

Season 2015-16

Mr M Cordner, Master IC Hockey

How do I attempt to summarise what, in my humble opinion, has been one of the most staggeringly successful seasons in living memory? The truth of the matter is that there are no words that will do justice to the incredible highs we have all enjoyed this year. For me the inspiration of Leicester City in blue was mirrored by our lads in red – a team that most thought too inexperienced and small, with a set piece worked at every session like it was their last and who grabbed all of the awards.

There were so many outstanding achievements that cannot possibly be overlooked: the 1st XI were the first school team to win ABC Council's Youth Team of the Year; the Tasmanian All Ireland Title was received following a whirlwind fairy-tale in Belfast, when all opposition was beaten off; the ousting of Wallace from the Burney and its magnificent end against Sullivan, with all our preparation paying off in fine style.

It was a season about the players, who drove the game on within the school via a committed and diligent Players' Committee. You all played a part in steering us to Bannister wins, Richardson Wins and indeed titles in Oxford, as U12 winners and the ultimate

prize of HDM European winners (a first for any Irish/Ulster School in Holland.) We enjoyed fresh financial backing from two new sponsors in Sintons at the Bridge, Scarva and DMF Contracts and we express our huge appreciation to you both. Indeed, the end of season meal was the best I have ever enjoyed, with Mr Mark Orr doing us the privilege of being our guest speaker. He was joined by Lee Tumilty, Steven Forbes, Hugh McShane, Owen Magee and Andrew Bennington, who all presented back a plaque commemorating the years the Academy have dominated hockey in Ireland, a fitting reflection on what we do best in the school and its sporting tradition. I believe we value each player, and each player values the school in return by continuing to keep close ties either through coaching, sponsorship or providing support.

I extend my sincere thanks to each and every player for being so fanatically driven about our sport of hockey. My thanks also to the team of staff who helped out all year. To Mr Clarke (U12), Mr Walker (U13), Mr Acheson (U14), Mr Miskelly (U15), Dave Agnew (2ndXI) and John Clarke (1stXI), you carry out simply tremendous work and your contribution is greatly valued. My thanks also go to Mr Stewart and Mr Dawson for assisting when required and indeed

John McCague, Thomas Sturgeon, Simon Jess, Matthew Bell, Gareth Matthews, Peter Bingham, Robbie Scott and Owen Magee for their drive and mentoring to the younger players on Wednesday afternoons. I would also like to pay tribute to Bill Malcomson, who gave us much needed man hours of coaching/umpiring and was always a great source of information regarding the Hockey Club, alongside Mrs Julie Sally who continues to drive the junior club forward.

I make no apologies for singling out a certain Andrew Bennington as Captain of the 1st XI: he is a true gentleman, leader, 'go to' guy and inspirational individual, who epitomised his team's fighting spirit, matched with decorum and selflessness.

I hope you enjoy reading the lengthy reports, which mark an unforgettable season. Even when sitting in my rocking chair, I shall snigger as I think about the drag flicks, strokes and mayhem after the full time whistle!

So to parents, grandparents, players, staff, coaches, sponsors and followers...I hope you gain as much delight from reading about the Season of 2015-2016 as I have obtained from experiencing it first hand!





Boys' Hockey: 1st XI

Andrew Bennington (Captain)

At the start of the season we had a large number of people who doubted that this year's Banbridge Academy 1st XI had the talent to win titles, given that we had lost nearly the entirety of the squad from the previous year. However from day one in August, the team showed that they were determined to win, to succeed and to play great hockey. Even though it was nearly an entirely new squad, that did not stop us preparing any differently and so August brought with it the usual gruelling preseason. The team were extremely well prepared for the incoming season and we all looked forward to getting on the turf against the other schools.

Our first success came as early as September but it wasn't a success on the hockey pitch as such. We were awarded the Youth School Team of the Year at the inaugural ABC Council Junior Sports Awards, held at Armagh City Hotel. It was a great honour for the school to be recognised as the best team not only in Banbridge, but also in the Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon area.

The McCullough Cup

The beginning of the year in schoolboy hockey is always McCullough Cup time, which we started very strongly with massive wins against Cookstown High and RBAI. Our next opponent was Sullivan Upper, who we knew had an extremely strong team and so the game was essentially a group decider. However, at Comber Leisure Centre we suffered a heavy defeat. Perhaps this was one of the defining moments of our season, as it gave us a huge shock that showed us we needed to improve our standard of hockey if we wanted to beat the best. We needed to beat Royal and Prior to make sure we made it to the semi-finals, albeit in second place in the group. After conceding two early goals, we showed great resolve and won 6-2 in the end with a superb second half performance. As the end of October approached, we neared the 'holy grail of school hockey', the All-Ireland Schoolboy Championships.

The biggest competition of the year consisted of the best 16 teams in the whole of Ireland and despite the Sullivan result, we still believed we could progress in the competition. The first obstacle we needed to overcome was to make it out of the group, which was full of tough opposition. We began the tournament with a strong 5-1 win over Royal and Prior, as Nathan Liggett, Jake Rowe, Charlie Norris and Peter McKnight (x2) were on target. The next morning we faced St Columba's. We didn't know what to expect from the team apart from that they had a few internationals in their team and a real star player. The game was a tight affair but it was clear in the opening stages that Bann were the better side.

Peter McKnight opened the scoring but his goal was cancelled out just before half time. The second half brought more of the same but St Columba's scored against the run of play to make it 2-1. We equalised through Nathan Liggett. Again St Columba's scored against the run of play to make it 3-2. With 3 minutes to go it looked like Bann would only grab a draw at best, but showing unbelievable character and spirit, Kyle Marshall and Mark Barlow scored to get the win. 4-3. A massively exciting finish and the 'never give up' attitude of the squad was demonstrated.

