

Academy cruise to the win [posted 05/07/16]

The Academy were in Evening League action this evening and cruised to the win, bowling out opponents Hillhead for just 54 - the last wicket coming on the final delivery of Hillhead's innings - and then chasing the 55 needed to win inside six overs. Ahmed-Raza was the standout performer in the first half returning figures of 3-1-6-2, taking a good low catch at mid-on and running out Tervet to see Hillhead lose their first wicket early on. Then in the run-chase, only *CJ* (4) was dismissed, *CJ2* (23*) and *Mo* (27*) seeing their side safely across the finish line with a flurry of boundaries.

Academy beat Motherwell in the Evening League [posted 07/06/16]

In a match marred by some genuinely outrageous non-decisions from player|umpires, the Academy took around seventeen Motherwell wickets in - eventually - winning by 16 runs in the Evening League this evening. Batting first the Academy posted 159 for 2 with *CJ2* top-scoring with 58. He was ably supported by contributions from all three other batters who made it to the middle. Openers *CJ* (22) and *Rambo* (19) gave the side a solid start, both scoring their runs at a decent click. And once they'd been dismissed - both victims of Fawad, both caught - *CJ2* and Uzzair took over. The skipper led from the front with his 58 (35), but Uzzair wasn't sluggish, his 38 not out coming at better than a-run-a-ball. 160 to win.

Motherwell's batters all batted one way: vigorously. Running between the wickets was optional,.....and an option few of the batters took. Instead they opted for bunting. Their eventual 143 for 9 (in effect "all out" as one player hadn't shown up) included eighteen boundaries, of which four were 6s. 80 of their 143 runs came without the need for leg movement. Talking of lack of limb movement, mention of the lack of digit movement that seemed to afflict the player|umpires. Over the years your scribe has seen, though never got used to, some "interesting" umpiring by player|umpires. Tonight's wasn't so much "interesting" as downright "fascinating". There was everything from the "No ball!" call with the ball in the air *en route* to the catcher, through the "Going down leg side" response to the enquiry as to whether a batter might be out who's been hit in the shins in front of middle with both feet pointing to the umpire, and the "Not out" decision to the stumping appeal when the batter was a short taxi ride away from the line, to the "Not out" adjudication (x2) when batters attempting square cuts with the 'keeper standing up are thought to have nicked the ball into the 'keeper's shoulder-high gloves! Fas-ci-na-ting! Sigh! Cricket really is the loser, and credit to *CJ2* for keeping his cool. Back to the game. Amidst the bunting by the visiting batters, they kept losing wickets. *CJ2* took a "4-for", and Ahmed-Raza a brace of wickets, as the Academy kept chipping away at the Motherwell batting line-up. There were some good catches taken too: in particular *Rambo's* diving grab in the outfield to get rid of Mushtaq. And when Amaan Ali held on to a steeping caught and bowled, the last Motherwell batter was out, and the Academy had run out 16-run winners. A decent win, on a gloriously warm long summer's evening. And credit the side for dealing with what they encountered.

Academy fall 8 runs short chasing 139 to beat Kelburne [posted 24/05/16]

The academy side were in Evening League T20 action this evening, a strong Kelburne side the visitors. In the field first, the Academy restricted their visitors to 138, with "Overseas Amateur" Bradley Williams top-scoring with 31 (22). There were also cameos from Willie Allan (23) and Bharani Jayasuri (24). However, in fact, second-highest scorer was extras, with 26, including another jaw-dropping number of wides - 23 this time! Unforgivable at the best of times, but in a T20? Criminal. And how this indiscipline would cost the youngsters. The stray deliveries aside, ironically, the young bowling attack did well. There was good energy in the field, some really good outfield catches taken and the boys defended the short boundaries well given the quickening outfield. *Roberto* took a couple of wickets, as did Ahmed-Raza. In all nine Kelburne wickets fell, two to smart run outs, but there'd also been some big hitting to accompany the wides, with five 6s helping to see the visitors to 138 for 9. 139 to win therefore.

Rosco opened with Amaan. Both looked comfortable, and the duo would put on 26 inside five overs before the latter was dismissed, bowled. *Rosco* would carry on though, batting

with a couple of other partners, before being third (and last) out with 44 (53). A decent innings that saw him gain valuable "time in the middle". At the halfway point the Academy were languishing a bit, sitting on just 51 for 1. An okay start normally, but maybe not if you're chasing 139. And, in fact, the run-rate really didn't change much until Ghaff' and *Beast* came together. This happened after *Rosco's* departure, and saw the combo score 36 runs in just sixteen balls. Ghaff' finished on 22* (19) and *Beast* 23* (7). Good clean hitting on show, allied to positive running between the wickets. But it wouldn't be enough as 130 for 3 was the final scoreboard total: oh how those wides had come back to haunt.....

