on, and hold the catches. And low-and-behold - somehow - it worked! Who the eleven cricketers were, wearing the same kit that the eleven diddies carrying bats earlier had been wearing, I don't know, but they certainly weren't - can't - be the same people. *Ihty* ran in fast and bowled quick, the SMRH batters being unable to get him away. He'd return figures of 4-1-4-1 reflecting this. Aliyan backed up his opening partner leaking only 10 runs in his spell. *Beast* then went for 1 run less than Aliyan as he conceded just the 9 runs. And the other change bowlers used - *Roberto* and Uzzair -

returned combined figures of 5-0-22-3, perfectly acceptable and taking wickets, the dividends of the pressure created by the bowlers bowling before them. So going in to the final over, and with darkness falling, the equation was simple. SMRH were 49 for 5, and 6 runs - tying the 18s' score - would see them win on fewer wickets lost. The bowler? *Rosco*! For his first over of the year. Stroke of genius or moment of madness from the skipper would be decided over the following four minutes. Ball one. Dot! Swing-and-a-miss. Balls two, three and four. A single scrambled each time. So two balls left and 3 runs needed. Ball five. Swing, edge, past fly slip/short third man. The batters are running, it looks an easy 3. But somehow the batters only run 2! And, wait a minute, the umpire's signalling.....1 short! You couldn't script it! So it's one ball left, 2 runs needed. Ball six. Wicket! *Rosco* cleans up Bell. And in the darkness the *zinger* bails flash away - on/off red signalling a quite remarkable escape by the 18s. Who'd be a coach.....

Comfortable in Paisley [posted 25/08/15]

Now there's something you don't hear every day, do you? "Comfortable in Paisley". Well of course we're only talking about the result of tonight's rescheduled Under 13 league match with Kelburne, at Whitehaugh! On a bright and pleasantly balmy night, the 13s made quick work of winning the game, bowling out the seven-man home side for just 49, albeit this represented a pretty decent recovery from 7 for 4! And those four had seen arguably the one-handed catch of this - *any* - season by Dilina, who'd thrown himself to his left and snatched the wee red ball out of the air to get rid of opener Farndale. Ali also held on to a nick off McLean's bat to see the other home opener depart for just 2, both wickets for *Sobo*. And *Sobo* had a third as well, cleaning up Black. It was carnage at this stage in proceedings. Dilina then completed the rout of the top order by getting rid of Wright caught and bowled. Phew!

But credit Kelburne, and Wylie in particular, who stroked five 4s in an unbeaten 24 to see his side to respectability. However the other batters couldn't stop leaving the middle, and when Devlin was caught by Dilina - his third grab - the innings was done. 49 all out. 50 to win.

And the win was achieved in just over ten overs, Abdul anchoring things with 19 not out after Momin and Ali had both been dismissed for ducks, Callum the other unbeaten batter.

Limped over the line [posted 21/08/15]

The Under 15s sneaked home in this evening's home league match with the Greenock|Helensburgh combined side, winning by just two wickets chasing down the relatively low target of 76. This was the target after the 15s had restricted their visitors to just 75 for 5 in a good bowling display. All of the top three combined side batters reached double figures, however none managed to put in an innings-defining scorer. Ware, with 28, top-scored, Goan making 20. However they were, respectively, dismissed by *Sobo* and Uzzair, the Shah boys each taking a brace. The other wicket-taker was Joe who got rid of Knowle courtesy of a stumping from *CJ*. Mention, too, of Aliyan's bowling. Though wicket-less on the night his figures of 3-1-5-0 reflect another good accurate - and economical - return.

However though 76 to win - even in a match reduced to eighteen overs-a-side - seems straight-forward, it proved not the case. 12 for 3 with Uzzair, Aliyan and *CJ* all sent packing evidenced this. Ware and Chambers were running amok and there was a need for someone to dig in. Luckily Abdullah was in the side and, coming in at four, he would stabilise things and play the anchor innings (34) that enabled the side to eventually get across the line. However it wouldn't be without further drama. Abdullah would be eighth out in the seventeenth over having just failed to see the side home himself. This, with the score on 71, meant a further 5 were still needed with eight balls left. And to make the agony for Abdullah just that little more acute, he'd been run out! However there'd be no "defeat from the jaws of victory" this time, as Abdul (11*) kept his cool and struck back-to-back 4s off Chambers on balls five and six of the seventeenth over to secure the win points. Phew.

Under 11s win again [posted 21/08/15]

The Under 11s unbeaten season continued tonight at a bright and sunny, if ultimately chilly, Marress, against the Irvine|Kilmarnock combined side. As seven days previously, the Under 11s bowled first, restricting their hosts to just net 32. However this reflected a much-improved score for the combined side than at Scott Ellis Playing Field when a clatter of wickets had seen the 11s chasing a negative score! A combination [Ed: no pun intended!] of less accurate bowling (balls not hitting the stumps), a faster outfield and smaller boundaries, and straighter batting, all conspired to see net 32 posted. Six wickets *were* taken however, with *Jamesy* picking up two, and Ubaid-Raza a "3-for". There were also good catches taken, take a bow Masters Mehmood (H), Khan and Rafay. So, net 33 needed to win.

And as ever the secret is not losing wickets, or at least not too many. Twenty overs later, in the gathering gloom, this had been achieved, only four '*Loc* scalps being taken by the home side bowlers. Nabeel top-scored with 20 not out, whilst Andrew ran him close with an unbeaten 14. The other batter getting in to net double figures was Ubaid-Raza who completed a good all-round performance with 10. The four wickets to fall saw Ubaid-Raza, Momin, *Jamesy* and Samee dismissed, all bowled. James's dismissal was commented on after the match as this now means he's finally got an average for the season!

18s win at BCP [posted 17/08/15]

Here are the *DJs*' musings on tonight's Under 18 League win at Bothwell Castle Policies. "The 18s were back in league action tonight taking the short trip along the M74 to Uddingston. The combined *Uddy/EK* team won the toss and chose to bat first on a good deck. Good bowling from *the Locsters* restricted the home team to 75 for 5 off their twenty overs. Pick of the bowlers were Lewis with 2 for 10 and *Roberto* (0 for 4) off their four-over quotas respectively, backed up by Ahmed-Raza three overs, 0 for 6, and a wicket for Shehroz!

"In reply 2 for 2 after four balls of South African 'Overseas Amateur' de Beer's first over was not an ideal base with Owais and *Stouty* both back in the pavilion without troubling the scorers! However under 15s Uzzair and *CJ* then batted with skill and bravery to see off de Beer and eventually compiled a partnership of 74 with the winning runs coming up in the fifteenth over, *CJ* unbeaten on 37 and Uzzair 23*. Pick of the home bowlers were de Beer with 2 for 13 and Calum Edmond who was only just pipped by *Roberto* in the economy stakes with his four overs costing 6 runs. So a satisfying win in the Bothwell Castle Policies sunshine with the big question being: how long will it last? The 18's form and/or the weather...."

Under 11s keep on winning [posted 14/08/15]

The Under 11s' unbeaten season continued tonight with a convincing win at Scott Ellis Playing Field against the Irvine|Kilmarnock combined side. Bowling first the 11s took a whopping sixteen [Ed: yes, 16!] home side wickets. This despite dropping no fewer than seven catches. *Jamesy* grabbed another "5-for", but couldn't possibly be handed the matchball given he'd grassed two of the catches! It's a tough school. But though there were numerous chances created but not taken, there was also - arguably - the best catch ever taken in Under 11 cricket.....ever. Nabeel was the bowler and Hurford the batter. A good length length delivery from Nabeel was smacked straight back and was travelling so fast that home umpire Mark Colman took evasive action. However Nabeel, still in his follow-through, simply through out a hand and snaffled a truly remarkable caught and bowled. And, much to M Colman Esq.'s relief as his life flashed before him. And though so many catches went down, some stuck. In addition to Nabeel's, Momin and Hassaan both held on to chances too. *Jamesy's* "interesting" night also included, having dropped his first chance, him picking up the loose ball and executing a direct-hit run out at the bowler's end. "Never run on a misfield" they say!

And the bizarre also happened when the 11s batted, Momin somehow ending up not out despite being beaten by a delivery that rapped in to the foot of middle stump only for the bails to stay where they were!

Aside *Jamesy's* 5 for 5, there were also "3-fors" for both Ubaid-Raza and Moiz. Well bowled to them too.

Dark Side doom.....again [posted 14/08/15]

Having had his belt and laces, and all sharp implements, removed from his person, the *DJ* has again penned a few thoughts on the Under 15s' latest defeat to the *Dark Side*. Tonight he writes, "The 15s' match report will be as brief as possible as I've suffered enough! It was a poor performance from the Under 15s tonight, who lost heavily to local rivals Clydesdale in the Scottish Cup. Clydesdale racked up 120 in their innings, aided and abetted by a number of dropped catches, missed run outs and misfields. Sound familiar? Zain Ashraf top scored for the *Dark Side* with 53, dropped third ball on nought 😞 We then mustered just 72 for 6 in reply, with the only bright spot being Uzzair's 22no which only just pipped 20 extras as the top scorer! Otherwise, it was a familiar tale of poor strike rotation (85 dot balls!), combined with poor shot selection and execution. Then, throw in a needless run out for good measure! Sadly no sign of learning from our mistakes...". Who'd be a coach, eh, reader?!? Nurse!....