The group decider was against a talented Mount Temple side who had some real quality in their ranks. Quite a crowd was in attendance for what was certainly going to be a close affair. As legs were tired from the thrilling game earlier on, Mount Temple had the majority of early possession and scored an early goal. This kicked the team into gear and we soon equalised through Charlie Norris. The score line was 1-1 at half time. In the second half, it became apparent just how important winning was to both sides with each having players sent off. Jake Rowe put B.A. ahead, but Temple replied almost instantly. The score was level until about 8 minutes to go when bad temper got the best of the Dublin side and we were awarded a stroke, which Jake Rowe

put away. The game was put to bed when Joel Reid placed the ball in the bottom corner, to make the final score 4-2 and put us into the semi-finals.

In the semis, we were pitted against Bandon Grammar from Munster. Believe it or not, the semi-final was perhaps the calmest game of the tournament with the Bandon side finding it hard to break down the defence. The final score saw a fine 2-0 win, Kyle Marshall and Charlie Norris both getting on the scoresheet. This set up a final showdown against Dublin giants and tournament favourites Wesley College at Shawsbridge. We were massive underdogs going into the final, but that had not stopped us from doing the impossible previously and the team had the character, determination and spirit to win. So we went into the final standing in front of a noisy crowd knowing that if we gave our all for 70 minutes, we would be victorious. This was our 5th game in 3 days and everybody's legs were aching even before the whistle was blown. We began the game with a strange lack of concentration and we conceded in the 3rd minute. Typical of our style of hockey we soon responded, growing into the game as it progressed, equalising before half time with a Jake Rowe drag flick. On the other side of half time we took the lead with another Jake Rowe drag flick. Wesley exerted huge pressure on us, however it looked as if they would be unable to break the deadlock – due to some incredible defensive performances from Andrew Bennington, James Anderson, Mark Adair and Kyle Marshall – that was until the last minute of the game where they took advantage from a short corner. The game was looking towards extra time, which evidently nobody in the B.A. team fancied! So, we raced up and won a short corner. The full time whistle went and the tension that followed was indescribable. Up stepped Jake Rowe, again dispatching another superb flick into the corner of the net, sending the crowd into raptures! The celebrations which followed can only be described as "unbelievable scenes". We

had done it! In the most dramatic and nerve wracking way possible, we had won! Banbridge Academy – All Ireland Champions!

Coming down from the highs of the Irish Schools' win, we finished off the group stages of the McCullough Cup beating Bangor Grammar 4-2, setting up a semi-final against Lisburn rivals Wallace High School. Unfortunately we produced a tired and uncharacteristically poor performance, and were deservedly beaten on the day.

The Burney Cup

After Christmas all focus turned to the Burney Cup. The draw was made and training and focus was stepped up as we found out we played bitter rivals Wallace High School in the first round. There was a strong sense of determination to avenge the previous Burney final and the McCullough Cup semi-final in December. The venue was on their turf at Lisnagarvey on a cold Saturday morning. B.A were the better side but had to come back from behind twice, in typical fashion. The game went into extra time and we conceded a penalty flick early on which was converted to put us 3-2 down. The 'never say die' attitude of the team resurfaced once more as Jake Rowe immediately responded with a superb individual goal. Wallace however won another penalty flick and ultimately had it to win the tie, but star keeper Luke Roleston saved and took the game to a replay; a game which we should have won but very nearly lost.

The replay was played the following Wednesday under the lights at the theatre of dreams, Havelock Park. In beautiful conditions, a huge crowd turned up for the game and the atmosphere was electric for what was a huge encounter. If any of the crowd had arrived in late, they would have missed the opening goal which arrived just 41 seconds in. Nathan Liggett finished neatly into the corner after good work by Mark Barlow punished the Wallace stopper for an error. Jake Rowe then made it 2-0 after six minutes with a trademark drag flick, low to the keeper's right. Just before the break, we won another short corner after great skill and a shot from Peter McKnight. The short corner was classically converted by Jake Rowe to make it 3-0 at half time. In the second half Wallace managed to grab a goal from a short corner, however any thoughts of a comeback were quickly dismissed by Phillip Campbell who showed excellent composure to fire



into the roof of the net, after great work along the baseline by Barlow. This was a huge win and easily one of the best performances and games all year. It was nice to beat Wallace as they were one of our only two defeats this year and we hadn't beat them in the Burney in the last three years. (we just needed to avenge the defeat against Sullivan...) Having disposed of the two- time previous winners we wanted to make sure that our concentration did not slip and that no complacency occurred. We reached the final after solid wins against Bangor and RBAI. The Burney Cup final is one of the showpiece events in the Ulster Hockey calendar and it certainly lived up to the occasion this year. The final was played on a cold day in March against Sullivan Upper. Throughout junior school it was always Sullivan vs B.A as the province's so called "big two".

The game was played in front of a massive crowd with both teams well supported. It was a game that neither side deserved to lose. Both had periods of pressure, the Academy driven forward by Rowe's direct running and a feisty forward display by Mark Barlow. Jake Rowe got his reward on 21 minutes when he blasted an unstoppable drag into the bottom corner. We had opportunities to further our lead, but unfortunately just missed out. We were punished for a lack of finishing as Sullivan equalised just before half time. Sullivan began the second half in the ascendancy, with some superb goalkeeping from Luke Roleston keeping them out. The nervy game exploded into life as it edged towards extra-time. First, Sullivan won a corner but a blasted effort was deflected wide. Legs were tired as the game headed into extra time. Sullivan thought they had found a winner but the goal was disallowed for a foot. Another corner

followed, but Academy captain and impressively solid defender Andrew Bennington ferociously charged down the shot. There was still time for another Roleston block before we created a last gasp chance. It was a penalty corner and Rowe's shot was destined for the net before it was deflected over to send the game to strokes.

