

**THE WESTERN DISTRICT JUNIOR CRICKET UNION**  
MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE UNION

held at

TITWOOD on 28<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER 2009 AT 7.30 PM

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PRESENT:

Keith Young – Chairman  
Richard Rutnagur – Vice Chairman  
Jim Young – Secretary  
Colin Dawson – Treasurer  
Mike Stanger – Committee Member  
David Barr – Committee Member  
John Blair – Committee Member  
Iain Stewart – Western Academy

CLUBS PRESENT:

Glasgow Accies represented by Colin Dawson (Committee member)  
Prestwick represented by George Watson  
Hillhead represented by Ian Holland  
Clydesdale represented by Tim Hart and Mike Stanger (Committee member)  
Poloc represented by Keith Young (Committee member)  
Ferguslie represented by Sam Scott and Richard Rutnagur (Committee member)  
Kelburne represented by Martin Pollock  
East Kilbride represented by Alan Dickie, Alan Meikle and David Healy  
Greenock represented by Colin McDougall  
West of Scotland represented by Jim Young (Committee member)  
Uddingston represented by Chris Eyles  
Ayr represented by Dougie Johnstone  
Renfrew represented by Paul Goodman, David Mudie and David Barr (Committee member)  
Inverclyde represented by John Blair (Committee member)  
Kilmarnock represented by Jonathan Raine  
Victoria represented by Jon Barnes and Wasif Ghaffour  
WCA represented by Iain Stewart and Tim Hart

CLUBS NOT REPRESENTED:

Motherwell, Weirs, Helensburgh, GHK, Active Life, Irvine, Dumfries, Vale of Leven, Cumbernauld, Ardrossan, St Michaels, Queen's Park, and Drumpellier.

APOLOGIES:

Active Life, Motherwell, GHK, Helensburgh, Richard Young and Andy Teiger (Committee members) and Steve Paige (Cricket Scotland).

## MINUTES:

The Minutes of the AGM held on 28<sup>th</sup> October 2008 which had been circulated to all members in advance of the AGM were approved.

## CHAIRMAN'S INTRODUCTION:

Mr Keith Young welcomed conveners to the WDJCU AGM and reported: At the danger of not just sounding repetitive, but - in fact - being repetitive I think we can again file season 2009 away in the folder labelled "Wet". As Secretary Jim Young will allude to I'm sure, junior cricket here in the west again suffered at the hands of the weather gods. The result of this was the now perennial scrambling to play matches as the nights drew in, in late August and early September, allied to a diminishing acceptance of what "playable conditions" are. We've all done it: noting to an opposition Coach on a cold, dark September evening that the water in the puddles on the square wasn't actually displaying any tidal characteristics, and so play's probably possible - so, 8 overs a side it is! The biggest consequence of rubbish weather is - of course - less cricket. And, in a short-enough season, this isn't good for any of our clubs. I think, however, we shouldn't be too hard on ourselves as, again of course, there's very little we can do about the weather, and I believe we still play a very healthy number of junior cricket matches compared to counterpart clubs in other districts. But, a couple of issues are brought into sharper focus when poor weather is impacting matches, these are:

- clubs calling off fixtures for - in my opinion at least - no good reason;
- clubs entering leagues/cups then scratching;
- the determination of league placings; and
- the preponderance of representative and non-league fixtures.

Taking these in turn:

The league rules as currently written allow clubs to call off fixtures, without conceding them, for any reason at all, as long as minimum notice is provided and as long as they don't do it too many times. This is open to abuse at the best of times I'd argue, but in seasons badly affected by the weather, the frustration felt by clubs at being informed by their opponents that they're postponing a match on one of the few warm and sunny nights because, say, their best team isn't available is magnified. The Committee will be looking at rule changes for next season to reduce clubs' scope to postpone.

Clubs entering competitions and scratching is deeply frustrating too; not just because it causes hassle for the competition organisers, but because - again - it can often result in teams being without a fixture on perfectly playable days. As is repeated every year please think very,.....very carefully before entering your club in a competition. Of course we are here to play as much cricket as possible, and don't want to discourage teams from competing, but entering and scratching actually achieves the opposite: less cricket than was planned. If greater

flexibility is needed remember, too, combined teams have been entered in the past, and the B Leagues are ideal for facilitating cricket if a club has more "fluid" playing numbers.

