

Benwell Hill Under 13s Season Review – Jim Robinson

NJCL U13 DIVISION A - 2024.

Northumberland Junior Cricket League

SHARE  

POS	TEAM	P	w	l	c	a	lcn	wcn	t	BatP	BowlP	Pen	Pts
1	Benwell Hill CC	11	6	0	4	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	39
2	Ponteland CC	11	6	2	2	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	35
3	South Northumberland CC	10	6	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	32
4	Tynemouth CC	10	5	1	3	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	31
5	Ashington CC	9	3	2	2	0	0	2	0	2	1	0	30
6	South Northumberland CC	9	5	2	2	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	29
7	Newcastle CC	10	3	4	3	0	0	0	0	3	3	0	24
8	Tynedale CC	10	2	4	2	0	1	1	0	3	3	0	23
9	Backworth CC	11	1	7	3	0	0	0	0	6	5	0	19
10	Stocksfield CC	11	1	7	3	0	0	0	0	3	4	0	15
11	Cowgate Sports CC	9	1	2	3	0	3	0	0	2	2	0	12
12	Newcastle City CC	11	0	6	3	0	1	1	0	2	1	0	11

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

What a season that was.

Back in May After a rain delayed start to the season the U13s got underway in a cup match away to Ponteland. Unfortunately, the lads fell 20 runs short in the run chase finishing 101/5. Seb Fletcher Woods top scoring with 19 and good contributions of 11 from Harsh Patel, 9 from Nicholas Walder and 7 from Daniel Hynd.

The league then got under way with a good win at home against Cowgate CC. Batting first we finished on 131/6. Freddie Mexter top scoring with 27 and Nicholas Walder with 26. There were good contributions from Seb, 19 and a nice cameo from Sai, 13.

A really good bowling performance ended with Cowgate bowled out for 61 after 14.5 overs. Charlie Krzysiak taking a caught and bowled with the first ball of the innings. 2 wickets for Charlie, 3 each for Tommy Sutcliffe and Vihan Dhillon.

The next league match was due to be against Ponteland but this was cancelled due to more rain. There have then been 2 friendlies the first away at Tynemouth ending in a narrow defeat, falling just short in the run chase.

Then an exciting draw at home against Ashington. We batted first scoring 98/3 with Ashington levelling the scores with a 4 off the last ball of the match. This was the first of several ridiculous last ball finishes that only got more and more dramatic as the season went on. When things don't go your way in cricket you sometimes learn more about the team and I could see and feel the disappointment of that result but was so impressed by how they knuckled down and wanted to improve.

The next game was a good win on the league against South North. Runs from Seb and Harsh at the top of the order and wickets from Sai Patel the standout performances.

By this point confidence was visibly increasing and the team really starting to take shape and players developing their roles in the team. This was noticeable with a great cup win away at Burnopfield who are traditionally a very strong outfit. Batting first we posted 179 for 3 with maiden 50s for Sai and Freddie. We then bowled Burnopfield out for 36 in the 12th over. A fantastic performance all round with Olly, Flynn and Thomas all stepping up from the u11s to all contribute to our performance in the game.

This win was followed up with comfortable wins in the league against Newcastle City and Backworth. 30s in these games for Seb, Daniel, James, Harsh, Freddie and Sai. Loads of contributions.

We were full of confidence but then came the biggest game of the season and unfortunately, we lost the cup semi final away to a very strong Seaham Harbour side. Everyone left the pitch disappointed that evening, but I don't think anyone looked so down as you James!

2 days later boy that was a different James walking off a cricket pitch and the first of my 2 coronary episodes of the season. At home to Newcastle, a team of all his school mates, chirping away at him throughout the game. Chasing 95 we needed 5 needed to win, with only 1 ball left. We looked out of it. Que James Roe, no problem, dispatching his mate into the car park for 6. The whole team streaming on to the pitch in celebration was just fantastic and absolutely summed up the team spirit this team has shown all season.

The next game saw my second heart attack. Away at Stocksfield, batting first on a difficult pitch and some questionable home umpiring, we were bowled out for 43. No chance you think, pack up and go home, try again next week. Not this team. A Fantastic bowling and fielding display, with 3 early wickets for Seb and 1 for Harsh I started to think. Not again! Wickets kept falling, another for Harsh, 1 for James and 2 for Sai. All of a sudden they are 42 for 9, 1 to tie. Their last recognised batsmen then tried to take a single to get back on strike. He hit it to the wrong fielder didn't he Sukvir – direct hit and out. We win by one defending 43. Box office this lot. A special mention to Charlies sister Megan who filled in last minute for us to make 11 and scored a vital 1 run batting 11 for us!!

The next game was a comfortable home win against Ashington. Then it happened again!

A crazy game away at Ponteland. What was meant to be a friendly became a bit more tense. We bowled first and bowled and fielded really well. They had 1 very good batter who made 30 and retired. We bowled the rest of the team out and then, im still not sure if it was in the rules or not the retired batter came back in and hit 78 not out. As it was a friendly, I was giving everyone a bowl and poor Sukvir showed real bravery and courage to keep and bowling in difficult circumstances. Temperatures were rising amongst the players and the parents! But we know this team and you can probably guess what happened. 31 for Daniel, 26 off 10 for Freddie, Nicholas is in on the act with a brilliant 30 off 21, 129 for 9 1 ball left Fynn on strike, yep, calmly works it down to fine leg for 4. That was sweet that one.

So those were the games and normally I wouldn't spend so long on that but but there were so many highlights I couldn't leave any out.

Before we look at the players themselves, on behalf of myself and all the team I would firstly like to thank all parents for their fantastic support, taxi services and quick responses to my messages when putting teams together.

This lot have been an absolute pleasure to coach and I would like to start with a special mention for their skipper, Harsh. I am very proud of the way he has lead this team and he embodies the team spirit and support they have all shown each other, when they lost and when they won. He has been selfless, not bowling himself a lot of the time and taking charge with bowling changes and field settings. He constantly supports everyone on the pitch, classic example of this was being run out for 0 not facing a ball he watched his opening partner Seb make a 30. Who was the first person to congratulate Seb on his 30 – yep Harsh.

Team spirit and togetherness was a feature of this team. Also, the improvement in their cricket as the season went on was there for all to see.

We had a settled opening partnership of Harsh and Seb. Daniel was a revelation at no.3 providing stability and consistent runs as well as being fantastic behind the stumps all season. A big hitting middle order of Sai, Freddie and James. All-rounder contributions from Nicholas and Sukvir.

With the ball Charlie has been metronomic opening the bowling hitting a consistent line and length. Nicholas had a nasty injury pre-season but continued his fantastic left arm shaping across right handed batsmen, too good at times to get the edges he deserved.

Crucial wickets at times from Seb, Harsh, Sai, Sukvir, Reyansh, James, Freddie, Tommy, Vihaan and Harshil.

At the end of all that. Without any official communication from the NJCL, I think we won the league. I am definitely claiming that we did. We finished top of the standings and played some fantastic cricket played in a great spirit and I absolutely think these guys deserve it 100%.

So in terms of awards, this was a very difficult decision but the winner of the **Player of the Season award** with 171 runs, 18 wickets is **Seb Fletcher Woods**. See below