Given how our season had unfolded, I think it was only appropriate that we end it with even more nerve destroying drama! Jake Rowe, Kyle Marshall and Peter McKnight all converted their strokes with conviction and Luke Roleston made another two ridiculously good saves. Up stepped Dylan Cowan with the chance to win the Burney Cup. He calmly converted and an entire pitch invasion from the strong Bann contingent ensued. Banbridge Academy was once again Burney Cup Champions after a two-year absence.

Trip to Holland

After Easter, we headed off to Holland to play in the JIPHT Tournament. Our first fixture was against Dutch side Pijnacker. Bann showed some top class ability and the game ended 6-1 to Bann. The goals went to Jake Rowe (2), Mark Barlow (2), Kyle Marshall and Peter McKnight.

The second game of the day was played in some great weather against South African side Clifton College. Banbridge, sponsored by Sinton's At The Bridge, went out with searing pace that the South Africans could not handle. With some fluid plays and destructive finishing, Bann won the game 13-0. The goals went to Kyle Marshall (3), Nathan Liggett (3), Joel Reid (2), Mark Barlow (2), Sam Green, Jake Rowe and Peter McKnight. The Saturday brought more sun and a tough game against well drilled German side Mannheim.

Boys' Hockey



The game was being played on a rather awful pitch but it was another obstacle which Bann had to overcome. Bann started in the ascendancy but were met with a strong defence. After losing forward Peter McKnight to injury, Bann conceded a goal to put the Germans 1-0 up. The score line remained this way until two minutes to go when Joel Reid scored a goal to equalise. Typical of the season Banbridge have had this year, there was another goal to come. Jake Rowe scored in the last second to win the game and put Bann top of the group. They now faced the Scottish U17 team in the quarter final.

In some glorious sunshine, the Bann side were given a challenge by the national side. After resisting plenty of Bann pressure though, Scotland finally conceded a well taken goal from Sam Green to make it 1-0. Just before the break Nathan Liggett scored a second making it 2-0 at the break. In the second half, Scotland replied with a superb goal off the post but Banbridge refused to be caught out and continued to play fast flowing hockey. Joel Reid scored and Nathan Liggett added another to his tally. Jake Rowe finished the scoring with a classic drag-flick into the side netting to leave the final score at 5-1.

Bann rose early on Sunday morning for a 9:30 start against Belgian side Oree. The Belgians had a few players with some seriously quick hands which caused the Bann defence a bit of trouble but nothing Captain Andrew Bennington and James Anderson couldn't handle. The Bann attack were lethal in front of goal and Mark Barlow opened the scoring early on. Jake Rowe added another through a short corner. Sam Green added another goal to make it 3-0 at the break. Jake Rowe scored two more to get his hat-trick and Mark Barlow finished the scoring off to put Bann in the final. The decider was played on the main pitch in front of a large crowd in the Dutch sun against bitter rivals Mannheim, who were looking to avenge their defeat earlier in the week. The game started tight with the Germans again proving hard to break down. The passing of Dylan Cowan and Mark Adair in the full-back positions was exceptional and got most moves underway. Rowe opened the scoring with two trademark drag-flicks and Mark Barlow soon rounded the keeper for 3-0. Mannheim fought back and scored with a well worked short corner but just before the end of the



half, Kyle Marshall scored a thunderous reverse hit to make it 4-1 at the break. Rowe and Marshall both added another to their tallies to make it 6-1 and after providing plenty of assists throughout the tournament midfielder Charlie Norris finally got a goal of his own. A sweet deflection from Norris made it 7-1. 12 year old Edward Rowe (watch out Jake!) made it eight with a lethal penalty stroke. The final goal was scored by Sam Green for 9-1.

This was a great send off for the four Upper Sixth guys and shows that the future bodes well, as there was plenty of talent shown by the youth in the team.

Captain's Reflection on the Season

This season demonstrated everything that people love about sport for me. Despair, triumph, success, sheer joy, the whole lot, was felt throughout the season. I've always fully believed that if you give 100% to anything, you will succeed. Despite everyone outside our team having little belief in our talent, we believed, our coaches believed and that's all we needed. We put in the effort and the character of each individual on the team came out in all those tense situations. We came back from being behind in games so many times, to show all that is great about Banbridge hockey, playing with your heart on your sleeve and leaving nothing on the turf. The togetherness, dedication and attitude of the team has been a complete key to the great success we have achieved. Playing hockey in this school has been an absolute pleasure and the memories of this season will live with me forever.

This has been the perfect season to end seven fantastic years of Banbridge Academy Schoolboy Hockey – and what better way to leave as Ulster, Ireland

and "European" Champions!

I would like to say a massive thank-you to all the coaches throughout my seven years: Simon Jess, Mr Acheson, Gareth Matthews, David Agnew, Eugene Magee, Owen Magee, Bill Malcolmson, Mr Walker, John Clarke – and in particular Mr Cordner – for all the hard work, time and dedication they have put in. Finally, I would like to wish next year's 1st XI all the best for next season – I look forward to supporting you on the side lines!

In Summary

Stats	
Played:	29
Won:	25
Drawn:	2
Lost:	2
Goals For:	150
Goals Against:	40
Goal Difference:	+110

Goalscorers (excludes friendlies)

J.Rowe:	36
K.Marshall:	14
N.Liggett:	13
M.Barlow:	10
J.Reid:	8
P.McKnight:	5
C.Norris:	5
S.Green:	4
J.Anderson:	1
P.Campbell:	1
D.Cowan:	1
E.Rowe:	1

Representative Honours

Ulster Under 18s: Kyle Marshall, Luke Roleston, Jake Rowe

Ulster Under 16s: Scott Dale, Mark Barlow

Irish Under 18s: Kyle Marshall, Luke Roleston

Irish Under 16s: Mark Barlow

Charlie Norris and Joel Reid have been selected to represent Ulster Under 17s in Lilleshall in May.