League placings again this year have ended up - at least to me - in producing an order that more accurately reflects the number of games played, than which is the best team or teams. And before anyone suggests it, of course this is a generalisation, and I'm happy to admit that my own club Poloc has, in the last two seasons, been both a beneficiary and a victim of the current points and placings systems. As with rights to postpone matches, changes to how league placings are determined will be introduced for next season. Allied to this are the rules - or lack thereof - surrounding the rescheduling of matches - these will also be reviewed over the winter.

The final point made was the impact of - really resulting from the growth in - non-league fixtures. It is a fact that there are many, many more representative matches than in the past. In days of yore there was a one-week Inter-District Festival, end-of, for most age-groups. And, at the oldest age-group, there were a limited number of Inter-District matches organised, but fitting in around WDJCU matches. Now our players have Area Squad matches, Academy matches and squad sessions, schools select teams, national age-group squad sessions and matches, Inter-City matches, etc. A question that arises is: can there ever be too much cricket? Maybe not, but the impact of these other things undoubtedly impacts our clubs' junior players and their junior set-ups. Player unavailability, players being told to rest, mixed messages to players concerning technique and other development issues, WDJCU matches not being scheduled to accommodate other fixtures, etc. The dialogue between the Union, the Western Regional Academy, Cricket Scotland and schools is ongoing, but 2009 may have seen a tipping point where, from feedback from Junior Convenors both during and after the season, I detect that there is a view that the interests of the clubs and the Union became a junior partner in what has to be an equal partnership with these other interested parties. And this is unhelpful, particularly if it has adversely impacted the many, in favour of the few; and adversely impacted clubs' abilities to offer continuity of cricket to their youngsters, particularly in an already badly weather-affected season. But I am not suggesting throwing any babies out with bath water however, and much of the non-league cricket has merit, but more thought about fixture scheduling allied to better communication about what's going on when, affecting whom, and why, need to be implemented. Players move in and out of these para-club activities, but they always remain club players and clubs remain their largest influences - it's important this is borne in mind. In concluding this point I'd stress that neither Cricket Scotland nor the clubs hold a monopoly on knowing what's in the best interests of our junior cricketers - so to repeat, genuine partnership is what's needed. The Union's dialogue with the other parties involved in these things, as noted, is ongoing.

A couple of other remarks in closing: the League had to address a number of player disciplinary issues during the season. Bluntly, this is unacceptable. A Zero Tolerance approach was and will continue to be adopted to bad behaviour, on or off the pitch. The League will not think twice about expelling clubs who cannot control their players,.....or Coaches! The Committee's approach to such issues can safely be summarised as "an iron fist in an iron glove"!

A comment on sponsorship: the Union was again delighted that The Trophy Centre continued its sponsorship of the League - again thanks to Richard Rutnagur for his time and effort in securing this deal. And The Frank Smith Trophy gained a new sponsor in 2009 in the shape of Clydesdale Bank, another welcome partner for the Union. A question often asked is what happens to this sponsorship money: the answer is - in 2009 - it part-funded the Western Regional Academy's junior squad's tour of Ireland, and part-funded an Under 12 representative match against Northumberland. The Union, as the accounts circulated in advance of this AGM by Treasurer Colin Dawson reflect, remains in a financially sound position, with much of its reserves ear-marked for district tours. Plans to tour, as in the past, remain an active matter for the Committee, More on this to come no doubt.

In closing I would add my congratulations to those clubs winning leagues and cups in 2009, to those junior players from the West who represented both the district and their clubs in national age-group squads and teams, and thanks as always to both the Union's other office bearers for their work behind the scenes in ensuring the smooth running of the Union and to clubs' Junior Convenors for their continuing sterling efforts. Thanks also to Iain Stewart and Tim Hart for the work with the regional academy, and the coaches who contributed there - we wish Iain well in his continuing recuperation from illness, it's good to see him up-and-about again. As I think I have said before at this forum, it remains a mystery to me how Cricket Scotland expect one person to carry out the two roles Iain has, particularly given the geographical size of the West District. In touching on the work of Cricket Scotland in the West it is also worth noting Josh Johnson's input. Working with Iain Stewart, I am aware Josh has undertaken a lot of grass-roots development work in the district - thanks to him too for his efforts.

