

Tour 2010

Worcester, Gloucester and very nearly Birmingham

I've just re-read the final days report from last years trip to Galway to get me in the mood for writing this report and the caption to the last photo suggests that even then my thoughts were turning to the 2010 Tour. Well after much discussion, research and analysis it was decided that we would turn our backs on Ryanair and tour in England once more.

Sussex was out for the count and it was decided to go and have a look at the Midlands, basing ourselves in Worcester. A company called Shire Sports provided the base and opposition and all we had to do was get XI players out on each day. A seemingly easy task you'd think.....

And so it seemed until the calls of the flesh-pots of Lanzarotte put paid to my full team on the first day!

Wednesday 23rd June 2010

Colwall CC vs. Mayfield Touring X

As normal for me, and I suspect most of the other dads on Tour, the day starts with getting rid of the kids and quickly as possible, packing the car and setting off. A smooth pick up of Phil and Lazza, and then off on the motorways of England. First stop Warwick Services for coffee and a pee and an unexpected rendezvous with Martin Bentley who had similar urges on his solo journey.

Then on we went to home base for the week, the Great Western Hotel. We had no idea what to expect so it was pleasant to make our way through the tunnel and into the car park where we met Sarjul and Martin (again) and were greeted by the Manager Richard. The rooms were all ready and after unloading the bags it was down to the bar for a beer, the first of many from Richard's extensive range of bottled ales.

Over the next hour or so the Tourists arrived in dribs and drabs, including Ray sort of on time for once with the all-important Tour Bus. Unfortunately Norm has trouble reading and had gone straight to Colwall on his own.



Martin and I enjoy a beer while I try to find out where Tebby-Tebbs is!

I suspect that most of you won't want reminding about the World Cup of Football but it is my duty as a loyal Welshman to remind you that following numerous requests we had arranged with Colwall to watch the England game at their clubhouse and follow this with some cricket – in the form of a 20/20 game. So after a short journey (made very long by the roadworks) we arrived at Colwall village and were gob-smacked at the facilities. Two pitches (both with sight screens and covers, two pavilions and a pleasant bar and they even laid on a barbeque at half time in the football!



Gadget shows some nerves while England take on the mighty Slovenia

The only worry was the general air of youth, competence and fitness about their side. Thankfully once the boredom that is football-watching had concluded the Colwall skipper explained that he was going to bowl each of his players 2 overs and was clearly in the mood for a fun game of cricket and he wasn't going to do a 'Sidley' to us!

The Game

The toss was agreed and so under the watchful eye of skipper of the day, Steve Gilliver, we went out to field.



The boys warming up before the game!

It was a bit of a story of two ends; at one end we had the extremely talented Hylands smacking us to all parts; at the other wickets were tumbling. First to go was Jones to a farcical run out (all I had to do was collect the gentle lob from Sarj and take the bails off as Hylands refused to move!), next was Lessimore who was caught by Gilly off Gadgets bowling.

Skipper Steve was now looking for some excitement and brought Ray into the attack. First ball – wide, second ball – middle stump and a 3rd wicket. Now things were really heating up especially as Hylands was nearing his 50. Ray came back on for his second over and when the first ball was smashed back at him foolishly stuck out a leg and had to retire to the ice bath. The over was concluded by Steve.

Hylands now had to retire as he reached his 50 with ease and Gilly sensed the chance for more wickets. So he duly bowled himself and got another out.

As the end approached Colwall pushed hard, but we did our best to contain them, getting another run out (from Gillies throw I think but this may be wrong) and Gadget picked up his second, bowled. At the end of the 20 overs Colwall had reached an impressive 168 for 7. S Patel 0-44, M Dowling 3-36, N Tebbutt 0-31, R Victor 1-18, P Connor 0-15, S Gilliver 1-14.

Despite his earlier injury Ray had returned to the field in the latter stages and would open the reply with Martin. He got us off to the usual flyer but unfortunately departed in the second over with the score on 14. Martin and Lazza then set about rebuilding and Lazza crashed the back doors in with 3 fours in his 14, Martin playing the supporting role that all you Sunday players will know so well from recent games. Lazza fell to a catch in the deep by Jones (as had Ray earlier) with the score having moved along to 36 off 5.

Steve came and went for a duck and Nigel followed for just one more. Thankfully the byes were racking up and we were on 48 at this stage. We were now beginning to need a partnership and had just the men for the task in Gadget and Martin. Between them they pushed the score along to 72 off 11 overs when Martin was out for 20. Sarj was next in and did what Sarj does best. I think it easiest to let the scorebook do the talking:

4, 4, 4, 1, 4, 4, 1, 6

Inevitably Sarj was out hitting, but what an innings. The score was now 111 and we had 4 overs to go. Game on!

Oh dear, game off – Tebby-Tebbs got a duck and then Gadget (33 including a 5!) got out after a brief partnership with Phil which left **me** having to go out with 3 overs to bat and a pint of beer only half drunk!



The pavilion at Colwall – I might need some newer equipment

Together Richard and Judy took 9 off the rest of the over but then some spinny bastard messed things up by bowling a maiden next up.

A quick recap on the match situation – 132 runs, no wickets in hand and only one over to go. Could the daytime telly duo do it?

Well of course not, although we did our best, taking 15 off the last over to get the score up to 147 and at least we weren't bowled out! P Connor 6 NO, R Granger 19 NO.

After walking off with a big smile on my face for once, I finished the pint that had so rudely been interrupted by having to bat (good six though) and we wandered back to the main clubhouse for more barbeque and beer.

All told a fantastic start to Tour, a really enjoyable day with one of the fairest and most hospitable oppositions we've ever visited.

After the trip back to the hotel it was quite late and it was no surprise that the only place we could get a drink was in the Lloyds Bar. An abortive trip to the more interesting seeming 'Bushwhackers' was foiled by the lack of shoes amongst the party! This would be rectified in due course.....