

Excellent competitive performances by ZCCC Under 11 team at Basel Indoor Tournament

Nine young men ranging from the age of 6 to 10 went to Basel this weekend and took on the mighty Basel Dragons, Basel Nightfuries, Gingins and Luxembourg U11 cricket teams. They came away with a very respectable third place, beating the Nightfuries in the 3rd/4th place play-offs. Their achievement was made all the more remarkable given their ages (mainly 6 to 8) and the fact that most of the Zurich U11 team has only recently been formed with a significant number of the experienced players having moved to the U13 squad in the latter half of 2014. Only three players - Kyle Seth, Matty and Paolo Patel – were part of the 2014 team. Given this, the team's performance was simply outstanding and their commitment to succeed was unshakable.

Amongst the newcomers, Vadim Shufiallah and Sacha Hall played their parts outstandingly well, being ready to run and squeezing runs from the opposition at every opportunity during their batting innings. Even Sacha's six-year-old younger brother, Andreas Hall, pitched in with highly skillful bowling and fielding during the play-off against the Basel Nightfuries. Meanwhile, Both Owen Thompson and Kabir Khanna produced excellent bowling performances. Their fast, accurate bowling proved a challenge for Gingins, Luxembourg and the Basel Nightfuries. Whilst batting, Kabir was retired in one of the games and was just short of retirement by one run in a second game. Owen did an excellent job of retaining his wicket during the match against Luxembourg after Kyle Seth was retired and Kabir Khanna was run out just short of retirement; whilst Ben Jackson, who has been focussing on rugby in recent months, gave it his best with some excellent stops whilst fielding, helping to keep the opposition run rate as low as possible and doing a great job of demonstrating his abilities as an all-round sportsman.

The 'Old Boys' Kyle Seth, Matty and Paolo Patel gave highly commendable performances throughout as might well be expected from them. Kyle's mighty sixes, double retirement, spin bowling with statistically 100% accuracy and uncannily scary one-handed catches as well as his well thought out strategic captaincy, all made him a bit of a celebrity at the tournament, quelling the Dragons' fury on more than one occasion. Kyle also showed great sportsmanship by volunteering to complete the Gingins team that was a few players short. He played consecutive matches without a rest both Saturday and Sunday and took several wickets to boot whilst subbing as wicket keeper for Gingins. Matty Patel was selected to bowl as many of the overs as allowed by the rules of tournament due to his skillful bowling accuracy and speed, whilst his brother Paolo provided an excellent defence of his wicket in all his innings, taking many runs off the wall and still doing his best to call and score additional runs between wickets.

Possibly the most impressive aspect of the tournament was how close the Zurich Crickets came to achieving second place. In the game against Gingins, Zürich were pipped to the post by just ten runs, whilst in the game against Basel Nightfuries, only three balls remained when Basel levelled with the Zurich score.

Well done to all the Zurich U11s. You all showed remarkable maturity, team spirit (in fact, you all played as if you have been a team for several years) and a little spark of something special for the Zurich Cricket's Cricket Club. A big thanks too from your coach, whom you made extremely proud.

A big thanks also to the organisers Basel Dragons Cricket Club, who hosted us, as ever, graciously and fed us some lovely marmite sandwiches amongst everything else that was laid on so very nicely for us. Now, that is cricket!

It just remains now for Zurich to organise a big tournament that brings all our cricketing friends together in our wonderful city.

M.Seth (ZH U11 coach)