

Under 14 Division 1 – Round 16 - 28/2/10

Woodville 13 d Glenelg 7

This game, the last of the season, was as Brayden put it in our last huddle, “our grand final”. We could not make the finals, but we could help determine who got in and we had the opportunity of moving into 7th position on the ladder over our opposition, Glenelg.

The conditions were very difficult at Glenelg. The wind was howling, making it was difficult to throw strikes and meaning that a ground ball hit to the left side of the infield was most times going to be a safe hit. The throw across the diamond was that difficult.

Glenelg had beaten us by 5 runs earlier in the season and we knew that they have some quality pitchers. But we had improved, having had 3 wins and a draw in our last 6 games. I thought that this week would be a good test of whether that good form was legitimate or whether we had caught a couple of teams on an off day.

Being the away side we started in the field and our first fielding innings gave some insight into how difficult the conditions were. Troy started on the mound. After walking the first hitter we had the first of what I thought would be many hits to 3rd base. Then there was, what would normally be a routine pop-up fly in the infield that Troy got under. But it came down on a 45 degree angle in the strong wind to be a safe hit. I thought this looked ominous and that our boys would struggle in the conditions. I hoped that we could also put bat on ball and cause Glenelg the same headaches. But hope was quickly restored with Troy combining with Brayden to pick off two of their better players at second base. This and the striking out of the number 4 hitter saw the innings over with just 1 run against us.

Our first batting innings was over in a blink with a come-backer to the pitcher and 2 strike outs.

From here Glenelg’s starting pitcher struggled to throw strikes and we scrambled for 2 runs in the second innings with a walk, 2 batters being hit by a pitched ball and some wild pitches.

We did a good job holding Glenelg to 7 runs in 5 innings, with a couple of good plays being made each by Shawn and Brayden and Ryan making a great play against the wind for a 3rd to 1st out. Troy had done a great job to hold them to 7 runs in 5 and a bit innings.

We strung together 5 hits in the 4th innings and with a couple of walks and aggressive base running we scored 5 runs.

We scored another 5 runs in the 6th innings while Sam W. did a masterful job closing the last innings and a bit with 3 strike outs and good plays by Shawn and Troy in the infield.

Matt was our stand out hitter with 3 hits to the outfield. He has had some welcome form with the bat over the last few weeks. Other than this we only had 2 other players hit to the outfield and as we thought with the tricky conditions we had 4 hits mainly to the left side of the infield.

I hope that this win, resulting in 4 wins and a draw in our last 8 games, gives the boys some confidence that they can play winning baseball. In the end we only missed out by percentage (12 runs over the season) on playing in the finals.

Hits: Durflinger 3; Loechel-Baker1; Nicholson 1; Williams 1; Jones 1; Dienhoff 1; Keneally 1

Pitchers: Nicholson; Williams

Under 14 Division 1 – Round 15 - 21/2/10

West Torrens 15 d Woodville 1

This year West Torrens are clearly a very good side. They have good pitching depth, they out hit us 11 to 6 and they didn’t make many mistakes in the field. But more than anything they put pressure on our field which unfortunately saw us make too many errors.

Troy, Matt, Ryan and Sam K all did well to get solid hits from quality pitchers and Sam W was unlucky not to get safe hits with 2 shots to centre field. But 6 hits in 6 innings is not going to see us score too many runs.

Sam W and Brayden battled hard on the mound.

For me the play of the day was when Josh threw out a stealing runner at second base. We had Alex Derhak work with all of the catchers mid week and Josh made brilliant use of what he was shown.

Again I’d like to thank Zac Esca for filling in after an early morning phone call on game day. Zac shows promise for the future.

Guys, lets have a return of the good form we have shown since Christmas for the last game of the season against Glenelg.

Hits: Nicholson 2; Durflinger 2; Dienhoff 1; Keneally 1

Pitchers: Williams, Marchioro

Under 14 Division 1 – Round 14 - 14/2/10

Woodville 9 d East Torrens 2

Our good form continued with this solid win.

The top of the battling line up hit really well with Sam W., Josh and Troy getting multiple hits and all to the outfield.

Troy pitched well striking out 9 of the 20 batters he faced, and picking off 3 base runners, in 5 complete innings. He also only allowed 3 hits and 4 walks. Sam W. did a good job closing out the last innings and allowing only 1 hitter to reach first base, with a safe hit.

Our field was again solid with only 2 errors.

This week saw a couple of late withdrawals from our 9 man squad. The team and I thank Zac Esca and Ethan Marchioro, 10 and 9 years old respectively, very much for filling in on short notice.

We have 2 minor round games remaining with tough teams. It would be nice to win one of these to cement the improvement we have shown over the last 5 or 6 games.