Frank Smith Trophy final berth secured [posted 13/08/15]

Tonight saw the playing of the held-over Frank Smith Trophy semi-final with Ayr, that's the one held over from 2014! Given the year's delay the match was open to players aged Under 19, which meant a return to the junior ranks for Yash and *Stiffy*! Ayr batted first on a beautiful night [Ed: not often we've been able to say that this season!] and immediately got in to a tad of bother, losing opener Robbie Henderson without scoring, bowled by *Ihty*. Maybe *Ihty* and Owais had something of "home advantage" despite the match being at Ayr's "New Cambusdoon" ground it should be said given they'd played there over the previous three days for Scotland Under 17. And *Ihty* would go on to show just how much at ease he felt, by cleaning up Ayr's other opener, Calum Henderson. 13 for 2, and a good start by the 19s. Khan and Azeem then stabilised things a little, taking the score on to 29, before the former departed for 10, the first of - wait for it - four run outs! In fact batters three, four and five (Khan, Azeem and Craig) would all depart, run out! Extraordinary. And the wickets kept falling at regular intervals, as the 19s' rotated their bowlers. In fact there was so much rotation that *Rosco* turned his arm over. But as well as wickets falling it's fair to say that the runs also kept flowing. And so when the last wicket fell on the last ball of the innings, though Ayr were all out, they'd also posted 127, more than a-run-a-ball. *Ihty* was the standout bowler with 4 for 19, with Bilal grabbing 2 for 22. The other four dismissals? All run outs - one each for Amaan, *Stiffy*, *Roberto* and Owais. 128 to win.

Stiffy and Owais opened for the 19s, and quickly got to work. The runs - as they'd done in the Ayr innings - flowed nicely, but unlike in the first half wickets didn't fall. 69 in fact was on the 'board before the breakthrough came for the home side, Elliott departing for 39 (26 balls), his opening partnership with Owais having created a great platform for a successful run-chase. *Beast* then reaped the perfectly proper reward for having the temerity to take a week's holiday last week by coming-and-going cheaply for 2, which brought *Stouty* to the middle to see the side across the finish line in some style and, with Owais (54*), finish not out (24*). The end came quickly in fact, the win being secured in the seventeenth over. For Ayr Azeem had taken both the wickets to fall, returning figures of 4-0-21-2, comfortably the best of the home side bowlers.

So a good win, and now the side waits to find out who they'll meet in the held-over final.

Same old story.....usual result [posted 10/08/15]

This season's Under 18 story has - largely - been one of unavailability. Tonight was no different. James x2 were on holiday, as was Abdullah. Amaan #1 had friends round, and Maqsoods x2 weren't available. *Ihty* and Owais *were* available.....until Cricket Scotland made them unavailable again. *Rosco's* still recovering from his broken finger. And Amaan #2's never been around! Given this scale of unavailability it's actually quite impressive an Under 18 side could've been fielded at all, far less that it might've held out hopes of a win against a

strong Ayr side. But play they did, and compete they did too. In the end Ayr's 157 for 5 proved 69 runs more than *the 'Loc* could compile, but there was no embarrassment, and some pluses can be taken from the match.

First positive was the side's enthusiasm for the task. Then there was the clawing back of the first innings as Ayr threatened to post a *really* huge total. 108 for 0 to 157 for 5 reflects the guys' willingness to stick to their task, and minimise as best they could the damage caused by both openers getting to 50, and doing so at way better than a-run-a-ball. None of the bowling figures look that healthy mind you, with Aliyan's 4-0-25-0 being the most economical. 158 to win was the target then.

Aliyan (11) and *Stouty* (21) got the reply off to a steady start before they were separated with the total on 23, Aliyan nicking off behind to Cooper off Miller's bowling. And *Stouty* then departed two overs later in exactly the same manner. Bizarre. From this juncture any momentum in the run-chase seemed to be lost and only after Uzzair had gone cheaply (5 from eleven balls), and *Roberto* (2 from twelve balls) had done similarly, was any positive to come from the innings. And that was *Sobd's* near run-a-ball unbeaten 27 that saw him score five 4s. Well batted the "wee guy", to borrow the descriptor used by the home side skipper. 88 for 6 was the final total, and a heavy defeat. But in the circumstances certainly no disgrace. [Ed: I wonder how many "unavailables" will become "available" when the cup semi's and finals come round.....?]

11s win at home against Prestwick [posted 07/08/15]

The Under 11s last played a competitive match on the 3rd of July! This summer's horrible weather has seen every scheduled Friday match since, cancelled. Unbelievable. But tonight, finally, the bad luck ended and play was possible. With the scheduled league fixtures all complete, tonight's match with Prestwick was a rescheduled game. The 11s batted first, with debutant Danny Cooke strapping on the pads in the second pairing. First pair Ubaid-Raza and Momin put on 18 without loss to give the side a decent start, and by half way it was 34 for 1 with Danny and *Jamesy* having batted together as pair two. Wides were probably the biggest contributor mind you, as the visitors' bowlers struggled to bowl a consistent line. In fact wides would contribute no fewer than 32 runs to the eventual total of 90 for 4. Top-scorer was Moiz with 10*, other highlights including Danny marking his debut with a couple of boundary 4s, and Samir playing the *champagne* shot of the innings, stroking a beautiful extra cover 4! 90 for 4 was net 70, and so the visitors would need net 71 for the win.

Prestwick's bunter-in-chief - and ace pitcher - Joe Morrison opened with Struan Duncan, and demonstrating that his arithmetic remains as good as ever, he manipulated the strike sufficiently well top face twice as many deliveries as his partner. 42 for 2 was the score once the first five overs were completed, Master Morrison having bunted 31 of them, albeit being cleaned up early on. By halfway the Prestwick total had only increased by another 12 runs though, and as importantly for the 11s they'd lost two more wickets. Net 34 then, and this again, plus a few more, were needed in the second ten overs if the win points were to head south-west. But wickets kept falling, seven would be the eventual haul, and so even when two of *Jamesy's* final three deliveries were pulled for 4s, the 11s were still comfortable in the knowledge that they'd end up on the winning side. *Jamesy* and Nabeel both took a couple of wickets, Nabeel's including a smart caught-and-bowled, and the other three wickets were shared around. So a win by 22 runs in the end, and the Under 11s continue to be unbeaten in season 2015.

Derby defeat for the 13s [posted 03/08/15]

Toytown was the venue for tonight's n'th meeting of *the 'Loc* and *'Dale* at Under 13 this season. And, unfortunately, the 13s' losing streak against the *Dark Side* remains firmly intact! But tonight there were maybe some offsetting factors, including the unavailability of a whole plethora of players, for a whole plethora of reasons. And in particular, the absences of the more experienced Abdul and Dilina certainly impacted the strength in depth of *the 'Loc* side that took the field. Here are the *DJs* thoughts on the game itself.

"The 13s were in league action tonight at a soggy, but not completely sodden, Titwood, suffering a heavy defeat to a strong home side. *The 'Dale* racked up 153 for 4 with three batters bunting retirement-inducing 30s. On the plus side for *the 'Loc* fielding was generally decent, and only 6 runs conceded in wides and no balls and everyone turned their arm over.

"Pick of the bowlers was young *Jamesy* who returned 3 for 21 in four overs, just reward for getting the basics right: full and straight, with two clean-bowled victims including dangerman Struan Walker dismissed to an excellent running catch at mid-on from skipper *Sobo*. However, not much of a positive spin can be put on the batting tho', with only 46 for 6 mustered in twenty overs. Too many dot balls, poor shot selection and a needless run out just about covers it with only one batter in double figures!

"Still, good to get a game in at last, the sun shone, and it wasn't too cold!"

Under 15s beat *EK*, but the midges beat *everyone!* [posted 24/07/15]

The *DJ* reports on tonight's Under 15 match at Torrance House. "Nine played seven tonight as 15s took on East Kilbride at Calderglen although it was more like Midge-glen! Holidays and injuries deprived the 15s of a number of regulars but it gave an opportunity to promote Under 11s Jamesy, Samee and Hassaan. Aliyan won the toss and decided to bat. The final total of 134 was largely due to a second wicket partnership of 96 between Amaan and Uzzair who came together after Aliyan departed for a briskly compiled 15, somehow contriving to reach, and edge, a wide ball from Calum Edmond to the 'keeper. Both uzzair and Amaan batted well interspersed with some dodgy calls, and running between the wickets (Amaan!). Amaan brought up his 50 with a 6 over square leg in the eighteenth over, his retiral bringing the Shah brothers together for the closing stages of the innings both finishing with sheriffs: Uzzair 43* and Sobo 4*. And so to the EK innings: Under 11s Jamesy and Hassaan opened up with the new ball and thereafter all the 'Loc players turned their arms over. Pick of the bowlers were Samee who picked up his first Under 15s wicket, clean bowled! And he ended up with figures of two overs 1 for 9. Hamaad, who bowled tidily, bowled two overs for 6 but contrived to drop a catch off his own bowling, while Sobo continued his happy knack of taking wickets at the end of the innings with 2 for 11 off three overs, culminating in the wicket of top-scorer Fergus Clarke who batted well for his adopted homesters and was out just 4 runs short of a half century. So, despite midge infested conditions, good to get a game in but still plenty of Work to be done by this group. Fielding was sloppy with a few dropped catches and non attempts, and the bowling was inconsistent with 19 runs gifted in wides....."

