

The Kowloon Cricket Club of Hong Kong

2008 Tour of England



THE KOWLOON
CRICKET CLUB

SINCE 1904



Tour Schedule



Date	Schedule
Saturday, 28th June 2008	Depart for London on Air New Zealand flight NZ39 departing at 0835hrs (arrive London 1435hrs)
Sunday, 29th June	Lords Tour (morning)
Monday, 30th June	1st Match versus Kent CCC at Kent. * If this fixture is cancelled we will try to arrange a net at Lords.
Tuesday, 1st July	2nd Match versus Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC) at The Nursery Ground, Lord's
Wednesday, 2nd July	Free Day. Kempton Park Night Races (optional)
Thursday, 3rd July	3rd Match versus Highgate CC at North London
Friday, 4th July	4th Match versus Ightham CC at Ightham
Saturday, 5th July	Free day
Sunday, 6th July	5th Match versus Windsor CC at Windsor
Monday, 7th July	6th Match versus Surrey CC at Surrey
Tuesday, 8th July	Free Day. Golf Day (optional) at the Cuddington Golf Club, Surrey
Wednesday, 9th July	7th Match versus RLCCC at Aldershot
Thursday, 10th July	8th Match versus Tunbridge Wells CC at Kent
Friday, 11th July	Free Day; End of Tour Dinner at The Stafford Hotel (St. James's Place)
Saturday, 12th July	Free Day; Depart to Hong Kong on Air New Zealand flight NZ38 at 2105hrs (arrive Hong Kong 1550hrs on 13th July)



Accommodation

The tour party will be staying at the following location in England.

Bankside House

24, Sumner Street

London SE1 9JA

Tel: +44 207 107 5750

Fax: +44 207 107 5757

Message from the President



It is with great pleasure that I write this introduction to the Kowloon Cricket Club's brochure for the inaugural cricket tour of England.

The Kowloon Cricket Club has a rich history of sporting tours since its establishment in 1904. Regular tours have been made over the years to neighbouring countries such as China, Thailand, Malaysia and Singapore. The Club ventured further in 1996 and 2002 when tours to India were undertaken. Details of a few amusing highlights from some of these tours, of both on and off field goings-on are recalled in a report later in this brochure.

This year, for the first time, a KCC representative cricket team will be travelling to England and I wish them every success. The players will play eight competitive matches over two weeks, but I am confident that they will all perform admirably and wear the KCC badge with honour and pride.

The KCC has also hosted many touring teams and it is wonderful to see that this year's cricket tour to England will include matches against teams from the MCC and the Royal Logistics Corps CC - both of whom have played at the KCC's Jordan Road ground in recent years. The history against RLCCC dates back to KCC's earliest days, with the Club's first ever league match being against the former Army Ordinance Corps CC in 1904. A return match against our oldest of adversaries on the 100th anniversary of that first game was a highlight of the KCC's year-long centenary celebrations in 2004.

The team will also look forward to building new friendships with the clubs and players it meets on this tour and we hope that these friendships too will stand the test of time.

As well as hosting touring teams, the KCC is also home to the famous Hong Kong Cricket Sixes tournament which has been running since 1992. Many of the world's best test and ODI players have graced the field and many have commented on the superb ground conditions. We are justifiably proud of our ground and facilities which were recently described on Cricinfo as the finest outside the world's test playing venues.

A tour of this size and duration takes a great deal of organising and I'd liked to congratulate the Tour Organising Committee for their efforts, not just in getting the tour off the ground but to organise so many high profile matches.

On behalf of the Club let me wish the touring team success in all the matches. Furthermore, I am sure that every player will do their best and play within the spirit of the game.

I wish the players and officials all the best on their tour.

Warmest regards,

Burji Shroff,

President, Kowloon Cricket Club

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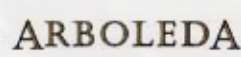
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Message from the Captain of Cricket



It gives me the greatest of pleasure to be able to represent the KCC as the Captain of Cricket on our inaugural tour to the home of cricket, England.