Hits: Williams 3; Loechel-Baker 3; Nicholson 2; Dienhoff 1; Marchioro 1;

Pitchers: Nicholson, Williams

Under 14 Division 1 – Round 13 - 7/2/10

Woodville 13 d Adelaide 0

This was probably our best all round game for the season. No errors in the field, great hitting, and great pitching. It was our first mercy win for the year and we have now won 2 and drawn 1 in our last 4 games. Things are starting to come together as the end of the season draws near. It was a pleasure to hear Adelaide's coach comment that he could not believe that we are where we are on the ladder.

Sam Williams pitched a superb game only allowing 2 hits, 2 walks and striking out 8 hitters in his 5 innings.

Sam's good pitching was backed up by an errorless fielding display. Fielding highlights: a full stretch dive by Troy at short stop to field a ball up the middle and then regain his feet to throw the runner out; 2 really solid plays by Ryan at third base throwing runners out across the diamond; and Matt showed good stretch at first base to receive the ball on a couple of occasions. Brayden did a good job behind the plate – everyone fielded well.

We had 12 hits for the game, although 5 of these were in the infield. But our contact with the ball put pressure on Adelaide's field resulting in some errors.

We have 3 games to go. Boys it would be terrific to continue our run of good form and to finish as high on the ladder as we can. Keep up the good work.

Also, thanks very much to Alex Dienhoff and Sam McKay from under 12s for filling after 2 late withdrawals through injury.

Hits: Williams 2; Dienhoff 2; Dienhoff 2; Marchioro 2; Cunningham-Brown 2; Durflinger 1; Loechel-Baker 1;

Pitchers: Williams

Under 14 Division 1 – Round 12 - 31/1/10

Woodville 18 d Port Adelaide 9

That's more like it!!

Easily our best hitting game for the year, beating our previous best score by 7 runs. With 15 hits and only 4 strike outs, and with quite a few of our outs being fly balls to the outfield. Terrific hitting by Sam Williams with 3 hits to Centre Field and 2 of those being doubles.

Troy and Sam W. pitched well holding Port scoreless in 3 of their 5 innings. They scored 6 runs in 1 innings where we made 3 errors. That innings should have concluded with only 2 runs being scored.

Hits: Williams 3; Keneally 3; Nicholson 2; Dienhoff 2; Jones 2; Durflinger 1; Marchioro 1; Loechel-Baker 1;

Pitchers: Nicholson, Williams

Under 14 Division 1 – Round 11 - 24/1/10

Southern Districts 17 d Woodville 9

After 3 innings scores were level at 3 runs each. It was a pitching duel with Troy holding up well. Souths scored the maximum 7 runs in the 4th innings. It looked like it was all over, but to the boy's credit we fought back with some good hitting to score 5 runs in the 5th and be only 1 run behind. Unfortunately Souths again scored the maximum 7 runs with their last batting innings to run away with the game.

It was a good hit out for the first game after Christmas. Like many of our games we were competitive for part of the game, but we simply got out hit, particularly in the last 2 innings. Most of the boys hit with great confidence at training. Boys, you have to take that confidence into the game situation!!

Hits: Nicholson 2; Durflinger 2; Marchioro 1; Loechel-Baker 1;

Pitchers: Nicholson, Dienhoff, Marchioro

Under 14 Division 1 – Round 10 - 20/12/09

Woodville 11 drew Sturt 11

What a game!!!

At the end of 4 innings we were up 8 to 0. Yes, at this point you'd expect to win the game. But Sturt are a quality side who have only lost 1 game for the season to date. I expected Sturt to fight back at some stage and games can turn very quickly, especially in the younger age groups.

At the end of the 5th innings we were up by 2 runs. We went 3 up, 3 down, in the 5th. If we got 1 runner on base then game would most likely have been called with us running out the winners. It wasn't to be and in the 6th innings Sturt scored 5 runs to go up by 3.

We could have pulled the pin there and then but the boys fought back. Good hits by Troy, Brayden, Zeb and Sam Williams took us back to level pegging with only 1 out. Shawn then hit a line drive that could have scored the winning run if it wasn't caught by the centre fielder.

Troy did a great job pitching, only allowing 5 runs in 5 innings.

Troy and Sam Williams batted well, each getting 3 hits to the outfield.

I'd like to thank Sam McKay, who usually plays under 12s, for filling in for us. Sam got on base with walks in 2 out of his 3 plate appearances and took a solid catch in right field. He also put bat on ball a few times and looks to be a promising player of the future.

So we could have won, and probably should have won. But I wasn't disappointed at the end of the game. We gave it our best. We probably fielded the best we had all year and we fought back to get 3 runs in the last. We had a chance to win, but gallantly pulled off a fighting draw with Sturt. We should be happy with that.