#### TREASURER'S REPORT:

Mr Dawson presented the Junior Union accounts for the year to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2008. This year the accounts and notes had been circulated to members in advance and Mr Dawson invited questions.

Mr Stanger asked if any progress had been made towards arranging an overseas tour, given that funds held by the Junior Union were earmarked for this purpose. It was confirmed that

the matter was being actively discussed. India had been considered and rejected after the troubles in Mumbai. South Africa was a possibility. There was a suggestion that, in the absence of a tour, the funds could be utilised for grassroots projects, but Mr Dickie pointed out that the funds had been received as a grant from WDCU specifically for the purpose of an overseas tour.

The accounts were then duly proposed, seconded and passed unanimously. Mr Dawson was thanked for the brevity of his report.

### LEAGUE SECRETARY'S REPORT:

Mr Young noted that for the third year in a row the weather had been particularly unkind to junior cricket in the West. In particular it seemed to rain through the whole of August making it impossible for clubs to catch up on fixtures that had been postponed or abandoned earlier in the season. The number of fixtures completed remains on the decline. This year only 220 league matches (compared with 245 last season) were completed and 15 of those were concessions.

Ayr, at under 11 level, were the only club to complete all its fixtures and they won the league by 2 points from Clydesdale.

The under 13 league was reduced to 10 clubs this year, which was very disappointing, and Clydesdale ran out winners with a 100% record, played 8, won 8. Poloc finished runners up.

The under 15 league was closely contested with Prestwick eventually winning 10 out of 12 matches and finishing 2 points ahead of Clydesdale with Ayr close behind. Poloc were unbeaten in this age group but couldn't fit in enough fixtures to challenge for the title.

This was the first season in which the under 18 league was split into 2 divisions and Kelburne were comfortable winners of the first division winning 6 matches out of 6 to finish 4 points clear of East Kilbride.

The under 18 premier division proved to be extremely competitive with Prestwick and Clydesdale eventually sharing the title, each club winning 9, losing 2, and tying 1 match. The clubs did not actually tie against each other. Prestwick's tie was against Ayr and Clydesdale's was against West. Again Poloc achieved a 100% record but could not complete enough fixtures to challenge.

When we planned the 2 divisions last winter, we had 17 entrants and we therefore created a premier division of 9 teams and a first division of 8 teams. Unfortunately, after the season started, a club withdrew from the first division leaving it with only 7 teams. Had this withdrawal occurred in sufficient time, we could have constructed 2 leagues of 8, which would have been a

more sensible arrangement and would have meant fewer blank weeks for teams.

So again I would urge that when we come to the stage of the meeting when we decide which competitions our clubs will play in, please only enter those competitions which you have resources to cope with. I would remind you that at the under 13 and under 15 age groups, there are B Leagues which provide both flexibility in the arranging of fixtures and, normally, fewer fixtures to fulfil.

Congratulations also to Prestwick on winning the Frank Smith Trophy, and to Poloc whose under 15s won the Scottish Cup section of the ECB National Under 15 Cup. West of Scotland's under 13s qualified for the finals day of the under 13 National Cup competition but lost to Carlton in the semi final.

Yet again the Sunday morning Kwik Cricket Festivals were a great success and I think it was only Prestwick whose Festival was rained off twice.

Mr Young finished by thanking all Junior Convenors, Team Managers, Coaches, Committee Members, Parents and Volunteers for all their efforts throughout the year.

Mr Dawson reported that three teams competed in the Under 15 B League and nine teams played in the Under 13 B League, including a Clydesdale girls' team. Ayr won the Under 15 League and Poloc won the Under 13 League.