Under 18s progress in the cup [posted 22/07/15]

The Under 18s finally managed to get their Scottish Cup tie with Ayr played this evening, but only by switching venues and going down to New Cambusdoon to beat the weather. Thanks, therefore, to Ayr for hosting. In a match reduced to sixteen overs-a-side the home side batted first and posted a competitive 105 for 5. The 18s' bowling and fielding was absolutely adequate, with the big ground and fast outfield producing the better-than-a-run-a-ball total. Mention, too, in passing when talking about the first innings, of *Sobo's* contribution. Drafted in as a late replacement after call offs, *Sobo* took two great catches a "cow" to get rid of both Muhammad Azeem and Shujaa Khan, arguably Ayr's two main batters. The successful run-chase centered on a half century from Owais, who batted through with a collection of partners to get the side over the finish line in the fifteenth over. SMRH are the Under 18s' next opponents, the Edinburgh club hosting.

Abandoned [posted 20/07/15]

The Under 18s made the trip to Prestwick this evening, hopeful of getting their league match played. However, though it started, it didn't finish, driving rain sending players and umpires running to the pavilion for cover. *The 'Loc* were 34 for 3 in the ninth over when the rain came, with *Beast*, *CJ* and Aliyan all having departed cheaply, and *Ihty* and Uzzair the batters in the middle.

Dark Side double [posted 10/07/15]

Clydesdale completed an Under 15 league double over *the 'Loc* tonight at a dark, dank and dreary Shawholm. Though the policies continue to look immaculate, the same certainly couldn't be said of the atmospheric conditions or the cricket on show! Miserable. Batting first after the toss, the *Evil Empire's stormtroopers* scratched their way to 105 for 8, a total only reached because of the central contribution made by Australian holiday-maker Carlisle, who top-scored with an unbeaten 47. It might've been 20C colder than he'd ever played cric' in back home, but he was really the only batter who "got in" and applied himself. For the 15s, Uzzair's "3-for" was the standpout bowling return, with the effort in the field to back up *the 'Loc's* bowling unit being as below par as the batting was low-quality. Catches were grassed, run out chances were missed, and there was a general apathy to the work done in the field. But all this said, from a 'Loc point of view, 106 to win would've been "banked" before the start of play. In effect just 5 runs-an-overs.

But 5 runs-an-over would turn out to be the stuff of pipe dreams as the 15s' - to a batter - gave their wickets away. The tone was set by Abdullah deciding that stepping to leg and swinging at every delivery was the best approach "up top". He got cleaned up by Ul Haq. Then Uzzair was run out without facing a ball! *CJ*, Aliyan and Amaan - arguably the batting order "engine room" - were also each dismissed gifting simple catches to fielders. How does 38 for 1 turning into 53 for 8 sound?!? Or, looking at the differential: 15 for 7! Bonkers! Nine batters scored 4 or less, and had Clydesdale's bowling not been as wayward - the visitors gifted *the 'Loc* 34 in extras - as it was, the 28-run margin of defeat would've been much, much, bigger. 77 for 9 was the final score, 34 coming in extras. Ouch!

Washed away! [posted 06/07/15]

The Under 13s' match with Stenhousemuir started but didn't finish tonight, the visitors 19 for 2 after six overs when the rains came and drove the players and officials from the pitch. The two wickets to fall had been shared between *Sobo* and Nabeel, Nabeel trapping Thakur LBW for 9, and *Sobo* cleaning up Bang for 1. Hopefully the match will be rescheduled.

Five-man Weirs succumb to the 11s [posted 03/07/15]

It's perhaps no surprise that the Under 11s' unbeaten season continued at Albert Park tonight when we tell you that hosts Weirs only had five players. However having arrived with ten, the 11s gave the home side a couple of fielders, and with each of the *Weirs* 5 bowling four overs each it was just about a legitimate match! So to the details. Batting first, the 11s only lost the one wicket, with Moiz being dismissed when he hit a return catch to the bowler who hung on to a sharp chance. Aside this mishap there were really no dramas as three figures were racked up, the final score being net 101 under the pairs scoring system. Nabeel was top-scorer with an unbeaten 24, whilst Samee struck a nice 15. 30 wides and no balls, however, evidence that 30 out of the 120 balls bowled - call that a quarter - or one in every four - were hittable. 102 to win was the Weirs target therefore. But they never really got going, and lost wickets at regular intervals - nine in total - to finish 48 for 9, or net 3, to leave the 11s as 98-run winners. Comfortable sure, but good to get a game in on a glorious night.

15s see off seven-man West [posted 03/07/15]

Here's the *DJs* spin on tonight's Under 15 win over northside rivals West of Scotland. "*Groundhog Day* or déjà vu, all over again, as the 15s completed a comfortable win over a depleted West of Scotland tonight, the culmination of a hat-trick of wins over our north-side rivals this week alone! Opposition skipper Angus Guy chose to bat first in the 'Shawholm' sunshine, and was the mainstay of the *West* innings, being last man out, clean-bowled by *Sobo*, in the eighteenth over for a well-compiled 31 out of a total of 46. He was kept in check however by a good effort in the field mirroring the 18s performance on Monday, with good tight bowling early on from Aliyan and Amaan restricting the *West* openers to only 7 runs from the first five overs. Ahmed-Raza then made the breakthrough, clean bowling opener Callum Coats in over nine, and thereafter wickets fell at regular intervals. *Sobo* cleaned up the tail with 3 for 6 in 2.2 overs, and *Gary* took the other wicket to fall, finishing

with 2 for 13, off four, but there were no real failures with the ball, and only 6 in extras including a leg bye tells its own story. Also worthy of mention is smart captaincy from Aliyan in the closing overs which ensured his opposite number was deprived of the strike.

"In reply, openers Abdullah and *CJ* made light work of the target, the only blip being *CJ*'s run out for 23 after an opening partnership of 42 in just over four overs. This brought the brothers Malik together and it was Abdullah who hit the winning runs in the sixth over, finishing on 22 not out. So a good win, in proper cricket weather, albeit against a well under-strength *West* team missing key players. Next up for the 15s is the visit of table-topping local rivals Clydesdale..."

DJs spin... [posted 29/06/15]

Coach James reports on tonight's Under 18 win against *West*. "It was a comfortable win tonight for the 18s at Hamilton Crescent against a depleted West of Scotland team who could only muster seven players. The start was delayed due to the *Warriors* game earlier in the day, and so was reduced to sixteen overs-a-side. *West*'s openers tho didn't seem to grasp the concept that it was a reduced T20 however, and batted in Test Match mode with 35 dots in the first six overs! Credit tho' was due to the opening burst from *Ihty* and Aliyan whose accurate bowling was backed up by some smart ground fielding. *Ihty* bowled three maidens in a row, and even though Aliyan was relatively expensive (3-2-2-1!) he took the wicket of *West* opener Sam Greene, clean bowled a ball after skipper *Ihty* had dropped a dolly at short extra cover! So, not an expensive miss but it did bring opposition skipper Lucas Farndale to the wicket fresh from his match-winning 50 for the *Western Warriors* at Shawholm earlier in the day.

"And he certainly upped the tempo and scored a run-a-ball 20 before being smartly stumped in *LWB*'s first over. This was followed by another wicket two balls later, courtesy of a diving catch from *CJ* at point. Bilal also took a wicket in the last over, *West* finishing on 53 for 4 with opener Guy unbeaten on 21, albeit off 42 balls, testimony to a good bowling and fielding display which almost went extra-less, spoiled only by 3 wides from Uzzair and a bye in the last over. In reply the runs were knocked off in less than eight overs, *Stouty* in particular taking advantage of some friendly bowling and lack of outfielders, and was unbeaten on 31 off twenty balls at the end. Abdullah was the only wicket to fall, LBW to that man Farndale, for 9, who then bowled *CJ* a couple of waste-high full tosses which were duly dispatched to bring a swift end to proceedings. So another good win, and next up for the 18s: *Uddy* away next Monday."