The position that I hold presently is one that bestows upon me an awesome sense of pride in being able to uphold the traditions of our great club and carry with me and my committee the visions of the future of cricket at the KCC and the protection of the KCC's cricketing reputation as the finest in South East Asia.

The formulation of the U.K. tour started, as a lot of things within the cricket section, on the balcony over looking the hallowed turf enjoying a quiet ale. Matt Collins enquired whether a tour to the U.K. had ever been conducted and with the answer of no it was from that point that we were definitely going.

KCC's history has seen us hosting a large number of touring sides and it was our intention to contact as many of those clubs that had made it to Hong Kong to see if we could arrange fixtures. We were overwhelmed with the response that we received and tailored our matches to conduct return fixtures with clubs such as the MCC and RLCCC and also to foster new relationships with clubs within and around the London area.

Cricket in Hong Kong began in 1856 with the formation of the Hong Kong Cricket Club and the only matches to be played were inter-port matches against Shanghai and Singapore. Kowloon Cricket Club was formed in 1904 and one year after the establishment of regular fixtures, 1903, commenced playing in the league. Our very first match was against the Army Ordinance Corps CC (today RLCCC) and we had the pleasure of entertaining them in Hong Kong during our centenary year and will be playing them whilst on tour which we are all looking forward to. Of course if you are playing cricket in England it would be remiss of the Club to not attempt to play at Lord's and the match against the MCC is eagerly anticipated.

As a touring party we hope to represent the KCC in the finest possible light both on and off the field and enjoy making new friendships amongst the cricketing communities of England. The KCC has a strong tradition of socializing and not only will the lads give it their all on the pitch but I am sure they will equip themselves well in the after match festivities. I very much look forward to meeting all of you on the square or around the ground during the tour to share in your hospitality and send an early invite to you to visit us in Hong Kong at anytime.

Warmest Regards,

Simon Scanlon,

Captain of Cricket, Kowloon Cricket Club

Kowloon Cricket Club

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Kowloon Cricket Club - A (Very) Brief History

The Early Years (1904-1950)

Cricket in Hong Kong started with the formation of the Hong Kong Cricket Club in 1851. The first Kowloon Cricket Club team played in 1904, following the formation of the Club that same year.

Early matches were played on grounds loaned to the KCC by various clubs at Happy Valley. KCC's first recorded match was against the Army Ordinance Corps Cricket Club (AOCCC), played on 15th October 1904. A local report of the match read, "The day was exceedingly warm for cricket and the ground hard. As is the usual custom, players who know for a fact they are to play in a match generally make it a habit of turning up late, causing great inconvenience. This match took place on the Parsee CC at Happy Valley. The Kowloon Club, although they lost the match 53 against 25, played a very promising game. One word that can be said of the team is that their bowling was good, and as regards their batting, more hard practice will find them a good team."

KCC finished second in the league in its inaugural season of competition and went one better the following year. The Club also won the League in the 1906/07 season.

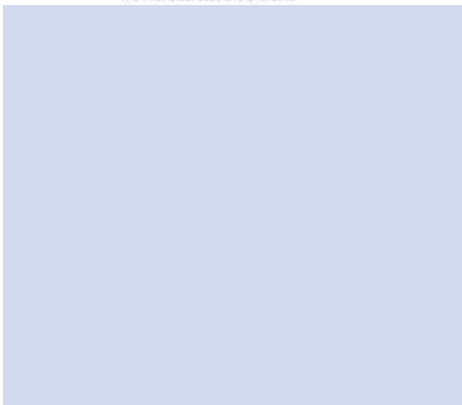
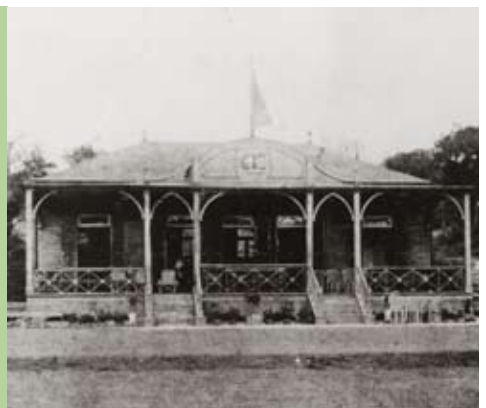
It was a long time until the KCC next tasted success and it wasn't until the 1921/22 season when KCC won both the 1st and 2nd Division titles. A notice in the SCMP on 17 September 1910 summed up the problems facing the Club in those intervening years... "KCC opens its season today with a match between the Captain and Vice Captain. It is hoped that players will attend in sufficient numbers". KCC won the senior division again in 1929/30.

