

Friday 25th June 2010

West Hagley vs. Mayfield Touring XI

Final full day of touring and I was expecting Dave Starcke to join us, he was clearly keen as he texted me at 7.00 Am to tell me he was up and raring to go!

After breakfast there was time for a trip into Worcester for some culture, an audio tour of The Commandery no less! Today's opposition was north towards Birmingham and in the middle of countryside. Ray was back on driving duties, with the fairly scared-sounding Gadget on Satnav duty.



Breakfast at the Gt Western Hotel

Scared or not we got to the ground in good time and were welcomed by yet another bunch of young, fit cricketers. Hopefully not another stuffing to come!

Sarjul was Captain today, and given the disaster of batting first at Gloucester we fancied a chase. The two 'N's (Nigel and Norm) had offered to sit today out to make way for Plunger and Dave, with Nigel taking over the Milty duties for the afternoon.

As mentioned above the ground was in the middle of a field and the pitch had a good covering of grass and a very short leg-side boundary which would need protecting. The only sound you could hear was a cockerel, a Wood Pigeon and a Gadget. Guess which was the most annoying?

The Game

We opened with Gadget and Sarj, Gadget had been enjoying his bowling on Tour so far and today was no exception. He made good use of the pitch and swing to beat the bat on numerous occasions. At the end of his first 5 over spell his figures were 5 overs, 2 maidens, 0 for just 6 runs. At the other end Sarj was being almost as frugal – with opening 5 going for just 18.

Change bowlers were Dave and Karl and they continued the good work, with KY picking up the first wicket in the 14th over. A fine, fine tumbling catch by you-know-who. The runs now started to pick up a bit as the bowlers tired and the batmen homed in on the short boundary (aided by some dodgy fielding placing at one stage). Dave picked up the next wicket to fall, the first of two fine, fine catches by Gadget at deep fine leg.

KY and Dave now came off to be replaced by Mark and Steve – this would be Marks first bowl for some time and he was rusty, but generated decent enough pace. Decent enough to pick up 3 wickets – one caught by Gadget as mentioned, one a fine, fine catch by Sarjul and the other by the Starcky-machine. The final two wickets to fall went to Steve and the returning Gadget both bowled. A mention should also be made of the Hagley no 3 who scored a fine 77 of his sides 203 runs.

After tea it was out to bat with the usual Ray and Martin. Ray was on for a hattrick on injuries and today was special – a short ball that he was late dodging and he managed to deflect off his LIPS onto the face of the bat and through to the slips! Honest Ray walked although no-one but him knew that he edged it after the kiss!

1-1. Lazza was now in with Martin and they set about building an attack with Lazza hitting his first 3 scoring shots for 4's. Martin fell in the 11th over for 16 with the score on 42. Mark then came and went cheaply which brought in Gilly and the rest is history.

Despite a slow start and much glowering at his new bat Steve was into his stride and looking for the big score that has alluded some so far on tour. With good support from Phil (8), Dave (23), and Sarj (12) Steve took us nearer and nearer to the total. When Sarj fell in the 37th over we had 196 on the board and the win looked a cert! Gadget took over the support role, but it was left to Steve to hit the winning runs off the last over and we won with 5 balls to spare. S Gilliver 90 NO.

A really enjoyable game of cricket, played in good spirit by both sides and it has to be said this lot were just as hospitable as Colwall on the first day!

Post game we lazed around in the late evening sun, munching on burgers, as Gadget took us through the fines and then we had the Tour Awards.

Tourist of the Year: was unanimously voted to Ray for providing and piloting the Tour Bus, plus providing us with a good spread of injuries to look at!

Player of the Tour: there were several good performances; Steve Gilliver had a good all-round Tour with bat and ball; Sarjul likewise and Martin was mentioned for his batting; but it was decided that the winner was Gadget for his consistent bowling, reliable fielding and solid batting.

I'll now hand over to Sarj for a report on Friday night as I was too knackered to leave the Smoking Terrace and spent the evening reminiscing over tours of old with Martin and Plunger.

Although the cricket was now over, there was still one more night in Worcester town for Mayfield to leave its mark. The team started at a local town pub, which has most of its customers outside due to the souring temperatures. The team joined the locals outside having an opportunity to reflect on the glorious cricket played during the day and the plans for the night ahead.



Is this 'Harry Potter' contemplating the night ahead?

After spending Thursday night in Bushwhackers with the students of Worcester (mini skirts and high heels), it was felt that we needed to go somewhere with a more “mature” crowd, (not that anyone was complaining about the sight at Bushwhackers). So after querying with the locals, it was suggested that we may prefer to spend the night in Drummonds, which was a venue for a Friday night live band that played music from the 80’s and 90’s. Drummonds certainly did not disappoint and the music was great. Phil’s shapes were burning holes on the dance floor, Steve was rocking his air guitar and Dave was knocking back the pints with a vengeance. Nick, although reminiscing about the night before at Bushwhackers, was a cracker on the dance floor.



Karl was a machine dancing the whole night (in between playing Dear Deidre to the young ones in the group). The night went by quick and soon the tour would be over, not before some final drama in the Mayfield camp. A certain Mayfield member was set to be the target of a predator only known as the “J”. To protect the identity of the Mayfield member he shall be known only as “Harry Potter”. J was a wildcat with her claws in Harry all night long. Harry somehow managed to feed J his mobile number, which he was duly going to regret. J was all over Harry, but to Harry’s fortune, a toilet break provided the perfect opportunity to escape from the clutches of J. Harry managed to make his way back to the hotel unharmed, although the eight missed calls and four text messages did not make it easy for Harry to sleep well at night.



So, who are the mysterious ‘Harry Potter’ and ‘J’?

Finally, a few thanks are due.:

To Colwall, Gloucester and West Hagley cricket clubs for hosting us; to Adam at Shire Sports for handling the arrangements; to Richard and Sheila at the Great Western Hotel for feeding us mammoth breakfast and the largest sausage roles in Christendom; and to Karl for managing the Tour. Of course it wouldn’t be a tour without the Tourists who this year were:

Karl ‘KY’ Cullen
Phil ‘Northern Monkey’ Connor
Mark ‘Gadget’ Dowling
Mark ‘Plunger’ Bailey
Steve ‘Gilly’ Gilliver
Sarjul ‘Jessica’ Patel
Martin ‘Bugler’ Bentley
Dave ‘Jonty’ Starke
Laurence ‘Lazza’ Swann
Nigel ‘Milty’ Ball
Ray ‘The Bus’ Victor
Nick ‘Tebby-Tebs’ Tebbutt
And myself, Richard ‘Six-Hitting’ Granger!