First XI Squad 2015-2016

Mark Adair, James Anderson, Mark Barlow, Andrew Bennington, Lewis Bingham, Philip Campbell, Dylan Cowan, Scott Dale (GK), Callum Gibson, Sam Green, Nathan Liggett, Harry Lockhart, Kyle Marshall, Peter McKnight (VC), Charlie Norris, Joel Reid, Luke Roleston, Edward Rowe, Jake Rowe (VC), Ryan Simms.

Boys' Hockey: 2nd XI

Corey Large (Captain)

After an intense pre-season, the 2nd XI team was fully prepared for the challenge ahead of them. The opening game of the season came against Regent's 2nd XI, where we came out with a well-earned 5-1 victory with goals from Corey Large, Sam McMurray and Matthew Young (with a hat trick to open the season.)

The first competitive challenge for us was the McCullough Cup, which consists of various 1st XI teams from across the province. This tends to be a tough few months for B.A's 2nd XI as opponents are usually stronger in skill and ability. However it proves to be a good way to develop the team, to prepare younger and upcoming players as well as enhancing the ability of all players for the 2nd XI competition, the Dowdall.

The McCullough Cup campaign began with the opening game against Campbell's 1st XI and after a hard fought 70 minutes, the 2nd XI were unable to break down the Campbell defence with the game ending 3-0 to Campbell. The 2nd team continued their McCullough Cup campaign against Regent's 1st XI and another 3-0 proved that the McCullough Cup campaign was going to be a challenging task for the 2nd XI. This was shown in a very harrowing 12-0 loss to Wallace's 1st XI, followed by a 5-0 loss to Friends' 1st XI.

A break in the McCullough fixtures allowed the 2nd XI to play Kilkeel's

1st XI. A final score of 3-0 to the 2nd XI allowed them to get a well-needed victory during a period of heavy losses, with goals coming from Matthew Young, Steven Campbell and Chris Campbell. The final McCullough Cup campaign came against Methody's 1st XI. The seconds were desperate for a goal in the McCullough campaign but it was not to be, as the seconds lost 3-0. A match against Campbell's 1st team allowed for the seconds to try and develop against a higher tier opposition, but Campbell's team used a half court press and suffocated Dave Agnew's seconds with a heavy defence. It was tough for us to break through and the match finished 3-0 to Campbell.

The 2nd XI team then began their preparation for Dowdall season with a string of fixtures against Friends'. We beat Friends' 2-1 with goals from Alex Wilkins and Chris Campbell. The next match against Friends' ended up in a 6-0 victory, with 2 impressive drag flicks from Matthew Graham and goals from Matthew Young, Alex Wilkins, Chris Campbell and Alex Donnelly. The final fixture against Friends' ended 5-1 with another impressive two drag flicks from Matthew Graham, followed by goals from Joel Reid, Matthew Young and Alex Wilkins.

The big moment of the season came against Sullivan's 2nd team in the quarter final of the Dowdall Cup. However, a bad day allowed for

Sullivan to take the game 3-2 after extra time. Goals from Alex Wilkins and Matthew Young weren't enough to salvage the game, with the 2nd team playing at their worst.

The season ended with a 6-1 victory over Regent with goals from Corey Large, Jack Montgomery, Matthew Graham, Matthew young, Alex Donnelly and Alex Wilkins.

A tough year for the 2nd XI should provide clear objectives for the team to achieve next year during pre-season and early season friendlies in preparation for both competitions. As it is my last year at B.A, it is obviously a disappointment to finish the season the way we did, but it has been a privilege to lead a great bunch of lads and I am looking forward to see what the upcoming 2nd XI can bring to the school next year. On behalf of the team, I would like to thank David Agnew who has worked extremely hard this year and who is an exceptionally good coach. We hope to see him continue his good work for boys' hockey in Banbridge Academy.

Second XI squad 2015-16

Leon Glover(GK), Toby Purce(GK), Matthew Graham, Sam McMurray, Lee Groves(VC), Aaron Megaw, Aaron McConnell, Alex Wilkins, Corey Large(C), Alex Donnelly, Joel Reid(Dowdall), Josh McCandless, Josh Peacock, Matthew Young, Sam Green(Dowdall), Scott Armstrong, Steve Campbell.

Boys' Hockey: U15

Ryan Simms (Captain)



Under 15 vs Wesley College

The match against Wesley College started rapidly with Banbridge dominating possession and creating all of the opportunities and putting Wesley under immense pressure. However the Wesley keeper, who was on form, stopped every Banbridge attack. Banbridge utilised the flanks of the pitch by using the pace of Mark Barlow and Harry Farson. The Banbridge back four caused Wesley problems as they weren't able to break inside the Bann 25 until the Banbridge defence had a lapse of concentration and gifted the Wesley attack with a golden chance as they were one on one with the keeper. The Wesley attacker hit the ball and Wesley found themselves 1-0 up. Several minutes later Wesley found themselves 2-0 up after winning a short corner late in the first half.

The second half started similarly to the first for Bann as they were again in control of the game. After many short corners and countless other chances however, Banbridge were still behind. Wesley's defence players were excellent on the day and were able to prevent many golden opportunities that Banbridge were unable to convert.

Under 15 vs Sutton Park

Banbridge once again put up a very strong performance against a very strong Sutton park team winning 4-0 in the end. Banbridge's first goal came from forward Phillip Campbell who slotted the ball into the bottom corner confidently after some good passing between Ryan Simms, Harry Lockhart and Mark Barlow. With the end of the first half then approaching, Banbridge launched a fast paced attack to make the score 2-0.

The second half started much better with Banbridge gaining several short corners, but they were unable to capitalise from them. The third goal came in about the tenth minute of the second half through Ross Scott. In the last few minutes of the game Banbridge went all out attack and scored to make it 4-0.