#### CUP COMPETITIONS REPORT:

Congratulations were offered to Prestwick on winning the Frank Smith Trophy, beating Poloc in the final at Shawholm, and Poloc Under 15s on winning the Scottish section of the national ECB Cup.

#### WESTERN REGIONAL ACADEMY:

Academy Head Coach, Iain Stewart, reported on the progress of the Western Academy. The 2009 season saw the Academy have a busy summer of fixtures at Junior and Senior level (U14 and over 14).

"The Junior/Senior split was made in the autumn of 2008 and after a marathon 12 hours of trials we got squads we were fairly happy with and tinkered with along the way. A couple of lads came in and couple went out. This theme went through to the summer where we had lads who were in form come in and fulfil roles in one off games.

The coaching staff I set up after being appointed to succeed Simon Smith (who took over from Steve Knox at the Eastern RA) was along the lines of specialist coaches and now the two Caledonia Academies and the Eastern Regional Academy are following this example this winter training period.

With Iain Kennedy onboard as Academy Assistant Head Coach I had experience around me and the likes of Bruce Patterson, Paul Hoffmann, Dougie Lockhart, Ian Young and Richard Young were all excellent over the winter. Their availability in summer was always going to be low due to their other commitments so some of the younger coaches who helped out intermittently over the winter were utilised at games in the summer which I could not always attend due to Development Manager duties.

The summer saw the Junior Academy record victories over Cumbria Districts (a B County XI) at Nunholm and also victory over Merchiston Castle School. A tour was arranged to Ireland which was a great experience for all concerned. Thanks go to Gill McElnea for her help in arranging the tour with me and to WJCU for a cash donation towards the trip which took the pressure off the parents and the Academy's bank balance.

The Senior Academy name was attached to games which saw U16/7/8 & 9 XIs and victories were posted over GHK in the WDCU Div 1 and Scottish Universities. A winning draw over Meikleriggs meant the 6 game (due to wet weather!) WDCU campaign was a worthwhile exercise, though the draw format was alien to the Inter-Academy tournament format (50/50 win/lose) we were building towards. We had a harsh lesson from the Brighton Grammar School of Australia which beat our U19 XIs at the end of June but our U16 level almost snatched victory but fell a few runs short at Hamilton Crescent.

Academy tournaments:

The Senior Academy U16 XI (with two U17 players) came third in their tournament at Stirling University/Stirling County CC in August. A great victory over East was the highlight, but we were outclassed by Northumberland's pace attack, who were quicker than anything our lads had seen all summer – this needs addressing. The match versus the Caledonian Academies XI was rained off on the final day after a few overs so we finished third on run rate. Caley have a good bunch of lads at this age so I expected a close game against Neil Burnett's well drilled squad.

The Junior Academy finished second behind Northern Ireland Academy at the Fettes tournament after beating Caley and East. Run rate decided the title as East beat the previously undefeated N.I Academy on the final day.

The Academy is Player Development centred so it's great to see the teams do well but it is about seeing youngster progress after a robust coaching and fixture programme onto national honours. We had 7 lads at U15, 4 at U17 and 1 at U19 do that in 2009. Three of the U15s were 'newbies' to the U15 squad after impressing over the winter. We also had 4 players selected for Regional Academy select XI's at U16, U19 and U21 level.

We have learned we have a few things going well within the set up but realise there is some work to be done this winter to

improve upon a couple of areas of the Academy so it can fulfil its potential."

The Chairman thanked Iain for providing this report. He explained to the meeting that earlier in the evening the WRA Management Committee had met and at that meeting Mr Young had presented a document setting out feedback and issues, both positive and negative, that had been canvassed from Club Junior Conveners. The Academy management had taken this feedback on board and there would be a follow up meeting to address the matters arising. Discussion following Mr Young's comments indicated that poor communication was the main failing of the Academy. This would be addressed and Tim Hart undertook to ensure all Clubs received a regular flow of information by e mail.

