

Benwell Hill Under 15s Season Review – Barry Pearson

The Benwell Hill Under 15s had a fantastic season in 2024 with lots of improvement and development shown by all members of the squad. They all played senior cricket throughout the season with five of them representing the Northumberland County squads.

The highlight of the season was winning the Northumberland County Cup for the second time in three years. A close win over local rivals South North where Gabriel Mellor was the stand out performer with 3/15 and a crucial innings of 30 took us to Blyth in the semi final where Rory Mustard scored an excellent unbeaten 50 with support from Fergus Wallace 34 and Aaron Armstrong 30. A win at Blyth by 100 runs took us to Tynemouth to play a very strong side in the final. The Hill produced a fantastic bowling performance backed up by some excellent fielding to bowl out the hosts for 78. In reply, Rory scored a crucial 40 and despite a late wobble, the Hill won by 6 wickets to claim the trophy.

Our reward for the win was a trip to Edinburgh to face Carlton Cricket Club as the competition went nationwide. A close game between two evenly matched sides was great to watch, and we fell just short as a couple of close calls went against us, but there was no disgrace in losing to a very strong side and the guys acquitted themselves very well.

The North East Premier League shield was a competition in which we have done well in recent years, and a first round win against a very strong Whitburn side looked to set us up for another good run. Aaron led the way with 4/23 and then top scored with 38 as we won by 8 wickets, but we then played a strong South North side with several players missing and were well beaten despite 54 from Fergus Wallace and 38 from Liam Hynd.

The Monday night League season was rather curtailed by the weather with four of the twelve games rained off, however we did win the remaining eight games to finish top.

Highlights include the game at Ponteland where we scored 217/0 in 20 overs with Rory, Aaron, Fergus and Ben Robinson all scoring unbeaten 50s. Gabriel and Aaron put on an excellent partnership of 100 in the win over Tynemouth, Aaron took 4/18 and Fergus scored an unbeaten 53 in the win over South North, while Rory scored 55 and 13 year old Seb Fletcher Woods took 3/5 in an impressive win over Stocksfield.

Aaron Armstrong was an excellent captain, and led from the front with some impressive performances. Rory Mustard had a fantastic season for the 15s, and also scored his first senior hundred for the second team at Felling. The two performed consistently for the 2s with the highlight coming at Ashington where Rory scored 80 then Aaron took 6/30 as the two under 15s stole the show.

Ben Robinson produced some excellent bowling spells throughout the season while through lots of hard work, his batting improved dramatically as he became an excellent all-rounder. Fergus Wallace also worked really hard this year with his batting to become a really talented and consistent performer, while together with his bowling and fielding he became a very accomplished player who will only get better next year.

Both Ben and Fergus played consistently for the 3s this year. Gabriel Mellor also worked hard this year and reaped his rewards with some crucial batting performances, while his bowling came on impressively to the point where he was one of our most reliable bowlers. Liam Hynd also performed well when called upon, while his keeping continues to improve. Gabriel and Liam will be big players in the 15s squad next year.

I would like to give a big shout out to the other Under 14s namely Tom Hewson, Matthew Barber and Ibrahim Ahmed who because of the strength of the squad didn't get as many opportunities as we would like, but performed well when called upon, while their enthusiasm and attitude to training was fantastic and they played important roles in the success of the team.

Because of the strength of the squad, our excellent Under 13s didn't get a lot of opportunity, but, in particular Harsh Patel and Seb Fletcher Woods played regularly and provided excellent support. All of the 13s will be great additions to the squad next year.

In conclusion, the enthusiasm, talent and development shown by the Under 15s in 2024 has been absolutely fantastic, with even more to come from all of them next year if they continue to learn, work hard and show the

right attitude. I would like to thank Max Williamson and Rory Hanley for their support with the 15s this year, and many thanks to Matty Hynd for his help with the scoring.

Because of his excellent season for the 15s, senior sides and for the county, **Rory Mustard won the Under 15 Player of the Season award.**

Final League Table

NJCL U15 DIVISION A - 2024.

Northumberland Junior Cricket League

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POS	TEAM	P	w	l	c	a	lcn	wcn	t	BatP	BowlP	Pen	Pts
1	Benwell Hill CC	12	7	0	3	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	44
2	South Northumberland CC	11	7	2	0	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	38
3	Tynemouth CC	11	5	2	1	2	0	1	0	2	0	0	35
4	Blyth CC, Northumberland	10	5	2	2	1	0	0	0	2	2	0	32
5	Newcastle CC	12	4	4	3	1	0	0	0	2	1	0	27
6	Ponteland CC	10	3	4	1	1	1	0	0	4	2	0	23
7	South Northumberland CC	6	3	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	23
8	Newcastle City CC	11	3	4	4	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	21
9	Stocksfield CC	7	3	2	2	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	20
10	Ashington CC	10	2	4	4	0	0	0	0	3	1	0	18
11	Tynedale CC	6	1	4	1	0	0	0	0	3	4	0	13
12	Backworth CC	9	0	8	1	0	0	0	0	6	4	0	11
13	Morpeth CC	8	1	4	2	0	1	0	0	3	1	0	11
14	Cowgate Sports CC	5	0	3	1	0	1	0	0	3	0	0	4

p - Played, w - Won (5), l - Lost (0), c - Cancelled (1), a - Abandoned (1), lcn - Team Conceded (0), wcn - Opposition Conceded (5), t - Tied (2), BatP - Batting Bonus Points, BowlP - Bowling Bonus Points, Pen - Penalty Points, Pts - Points



Rory collecting the Player of the Season trophy from President Tom Williamson



Under 15 Captain Aaron Armstrong collecting County Cup



David Hamilton presenting the Neil Hamilton Trophy to Fergus Wallace