Under 15 vs Portadown Under 16

The match started very well for Banbridge as they were in control of possession for the opening 10 minutes, creating multiple chances when attacking. However Banbridge were unable to find the back of the net as the

Portadown keeper made some fantastic saves to keep the score level. Then with several minutes left, Portadown broke on the counter attack and created a three on one, slotting the ball home to make it 2-0. Banbridge's first goal came five minutes from time thanks to Mark Barlow who intercepted a bad pass and managed to shoot from a very acute angle on his reverse. Banbridge never stopped attacking and putting the Portadown defence under immense pressure, but the score remained 2-1 until the final whistle.

U15 vs Regent

Banbridge once again had a strong performance against a very good Regent House team. The first goal came in the tenth minute of the match from a short corner. With some momentum behind Banbridge a second goal came shortly after from Phillip Campbell, who swept the ball home after some very skilful play from Alex Jordan and John Scott on the right hand side.

The second half started as well as the first with Banbridge once again scoring goals. The third goal came from a powerful Mark Barlow drag flick into the roof of the net and a third soon

followed from Luke McConnel, making the score 4-0. Banbridge's sixth goal came from a short corner, which was earned by some nice skill from Ross Scott. Phillip Campbell scored once again with a sweet reverse into the bottom left corner giving him his hat-trick. Regent had put up a good fight but they didn't use their chances as well as Banbridge, who finished with a tremendous 7-1 victory.

U15 vs RBAI

Banbridge started the game very well, creating many chances early on. After a Mark Barlow dragflick was saved by the keeper, the ball was thrown into the air only to be volleyed confidently into the bottom corner by Ryan Simms making the score 1-0. With several minutes to go before the end of the first half, Banbridge launched a counter attack of their own with Mark Barlow tapping the ball into the net to put Banbridge back into the lead.

The second half started very quickly with both teams eager to score a goal but it was Banbridge who dominated in possession. In the 15th minute of the second half Banbridge grabbed their third goal of the match, thanks to Phillip Campbell. When the full time whistle went, Banbridge had won 3-1. It has been a very strong start to the season for the U15 team who hadn't lost a game yet.

U15 vs Bangor Grammar

The match started very well for Banbridge as they won a short corner within the first 4 minutes. The scoring was opened by Mark Barlow as he slotted a drag flick into the side netting of the Bangor goal, which made the score 1-0 to Banbridge. With 10 minutes to go Bann won another short corner from Harry Lockhart's good work. The second half didn't start as well as the first did for Banbridge as they were put under immense pressure immediately from the whistle. Unfortunately the Bann defenders couldn't hold out from the constant waves of attack from the quick Bangor forwards. The game ended with the final score 3-1.

Under 15 vs Friends' School Lisburn

McAdam secured the first goal of the match as he confidently swept the ball into the bottom right corner from the flick spot. With some superb defending from Ryan Simms and Lewis Bingham, the opposition didn't get anywhere near the goals and the first half ended



with 2-0 to Banbridge.

Banbridge's third goal came in the second half from Phillip Campbell, who expertly beat three players inside the circle and then precisely lobbed the flat-footed keeper to make the score 3-0. The fourth goal came near the end of the second half with a penalty corner won by Shimmons.

Cup season

Under 15 vs Raphoe

Mark Barlow started the goals with a second phase play after his drag flick had been saved by the Raphoe keeper. Bann stayed 'on top' throughout the first half, with the final score 3-2 as the half time whistle blew.

The second half started excellently for Banbridge as they went 4-2 up thanks to Philip Campbell. Several minutes later Bann scored again with Mark Barlow grabbing his second of the game. After Ryan Simms won a short corner, Mark Barlow capitalised by sending a powerful dragflick high into the roof of the net giving Bann a three-goal cushion. Bann then became complacent and allowed Raphoe back into the game. They started to change their style of play and started to smash the ball hard into the circle, which was deflected expertly 3 times by the attackers, which

levelled the game at 5-5. Jones beat the keeper and slipped the ball into the bottom corner making the score 6-5 with only minutes left on the clock.

Under 15 vs Kilkeel

It only took several minutes for Banbridge to capitalise on their early bursts of pressure thanks to Philip Campbell who beat several Kilkeel defenders and then hit a strong reverse into the back of the net. Bann then doubled their lead less than a minute later, as Mark Barlow intercepted a poor pass and casually passed the ball into the bottom corner. Bann soon made it 3-0 with Ryan Jones grabbing another goal as he slapped the ball hard past the keeper. Banbridge then grabbed two more goals from Mark Barlow as he completed his hat trick. As the halftime whistle went, Bann were 5-0 up for the first time in the season. Ryan Simms was the first to score in the second half and a second goal was soon secured by Harry Lockhart. Scoring continued in this half of the game and as the whistle blew, the U15 team finished with an impressive 10-1 victory.

U15 vs Sullivan upper- semi final

After numerous waves of attack from Banbridge, with Mark Barlow leading the charge, Sullivan's defence buckled and they began to give away penalty

corners. After several corners in quick succession Banbridge still couldn't find a goal. But then as the first half was coming to a close, Barlow hammered the ball across the face of the goal and was deflected perfectly by forward Phillip Campbell, to give Bann a well-deserved lead going into the second half.

The Sullivan defence had tightened up after the break and easily cut out any Bann attack. The Sullivan attackers utilized their pace and caused the Bann back four troubles. But with defensive strength of Lewis Bingham, Eddie Rowe, Ryan Simms and John Scott the Sullivan attacker could not find a way into the circle. With minutes left to the full time whistle, Bann surged forward with Mark Barlow again. He played the ball through to Alex Jordan who was terribly fouled in the circle and won a penalty stroke! Mark Barlow took the stroke to win the match but the keeper saved it. But it didn't matter as the final whistle blew soon after and Bann were through to the final.