Tough test for the 13s [posted 24/06/15]

The Under 13s ran into Clydesdale's 13s again tonight, this time in the Scottish Cup. And, as on the two previous other occasions they've met this season, it was the *Dark Side* who triumphed. And tonight, though without two of their bigger and better bunters, they still had enough bat swirlers to bunt their way to 188 for 3 batting first. Of course on any properly-sized ground this is ball-park 120, but it still reflects the club swinging prowess of Crossmyloof's best club. No fewer than three *Stormtroopers* retired, with only *Sobo* amongst the *Rebel Alliance* bowlers having any success. Courtesy of a good catch by Hassaan he got rid of Taha Khan for 15. There were also two really sharp bits of fielding that saw Samee and Moiz execute direct-hit run outs. Cairns and Zilfiqar were the batters to suffer. 188 for 3 then, with none of the bowlers' figures really looking too good. The [Ed: we measured it apparently!] 26-pace boundary certainly helps "up" any score, and Clydesdale's five 6s and 22 4s tell their own stories. A mere 189 to win.

Well the 13s *didn't* win. But they *did* - and remember the 13s are a side of all but three Under 11s - bat their twenty overs, and with Samee scoring an unbeaten 33 and the side mustering 96 for 5, their efforts with the bat are certainly nothing to be ashamed of. Aside Samee's 33, Abdul, *Sobo* and Abdullah all got in to the teens. Abdullah *and Jamesy* were the not out batters at the end, a damp end it should be said as most of the second innings had been played through drizzle.

Under 13s defend low score in Paisley [posted 22/06/15]

The Under 13s somehow managed to defend just 87 this evening, and, by doing so, secure a win at Meikleriggs over Ferguslie. Yet this had looked unlikely as late as halfway through the Ferguslie innings. At 43 for 1 looking for just another 45 to win it seemed improbable that the 13s could triumph. However Nabeel had other ideas it seems, and the tenth - bowled by him - saw him take a hat-trick that saw the pendulum swing in *the 'Loc's* direction. Suddenly it was 43 for 4. Then, in the next over, Ferguslie's opener, and skipper, Scott Glassford was bowled by Moiz. 51 for 5,.....and from nowhere, within nine deliveries. What a turnaround. And from this point the wickets just kept coming. Theoretically still able to win the game if their batters could play out the twenty overs, the home side batters seemed to catch a dose of the jitters, and when last man Shaw was run out by *Sobo* and Ali, this was the third run out of the innings - the earlier two seeing direct hits from Nabeel and Andrew - and the 13s' hosts had been bowled out for just 67 leaving *the 'Loc* 20-run winners. Amazing.

The target of just 88 to win would've been lower however had *Sobo* (30*) and Ali (11) not put on 46 for the first wicket. Both were batting comfortably, and it was only the needless run out of Ali [ed: by *Sobo*???] that saw their partnership broken. Unfortunately after this first wicket fell there was a spate of dismissals, one after the other. Six batters failed to score, Momin finishing the not out batter,.....on 0 too. Had extras not totalled 41 then maybe the result would've been different. Too many batters playing poor shots, and lacking conviction in playing their shots when these were on. Lob in two run outs - *Sobo* involved in both! - and it wasn't really a night for the batters. However they were bailed out by the bowlers, and all ended well.

Good all-round performance secures good win [posted 22/06/15]

It really was kind of like it always should be. What? The 18s' win over Ferguslie. By this we mean, batting first, the top order gets in, goes on, and a couple of batters "make scores". Then the rest of the batting order chips in and, before you can say "kind of like it always should be", you've posted a total that's more than a run-a-ball. *Easy-peasy*. Then defending said more-than-a-run-a-ball total, you take early wickets, gift *hee-haw* in extras, and proceed to bowl out the opposition just for good measure. And tonight? Job done.

Ferguslie were the Under 18s' opponents as already mentioned, and - batting first - the 18s posted 136 for 5, with *Rosco* (20), *Owais* (41) and *Beast* (38) - the top three - producing almost three-quarters of the total. Throw in a near run-a-ball cameo unbeaten 18 from *Ihty* and there's your 136. 14 runs *were* gifted in extras by the visitors too, Haroon Tahir being the pick of their bowlers, taking 2 for 19 in his four overs. 137 to win then for the Paisley side.

The 18s' defence of 136 started well too: 19 for 2 early in the reply and Ferguslie's batters were already in a bit of trouble. Neither opener - the two Khans - made it past 7, and therefore [Ed: think about it!] defied their surnames as regards batting ability on the night. A bit of calm followed as Haroon Tahir and Ahmed took the score towards 30. However their partnership, too, couldn't last, and 29 for 3 was soon on the 'board. 9 runs later and Ferguslie were four down. English (24) added some much-needed fight in the middle order, but he kept losing partners, and he'd eventually go himself, dismissed by *Beast*, caught and bowled. The second "c & b" of the innings, Amaan having got rid of Gilmour in the same manner. The end came in the eighteenth over, Doud Tahir the batter left stranded, the 18s securing a 53-run win.

Kwik Cricket update [posted 21/06/15]

Gordon Smith reports on a fun - but at times damp (!) - Kwik Cricket festival this morning. "Poloc was represented by Devraj, Aritra and Callum at Clydesdale today. Despite the rain we managed to play two matches. First up was a match against Clydesdale, although Poloc's *three amigos* were actually joined by another four from the home side. Batting first a target

of over 250 was set. However, unknown to our boys the home side had pulled a fast one, passing them a bowler who went on to bowl 6 no balls, resulting in 12 in extras and six free hits from the tee. 😬 The end result of a 15-run loss was very harsh. Our three then joined forces with Ferguslie to face Greenock. Batting first. some good hitting from all the boys helped set a total of 215. Defending the total was always going to be a close thing but with Devraj, Callum and Aritra all taking wickets the defence was succesful and the win secured. Given the second match was interrupted by an extremely heavy shower which saw all parties scurry for the clubhouse, the decision was taken to call a halt after two matches." Thanks to Gordon, and the youngsters, who braved the inclement weather.

Under 15s finish third on Finals Day [posted 21/06/15]

As the Under 13s had done a fortnight ago, the Under 15s travelled to Edinburgh on *ECB* Cup Finals Day business, and would return ten hours later with a won one/lost one record, and a third-place finish. Up against Grange in game one, the 15s lost out by 39 runs, ending their run-chase on 87 for 4. Only really Abdullah (20) had "got in", though he might be disappointed that - chasing Grange's effective run-a-ball total - he didn't keep the scoreboard ticking over to a greater extent, his 20 coming from 39 deliveries. Uzzair's 18 not out was the only other semi-meaningful knock, as any realistic chance of reaching 127 evaporated pretty early on. The first innings that had seen the Edinburgh youngsters post 126 for 5 had actually been a little in the balance after ten overs, Grange sitting at 50 for 3 - Amaan having grabbed three scalps. However the 15s' change bowlers hadn't backed the performances of the new-ball combo, and Grange's middle order capitalised. Defeat then meant it was the third/fourth place play-off that awaited the 15s after tea.

Huntyly - who'd been well beaten by Carlton in the other semi-final - would be the 15s' opponents. And this match really mirrored the first game, in as much as the side batting first posted 120-odd before then restricting the chasing side. This time though it was the 15s who had first go, scoring 125 for 4, *CJ* top-scoring with 38, and Uzzair scoring 20. Then in the defence of their score, all the outfielders rolled their arms over, and did enough to secure the eventual 52-run winning margin. Third place it was then.

So after the obligatory team photo', there was just time to nip over to the other pitch for the end-of-event presentation.....which had finished before the 15s got there!

Big first innings score sets up 15s' win [posted 19/06/15]

Amaan's unbeaten 51, coming after *CJ* and Aliyan had put on 53 for the first wicket in tonight's Under 15 League match down at Prestwick, was the key plank in securing the win points. He reached his maiden half century for the club in the last over, in a match reduced to eighteen overs-a-side to ensure that those players observing Ramadhan could get back to Glasgow in time. Amaan's 51 not out included eight 4s, the only two maximums of the innings featuring in Aliyan's fifteen-ball 21. *CJ* - Aliyan's opening partner - chipped in with 29 from just twenty balls too, but both openers will be disappointed by how they got out. Aliyan tamely chipped a Macbeth delivery to mid-off where Cole held on, whilst *CJ* somewhat bizarrely - and certainly unecessarily - ran himself out, returning for a second that never really looked on. Aside these three innings, extras was the next highest scorer, Prestwick gifting 18 by this means. 138 for 6 was the final total after the eighteen overs were bowled, one of the six wickets being Uzzair's - run out at the non-striker's end by Rao for wandering out of his crease after being warned!

The second innings was largely a formality for the 15s, Prestwick's batters struggling to get any real momentum going. Only 7 were scored from the first four overs as Aliyan and *Sobo* tied up the home side's openers. And then when *Gary* came in to the attack he immediately made the breakthrough, bowling Clelland. 8 for 1. Clelland's opening partner Cole would go on to top-score for his side with 20, but his innings would be the only one to get to a two-digit number starting with "2". Macbeth (12 from seven) and Watson (16 for nine) did "have a go" late on, and entertained the midge-bitten onlookers, but aside this, as noted, the innings didn't so much peter out, as peter in then peter on and on. 95 for 8, with all ten

outfielders in the 15s' ranks rolling their arms over, four grabbing a wicket each, the fifth dismissal seeing Uzzair and *CJ* combine to run out Turner. A win by 43 runs.

