

## **Benwell Hill Under 15s – 2025 Season Review – Barry Pearson**

To sum up, the 2025 under 15 season was very enjoyable and a tremendous success, reaching the final of the Northumberland Cup and winning the NEPL Shield for the third time.

The NEPL Shield began with a 7 wicket win against a strong Sacriston side. Despite losing a close game at Whitburn, we qualified for the semi-finals where we travelled to Chester le Street and turned in an excellent performance to win by 114 runs. Gabriel Mellor scored 33 and then took 4/5 as CLS were bowled out for 54.

The final was played at South North where the Hill triumphed by 4 wickets. The bowlers led the way with Gabriel taking 4/14 and Seb Fletcher Woods taking 4/8.

In the Northumberland Cup, the Hill qualified for the final with wins against Newcastle City, Stocksfield and Tynedale. The prolific openers Gabriel Mellor and Liam Hynd both scored 50s in each of these games. In the final, we came up against a strong Ashington side and lost by 39 runs.

In the League, there were wins over Morpeth, Tynemouth, Newcastle City, Backworth and South North but losses to Ashington and Blyth. The batting and bowling were generally really good this season, the main weakness was the fielding in general and the catching in particular which needs to improve.

There were lots of excellent performances this season from a very strong squad of players who worked hard, and they all improved making big strides forward.

All of the players played senior cricket, performed well and enhanced their reputations, which all goes well for the future of themselves and the Club.

Gabriel Mellor led the side by example with some very strong performances for which he deservedly won the Under 15 Player of the Year award. Liam Hynd's batting and keeping continues to massively improve, Harsh Patel's talent alongside his enthusiasm continues to flourish, while the bowling performances of Nick Walder and Seb Fletcher Woods were excellent throughout the season. Tom Hewson, Sai Patel and Freddie Mexter showed us glimpses of what they can do, and I think that with more belief in themselves, there is a lot more to come next year. Also, new guys Robble Cope and Haarshir Khan added to the quality of the squad in what was an excellent season.