During WWII, KCC's Clubhouse and ground were occupied by Japanese forces following the fall of Hong Kong. The grounds were used as market gardens and stables for horses while the buildings were largely destroyed and their timbers used for firewood. Whilst cricket was not played at KCC after the occupation, war-time records show that cricket found its way into the PoW Camp at nearby Sham Shui Po, where a number of KCC's cricketers were incarcerated.

After the war, the main ground at KCC was found to be in such bad shape, due to four years of neglect, that cricket did not resume until the 1946/47 season. In that first post-war season, the first match for the Hancock Memorial Shield, played between KCC and Hong Kong CC, was played on 8-9 December 1946, with HKCC winning on that occasion.



The First Clubhouse and Cricket XI



KCC v Shanghai - 1927



Modern Times (1950-today)

By the mid 1950's the number of cricketers playing at KCC had increased to the extent that the Club was able to field three teams for the first time - one team in the 1st Division and two in the 2nd Division. By 1978/79, the number of teams had increased to five.

KCC was not terribly successful in the first division during the three decades after the end of WWII but they enjoyed a golden run during 1970/71 through to 1974/75 when the championship was won four times. During this period, some of KCC's finest cricketers represented the Club with the likes of Jalu Shroff , Carl Myatt and 'Buddy' Carnell (reputedly the best fast bowler to play post-War cricket for Hong Kong) joining the ranks of Teddy Fincher, Robbie Lee, JP Robinson, Peter Hall and David Coffey in KCC's cricketing folklore.

The period from 1985/86 to 1993/94 was probably the Club's most successful, with the two 1st Division (now called the Sunday League) teams winning the championship no fewer than six times. They also picked up wins in the 2nd Division (now called the Saturday League) and Saturday Cup and Sunday Cup knock-out competitions.

Following Hong Kong's hand-over to Chinese sovereignty in 1997, KCC lost a large number of expatriate players and as a result struggled to be competitive whilst other clubs in the former colony enjoyed a period of ascendancy.

But the KCC enjoyed a welcome return to the top of the ladder as it celebrated its centenary season in style by winning the coveted Sunday League and Cup double in the 2003/04 season.

Sources:

The KCC Century - The Kowloon Cricket Club Centenary 1904-2004

150 Years of Cricket in Hong Kong by Peter Hall



Back row : A. Cornea (V. Carl), A. Dillon, D. Kelly
Middle row : K. Chapman, S. Hwang, Y. Yau, S. Parris, A. Clements, R. Raphael, J. Lauer (Storer)
Front row : B. Sharma, P. Fincher, Z. Waheed, H. Davies (Capt)

Kowloon Cricket Club

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Tour Venues

The following is a brief description of the teams and venues where the matches will be played. Thanks to the respective clubs that supplied pictures and histories.

Kent County Cricket Club



Kent County Cricket Club is one of the 18 first class county cricket clubs which make up the English domestic cricket structure, representing the county of Kent. The county's limited overs team is called the Kent Spitfires. The county plays most of its home matches at the St. Lawrence Ground, Canterbury, but also plays some home matches at The County Cricket Ground, Beckenham, and the Nevill Ground, Tunbridge Wells.