13s see off Greenock [posted 15/06/15]

The Under 13s enjoyed a fairly straight-forward win this evening over visitors Greenock. Batting first - in light drizzle - the 13s' opening batters - *Sobo* and Abdul - put on 92 together, their partnership only being broken when the former retired on 33. Ali was next in and he'd be the third batter to get in to double figures, reaching 12, before being bowled by Nowell. Nowell actually had a hand in a few of the five wickets that fell, grabbing Abdul's wicket and taking a catch to send Samee back to the pavilion. But notwithstanding that wickets were falling, the runs were also still flowing. Aided by an abundance of extras - including 44 runs in wides - the 13s eventually closed their innings on 135 for 5. A decent total.

As the Greenock reply started the first good news was that the rain had stopped and it had turned in to a decent evening. In their run-chase the Greenock openers, too, started well. Forrest and Nowell put on 49 for the first wicket, Nowell being run out by Ubaid-Raza. And, spookily, Forrest would also depart courtesy of a run out, this time a great direct hit by Samee, aiming at just the one stump. With inroads being made in to the Greenock top order, *Sobo* was able to rotate his bowlers, and - in fact - all ten outfielders rolled their arms over. 87 for 5 was the eventual end-of-innings score to see the 13s secure a 48-run win.

Sigh.... [posted 15/06/15]

Coach James was eased off his sedatives by nursing staff this evening for long enough to dictate some thoughts on tonight's shambolic defeat at Langloan. "The President's suggestion wasn't that far off the mark! The Under 18s were beaten tonight by an eight-man team whose senior players were simply more committed and street-wise than their *'Loc* counterparts. In fact tonight's match brought back bad memories of some of the *'Invincibles'* performances from last season. It seems some of our players don't seem to [Ed: or have the ability to?] learn lessons 😞

"I'll keep the match 'highlights' brief so as not to traumatise our readers! Having won the toss, *Drumps* managed 110 from their 20 overs, largely due to Nathan Allison's hard-hitting 61 and a below-par bowling and fielding performance. 19 runs in extras were gifted, including 15 in wides. Two catches were also grassed (top scorer Allison twice!), and run outs were missed due to not attacking the ball. Oh, and boundaries were conceded due to not getting anything behind the ball! Basically,.....a number of basics! Exempt from criticism were excellent spells from our opening bowlers *Ihty* and *Roberto* who bowled a combined eight overs, returning 4 for 23. And so to our batting.....if we must. From a seemingly comfortable position of 34 for 1 from four [Ed: yes, 4!] overs, opposition skipper Sabri bowled a game-changing over, clean bowling three of our top 5 (*Rosco*, *CJ* and Uzzair) for no runs in his third over. Thereafter a partnership of 42 between *Ihty* and Amaan put us back in the game, but *Ihty's* dismissal in the fourteenth over proved pivotal.

"Still, at 92 for 7, and with five overs left, it was anyone's game and surely Poloc's if we could bat the overs? Wrong! Bat the overs we did but a sequence of fourteen (!!?) dots and 1 run from the start of the last five overs followed, and we ended up 5 runs short needing 9 off the last over not getting bat on ball or rotating the strike. Sound familiar? Twenty dot balls in our last 30 faced! Finally, all credit to a committed Drumpellier team who fully deserved their victory with their effort in the field, especially commendable as they defended their total with only eight players, which tells its own story..."

Under 13s take third place [posted 14/06/15]

The Under 13s secured a third place finish in this season's ECB Cup, defeating Broomhall in a 3rd/4th place play off game at Goldenacre in Edinburgh today. They ended up in this match after losing heavily to the Dark Side in the semi-final. Batting first the 13s mustered just 56 for 9 in their twenty overs, with only two batters - Ali (13) and *Sobo* (11) - getting in to double figures. Then with the ball in hand the side could only hold up the Evil Empire's

march to the final for 7.2 overs as Hegg**inbunter** smote the wee red object to all parts on his way to a retirement-inducing 33. A ten-wicket loss - ouch!

The play off match - oddly - followed a similar pattern, with Broomhall this time collapsing batting first and setting the 13s just 48 to win, a target they reach with five overs to spare. *Sobo* anchored the innings with 18 not out, whilst Abdul also got in to double figures. In the first innings, the destroyer-in-chief had been Abdullah who followed up his big wicket haul in last Thursday's quarter-final with a "4-for". Dil' also chipped in with three wickets, dealing with two of Broomhall's top three, Abdullah cleaning up the tail. Rumours are also swirling round the club that the play off game saw a "world class wicket-keeper" in action for *the 'Loc!* 🤔

So a good performance to finish for the 13s in the competition, and a fun day out in the Capital. A big thanks to Grant Cathcart, for taking charge on the day, and for help from both Safder Rana and Chris' Graham in chapering the players. It's now back to league action tomorrow, with Greenock visiting.

11s beat Ayr [posted 12/06/15]

The Under 11s continue to be undefeated in this year's league, Ayr being the latest side to be seen off. Ayr's side was young and inexperienced, and was also missing its most potent bowler. However notwithstanding this *the 'Loc* youngsters put in a strong all-round performance to win by 100 runs under the pairs scoring system. Losing only three wickets batting first was a great starting point, before then dismissing Ayr batters no fewer than eleven times in the second half. There were unbeaten scores in the teens from *Jamesy* and *Moizy*, as net 98 was posted. And then amidst the breaking of wickets as the 11s' bowlers cleaned up visiting batters, there were three good run outs - by Nabeel, James and Samee - and a stumping by Andrew, that were nicely executed too. Well played to the ten players on parade!

15s see off Ayr [posted 12/06/15]

Coach James reports on tonight's win at New Cambusdoon against Ayr. "The 15s second long road trip of the week was another successful one with an impressive win away to a strong Ayr side. On being invited to make first use of a good batting wicket the 15s racked up 129 for 2 in their twenty overs, a well paced effort after being 51 for 1 at the halfway mark *CJ* ensured the innings got off to a decent start with a well compiled 26 but the final total owed much to unbeaten partnership of 78 between Aliyan and Amaan who scored 39* and 40* respectively. Amaan's 40 included eight 4s off 25 balls (not much running then, as the outfield was lightning fast!), and whilst Aliyan was more circumspect, the highlight of his innings was a beautifully clipped 6 over mid-wicket from the bowling of opposition skipper Matthew Davidson.

"Pick of the home bowlers was leg spinner Harry Boyd who picked up both wickets to fall and ended up with figures of 4-2-7-2, yes you read that right two maidens! In reply Ayr were never up with the rate due to some good bowling up front from the Aliyan:Amaan combo. 17 for 0 was the score after five overs, and scoreboard pressure, plus some good bowling from Ahmed-Raza, accounted for both Ayr openers in the eighth over. Thereafter wickets fell regularly with *Sobo* cleaning up the tail with 4 for 11 from his two overs. Despite some poor ground fielding early on, some good grabs were taken by *the 'Loc* fielders, notably a couple of great low diving forward catches from Amaan and Abdul and even our one dropped catch from Abdullah led to him recovering the ball and running out the reprieved batsman with a direct hit at the bowlers end!

"Sometimes things go for you, and tonight was one of those night. Two of the Ayr top three holed out to full tosses from Ahmed-Raza and Dil' respectively, and Richie Simpson was run out at the bowlers end after Uzzair deflected a drive onto the stumps. Then again, sometimes you make your own luck.... Anyway another pleasant evening at a bustling New Cambusdoon. How long will this run continue? I'm talking about the weather of course...."

Under 13s win in the east.....the *far east!* [posted 11/06/15]

The Under 13s had conceded home advantage in the quarter-final of the ECB Cup in order to find a date to get the game played. Little did the Match Secretary know that this would then mean a rush hour trek to Prestonpans CC's "Polwarth Oval" this evening when he made the generous offer however! As they say on such occasions, it might not be the end of the world,.....but you can see it from there! But at least the sun was shining in a cloudless sky. And just as well too, given the last ball wasn't bowled until 9.30pm! The offer to bowl five overs from each end, incessant moving of fielders by the home skipper and a drinks break (!).....in each innings (!!), added what seemed like days to proceedings, but as we say: the sun was shining. The host club and team were also hugely welcoming, and it's clear there's good development work going on there. To the game.

After the toss, the 13s would have first use of the astroturf wicket and - after losing *Sobo* (1) and Abdul (6) early - Dilina and Ali added 44 for the third wicket to set the base for a defendable total to be posted. Dilina would retire having passed 30, and Ali would eventually hole out to Stewart for 20. Add 34 in extras to the mix, and 93 was the final scoreboard total after *the 'Loc* had finished batting. 94 to win for the home side. However at 8 for 3 - all three to *Sobo* - chasing the 13s' defendable, but nonetheless still low, total looked a much harder task for East Lothian. And so it proved. Just as *Sobo* had torn through the top order, so Abdullah skittled the tail, taking a "4-for" *en route* to 4 for 7. The final East Lothian wicket fell at the end of the nineteenth over, Abdullah trapping Hagan in front. A relatively straight-forward 32-run win then, but hardly impressive. The batters, aside Dilina and Ali, lacked application, and five ducks tells its own story. Then in the second innings the bowling - aside *Sobo's* early burst, and Abdullah's wicket-taking balls - was generally pretty average, and the 'keeping and fielding pretty ragged. But, maybe, a win's a win. On to "Finals Day" and the latest *Rebel Alliance* versus *Evil Empire* clash.