Banbridge Academy vs Methodist College- Richardson Cup Final

Banbridge Academy faced Methody in the biggest final in Northern Irish junior hockey. Both teams had had a strong season leading up to the match and had been in fine goal scoring form, but there could only be one winner.

The atmosphere was electric around Lisnagarvey Hockey Club as the many supporters from both sides were awaiting the start of the match. However it was a disappointing start for Banbridge as Methody went 1-0 up

with a well-worked early goal within the first 5 minutes. The Banbridge defence had been caught sleeping. Methody maintained control of the game for the next 10 minutes and gave Bann very little room for error due to the physical work by their forwards. This hard work resulted in another goal just minutes after the first.

After this, Banbridge tightened up their game and goals were looking much more promising as the match progressed. The Bann side was now performing well, resulting in chances on goal from counterattacks and Banbridge's first short corner thanks to the determination of Phillip Campbell. Unfortunately for Banbridge, on the short corner the Methody keeper made an impressive save on the drag flick from Mark Barlow keeping the score at 2-0.

In the next period of play Methody were dominant putting the Banbridge defence under immense pressure, however after many strong tackles and good defensive work from Ryan Simms, John Scott, Eddie Rowe and Lewis Bingham, Banbridge were able to mount a very promising counterattack. After a smart series of play from the Bann midfield the comeback goal finally came around from Phillip Campbell who lobbed the keeper spectacularly after Mark Barlow smashed the ball in from the end line. This injected energy into Banbridge's game which consequently resulted in more chances and a late short corner equalizer scored by Mark Barlow who intelligently beat the first runner with ease and finished a strong reverse across the goal into the bottom right corner just at the end of the half.

Half time Banbridge-2 Methody-2

Banbridge had high hopes going into the second half after managing to mount a comeback from 2-0 to 2-2. Nevertheless, Methody proved a difficult side to beat and secured their 3rd goal of the match after an interception from a loose pass from Banbridge. The Methody forward then charged into the circle and took a ferocious shot, which was deflected at the back post to put them back in the lead just 10 minutes into the second half. Banbridge didn't let this interfere with their mindset and after a demanding physical period they obtained their second equaliser from Mark Barlow, which resulted in a nerve-racking score line of 3-3. However, Banbridge coped well with

this building pressure and controlled the last few minutes of possession unquestionably. With this newfound momentum and the physical fitness of the players Banbridge were too much for the Methody defence, which resulted in a short corner on the final whistle. All of the Bann players were moved up. It was Banbridge's last chance to put the game to bed and become victorious. The crowd fell silent and Mark Barlow stepped up at the top of the circle poised and focused. The ball was pulled out perfectly by Lewis Bingham and Mark Barlow released a powerful drag flick, which clipped the post before striking the net. Banbridge were victorious once again. It was a heartbreaking way to lose for Methody who overall were the better team on the day. It was an extremely close match but Banbridge used their opportunities and their physical prowess to make an incredible comeback and win 4-3.

Thanks to our coach Mr Miskelly for his hard work and dedication throughout the season, alongside Mr Cordner and other coaches who helped us win the Cup this year. It was a great achievement for the team and the school and we hope to continue the winning streak next year.

Banbridge U15 2016

Ryan Simms (Capt.)
Scott Dale (Gk)
Ross Stewart (Gk)
Mark Barlow
Phillip Campbell
Harry Lockhart
John Scott
Ross Scott
Lewis Bingham
Eddie Rowe
Ryan Jones
Harry Farson
Alex Jordan
Josh McAdam
Benjamin Logan
Luke McConnell

Total Goals scored- 61

Top Goal scorer
Mark Barlow-17
Lewis Bingham-4
Alex Jordan -3
Luke McConnell-2
Harry Lockhart-1
Harry Farson-1
Ross Scott-1

Phillip Campbell-15
Ryan Jones -6
Ryan Simms-5
Josh McAdam-4



Boys' Hockey: U14

Matthew Anderson (Captain)

The U14 boys had a small squad to start the season, but with help from some U13 players, we had a very formidable team to challenge the other U14 teams as well as the great coaching ability of Mr Acheson.

The boys started their season with a 4-3 win away to Sullivan. They then welcomed Grosvenor Grammar to Havelock Park and defeated the Belfast side 5-3, with Eddie Rowe of the U13 team scoring 4 goals, a future player to look out for. The Academy boys then travelled up to Friends' School Lisburn, but unfortunately were unable to snatch a win after some last minute goals from David

Douglas (scoring two goals.)

Into the colder Winter months, the boys had lots of challenging games lined up ahead of them. They first had an away game to Sullivan Upper, but a last minute goal to the Hollywood side meant Banbridge went home empty handed. However, they got back into winning ways with a 3-0 win at home to Regent. This gave us a well-needed confidence boost going into the competitive stage of the season.

Unfortunately, the Cup run for us proved to be rather short. After losing to Sullivan in a friendly we knew

what to expect and so we prepared vigorously. However, we failed to show up on the day and lost 4-2. The first two goals came from BA but Sullivan upped their game and came back stronger and scored four consecutive goals against a complacent U14 defence.

Thank you to Mr Acheson for his continued efforts throughout the season and for providing great coaching to an enthusiastic U14 side. We would also like to thank Mr Cordner and other coaches for their assistance during the year and are excited to see what the U14 team have to offer next year.



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U13 Season Report

Mark Cowan (Captain)

The U13 team had a very interesting and enjoyable season. The players worked hard on and off the pitch with the help of William Malcomson, Mr Walker and Mr Corder.

Second round of Bannister Bowl

On Monday 1st of February, Banbridge Academy's under 13s travelled to Bangor for the first match of their Bannister Bowl campaign.

