

The Funny Tour Diary

The **Nepotists** On Tour 2003



With a forward by Warnie

When Funky Gorto sent me an advance copy of the tour diary it brought back many happy memories and a smile to my face.

Not that I ever played at such a low level – no the memories were of my far superior talent and I was thankful I was never so crap. In fact I bowled my first flipper aged 2 and when Mum ran out of her ‘special’ tablets at bedtime she would send me to sleep with a chorus of “bowled Warnie”

My first contact with the Nepos was my very first game of senior grade cricket at age 15 back in Victoria. I’d been punished severely in my first few overs and was just about to run in when none other than Bomber Dale sauntered over to give me some advice.

Being new to the team I didn’t recognise Bomber. Turns out nobody did as he wasn’t part of either team and had just been riding his bike past the ground when he’d decided to run on. I can’t remember what he said but I do remember it took him ages to say it. He was still shouting advice as he was dragged off the field

I’ve run into Colin a few times since then and I’m proud to say that my celebrity status hasn’t come between us. Fortunately the restraining order has and I haven’t spoken to him in years.

My other brushes with the Nepos have consisted of twice telling FG and his mates to f#ck off, once in a bar in the West Indies and once in another bar in Dubai. On another occasion I had FG and his mates kicked out of the Aussie dressing room after play in Antigua. To his credit FG has taken all these incidents in good humour and holds no grudges.

Anyway, well done Nepos and thanks for pointing out that writing forwards for a bunch of washed-up never-was park (or village idiots as I think the Poms call it) cricketers counts towards my community service hours.

Warnie

Author’s Note

I’d like to thank Warnie for taking time out of his busy, fat, cheating, drug taking, womanising schedule to pen the above. And yes, unlike a lot of the diary, the above stories involving Warnie and me are true. Not sure about the Bomber story but it sounds feasible.



The serial pest in action

Day 1 London → Holberton

Got a call from Colin “LPK” “Bomber” Dale to let us know that Mark “Transport” “Bandit” Minehan had got the tour off to a flying start by locking the keys in the van and the start could be delayed. Fast bowling firebrand and fellow office worker Geoff “3 Bats” “Merv” “Big Balls” Dillon took the news well



The next call however brought good news – The Tour Was On!!

Met by Bomber, Transport and Jacko at Paddo station. Start delayed as Merv had to talk his way out of yet another “situation” after square cutting a short one into a passing taxi in a game of pavement cricket outside the station.

Jacko had the sulks. Turned out he was upset at being the only tourist with one nickname and was in danger of being sent home if the proposed “2 nickname minimum” law came into being. Merv refused to give up one of his and it was only after we agreed on an upgrade that Bruce “Jacko” “The Diva” Jackson finally cracked a beer and started to enjoy the trip. (Little did we know he’d end up with three)



Merv on the back foot early

Bomber’s driving was meticulous and his amusing anecdotes made the time pass swiftly.



Driving, drinking a beer
and on the phone. Road safety
Bomber style



Transport listens attentively

15 hours later (or so it felt) we arrived at our home for the next three nights, Mild May Colours. A few of the guys were already there and our host Louise (nickname still to be decided) was there to greet with a phenomenal steak dinner. From memory Rik “Mr Rik” Andrew had a carrot stick and a lettuce leaf – vegetarianism is still a new concept in the country.

The general consensus was not to drink too much and retire early in readiness for three big days of golf and cricket.

Day 2 Eng v Antipodes Golf; Holberton v Nepos 20 Over Cricket

Apparently in an attempt to combine two of my favourite movies “Cocktail” and “Striptease”, sometime around 3am I was spinning bottles whilst dancing on the bar in my underwear. My memory of this is vague at best and fortunately the boys cleared up most of the broken glass so no harm done.

Bomber having been banned from all golf clubs within a 15 mile radius of Holberton meant we played at the picturesque if somewhat distant course, St Mellion.

With 16 starters an England v Antipodes format was decided upon. Owing to his sledging ability and fulfilling a childhood dream Andrew “Roly” Monk made up the numbers for the Antipo side. Results were Antipos (Jackson, Werren, Transport, Me, Merv, Alex, Bomber, Roly) 3, England (Stocker, Deek, Stoney, Mr Rik, Leckers, El Pres, Stoney, Keith) 1.