15s book a finals day place [posted 09/06/15]

The Under 15s sneaked past Helensburgh this evening with a tight 18-run win. Batting first the side struggled to build any real momentum with wickets falling at regular intervals. Three of the top four batters got starts - with only Uzzair going cheaply. However *CJ* (15), Aliyan (23) and Amaan (14) would all fail to build on the bases they'd created. Aliyan in particular might be frustrated, having reached 23, he couldn't go on and play a match-winning knock. And if there was such a knock then it was Ahmed-Raza's. Batting as last man, *Gary* stroked an impressive unbeaten 20, adding 31 with Hamaad (3*). These last-wicket runs would be crucial as it turned out. 98 was the total eventually posted, and so Helensburgh would need a run short of three figures to win.

The home side's run-chase centred on Gregor Chambers' knock. He'd eventually be dismissed - ninth out - for 48, having done what none of the 15s' top order had managed. Around him wickets were falling left-right-and-centre, with only Caskie (10) making it into double figures. For the 15s it was that man Hanif again whose figures stood out: 4-1-6-3, bowling first change. A real *MoTM* performance. Around him others bowled well too however. Aliyan's return was 4-1-9-1, opening the bowling well, and eventually bowling dangerman Chambers. 80 for 9 was the Helensburgh score after the last ball of their twenty overs had been bowled, and with their win, the Under 15s had booked a finals day appearance at Inverleith on the 21st of June. Well done to them; a good win in an exciting and close match.

Under 13s in comfortable win.....kind of [posted 08/06/15]

The Under 13s were over in Renfrew this evening playing the East Renfrewshire/Renfrew combined side in a league match. In pleasant conditions the side ran out seven-wicket winners in the final analysis, winning with over five overs to spare. However, though this sounds "convincing", in fact it was a pretty scrappy affair. Both sides struggled with the bat, 61 for 3 beating 60 for 6 reflecting exactly this.

In the field after winning the toss, the 13s quickly put a stranglehold on their hosts, and the combined side crawled along - remembering there are 2 runs for a wide or a no ball in the Under 13 League - to eventually post 60 for 6. *The 'Loc's* fielding display had been competent if not thrilling, though Dilina's catch over his head running to the mid-off boundary was a genuinely good piece of cricket. In fact Dil' was likely the *MoTM* returning bowling figures of 4-1-5-2 and then top-scoring on the night with 15 to add to his two catches. The very fact 15 was the top score of any batter, on either side, simply reinforces how apparently tricky batting was.

In the end though a very patient unbeaten 6 (29 balls) from Ali was enough to see the 13s across the winning line, Momin Rafay the other not out batter at the other end, on debut.

18s in home win [posted 08/06/15]

Coach James reports on tonight's home win over the East Renfrewshire/Renfrew combined team. "A good win for the 18s tonight. Stand-in skipper *LJ* elected to bat and the final total of 130 was due to useful top order contributions from *Ihty*, Lewis and *CJ*, all at a rate better than a-run-a-ball. Pick of ER/R bowlers was visiting skipper Umair Amin who, on his return to Shawholm, took 2 for 11 off his four overs. In reply the visitors could only muster 56 all out with their hopes of victory dashed early on as wickets from *'Loc* opening duo Aliyan and *Roberto* left them 19 for 4 after just six overs. Thereafter the bowling was rotated, and wickets shared around: highlights being a first *'Loc* wicket for Sheroz courtesy of a good running catch by Abdullah at mid-off and two wickets for no runs from Abtaha - both clean bowled - to finish off the tail. Six clean bowled dismissals in the innings in total. Good viewing for the visiting *School of Fletch* founder?!"

Home win for the 15s [posted 05/06/15]

With the Under 11s not in action in a bye week, the Under 15s were the centre of attention tonight. East Kilbride were the visitors to Shawholm on league business, and it's pleasing to report on a convincing win, and the 15s getting back "on track". Batting first after the *EK* skipper called wrong and Aliyan decided to make first use of the track, Amaan and Abdullah opened up for the 15s. They batted positively from the off, and put on all-but a 50-run opening partnership. Amaan was the one dismissed first as he played across the line to a Clarke leggie, to nick off to 'keeper Lawwell for 27. Abdullah was then joined by the skipper and he - Abdullah that is - continued to play the anchor role as Aliyan played his shots. Aliyan quickly passed Abdullah in the runs-stake and would be retired by Coach James having reached 50. His entry on to the Juniors Honours Board required just the 42 deliveries as he struck two maximums and a couple of 4s. Abdullah then became the second wicket to fall, being dismissed courtesy of another Clarke:Lawwell combo, this time the visiting 'keeper stumping Abdullah. 130 for 2. There was then just time for *CJ* and Uzzair to scurry a few late runs and get the score up to 148.

With just nine *batters EK* were going to have to get off to a good start if they had chasing down 149 in mind. And openers Rajmohan and Clarke started positively. However, despite the first few overs going for 5s, a wicket had fallen. Hamaad was the bowler, and Clarke had been gotten rid of, *Sobo* safely pouching a miss-hit pull at mid-on. 48 runs were then added for the second wicket however, albeit not particularly quickly. So though the win was secured early on in the second innings, the second wicket didn't fall until over thirteen. 54 for 2 was the scoreboard total when Rajmohan was eventually prized out, Joe inducing the miss-hit to Aliyan at "cow". From this point the flood-gates opened, and it turned out that behind said gates were wickets, another six of them! And without suggesting he was being greedy, Amaan snatch most of them! His eventual return of 4 for 1 [Ed: yes, four wickets for just the one run!] included a hat-trick, and all four were bowled! Well bowled sir! Dil' and Abdullah were the other wicket-takers, the latter finishing things off when he bowled Ralphs. 72 all out.

Cup progress [posted 31/05/15]

The Under 13s have benefited from a walkover win in the second round of the ECB Under 13 Cup, Stirling County being unable to accommodate what would've been their home tie this week. The 13s will now host East Lothian County in the quarter-final.

Under 15s see off Accies [posted 29/05/15]

The 15s racked up 162 for 1 tonight, batting first against their hosts over at New Anniesland. *Uzzi* (55*) and *CJ* (53*) led the run scoring, with Aliyan chipping in with a useful cameo 21. *CJ*'s knock included eight 4s, whilst Aliyan's two 6s were likely the two biggest bunts of the evening. In reply Accies struggled from the off as they slipped to 30 for 5. All the eight bowlers used by the 15s took at least the one wicket, Amaan finishing with the quirky figures of 1-1-0-2! So a convincing result, and important given the defeat to the *Dark Side* last Friday, and the earlier loss to West of Scotland.

11s in big win [posted 29/05/15]

On a freezing cold night when the match was played through some pretty squally showers, the Under 11s recorded a convincing win on the road against Renfrew. This match had all sorts of odd things in it - aside just the Arctic weather! There was a dog running off with the ball, a small child appearing in the outfield, a grown adult deciding they'd stand and watch the game.....from a short extra cover position, and the somewhat bizarre sight of an umpire trying to score with a kid in their arms and their hand shielding their face from the driving rain! Summer cricket in Renfrew! The game also featured Abdullsubhan playing for Renfrew as the home side had just seven players whereas the 11s had travelled with one more than maximum allowable ten for "pairs cricket". A young Master Rana actually cleaned up Hassaan first ball when he came on to bowl for his adopted team for the night! Hassaan's was one of only three wickets to fall though as 112 for 3 was posted. Abdullah and Samir - on debut - were the two other batters dismissed. Hassaan did have something smile about however as tonight saw him hit his first hardball 6!

In their reply, Renfrew never really got going and would lose seven wickets and score just 14 off the bat as they stumbled to 37 for 7 in their twenty overs. The best bowling figures belonged to Moiz - skipper for the night - who took 3 for 5 in his three overs. Andrew grabbed a stumping along the way, and *Jamesy* held on to a catch at short extra cover, likely unable to feel the ball land in his frozen palms it was so cold. A good win then, and the 11s remain unbeaten on the year.

It's actually quite hard to do..... [posted 25/05/15]

Coach James reports on tonight's derby defeat at *Toytown* [Ed: briefly, as the nurses say that he shouldn't be put in any stressful situations for a few days after tonight's turn of events!]. "Decent bowling and fielding effort to limit *the Dale* to 101. But then some very soft dismissals and four [Ed: 4!] run outs meant the 18s failed to convert a winning position at the halfway stage. [Despite needing just 36 runs from the last ten overs] 10 runs were still needed off the last over and, despite a glorious square drive from *Roberto* for 4, we ended up needing 3 runs from the last delivery for the win, and Ahmed-Raza was run out going for the second run which would have tied the game. Definitely one that got away but, I think we've said that before, so unless lessons are learned.....".