Hopefully this game gives us some confidence to win a few games after the Christmas break. The biggest thing for me is that our good hitters have to keep on hitting and those who have yet to realise their full hitting potential need to deliver. We need to bat right through the line up. Develop that confidence boys.

Hits: Nicholson 3; Williams 3; Cunningham-Brown 1; Marchioro 1; Keneally 1

Pitchers: Nicholson, Loechel-Baker, Williams

Under 14 Division 1 – Round 9 - 13/12/09

Kensington 12 d Woodville 7

Again, the story of our season to date – the scores were close with us being down by 1 run after 4 innings. Kensington scored 4 runs without reply from us in the final innings to take out the win.

Josh did a good job pitching. After the team allowing 5 runs in the first innings we held them to 7 runs when Josh came out after 4 and 2/3rd innings.

Troy did a great job with the bat with 4 safe hits from his 4 plate appearances. 3 of the hits were good line drives to left field. Sam and Zeb also hit well with 2 hits each.

It was nice to welcome Ben Currie into the side for the first time this year. I sincerely hope that Ben finishes the season off for us.

Hits: Nicholson 4; Williams 2; Cunningham-Brown 2; Loechel-Baker 1; Marchioro 1; Dienhoff 1; Currie 1

Pitchers: Loechel-Baker, Williams

Under 14 Division 1 – Round 8 - 6/12/09

Golden Grove 11 d Woodville 6

This was a closer game than the 5 run winning margin indicates. We started well with 3 runs in the first innings. At the end of 4 innings we were still in touch, being down by 2 runs but unfortunately we could not answer their 3 runs in the final innings.

Our pitching was good with minimal walks being allowed.

The story of this game lies with our hitting again. You will generally need to score more than 6 runs to win an under 14 game. Golden Grove managed 13 hits while we could only put 6 up.

There were 2 great plays worthy of a special mention in the infield. Firstly Zeb dived to his left to knock down a line drive at third base nearly pulling off a miraculous catch. This is the kind of desperation we need to show and while we didn't get the out but Zeb cut down extra bases for their runners. Secondly Ryan caught a hard hit line drive above his head at second base. Well done boys.

Hits: Nicholson 1; Loechel-Baker 1; Marchioro 1; Williams 1; Jones 1; Cunningham-Brown 1

Pitchers: Williams, Nicholson

Under 14 Division 1 – Round 7 - 29/11/09

Glenelg 10 d Woodville 5

We were very competitive for most of the game with the score being 4 all at the end of 3 innings.

Glenelg's offensive pressure (hitting) and the fact that we made some errors in the last innings saw the score blow out a bit. We had 4 safe hits compared to Glenelg's 8. But it was more than that – they hit the ball more often than we did to put pressure on our field.

I have been trying to encourage the boys to be more aggressive in the batting box. We got 3 hits in the first innings, then 1 in the second and we were kept hitless after that. If we can get hits off a quality pitcher early, then we need to continue that pressure right throughout the game.

We need to keep things simple. You don't have to hit the ball hard or far to get on base, but you do need to put bat on ball and get it into fair territory. You need to be a "hard out". This means that you need to make the other team work hard to get you out rather than striking out. If you get behind in the count you need to shorten up on the bat and get bat on ball. Sometimes you'll still get out, but sometimes you get a hit or they'll make an error. This will be our focus in the weeks ahead.

Well done to the pitchers, Troy and Sam. 10 runs, with 8 hits is a good effort against a good hitting side. Zeb also showed good courage to play on after a getting hit in the leg while batting.

Hits: Nicholson 1; Marchioro 1; Jones 1; Keneally 1

Pitchers: Nicholson, Williams

Under 14 Division 1 – Round 6 - 22/11/09

West Torrens 13 d Woodville 3

This was a good result against a very good side. It was very pleasing to hear from the opposition coaches after the game that they considered that we did the basics as well as, if not better, than the other sides they had played to date.

This week we threw the side around defensively. Josh Loechel-Baker, Brayden Marchioro and Ryan Dienhoff all made their first appearances for the year on the pitching mound and all did a great job. They threw strikes, with very few walks between them. That's all I can ask for.

Sam Keneally spent the whole game at second base making some good solid plays, Zeb Cunningham-Brown has greatly improved his outfielding and this showed through. Shawn Jones made the play of the day – a full stretch pick-up at shortstop and a great throw to first base.

Josh Loechel-Baker, Sam Williams and Brayden Marchioro all picked up 2 hits each.

Hits: Williams 2; Josh Loechel-Baker 2; Brayden Marchioro 2; Cunningham-Brown 1

Pitchers: Loechel-Baker, Marchioro, Dienhoff

Under 14 Division 1 – Round 4 - 8/11/09

Woodville 7 d Adelaide 6

We're on a roll – 2 wins in a row!!