Geoff “Shaied” Dillon

The only victory came for the Poms when Stocker and Deek had a lucky win over Merv and yours truly. Turns out Merv is to golf what Bangladesh is to 1 day cricket

At a superb lunch, Steve “Del Boy” Werren worked out how many cars he could buy with his winnings (3) and Stocker unleashed a Jacko-like whinging campaign about the handicapping.



From there it was back to Holberton and a Twenty20 (or is it 20Twenty?) match with a local 11 (or 10 as it turned out). In a masterstroke of selection, the inclusion of Alex “can I buy a vowel please” Trlnlnnyn meant the home supporter advantage (200 sheep) was negated.



Holbeton batted first and posted a competitive 153 for 6. Wickets were spread around with Dale, Trlnnynln, Scott and Transport collecting 1 and JonesS rolling back the years with 2 including a scorching c&b.

Fielding highlight was definitely Stoney doing his Mark Vander impersonation behind the stumps. At one stage he even bettered Mark's record for the number of pirouettes completed before dropping a catch.

Our reply was in trouble from the moment our first time (and almost definitely last time) skipper Dale followed up his expensive opening spell with the ball by strapping on the pads and putting himself 3.

Andrew, Dale and L'Oste-Brown all failed to trouble the scorer and when Hayley went for a well-crafted 18 we were 32 for 4. An unprecedented middle-order recovery led by Transport (34) saw us struggle back within striking distance and with 9 down, 5 runs were required for the win from the final ball.



A worried megalomaniac, I mean skipper

Despite the fact he knew he had the NACA in the bag, Bomber was worried. With the bleating of crowd ringing in his ears, the hero of

the hour Trlnn stepped over the sheep dip and up to the plate. A smashing on-drive saw the ball rocket to the boundary and the result was a tie. Nepo mediocrity remained intact.



Alex covers himself in the woolly cloak of glory

With Saturday night traditionally the biggie, a quiet night was decided on with the Golf Ball and Mr Freeze only to see limited use back at the Mild May

Day 3 Nepo v Nepo 30 Over Match

65 Golf balls and 53 freezes are disputably a Nepo record. I can't remember dancing on the bar this time but then again I can't remember smoking a cigar and yet when I woke there it was stuck to my cheek...

Tensions were running high at the breakfast table, as the big decisions had to be made pre-match. Eventually it was decided to have the fried toast as well as normal toast. On to more mundane things as we moved to team selection for the big mate against mate, state against state, Nepo against Nepo clash.

The problem was that everyone wanted to bat against Bomber. In the end names were pulled out of a hat and the President's 11 was pitched against the Chairman's 11. I was in with El Pres but on paper the Chair's team looked stronger. We had Bomber but to their advantage they didn't.

Another beautiful English summer day down at Wembury saw gale force winds whipping across the ground, producing Arctic-like conditions. The Chairs batted first in a 30 over format. Werren and Carthew opened the bowling. Werren showed the bowling class that has made him such a good wicket keeper / batsman over the years.

Stoney unleashed a mighty barrage of attacking shots and was soon retired on 51, 48 of which came in boundaries, most of which came in one of my overs. Eventually it took some class spin bowling to produce the first wicket as a vicious turner from yours truly bowled Mattress around his legs. Ok, so it was the arm ball that hit a crack but it was the first ball of the innings not to be a full toss or long hop.

Stocks picked up the torch from Robinson and was on 39 (38 in boundaries) when he joined a not-so-exclusive club by being caught on the boundary from a Dale lollipop. A brilliant catch by Carthew saw the in form Stocks understandably reduced to tears. Not so much that he was out but more because he knew he'd have to listen to Bomber crapping on about it for the next 10 years.

The much awaited Dale / Jackson confrontation was a non-event with Bruce "No Way Was That Out" Jackson trapped plumb in front during an inspired spell from Monk (6 overs, 9 runs for 1 wicket including the only maiden of the innings). An average boosting 42 n.o. from Sutton saw the Chair get to 204 for 7 at the end of their 30.



Roly points out for the 932nd time his dismissal of Jacko

A superb barby was enjoyed by all in the ensuing lunch break with Bomber Dale generously providing the snags and only 1 major and 3 minor cases of food poisoning to report.