Brief comments they may be, but pertinent. At 65 for 2 at the halfway stage of their second innings run-chase, the 18s really only had to bat sensibly - and with a plan - to see this game out. However - and to some extent as the innings had started, with Owais's daft run out off a wide ball, the fifth of the innings having already smacked two boundary 4s! - some thoughtless cricket would cost the side dear. After the diddy start, order was then restored and 51 runs were added by *Rosco* and *Beast*. However their partnership would end with the score on 60 in the ninth over when *Rosco* drained a shot straight to the boundary off Anderson, the leggie. This after the previous two deliveries had gone 4 6 . Anyone mention brainless? Where was the plan? The middle order then either "dotted up" (*Uzzi* scoring 3 from fourteen deliveries), or came-and-went-quickly (*CJ* and Amaan lasting eight balls between them. The killer passage of play was likely the five-over period, overs 12 through

16, when the 18s were 10 for 3. Criminal. Four wickets from the last eight legitimate deliveries just kind of put the seal, then, on a match that will surely be filed away in the "You couldn't script it" file.

A final thought from your scribe, and picking up on the question posed by Coach James at the end of his report about lessons being learned, here's a *verbatim* quote from the first match report of the 2014 Under 18 season, almost exactly a year ago today, and a game that six of tonight's side also played in: "*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.*" Sound familiar? Were lessons learned? Sigh.....

Bat dominates ball [posted 25/05/15]

The batters certainly had the upper hand in tonight's southside derby clash in the Under 13 League Cup, as the *Dark Side's* 13s chased 104 to beat the 13s' 103 for 2, just one-down, and all inside twelve openers! Batting first, the 13s' top order all looked comfortable, with only *Sobo* departing relatively early on. Dilina would bat through the innings for an unbeaten 26, whilst Abdul retired after reaching 30 in, arguably, his best batting performance for the club. The 13s were greatly assisted it should be said by the *Dark Side's* bowlers bowling no fewer than nineteen wide deliveries. Expensive! And with no extra delivery bowled for a wide in Under 13 cricket, it could be argued that the 13s missed out on getting three overs-worth of "hittable" balls. However it likely wouldn't have mattered given that - though 103 for 2 is a creditable first innings total to post - it never looked like being anything like enough as *the 'Dale* run-chase got under way.

That chase started with the *Dark Side's* two bunters-in-chief, Masters Walker and Hegginbottam. Both batters played as they normally do, bunting, slapping, slogging and generally swinging at every delivery. And in amongst the inside and outside edges that such an approach tends to accrue, there were a few lusty blows as the Rule of Coincidental Coordinates dictates. Hegginbottam's was, in fact, the only wicket taken, as Dilina held on to a mis-hit swoosh. Hegginbottam's 25 had come from just eighteen balls and included three 4s and a 6. Walker, the other opener, went 5 runs better, retiring on reaching 30. His knock was a mere fourteen deliveries long and contained three 4s and two 6s. At least the 13s had two new batters to bo.....sorry, they now *had* two batters to bowl to. Hegginbottam's and Walker's departures had brought Cairns and Sturgess together and these two stroked the ball around and saw their side home in decent time, the winning boundary coming in the twelfth over.

A convincing win then, but - as often - a 13s side containing seven Under 11s again did themselves proud and gained invaluable experience into the bargain.

Big win for the 11s [posted 22/05/15]

The Under 11s cruised to a big - 122-run - win over their *Dark Side* counterparts at Shawholm this evening in the first of two league encounters. Batting first only three wickets were lost - Abdullah out twice, and Hassaan once - as 115 runs were in-gathered. This left the side on exactly net 100 under the pairs cricket scoring system. Four 11s' batters got in to double figures - and were not out: Nabeel (11*), Hassaan (13*), Moiz (14*) and Samee (15*). Burhan Dar, on debut, scored 8 not out to see his '*Loc* career up and running too. For *the 'Dale* Williamson's 1 for 14 was the best return with the ball. 101, net, to win then.

Clydesdale's youngsters got off to a steady enough start in the second innings as only one wicket fell in the first four overs. However by halfway this had become seven as - in particular - *Jamesy* cashed in on the wickets-front. In fact, at one stage, Hasan Ahmad's legendary "8-for" [Ed: still the top-of-the-table bowling figures on the [Juniors Honour Board](#)] looked under threat. However young Master Cathcart would have to settle for 7 for 4 - and the match ball! - as he saw his name added to the [Juniors Honour Board](#) for a second time [Ed: is it true that Uzair's still not on it???], tonight's "7-for" adding to his 5 for 2 against Kilmarnock last season. But *Jamesy* wasn't alone. As thirteen *Dark Side* wickets fell, Nabeel

and Burhan both grabbed a brace. In the final analysis the visitors from *Toytown* would end up on 43 for 13, to produce the 122-run win for the 11s. Next week it's Renfrew away.

Derby defeat [posted 22/05/15]

Coach James reports on tonight's derby defeat at *Toytown*. "The side was inserted upon Clydesdale winning the toss, and *CJ* and Uzzair then set up a good platform with a partnership of 66 off fourteen overs. This was good batting, in testing conditions, along with some good running between the wickets, but - and if being critical - better rotation is *still* required with *both* openers' combined dot ball count totalling 55, or just over nine overs' worth of deliveries! 🤔 The *Dark Side's* skipper Zain Ashraf's bowling spell [Ed: we thought he was a 'keeper?!?'] then turned the tide in Clydesdale's favour, accounting for both *CJ* and Aliyan in his second over, the latter to a smart caught and bowled.

"A mini-collapse then ensued that saw Ashraf end up with 4 for 11 with his [very!] effective non-spinning *donkey drops!* Amaan was victim to *another* run out mix up, and only some good bunting in the late stages from Abtaha got the total up to 91 for 6 which ended up being below par.

"Early wickets were certainly required against a strong Clydesdale top order, but it was not to be, despite tight opening overs from Aliyan and Amaan. A run out half-chance was missed by the latter, and thereafter *'Dale* openers Ul Haq and Ashraf accelerated the scoring rate and brought the 50 up in the tenth over. Joe's introduction to the attack did bring the first wicket, Ul Haq trapped leg-before, sweeping. A tidy spell from Uzzair also brought him reward, with Daniel Cairns clean bowled. But the home side knocked off the remaining runs without any further loss, victory coming in the nineteenth over with Ashraf unbeaten on 38.

"Positives, though, *can* be taken with a much better bowling and fielding performance compared to the 15s' last league outing at Hamilton Crescent. Next up for the 15s is an away cup quarter-final to Helensburgh."

Double completed over West [posted 13/05/15]

The Under 15s were in action this evening, playing West of Scotland at home in the ECB Cup. This, less than 24 hours since their Under 13 counterparts had beaten the same opposition - albeit away from home - in their version of the same competition. Both sides were missing some experienced players, with Higher exam's and other commitments taking their toll. It was, therefore, a chance for both clubs' younger players to step up to the plate.

Amaan was skipper and after the toss his side was fielding. Coats and Wainwright opened for *West*, with Amaan and Ahmed-Raza sharing the new ball for the 15s. The breakthrough came in the third over when Coats - *West's* captain - was sent on his way by his opposite number, Amaan taking a really good low caught and bowled. This brought Shafer to the middle, but he added just 2 with Wainwright before the latter was second out, *West's* other opener nicking off to *Sobo*, Abdul holding on to the chance. 16 for 2. 36 were then added by Sam Greene and Shafer, their blossoming partnership being ended when Shafer became Uzzair's first victim, Amaan again holding on to the catch. Shafer's departure brought the Greene brothers together, John joining Sam. And a second meaningful partnership ensued. 29 were added in under six overs to see the total move on to 81 before Sam Greene was bowled by Uzzair for a top-scoring 39 that had included five 4s and a maximum. After Sam Greene's exit only 14 more were added as the 15s' opening bowlers returned to close out the innings. 85 for 4 was the final scoreboard total. 86 to win.

It was a Shah double-act that kicked-off the run chase and *Sobo* and Uzzair started sensibly-enough, reaching 26 before Uzzair was first out. He was bowled by Coats, going back to a ball that jagged on him and disturbed off stump. This brought Amaan to the middle, and his arrival sparked an acceleration in the accumulation of runs. He eventually scored a better-than-a-run-a-ball 22 before being run out by *Sobo*, but he'd done what was needed, his wicket coming with only 14 needed for the win, and plenty of overs in hand. However out he

was, and this allowed Dilina to have a bat, he and *Sobo* (who'd finish unbeaten on 33) seeing their side across the finishing line, and to an eight-wicket win. A good result then, and West Lothian are the next opponents.

Cup progress [posted 12/05/15]

The Under 13s recorded a good win at Hamilton Crescent tonight on another bitterly-cold night. Batting first the 13s posted 104 for 4, with the main contribution being *Sobd's* unbeaten 33. However three other batters got in to double figures: Abdul (11), Abdullah (11) and Samee (13*). So though *Sobd's* knock was the standout, it was far from the only contribution of merit. And in fact it might've been 104 for 3 had Moiz not been trapped LBW with the last ball of the innings, bizarrely the third LBW decision in the twenty overs. For *West*, Sedgwick - with 4-0-11-1 - was the pick of the bowlers.