Last week we got well in front and then just managed to hold on for a win. This week it was very pleasing to see a hard fought win in a game that was close throughout.

It was hot even though it was an early game. I asked the boys to hustle, "no walking", and they did that all day with only a few reminders. I want to install a culture of hustling in the boys. The mental aspect of baseball is huge and hustling helps keeps us positive and give the other team the impression that we are always about to do something.

We did a great job defensively this week in allowing only 6 runs in 7 full innings against a hitting team. The pitchers both did a great job and our fielding was impressive. It was a great all round effort but special mentions this week to Sam Williams who made several solid plays and a great running fly ball catch which I didn't think he'd get to, and Ryan Dienhoff who came in to third base, charged a ground ball and made a terrific throw for a bang, bang out at 1st base to end an innings and prevent a run scoring.

We generally hit well, with 7 strike outs against us with quality pitching. Our base running was generally good with some room for improvement.

We made a couple of great "heads up" plays under the pressure of the moment which really gave me the feeling that some of the training we are doing is paying off and that the boys are learning the game. That, and the fun it brings, is the real objectives for the year.

Hits: Nicholson 2; Williams 1; Cunningham-Brown 1; S Keneally 1

Pitchers: Nicholson; Williams

Under 14 Division 1 – Round 3 - 1/11/09

Woodville 9 d Port Adelaide 7

It's always good (and a relief!!) to get your first win for the season. Well done boys!!!

We dominated the first 5 and a half innings being up 9 to 0. Great pitching from Troy with 9 strike outs and only 4 hits and 2 walks. Sam W. did a good job closing out the game getting us 5 outs, with 3 being strikeouts and only walking 2 hitters and having 1 run scored against him.

Our catchers Josh and Ryan each threw out stealing runners. These outs are very helpful – we only got up by 2 runs.

Overall our fielding was pleasingly more consistent, but in a day when our pitchers got most of the outs. It was also good to have a few players play in different positions. We will continue this in the coming weeks.

Our hitting was where we need to, and did, make the biggest improvement. We got 11 hits in total and had another couple of catches taken deep in the outfield. Well done Josh on your 3 for 4.

On 5 occasions our hitters watched the 3rd strike without swinging so we still have room for some improvement in our hitting.

Thanks to Luke Johansen for filling in, playing his first game (hopefully not his last) for Woodville.

Hits: Loechel-Law 3; Marchioro 2; Williams 2; Jones 2; Cunningham-Brown 1; Dienhoff 1

Pitchers: Nicholson; Jones; Williams

Under 14 Division 1 – Round 2 - 25/10/09

Southern Districts 12 d Woodville 2

A tough game against a quality opposition with quality pitching in particular. After 4 innings we were pretty much in the game, being only 3 runs down at 5 – 2. Unfortunately we could not hold on and at the end of the game (5 innings) it was a bit of a blow out.

With only 6 hits for the game and with their pitchers walking only 6 of our batters we could not make much impression on the score board. We will need to work on our hitting in the weeks to come as we need to be more aggressive.

Hits: Nicholson 2; Durflinger 1; Marchioro 1; Williams 1; Cunningham-Brown 1;

Pitchers: Nicholson; Durflinger

Under 14 Division 1 – Round 1 - 18/10/09

Sturt 13 d Woodville 6

The score line for our first game does not reflect the potential this playing group has shown at training. The Sturt bats were awake early with 7 hits and 11 runs in the first 2 innings to our 3 hits and 2 runs.

The second half of the game (3 innings) was far better for us and more entertaining for our supporters. We outscored Sturt 4 runs to 2 and out hit them 7 to 2. Although we hit better in the second half we still didn't quite utilise the batting depth we have in the squad. I am sure our offensive play will improve as the weeks go by.

As I have explained to the boys on a couple of occasions the defensive (fielding) side of the game is so important. We need to keep opposition hitters off base, and outs are probably more important in some ways than scoring runs. During the course of the game we made 4 fielding errors while Sturt only made 1. Putting the errors aside there were other plays which we could have turned into outs. When we match them in hits the extra runners put on base by errors hurt us on the scoreboard.

I'd like to welcome Matt Durflinger, Shawn Jones and Sam Keneally to the club and to congratulate them on what I hope is the first of many games with Woodville.

In summary, this was good first hit out against a team that will most likely be one of the measuring sticks of the competition. It is my hope that as the year goes on we will see the boys become more alert and instinctive in the field. This will come with lots of practice, a desire in each of the players and a bit of confidence.

Hits: Nicholson 3; Marchioro 2; Durflinger 1; Jones 1; Keneally 1; Williams 1; Dienhoff 1

Pitchers: Jones; Nicholson