Bann made a promising start putting immediate pressure on Bangor, but failed to make a breakthrough in the first ten minutes. After this came the first goal as Chris Curry scored after a rebound from Mark Cowan's shot. The second goal quickly followed after a shot from Eddie Rowe. Fast approaching half time, Matthew McClimonds had a shot which deflected off a Bangor defender and went flying past their keeper. The score at half time was 3-0.

Five minutes into the second half, the fourth goal came from Chris Curry. The fifth goal came from a short corner as Chris Curry scored a drag flick from the edge of the D, which flew into the back of the net. Eddie Rowe scored the sixth goal for Banbridge Academy, another goal from a short corner as he drag flicked the ball, which flew into the top corner of the net. After some good counter attacking work from Bangor, they finally got a goal as the shot that deflected off a Banbridge Academy defender rolled into the net.

Both teams played well throughout the match but in the end the score finished 6-1 to Banbridge Academy, a good result and a great start to the Cup campaign.

Quarter Final of Bannister Bowl

Banbridge Academy U13s set out against Sullivan Upper in the quarter final of the Bannister Bowl. The young Bann side dominated the first half. They started off well with an early goal by Chris Curry, with great work down



the wing and up the baseline to slot it past the keeper and into the back of the net. Shortly after, Charlie Rowe scored with a deflection from a short corner to make it 2-0. Edward Rowe then made it 3-0 with an amazing goal which he took from the middle of the pitch and hammered into the bottom left hand corner. Louis Rowe finished off the first half, with the brothers adding another goal to their name. The last goal of the first half was a fabulous combined effort from the Rowe twins. The second half wasn't as exciting but the U13s got a goal from Mark Cowan as a result of a well-worked short corner. Unfortunately, Banbridge conceded a late goal from a Sullivan short corner but with some great saves only one unfortunate goal was let in by the keeper Elliot Haw. With the final score at 5-1 Bann were through to the semi-final of the Bannister Bowl.

Semi-Final

On a sunny Monday afternoon the U13 lads turned up at Friends' School Lisburn, well prepared for what lay ahead.

After a quick warm-up the BA boys stepped onto the pitch and instantly dominated possession. At the start they were unable to finish their chances, with multiple attempts on goal and the score still remained 0-0. Half way into the first half, the ball was hit into the

D and driven across goal for Edward Rowe to score. Now with increased confidence, the Bann boys won a short corner that was converted easily by Mark Cowan.

In the second half we dominated possession and quickly had the ball at Friends' 25-yard line, from which it rarely left. The constant pressure led to yet another short corner. Mark Cowan pulled out to Lewis Groves who stopped it dead, allowing Chris Curry to drag flick the ball into the top of the net. Then Lewis Groves hit the ball on the reverse, which was deflected off the keeper and was then hit in by Charlie Rowe. After a few minutes Lewis Groves, at the top of the circle, hit a half volley which went like a bullet into the back of the net, a great way to finish off a 5-0 win.

Final

The final proved to be a battle of styles as the power and directness of the Cookstown High boys wasn't enough to cope with the passing and skill of captain Mark Cowan's team. The game started with Cookstown immediately putting Bann under pressure, with the ball crashed into the circle at every opportunity. Josh Gibson in centre defence dealt with them admirably in the difficult conditions. After good work at the back from Christian Fee, Chris Curry's persistence in attack earned

a penalty corner for the Academy. Up stepped Edward Rowe to drill the ball home with a powerful shot that nearly took the Cookstown keeper into the back of the net with it. After that goal, momentum shifted and Bann were now very much on top. Curry's great work cutting in from the right flank, saw him hit the post and forwards Charlie Rowe and Louis Rowe were unlucky not to beat the goalkeeper, who somehow was keeping his side in the game. On the stroke of half-time, Matthew McClimonds had a great chance to double the lead but his effort failed to trouble the keeper.

Cookstown started strongly in the second half and were a constant threat around the Banbridge circle. Great defending from Jamie McArdle and Lewis Groves gave the Tyrone men few chances to score, but goalkeeper Elliot Haw was on top form as he saved a succession of penalty corners. The Academy boys had to dig deep to stay on top but Matthew McClimonds eased the pressure when he scored from open play midway through the half, with a strike that gave the keeper no chance. After Mark Cowan saw his effort from a penalty corner hit the post, Bann went further in front from another penalty corner. Edward Rowe's drag flick beat the keeper high into the net and the Academy boys felt they had victory in their grasp. To put the icing on the cake, McClimonds scored again after a great counterattack, with the keeper failing in his scramble to keep the ball out of the net. On the final whistle, the Academy boys were ecstatic as their hard work and determination all season had paid off and they were Ulster Hockey Bannister Bowl Champions.

Dublin Tour

On Monday 14th December, Banbridge Academy U13s arrived in Dublin for a two day tour. The first match was against Sutton and started with Bann having the dominant possession. Good play between the midfield and the forwards led to a Chris Curry goal, 1-0. Good link up play in the midfield between Josh Priestly, Mark Cowan, Edward Rowe and Lewis Groves led to Edward shooting on his reverse into the goal, 2-0. Pressure was mounting on the Sutton defence with the front three of Matthew McClimonds, Chris



Curry and Ben Ingram, which paid off with Chris Curry scoring another, 3-0. The next goal was set up by a short corner. The goal was an Edward Rowe drag flick, which was going top left but was then deflected into the goal, 4-0. After this, possession was even between both sides with attacks from Sutton being defended well with the back three of Christian Fee, Josh Gibson and Jamie McArdle. Unfortunately, Sutton broke through the defence which then led to a goal, 4-1. Banbridge then switched the momentum very well to set up yet another goal by Edward Rowe to add another one to his tally, 5-1. Another good result for Bann.