ARRANGEMENTS FOR  
JUNIOR COMPETITIONS  
2010:

Firstly, the Secretary conceded that it had been a mistake to leave part of the season clear of fixtures to accommodate the Area Competition in 2009 and this would not be repeated. After discussion it was decided to continue operating two divisions at Under 18 level. A proposal to play the Under 15 League on Sunday mornings on a 30 overs per side basis was discussed, but it was felt that ground availability would be an issue and it would not be a good idea to move from Friday evenings when club grounds were always free for junior cricket. It was, however, agreed that the rules would be amended to allow clubs the opportunity, where both agreed, to play a longer league game on a Sunday instead of the usual Friday fixture. The Ayrshire Group of Clubs expressed concern about the continual failure of some clubs to travel to Ayrshire for away fixtures. While there was no obvious solution, the Secretary indicated that rule changes were being considered that would impose bigger penalties on defaulters.

The provisional League setup will be as follows:-

**GRADE A UNDER 11 LEAGUE**

Ferguslie  
Prestwick  
NVT Poloc  
West of Scotland  
Greenock  
Clydesdale  
Hillhead  
Ayr  
Glasgow Accies  
Helensburgh  
East Kilbride  
Kilmarnock  
Renfrew



Motherwell are currently undecided.

#### GRADE A UNDER 13 LEAGUE

Ferguslie  
Prestwick  
NVT Poloc  
West of Scotland  
Glasgow Accies  
Greenock  
Clydesdale  
Hillhead  
Ayr

Kilmarnock are currently undecided.

#### GRADE A UNDER 15 LEAGUE

Clydesdale  
Glasgow Accies  
Prestwick  
Hillhead  
Greenock  
Ferguslie  
West of Scotland  
NVT Poloc  
Kelburne  
Ayr  
Renfrew

#### GRADE A UNDER 18 LEAGUE

Clydesdale  
West of Scotland  
Prestwick  
Kelburne  
Ferguslie  
NVT Poloc  
Glasgow Accies  
Greenock  
Ayr  
East Kilbride  
Uddingston

Kilmarnock are currently undecided.

#### UNDER 18 FRANK SMITH TROPHY

Clydesdale  
West of Scotland  
Prestwick  
Kelburne  
Ferguslie  
NVT Poloc

Glasgow Accies  
Greenock  
Ayr  
East Kilbride  
Uddingston

Kilmarnock are currently undecided.

#### GRADE B UNDER 13 LEAGUE

Ayr  
Queen Bees  
Clydesdale  
NVT Poloc  
Uddingston  
GHK  
Kelburne

Inverclyde, Kilmarnock, Motherwell and West of Scotland are currently undecided.

#### GRADE B UNDER 15 LEAGUE

Clydesdale  
East Kilbride  
NVT Poloc  
Ayr  
Uddingston

Helensburgh and Motherwell are currently undecided.

The Secretary will contact the undecided clubs and the clubs not represented at the meeting to finalise entries to the various leagues.

#### ELECTION OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

The following were elected for a two year term of office:-

Keith Young – Chairman  
Richard Rutnagur – Vice Chairman  
John Blair – Committee member  
Dougie Johnstone – Committee member  
George Watson – Committee member

The Chairman thanked outgoing Committee members, Mike Stanger and David Barr, for their long periods of service on the Committee.

#### APPOINTMENT OF AUDITOR:

Fred Haw was unanimously re-appointed, having already been approved by the Senior Union.

#### AOCB:

a. Mike Stanger presented the MB Stanger Trophy to David Healy of East Kilbride.

b. Mike Stanger displayed the ICC Centenary Medal presented to him by the ICC as one of five volunteers selected from different areas of Scotland for their contributions to cricket. Mike insisted that he saw this as an award for all volunteers in the West District.

c. The meeting was pleased to note the well deserved awards presented earlier this week by Glasgow Sports Council to Mike Stanger and Colin Dawson, both of whom had been sports volunteers for over 30 years.

d. Tim Hart reported that Hutchesons' Indoor Facility had been booked by the Junior Union for its indoor cricket competitions to be held from 28<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> December.

e. Tim Hart raised the issue of slow over rates in junior cricket, particularly at under 15 level. Agreed it was unrealistic to try to penalise this but club managers should have a responsibility to instil a degree of urgency in their players.

There being no further business, the meeting closed with a vote of thanks to the Chair.