Academy defeat *Accies* in the Sunday League [posted 22/05/16]

After a near complete washout of a week it was good to get some action in today, as the sun shone at Shawholm. And the beautiful weather provided the perfect backdrop to a convincing win by the Academy side in the Sunday League. The bare bones of the result are that 280 for beat 48 all out. However there was more to the match than just that. And one-sided though it perhaps will look in the scorebook, there were still some good performances with bat and ball by the Academy youngsters. *CJ2* led from the front with 110 batting at three, his arrival in the middle coming with the score on 20 after Uzzair had slapped a square cut straight to point. It was then 38 for 2 when *Rosco* swung across the line at a straight one and departed, bowled, for 11. This brought Owais and *CJ2* together and they'd completely change the direction of the innings, putting on 172 in under 22 overs. Both went past 50, and *CJ2* reached his century with a crisp 4 through mid-on. Owais wouldn't become the match's second centurion however, as he holed out to King off Qayyum's bowling, for 61, to join *CJ2* back in the clubhouse after the latter had been bowled for 110. All that was left was time for a cameo unbeaten 37 from Aliyan, his knock needing just 27 deliveries and including three 4s and three 6s. 280 for 7 the final innings score.

After tea the *Accies'* reply started both tentatively and shakily. Ahmed-Raza made an early breakthrough getting rid of Habib, and from 2 for 2 wickets just kept falling at regular intervals. Ahmed-Raza took three of the first four to fall, and with only 14 on the 'board *Accies* were six down. Bar a 22-run partnership between Qayyum and King for the eighth wicket, there was really nothing much to cheer the visitors' batters, and when Aliyan bowled Ferretti - one of seven *Accies'* batters not to trouble the scorers - the northsiders were all out 48. So a big win, and two "3-fors" for the Academy attack: one each for Ahmed-Raza and Aliyan. And, the sun shone!

Academy win on opening Evening League night [posted 10/05/16]

The Poloc Academy took to the field for the first time in season 2016 tonight, New Cambusdoon the immaculately-turned out venue for their opening Evening League T20 of a new year. Skipped, as is now tradition, by the club's "Overseas Amateur", the side were batting first after *CJ2* guessed right at the coin toss. Owais and Ghaff' were the openers, the latter sent "up the order" in this the shortest form of the game. However before you could say "Watch out for the straight ball", both were back in the changing room, having been cleaned up - respective - Gordon and Bhandari. 9 for 2 in the third over. *CJ2* and Uwais then set about rebuilding the innings, *CJ2* in particular looking to be hitting the ball cleanly, and clearly relishing the extra responsibility of the metaphorical "Captain's arm band". The two took the score past 50, but couldn't quite reach 75 as Uwais unluckily played on to a delivery from Ayr's "Overseas Amateur" Crawshaw, the ball rolling under his bat and coming to rest against the leg stump with sufficient of a bump to dislodge just the one bail. 74 for 3. From here - in the fourteenth over - the run-rate was upped, firstly by *CJ2* and new partner *Beast*, and then the rest of those Academy batters called upon. The last over saw good scurrying by Harris and Uzzair, and what would prove to be an invaluable 8 runs were in-gathered in those final six balls. 128 for 6 was the Academy's final total.

The Ayr reply was a bit like the Academy's. A couple of early-ish wickets, one meaningful partnership and decent scurrying between the wickets. And one individual innings of note. The Academy's innings contained *CJ2's* 72, and Ayr's would include 57 from McKelvie. Around him were a few bits-and-pieces knocks, but nothing of real substance. And with the

light fading, the target of 129 proved to be just out of reach and Ayr finished 7 runs shy. For the Academy, *Robbo's* figures of 4-0-17-2 were the stand-out, as a few guys went at 6s or more-an-over. And in *Robbo's* usual fashion both his wickets saw the batters scything across the line to perfectly straight deliveries, the result being stumps being re-arranged. It's a beautiful sight!

So a good win, on a beautiful night, at a lovely venue. All-in-all, perfectly pleasant!