



**Carrickfergus Cricket Club  
Youth Cricket Review 2008**

# Carrickfergus Cricket Club Youth Cricket Review 2008

*Roger Bell*

The Club's youth teams had a very good season in 2008, which could have been even better had it not been for the unseasonal weather which ruined the second half of the season.

The Under 15's enjoyed their most successful season ever. They won all the matches in their group and qualified for the semi finals for the third time in four years. Then, for the first time ever, they managed to win their semi final, with a narrow three wicket victory at Armagh. Carrick met a very strong North Down side in the final, and in a keenly fought contest lost by a narrow two wicket margin, despite a fine all round performance by Alex Haggan. They went out in the 2nd Round of the Graham Cup. Gary Scott captained the side during the group stages, but a broken ankle forced him to pass the reins to Alex Haggan for the semi final and final. Haggan had an outstanding season with both bat and ball, scoring 323 runs @ 35.89 and taking 9 wickets @ 16.66. The highlight was his superb innings of 119\* v Templepatrick, the highest ever score by a Carrick player in an Under 15 match. Although it was an fine team spirit that made the Under 15's an outstanding side, there are some players who stood out. Gary Scott, before his unfortunate injury, performed well with both bat and ball scoring 193 runs at 32.17 and taking 7 wickets @ 16.43. Leg spinner Peter McAlister was leading wicket taker with 12 wickets @ 12.67 to add to his 118 runs @ 14.75 and Under 13 captain Glenn Shimmon topped the bowling averages, with 11 wickets @ 8.54 as well as scoring 83 runs @ 16.60. Wicketkeeper/batsman Jordan McClurkin and medium pace bowling all rounders Johnny Addis, Stephen Grant and Mark Gordon also made significant contributions to the side's success. These players all played regularly and made very useful contributions in the club's adult sides, indeed some of them did very well with Alex Haggan making a number of 1st XI appearances.

The Under 13's had a quiet season, winning 1 out of 3 league matches played and, as well as reaching the second round of the Banoge Cup. They were captained by Glenn Shimmon who is a real prospect scoring 142 runs for once out and also topping the bowling averages with 5 wickets @ 8.00. Sammy Armour made the top score of the season with 64\*, while Aaron Hutton was leading wicket taker with 6 @ 10.66, with John Campbell making a useful all round contribution

The Under 11's managed to play three matches this year, winning two of them. Andrew Palmer was outstanding with the ball and appears set to follow in brother Matthew's footsteps. His 10 wickets cost only 2.80 each, and he achieved the remarkable analysis of 4-3-1-6 v Ballymena. Simon Scott, Gary's younger brother also made a good all round contribution to the side, while Andrew Forbes and Zach Cairns batted well. They reached the semi final of the Under 11 Plate but it remains uncompleted due to the weather.

The Under 17's had a good win over Lurgan in the first round of the Colts' Cup, before losing to Downpatrick in a bowl out with no play having been possible due to rain.

Congratulations are due to five of the Club's young players who were selected for various representative teams in 2008. Michael Gilmour represented Irish Universities and scored a fifty v MCC in Dublin. Matthew Palmer played for the NCU Under 17's in the Interprovincial Tournament. Alex Haggan was selected for the NCU Under 15's in the Interpro series and after doing well with bat and ball can be considered a little unfortunate not to have earned Irish selection. Glenn Shimmon and Jordan McClurkin both played for the Belfast Under 14 team in the Lord's Taverners Inner Cities Cup at Arundel, with Glenn emerging as leading wicket taker in the Tournament.

Professional Colin Birch and his assistant Ryan Ervine worked hard with the club's young players, and the progress made by many of them during the season was evident.

The Club received the backing of the Northern Bank for our Summer Coaching Academy at Middle Road, and this was reasonably successful before being ruined by the atrocious weather. Youth practices were well attended and we have some very talented and enthusiastic youngsters at the club at present. Thanks are also due others who helped with coaching during the season including Andrew Cowden who as always was a great help, Johan Le Roux who worked with the Under 11's pre season, Joe and Chris Campbell, and NCU CDO Ryan Eagleson. We are also grateful to Robin Beggs who assisted with scoring on occasions, and to all members and parents who gave us their support and supplied transport to matches, in particular Jim McClurkin who transported the bags, which seem to be getting bigger every year, in his van to youth matches.