On 15th of December Banbridge Academy's U13 team played Dublin High School. The first goal came when Mathew McClimonds dribbled the base line and passed it into Thomas Acton who had a shot and scored. The next goal came when Ben Ingram played a pass to Thomas Acton for the second goal of the match. The third goal came when yet again the ball was passed into Thomas Acton who took another shot, making it three in a row for Thomas Acton. Both sides lost momentum until Thomas Acton passed

the ball into Ben Ingram who placed it near post to make it 4-0. Bann finished the first half with a healthy 4-0 lead.

The second half started well as Mark Bronte took a shot making it a 5-0 lead, then just as you thought it could not get any better Thomas Acton scored his 4th goal of the match, giving Bann a superb 6-0 lead. Bann thought they had it in the bag but then out of nowhere Dublin scored two. Thankfully the whistle blew for full time and so we finished the match with a respectable 6-2 victory.

It was also a successful year for some of the Bann players outside of school with Charlie Rowe, Joshua Priestley, Mark Cowan, Lewis Groves, Chris Curry and Elliot Haw making Southern Sports Partnership and Edward Rowe helping the 1stXI win the Burney cup. Another great result for some of the boys outside school was when they won Clubs' Finals Day, which was a tremendous achievement for them. The U13s have had many goals this season with the top scorer being Edward Rowe with 35 goals, next Chris Curry with 32 goals and then Matthew McClimonds with 18 goals.

Boys' Hockey: U12

Luke Watt (Captain)



The Academy's U12 team began their season with a victory, winning 4-1 at home against Kilkeel Junior High School. This gave the new team the much-needed confidence to start their hockey career at Banbridge.

However, it was clear that there was some work and further progression needed. The next few games saw a home draw against Friends' School Lisburn and a loss against Kilkeel Junior High U13 away, with a score of 5-3. However this streak was not to last long for the U12 BA side.

The next few games saw progress in the team after the rigorous training from Mr Cordner and other staff. We played the Kilkeel U12 side away, grabbing a 1-1 draw and played them also later in the year, beating them 3-0. We also managed to redeem ourselves on home turf against the strong Friends' side, beating them 3-2. So it is very clear to see the progression of the U12 side as the year continued, and this was important as we were preparing to make the annual trip over to Oxford to play

many different English teams.

During the year we also saw wins against Grosvenor, beating them 3-0 away on a cold Saturday morning. We didn't have as much luck however in our final match away to Campbell College, which resulted in a 3-0 loss. This proved that some more work and guidance was needed before we headed to Oxford.

Oxford Trip

The Junior U12 Academy boys' hockey team returned from Oxford as champions in the Easter U12 South of England championships. The local juniors fielded two sides and competed against the best sides in the wider Oxfordshire area. Not to be outdone by the seniors, the U12 Academy side has had a tremendous season under coach Mr Clarke and even in his absence, with coach Mr Cordner shaping the attacks, they made light work of their English opponents.

The tour, now in its 19th year, has been a milestone of the symbiotic relationship

between Banbridge Academy and Oxford HC, with particular thanks to Nick Malden and Richard Jess. The Banbridge Academy A team's first match was a successful win over Cirencester 3-0 with goal scorers Charlie Rowe, Jordan Nummy and Nathan Reid to start on a positive footing. This form continued in the second match against Oxford A, winning 3-0 with goal scorers Charlie Rowe, Louis Rowe and Nathan Reid.

In the Academy's third group match Charlie Rowe scored the only goal from either of the two teams, scoring with a flick to edge a very strong Eastcote a 1-0 win. In the fourth match Banbridge Academy continued its streak of winning, with 4-1 over Cheltenham and goal scorers Charlie Rowe, Cody Large and Seb Best. In the semi-finals Banbridge Academy won against Marlow 3-0 and then it was the final. It was a tough match but Banbridge Academy emerged victorious, winning 2-0 with both Charlie and Louis Rowe scoring the winners. This meant that the B.A U12 side remained the champions for the tournament.

Boys' Hockey Award Winners 2016

TEAM	PLAYER OF THE YEAR	MOST IMPROVED
U12	JORDAN NUMMY	CAMERON MCCOMBE
U13	EDWARD ROWE	CHRIS CURRY
U14	ROSS STEWART	ALEX JORDAN
U15	RYAN SIMMS	HARRY FARSON
2nd XI	MATTHEW GRAHAM	ALEX WILKINS
1st XI	JAKE ROWE	CHARILE NORRIS

- The Oxford Cup, donated by Mr Jess and Mr Malden in 2010, was awarded to Louis and Charlie Rowe (U12 and 13 Team).
- The Mid Ulster Award for Outstanding effort in a final, was awarded to Lewis Groves (U13 Bannister Final Performance).
- The Junior Hotshot Award, went to Edward Rowe (U13 and U15)
- The Senior Hotshot Award, went to Jake Rowe (1st XI)
- The Leavers (7 in total) were awarded a token from the school: A.Bennington, S.Green, P.McKnight, A.Megaw, M.Adair, L.Glover and C.Large.
- The CLUBMAN of the Year award was presented to Chairman of the Players' Committee and 1st XI Captain, Andrew Bennington.
- Special Wall Plaques were handed over to Mr Mark Orr (Guest speaker and Chair of the Board of Govenors) from Captains spanning from 1992 to 2016 Irish Schools' winners. We hope these are displayed publically for generations to remain inspired and focused. Captains included: Lee Tumilty, Stephen Forbes, Hugh McShane, Owen Magee and Andrew Bennington.

Our sincere thanks to all the parents, players, coaches, supporters and indeed sponsors for another truly fantastic season. In particular a special thanks to Sintons at the Bridge, Scarva for hosting the Awards night and their sponsorship of the Senior 1st XI.

Mr McLoughlin drew an end to the evening and a small presentation was given to Mr Orr from the players, for his attendance and words of support.

A total of £212.50 was raised by the players and staff donations for CLIC Sargent and the Heads and Tails Game (Sponsored by Total Hockey) was won by Orin Shimmons (U15).

