

### **Tour Secretary's Report 2013**

This was our third year going back to North Devon and we seem to have got it down to a 'T'. Here is why:

**Hotel** – They understand what we're about. It's excellent value for money. The staff are friendly, accommodating and tolerant – everything we could desire. Keeping the bar open late solely for us to bond and laugh at the occasional lunatic lobbing dandelions over an iron fence allows some of the most amusing tour moments to happen. This is something I would keep without doubt.

**Fixtures** – I'm going to break this down a little:

- a) Chittlehampton – There has been some questioning of this game. They have let us down two years in a row and, sorry as some will be to say farewell to John Andow and The Bell, I think this may have run its course. If they can't guarantee a fixture, let's try somewhere else. I'm sure the police force will be glad to see the back of it. My first attempt will be to see if we can get a game going against the hotel staff.
- b) North Devon – Firstly, this year I thought our fielding and bowling was as good as anywhere we played all season. To bowl out a side of that quality was exceptional and despite the run chase never really getting off the ground. Immense credit should go to the whole team – in particular to Chris for his captaincy on the day, realising that you put your best fielder (himself) where the batsmen are going to hit the ball. Clare also did superbly to claim 4-22 against some very good players, including their captain who then opted to perform a demolition job on his own stumps.
- c) Hatherleigh – This is always the 'long' game and although they've had a couple of good kids in recent years who've taken the match away from us as a contest, they completely understand our tour ethic. Plus, where would the fun be without Webber being caught off the bowling of a man who has only ever taken one wicket...and that was Milky! Highlights this year were McInnes' first fifty, the unfortunate demise of Dave Lawn's bowling career, Nick Blake taking a wicket with his one over, the Legend (now aged 79) and the rowdy spectators by the cement works.
- d) Westleigh – Again, they understand the tour ethic perfectly and there has even been talk of us hosting them for a game. Although the weather is terminally dreadful whenever we play there, the slip 'n' slide from one side of the hill to the other is always amusing. This year we also had Razi bowling superbly to claim top wicket taker, Phil 'safe hands, but no runs' Woods taking three catches, Kev's once-a-season knock (which was actually good!) and Symons Snr yet again outdoing me in the wickets (two years wicketless and counting...!).

If I get my way the fixtures next year will be. I am, however, currently awaiting a response from Steve that the fixture with their staff would be able to happen.

Mon – Westleigh

Tues – North Devon

Weds – Hatherleigh

Thurs – Park Hotel staff/Miscellaneous XI

**Activities** – This area we have absolutely perfected. Tuesday beach trip for some football and crazy golf. Wednesday outdoor laser quest (well found, Lawny – that was brilliant) proved to be a fantastic addition – if I can shed my tiger onesie for next year I will! Thursday's karting was fun as ever and even allowed us some dry and wet weather conditions this year with Symons Snr pilfering the title.

**Officers** – Personally, this was my favourite tour to date and I owe this to everyone who came, but extra thanks should go to those whose jobs really contributed to making it such a blast. Now I've known Dan a long time and (especially after his dig at my bowling in his report) I'm sure he'll forgive me for saying that he can be a drunken, foolish, wreck. However, his sobriety (at least until midnight) and diligence as Sock were second to none and everyone paid fines in good humour (again, credit all round for that one).

The Tour Captain/Organiser role has been too much in the past and it was heart warming to see Chris step in as tour captain to lead us. He conducted himself and his team in a fine manner, allowing everyone a game and to enjoy their cricket even if we were on the receiving end of a hiding. This deserves great credit as it's not an easy job and I think his burn out by Friday typified that! I hope both Chris and Dan want and are able to continue their fine work next year.

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I hope everyone that came enjoyed themselves and will come again. It was really rewarding to see new people like Clare, Nick Blake, Matt Hunter, Phil Woods and even prankster Razi throwing themselves in (or turning themselves in in one instance...) and enjoying themselves. Thanks also to Kev for making the effort to travel for one night. The regulars like Phil, Lawny, Andy, the Major and even Symons Snr (fine work from the tour bookie to help the Sock reach unprecedented dizzy heights of £430+) are part of the furniture I hope we can add to the group next year and get some old faces back too.

**If I could have one thing to come from this it would be for everyone to keep driving tour and the club forward and share more responsibility for everything that goes on within our club. The more you put in, the more you get out.**

Next year tour will run from 16<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> June, so book your leave, pay your instalments or whatever you have to! It'll cost in the region of £200 again (bed, brekkie and cricket included) and hopefully we can make it even better!