In an attempt to nobble the opposition Bomber also donated a dubious red wine – a certain Chateau de Anti-Freeze - Transport had purchased across the channel for the princely sum of 1 Euro a bottle. Fortunately for them the plastic cups were unable to hold for more than a few minutes before they melted.



The Bomber Barby

A promising start in reply from Hayley and JonesM was tragically cut short when Moz was run out, a dismissal method that was to prove popular.

Stocker then proved he's not just a crap fielder who bats a bit by picking up 2 wickets including Haley for 38 to bring his Nepo life tally to 3. To go one better Mattress picked up his first ever Nepo wicket when I was well caught by Stocks at mid off to prove that unfortunately there is nothing he can't do (a claim that Mandy has made for years)



Stoney behind the stumps. One of the rare occasions he hadn't fallen over

Apart from Tum who remained 59 not out at the end, not much was done by the rest of the team to make their mark on the score book as we capitulated to 185 all out. Not much that is except by Roly Monk who in an attempt to get his name in the book as often as possible attempted to run out as many of his fellow batsman as possible. We broke down his calls and they were:

YES – 5

NO – 5

OH F#CK – 10

SORRY – 20

Fortunately due to a combination of the after effects of Bombers wine and Stoney's wicket keeping there were only 2 instances of "Run Out Roly" in the book.

True to English Cricketing Etiquette we refused to shake their hands and stormed off to our dressing room calling them cheating pr#cks. They must have cheated – they won!

Back in the rooms moral was at an all time low. That was until it was realised that his devastating but entertaining running between wickets left Roly virtually unchallenged for the NACA.

A showdown with the Chair's NACA (Jacko – also unchallenged) followed. A secret NACA vote saw Roly have the honour of wearing the lime green and magenta jacket for another year. The 6th year in a row on tour he has won – not bad considering he wasn't even there 3 years ago.



There Can Be Only One



And That One Is Roly

A quick trip back to Mild May and the Golf Ball and Mr Freeze were out in force.

As a team we know the importance of sticking together and not targeting any one person. It's that sort of thing that can split a team and make someone feel unwanted – a point well made by Bomber after he had received every 2nd Golf Ball and been every 2nd Mr Freeze in the first hour and a half.

Unfortunately someone slipped the ball into his fresh pint while he was making the point. And then while downing that pint he was a victim of Mr Freeze so straight afterwards had to down the next pint as well.

By the time the taxis arrived to take us to the bright lights of Plymouth, Bomber was so drunk he was dribbling and sprouting crap in a manner that hadn't been seen since that afternoon when he was sober.

After a few pints at a local in Plymouth Town, where unity and teammanship were again stressed, we split into two groups. One group headed to the casino. The rest of us felt we should go somewhere more classy but settled for a 12 pound all you can drink nite club where we were all at least double the average age. The drinks were all no-name alcopops which no doubt would have been dangerous if it weren't for the countering effect of Bomber's sausages.

On the way back to meet the others we came across Transport who had been chucked out of the casino for Golf Balling one of the blackjack dealers. Twice.

We may give the little fella a hard time but nobody begrudged Bomber his stories giving a blow by blow description of his big wins at the tables. Mainly because on the trip back to the Mild May we made him go in a taxi by himself.

Having been one of the lucky ones to score a bed and not have to sleep in the van, I couldn't wait to make the most of the comfort ahead of the next big clash against Budleigh Salterton the next day.

Day 4 Budleigh Salterton v Nepos 40 Over Match

Felt like I slept in an oven last night. Turned out I did. Well next to one anyway. After making my way out of the Hotel's kitchen back to my room I was able to get a few more hours sleep, broken only by "No Way Out" Jackson, still muttering in his sleep about his dismissal.

After a subdued breakfast we made sure a certain team member who has a habit of not paying his bills but who shall not be named here* had paid up, before heading to the beautiful English seaside.

*Bomber

Some may call the Poms stupid (I know I do all the time) but the guy at the "beach" (known to the locals as the toxic waste dump) scored 2 quid a car from us to park in his "car park" (a bloody great field in the middle of nowhere) before we realised it was miles to walk to the ocean. At least the weather was true to form – cold, wet and windy – so it was 2 quid well spent.



