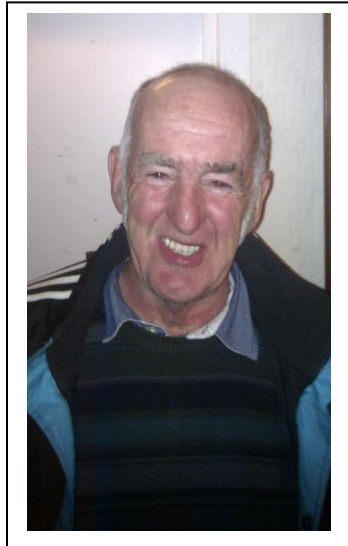


Juniors Revival – ‘The Don’ Transforms Junior Section

At the end of 2007 the junior section of Baildon Cricket Club was in disarray. A poor structure, lack of volunteers and dwindling numbers meant the junior section was virtually non-existent and for a leading Bradford League club that had to change. Fast forward 5 years and we will be running 4 junior sides in 2012 and have over 75 registered juniors. The numbers have risen year on year and further increases are anticipated this coming season.

The transformation is down to one man, Don Butterfield, whose drive and determination to resurrect the most important side of any club is starting to pay dividends.



As befits a man of his years, Don has a lengthy cricketing CV but his enthusiasm for the game shows no signs of ending, indeed he can still be seen these days turning out in the 4ths and 5ths. Having started out many decades ago at Settle and taken in spells at Linthwaite and Slaithwaite, Don has been around Baildon and Baildon Meths since the 1980s. When asked what his role in these sides was in his serious playing days, Don was quick to advise: “Well I started off as an opening bowler, turned to wicket keeping and finished up as a batsman!”

Don preferred however to talk juniors and coaching and about the present day: “We now run 4 sides, Under 9s, Under 11s, Under 13s and Under 15s and we practice on Friday nights starting at 6pm running through to 7.30pm. On a typical night we can expect more than 50 juniors”

Don was also keen to acknowledge the help from fellow volunteers: “Our Under 9s side is run by Andrew Fold, Andy Dixon runs the Under 11s, I look after the Under 13s and Peter Brook takes charge of the Under 15s, their coaching skills are second to none and most importantly the kids really enjoy themselves. It is not always about winning or losing, we have seen every junior develop under our guidance and long may that continue”

Asked about any names that may one day take the ultimate step into the Baildon first team, Don was typically coy but he did give special mention to Danny Hunt and Elliott Turner from the Under 13 side and Kane Whithall and Robbie Duke from the Under 15s who both got their first taste of senior cricket in 2011.

Looking ahead to the forthcoming season Don had this to say: “Any new recruits are always welcome and although Under 9s is our first age group it is generally accepted that anyone from 6 years old can start to get involved on a Friday evening, plus we still await our first girl, it would be great to see some girls come along too!”

Don was also quick to note the added facilities on offer this coming season at the club for parents and guardians: “The Committee have recognised the great strides the junior section have made and from this season the bar will be open on a Friday evening to ensure watching parents and the like are suitably refreshed!”

2012 Junior Registration will take place on the first practice night likely to be held on the 13th or 20th April.

For more details on enrolment and to pre-register contact mail@baildoncricketclub.co.uk or Don Butterfield direct on 01274 598501.