

## Potters Bar v North London County Cup Under 11's at Potters Bar 5<sup>th</sup> May

The Walk on a beautiful May bank holiday was the venue for the second round Cup match for the Under 11's. Potters Bar were asked to bat first after Tim Richards lost the toss and Harrison Palmer and Hadley Caswell took to the field. Caswell struck the first 4 of the innings with a beautiful turn to leg only to see a high full toss dip enough to be not called no-ball but good enough to take the top of his stumps – a very unlucky dismissal and one that I'm sure Hadley will learn from. U11 vice captain, Freddie Scutt, then came to the crease. His first defensive shot against North London's best strike bowler would have not been out of place at any level of the game. He soon after clipped/pulled a legside delivery for a glorious four and then again in the next over as the North London bowlers were being punished. Unfortunately, Freddie tried to play one pull shot too many as he missed a straight one and was given LBW – shot selection will be Freddie's next learning curve although he looked extremely confident at the crease and I expect him to score runs this year against better attacks.

Harrison took 8 singles before he launched a leg side pull for 4 and this was the momentum for an extremely mature and ultimately match winning knock. This was a lesson indeed for other players in the squad that accumulation is just as effective as trying to hit boundaries every ball.

Will Kilpatrick batted at 4 and with Palmer put on 43 and although Will's contribution to that total wasn't massive he will learn from his knock and hopefully produce good knocks throughout the remainder of the season.

His wicket brought together James Ilott and Palmer, a pair who look very relaxed batting together as they have done it before many times, and they went about closing in the 120 runs I had asked for before the game. In fact they surpassed my expectations and added 57 in 8 overs and showed their teammates the art of good running and punishing bad deliveries. Potters Bar closing on 126 for the loss of 3 wickets with Ilott not out 16 and Palmer, with his first of what will no doubt be several 50's this season, not out 56.

I then asked the lads to bowl no more than 20 extras after the last games debacle and also to bowl out North London for less than 80. The heat had got to Harrison and therefore Robert Poth took the gloves behind the stumps for the entire innings and was excellent. Very few byes and a couple of run outs showed that this boy is almost as comfortable with keeping gloves on as he is with skiing gloves.

Luke Jupp continued his fine form with the art of straight bowling starting off with a wicket in his first over and eventually going for just 6 runs in his 3 overs. He will certainly be part of the main seam attack this year and I'm sure he is itching to show me that he is just as effective with the bat – your time will come Luke. His opening partner was the captain Tim Richards who again showed what a talented bunch we are at Potters Bar colts – a County Squash festival all weekend didn't affect his enthusiasm or pace and he bowled an exceptional spell with just 3 runs from his 3 overs.

But it was the change of pace that brought about the downfall of North London – David Sprigens and Drew Daniels-Smith showing that a good line and length at this level, in fact at any level, is always likely to be successful. The pair bowled really well together taking two wickets each for just 26 runs off the combined 7 overs.

This meant that it was just James Cattlin left to play a starring role and his first over didn't disappoint. Straight bowling was again the order of the day but the chase for quick runs now meant that singles were being taken where previously they weren't. This affected James' figures but he can hold his head high for his first bowl at this age group.

James Ilott came on to mop up the tail and did so in a professional manner dismissing the last two batters in his one over conceding just the one boundary.

Just 16 extras were dealt up, so they pleased me on that front and they bowled NLCC out for 53 so again, bettered my expectations. A quick mention about the fielding – the opposition took some Kamikaze singles early on but history would suggest that if you put young players under pressure that chances are quick singles can be taken where singles shouldn't be – but our U11's never panicked and executed 3 excellent run outs with a really mature piece of fielding by Jupp who opted for the sprinting to the stumps instead of opting to try and hurl them down from 5 yards, well done Luke.

One other thing that I am very proud of is that they all encourage all the time and the players are always thinking cricket with the real star on that front being Hadley Caswell who never fails to back up the stumps at either end and also never lets a ball get past him in the field.

Well done Potters Bar and with a next round match against Finchley or Primose Hill confidence is certainly high with every player contributing to the teams win for the second time in succession.