This water's not toxic



Yes it is

On to the ground for the game the guys were tired from 3 days of partying but were still jumping out of their skins to get on the field.



They won the toss and decided to bat. A decision that looked sound when yours truly was the only one stupid enough to agree to bowl into the force 9 wind at the far end. My first hat-trick of the season was unfortunately a hat-trick of fours and B&S were off to a flyer. Deek and Merv bowled well with the wind and with the aid of some generous lbw decisions from the home umpire, saw us back into the game. Mind you, my Grandmother could have bowled well with that wind at her back.

I'm not too sure about the details of the majority of the innings as I was banished to fine leg / deep mid off at the end of my spell.

I did discover, however, that Budleigh Salterton is a retirement haven as there was a procession of "coffin dodgers" as Bomber affectionately called them, wandering past. It kept me occupied as they reminisced about their cricketing days pre-war and wanted to know what the score was, how the pitch was playing, what the team names were, what their own names were and so on. It was a lot like a Nepo's post match meeting really.

To best sum up the innings I have a copy of the oppos score sheet showing our bowling:

SCORE CARD

<u>Bowler</u>	<u>O</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>R</u>	<u>W</u>	<u>Comments</u>
Dillon	6.3	2	15	1	On fire (but wind assisted)
Donnelly	5	1	19	1	Lucky to stay on after 1 st over went for 12 but obviously good player out of luck
Monk	8	0	45	1	Catches like a girl
Sutton	8	0	44	2	2 vital LBWs - i.e. Leg Before [it would have gone through to] Werren
Dale	5	0	32	4	There is no justice in this game
Andrew	5	1	26	0	Gives new meaning to trundle

Just goes to show there ARE comments in the scorebook, a necessary addition in my opinion. B & S ended all out on 189 leaving us 190 in 40 overs to win.

In reply our skipper Tum, in an attempt to lessen his guilt for banishing me to the deep for most of the fielding innings, sent me out to open the innings with Jacko. He knew I was desperate to be part of the game and it gives me great pleasure to say I didn't let him down.

Well I did, but it gives me more pleasure to say I didn't. A possibly rash drive saw me caught at mid-on for not many and I retired to the dressing room. Now, I'd like to take this opportunity to point out I WAS NOT SULKING! I like sitting in the dressing room. On my own. With the door locked. And everyone feels better with their gear strewn across the room.

In any case I soon joined the rest of the team back outside in time to watch Stocker reach an (apparently) well struck 100 to carry us to a resounding 7 wicket win with 18 balls to spare. Actually I had little say in my reappearance as Roly had threatened to kick the door down when Jacko told him I had the remaining donuts from Tea.

As a favour (and as I had once again missed most of the innings) I asked someone else to put together a summary of our batting and the result is below.

Prima donna Jackson 10. Out LBW - what else would you expect? Highly overrated as an opener and lucky to keep his place. Very susceptible to anything straight as his numerous dismissals by this method show.

No brains Donnelly 3. Out caught driving - what else would you expect? All rounder? All round ordinary maybe. Makes Scott Muller look like Garfield Sobers

Lucky pr#ck Stocks 101. Not Out - has to be the luckiest player alive. Edges, miss-hits you name it he does it and somehow week after week gets away with it.

Class act Werren 44. Out bowled - an unplayable corker and definitely not playing across the line. Brilliant, match-winning innings displaying every shot in the book played to near perfection

Thanks for coming Challanor 13. Not out. May be a big man in some quarters but a small man on the cricket ground.

Yeah, thanks Steve. Who'd have thought there could be so much bitterness in such a little man?

So that was it, the tour was over for another year. A tie, a win and a Nepo derby par excellence.

All the ingredients that accompany a great team in this great sport - the tension, the drama, the buzz, the crowd, the atmosphere - were all once again nowhere to be seen but a great tour it was nevertheless.

Plenty of sport and even more alcohol, exceptional accommodation from a wonderful host, great company and companionship and most importantly of all not too many wickets for Bomber meant we were all going home healthy and happy. See you all next year...

*Funky Gorto
Ward 6B
St Georges Hospital
Tooting*



The Author, Post Tour