After the innings break - and some warmth for both the players and officials! - *West's* run-chase was started by Ulanovsky and Clark, whilst Dilina and *Sobo* shared the new ball. And good tight opening spells by both bowlers saw *west* restricted to 5 for 1 in the first five overs. Ulanovsky was the man out, unluckily run out without facing a ball! The run-rate continued to struggle to reach the level required for a home win, and *Sobo* was able to rotate his bowlers to the extent that nine were used. [Ed: rumours are that Abdul was a bit huffy he wasn't allowed to roll his arm over too!]

Three run outs were executed in the second innings as *West* were ultimately restricted to just 70 for 5, *Sobo* getting two to his name, and Ubaid-Raza the other. In fact only Cooke, the home wicket-keeper really troubled the bowlers, scoring 30 not out batting at four. His, and Sedgwick's 15, were the only two scores in double figures in the second innings. So 70 for 5 when "Time" was called, and a win by 34 runs. The win sees the 13s travel to Stirling County in the next round.

Under 16Bs win on debut [posted 11/05/15]

The club's first match in the newly-introduced Under 16B League took place this evening on a bright but downright chilly night in Prestwick. *Roberto* was the skipper, and after guessing wrong when the coin was mid-air he found his side invited to bowl first. Aliyan and Bilal were the opening bowling combo, with a new [ed: world class!?!] wicket-keeper wearing the gloves, in the shape of Uzzair. A fairly even start is likely the best way to summarise the first five overs, as Prestwick reached the quarter-point of their innings 26 for 1. Bilal had the wicket, Cole nicking off to Uzzair. However if Uzzair thought this keeping lark was straightforward he was quickly brought down to earth when he spilled a top-edge skier off his skipper's bowling to give Prestwick's new batter, Chot, a life. And this wasn't the only life the home side batters got, two free-hits (after no balls) seeing "wickets that wouldn't count". Frustrating. In fact as the innings progressed it's fair to say that the bowling got scappier - in the end, and despite bowling Prestwick out inside their twenty overs, the 16Bs would gift their hosts 29 in extras. Back to proceedings. Number three Chot made the absolute most of his life as he bludgeoned 36 from just twenty deliveries before being caught by *Roberto*. His fireworks included four maximums, one resulting in a lost ball. However wickets were falling at the other end, and then fell quickly after Chot departed. And in the end Prestwick were bundled out for 119 in the nineteenth over to leave the 16Bs a target of 120 for the win. Amaan was the pick of the bowlers returning 4-2-3-3, with Hamaad taking 2 for 5 too, and cleaning up the tail.

The 16B's run-chase saw Abdullah and Uzzair opening. And in fact they'd both open,.....and close. the innings, as they each carried their bats to see their side to a ten-wicket win. Abdullah would reach his half century [Ed: and with it secure a place on the [Junior Honours Board](#)], whilst Uzzair finished unbeaten on 46. Well batted both. Seventeen boundaries were hit by the two batters as each recorded a strike-rate of better than a-run-a-ball. So, an opening-day win and a decent start to this new age-group league.

Defeat over the river [posted 08/05/15]

Coach James reports again on tonight's only junior game: the Under 15s' trip to Hamilton Crescent to take on the city's second-best club. After opening day defeat to the Greenock|Helensburgh combined team, *West* would be keen to get a win under their belts, and the 15s travelled hoping to make it back-to-back season-opening victories. Coach James reports.

"This was a night of low-lights. 21 boundaries in the *West* innings against just five in ours is maybe the best summation! Granted there was some good bunting from *West*'s Robbie McCallum (84 from 48 balls), but he benefited from far too many short balls, especially from the spinners. Ground fielding and catching was also poor and, as in the reverse fixture last year, dropping McCallum twice proved costly! And ironically two of the 15s' better fielders Amaan and Abdullah were the culprits. 😞 On the bowling front maybe the only pass marks would be gained by Ahmed-Raza and Aliyan; Joe and Hamaad both taking late wickets, but by then the damage was done. In truth the 15s never really looked like chasing the big *West* total of 151 for 3, despite a good middle-order partnership from Aliyan and Amaan - like last week in fact. A finishing burst from Abdullah would also add some respectability to the final scorecard, however it was the now familiar failings at the top of the order that cost in the run-chase: not enough intent or strike rotation."

So plenty to work on, and with the league seeing a home-and-away programme of matches, there'll be a chance to gain revenge soon enough.....

Nail-biter of a finish sees the Under 13s secure cup win [posted 04/05/14]

The Under 13s got their 2015 season under way this evening, and what a cracker of a game. Ayr were the visitors to Shawholm on a bright and sunny, if chilly, evening. After his counterpart lost the toss, *Sobo* elected to bowl first. And the skipper's decision looked like genius as Ayr slumped to 14 for 4. A cracking start with the Ayr top four all being bowled out. *Sobo* and Dilina had a brace each, and there was a real danger the visitors' innings might implode completely. However the middle order dug in, and aided by some wayward bowling - 31 runs in wides were gifted [ed: though it is 2 runs for a wide] - Ayr managed to eventually post a more-than-competitive 100 for 9. Jefferson, Howard and Martin had all made it in to double figures in the process. For the 13s on the bowling front *Sobo* finished with figures of 4-0-10-2, and James and Moiz impressed in bowling their three and four overs, respectively, for just 9 and 17 runs, again respectively. It's also worth highlighting the three well-executed run outs the 13s recorded. Impressive, though no complacency as there were certainly other chances that could've been taken. 101 to win then.

The run-chase started in positive, but controlled, fashion, Dilina and *Sobo* putting on 50 for the first wicket. However their partnership wouldn't make it to 51 as Dilina was run out after a classic Under 13 running "shambles". He'd made a valuable 17 (21 balls). *Sobo* and Abdul then put together the second important partnership of the innings, this one only being ended when *Sobo* retired after having reached 30. Abdul's job was then clear: steer the middle order and tail to the win. He'd achieve this aim too, batting with Nabeel, Abdullah, Andrew, *Jamesy* and - finally - Moiz to see his side secure the win. But it wasn't Abdul who hit the winning runs. No Moiz got that honour. Starting the final over with Abdul at the non-striker's end, and the side needing just 2 to win, Ayr's bowler - Parry - proceeded to open over 40 of the match: W . . W! Yikes! Two balls to go, 2 runs needed, and Moiz facing his first delivery. Abdul was still stranded at the other end with that look on his face that's reserved for batters at the non-striker's end in such circumstances!! But he needn't have feared, Moiz calmly rocked on to his back foot and cut Parry's penultimate delivery to the point boundary. 2 runs were completed, and the match was won. A good win over a good side. Moiz got the high-fives, but credit to *Sobo*, Dilina and Abdul, too, in the run-chase.

11s win at Prestwick [posted 01/05/14]

It was a clear but chilly night that welcomed the Under 11s at Prestwick in their 2015 league opener. Skipper *Jamesy* lost the toss and his side were fielding. In for a first competitive hardball game was Callum Smith, with the Rana brothers back in the fold too. Prestwick

would be restricted to net 45 batting first, with the 11s taking nine wickets. The wickets were shared around, three being accounted for by run outs, Ubaid-Raza's direct hit from extra cover being the best of the bunch. Nabeel also held on to a decent catch, whilst Abdullah helped himself to a brace of wickets. Only Morrison, still the league's best pitcher, provided much resistance to the 11s' bowling attack, hitting a net 36 that included eight 4s.

In their reply the Under 11s would lose just the four wickets, with Nabeel top-scoring with 21 from just thirteen deliveries. The eventual total of net 100 also much to Prestwick's bowlers' generosity in gifting 58 runs by way of wides and no balls. That's very generous! So a good win, on a decent if chilly night, and it was a happy convoy that made its way back up the M77, the league win points safely packed away in the boot!

Under 15s start off with a win [posted 01/05/14]

Coach James's main reflection on a solid 63-run win for the Under 15s this evening over visitors was that it was a comfortable win in the end. The brief highlights would include a decent opening stand from CJ and Uzzair, notwithstanding both got out having made starts. There was then an excellent partnership from Aliyan and Amaan that boosted the run-rate although Aliyan *was* dropped twice 😞 before holing out to long off! The only real minus points were the running between wickets - this was rusty - and too many singles missed. Three run outs probably reflects the former, though two were direct hits, a mix up between Abdullah and Amaan accounting for the third. There was also perhaps not enough rotation of strike in last five overs as the eventual total of 125 was slightly disappointing after being 92 for 2 after fifteen overs.

In the second innings, and on the bowling front, it was a decent effort, especially given cold conditions for the spinners. Highlights include a great diving catch at mid-wicket from Abdullah off Amaan to dismiss the Prestwick dangerman Sam Cole, first ball! There was also a decent grab from Dilina in his first match for the club, but on the down side eight [Ed: yes, 8!] other catches were grassed, and not all could be excused by cold conditions, Exhibits A and B being skipper Qureshi's two straightforward grassed chances! Could be costly against stronger opponents.....