

The Great War Centenary Tour to Oxford 2014

Oh, oh, oh What a Lovely Tour!

For the first time in 100 years, Devon Dumplings toured, going on “The Great War Centenary Tour” and what a lovely tour it turned out to be!

On Tuesday 12th of August 20 tourists departed in the early hours from Devon to be met by two from Birmingham and a “reverse commuter” from London at The Queen’s College Ground in Abingdon Road, Oxford. This in itself seemed miraculous as we had 13 tourists on the Thursday before and lost one that evening and another two at 11.23 hrs on Saturday morning, less than 68 hours before the planned departure! However thanks to the efforts of touring members we added another five players before 23.00 hrs on the night before the Tour started. Thank you all of you!

What happened you ask? Well briefly: **Played 3, Won 1. Drawn 2!**

12th August 2014 DDCC 186 for 5 Beat Incogniti 114 all out by 72 runs

Our first opponents were Incogniti, one of the three teams we were planned to play in August 1914 and whose matches were cancelled by the outbreak of war. After Graham White, Captain for the day, won the toss and elected to bat, the touring party and the Incogniti group joined together in a minute’s silent reflection on the players from both teams who lost their lives in the 1914-18 War before starting on time in weather described as “Sunshine and showers – cool”. Of the top five batsmen only Dominic Tuohey gave the scorer much to do making 35 and Dumplings were reduced to 72 for 5 in the 28th over. Whitey acted in the best tradition of all Dumplings when he walked having “feathered a glove” on his second ball – but he does that in league matches too – even with me umpiring!

We were rescued by two of our three Australian Dumplings who made an unbeaten 6th wicket stand of 114 with Nick Prell 51* and Dan Beatty 60* getting us to a declaration after 49 occasionally rain-interrupted overs at 186 for 5. Incogniti’s reply started poorly with them at 11 for 3 in the 6th over. Wickets continued to fall with great regularity until they were all out in the 33rd over for 114. Their main resister was J Fisher with 56 runs. The wickets were well spread amongst the Dumplings but with Jake Choules taking 3 for 22, Matt Nichols 2 for 5 and Paul Jordan 2 for 31. Thus Graham became our first Captain to win a Tour match in a Century!

13th August 2014 DDCC 171 all out Drew with The Frogs 102 for 8

Dominic Tuohey Captained Dumplings, won the toss and chose to bat at the Brasenose College Ground on a grey slightly damp day on which we were fortunate to have no interruptions. Openers Jamie Khan and Greg Maher both fell early LBW to be followed rapidly by David Mason being bowled putting us at 27 for 3. Matt Nichols (48) was joined by John Meredith who made a very patient 4 in 38 balls! The collapse continued until we were 112 for 9 when Dominic Tuohey (50*) batting at number 10 was joined in an heroic partnership of 59 within which Paul Berman made 0 in 37 balls. An excellent duck if ever I saw one!

All but two of The Frogs failed to get into double figures, Carson with 18 and Lawrence with 54*. From 6 for 3 they progressed to 94 for 8 before finishing on 102 for 8 after 46 overs. Dumplings most successful bowlers were Matt Nichols with 9 overs, 4 maidens, 3 wickets for 9 runs and John Bennett with 2 for 32 off 10 overs. Dominic thus became the first Captain of Dumplings not to win on tour in a century!

14th August 2014 DDCC 191 for 6 Drew with South Oxford Amateurs 184 for 7

Winning the final toss of the tour Bernie Wilson again elected to bat at The Queen's College Ground in very cloudy conditions which promised rain. With wickets falling in the 3rd and 6th over Graham White and Greg Maher put on 44 for the 3rd wicket, White had got off the mark on tour after a total of 13 balls with an excellent 4 runs through the covers! He was next out for 24 leaving Maher (53) and Daniel Beatty (65*) to make the majority of the runs. Their partnership was briefly interrupted by a crash of thunder overhead followed less than a second later by sheet lightning filling the sky above the ground. I have rarely seen 15 people leave the playing area so quickly! After the resumption Beatty stepped up the pace and made 18 runs off the last 6 balls he faced taking Dumplings to a declaration at 192 for 6.

SOA responded well with openers Rose (27) and Mooney (29) putting on 59 in 16 overs. They subsided somewhat to 90 for 6 before Robey (54) and Wiskin 54* added 92 putting them in range of victory. Robey fell off the 2nd ball of the last over leaving SOA 10 short with 4 balls to go. Nick Prell held them to 1 wicket and 3 runs off the over to earn a close fought draw. Daniel Beatty returned the best figures for Dumplings with 12 overs, 5 maidens, 5 wickets for 30 runs. This left Bernie as the first Dumplings Captain on tour in ten decades to chew his nails to the quick!

I must record my thanks to the touring party who made the three day tour such a success:

Paul Berman, Nick Prell, Graham White, Jake Choules, Dan Beatty, Dominic Tuohey, Matt Nichols, Paul Jordan, Bernie Wilson, Johnny Meredith, Jonathan Bennett, Christian Cabburn, David Mason, Greg Maher, Jamie Khan, David Salter, Derek Hardy, Wendy Hardy, April Berman, Judy Jolliffe, Kelsey Bacon and Sally Salter.

Martin Cross and his team at the ground gave us a lovely playing area and "fed the hungry beast". Jane Osborne and Ellen Brady arranged for us to be wonderfully cared for at Pembroke College which proved such a wonderful B&B with lovely gardens and architecture. Hopefully we will be invited to stay again in the future.

Peter Jolliffe, Tour Organiser.