Source: Wikipedia

Marylebone Cricket Club, Lord's Nursery Ground, London



Marylebone Cricket Club (known as the MCC) is a private members' club, which owns, and is based at Lord's Cricket Ground near St John's Wood in London, England. The MCC was formerly the governing body of cricket in England and across the world. Most of the club's global functions were passed on to the International Cricket Council (ICC) in 1993, and its English governance was passed to the England and Wales Cricket Board at the same time. However, the MCC remains the framer and copyright holder of the Laws of Cricket and is an active and influential club within the cricket world. Source: Wikipedia

The match against MCC will be played on the Nursery Ground, adjacent to the main Lord's oval. A tour of the famous Lord's ground and buildings has also been arranged.

Highgate CC, Shepherd's Cot, North London



Cricket at **Highgate** dates back to 1794 when a team from Highgate played Kentish Town & Hampstead played on Highgate Common. The present Highgate club started under the name of Beaumont in the 1850's. The Beaumont club changed its name to Highgate in 1905.

The move to the present ground took place in 1882. In 1884 a tennis section was inaugurated, with women members accepted, and the resulting growth in membership meant that the first Pavilion could be built in 1888.

Today Highgate is a vibrant cricket and tennis club with six cricket teams participating in local league competitions and junior teams at U11, U13, U15 and U17 levels.

Source : Highgate CC website [<http://highgatecc.play-cricket.com>]

Ightham Cricket Club, Ightham, Kent

The **Ightham Cricket Club** seeks to promote friendly village cricket throughout west Kent. The Club competes in the Kent Cricket Village League on Saturdays and on Sundays they play friendly matches against local teams.

The Club has played cricket at its current ground since the 1880s and is still one of the best grounds and prettiest in the county.

Ightham CC is the home club of former KCC Vice President, Rob Gill.

Source: Ightham Cricket Club website [www.ighthamcricketclub.org]



Windsor Cricket Club, Home Park, Windsor

The **Windsor Cricket Club** was formed in 1995 as a merger between great rivals Windsor Victoria and Windsor and Eton Cricket Clubs. This makes Windsor one of the newest cricket clubs in the Thames Valley Area but still maintaining a rich history inherited from the two previous clubs.

The club plays its home games at the Home Park, Windsor. With the world famous Windsor Castle in the background it is regarded as one of the most scenic cricket grounds in the country. The club also has another royal connection as HRH Prince Philip is the patron.

The club has undertaken cricket tours to Australia, the Netherlands, Ireland as well as taking part in cricket festivals and hosting touring sides mainly due to their splendid location. Source: Wikipedia



Surrey County Cricket Club, Guildford

Surrey County Cricket Club is one of the 18 major county clubs which make up the English domestic cricket structure, representing the historic county of Surrey. Its limited overs team is called the Surrey Brown Caps (formerly the Surrey Lions).

The club is based at The Oval cricket ground, within the Kennington region of Lambeth in south London. Before the formation of the London metropolitan county, the ground was in the county of Surrey. Some home games each season are played at Whitgift School, Croydon and at Woodbridge Road, Guildford.

The club colours are chocolate brown and silver. The club badge is the Prince of Wales' three feathers. Lord Rosebery obtained the permission to use this symbol from the Prince of Wales, owner of the land on which The Oval stands.

Source: Wikipedia



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Tour Venues (continued)

Royal Logistics Corps CC, Deepcut, Aldershot

The KCC's first ever match was played against the Army Ordnance Corps CC on 15th October 1904. Exactly one hundred years later, KCC played the **Royal Logistics Corps CC** again to mark the anniversary of that first match. With such a rich history, there was never any doubt that a tour to England would not include a fixture against KCC's oldest rivals.

The tour party will be staying overnight in the Officer's Mess, being the only night on tour away from Bankside House.



Tunbridge Wells CC, Tunbridge Wells

Tunbridge Wells Cricket Club is one of the leading clubs in the Kent Cricket League, being a founder member in 1970.

Widely acknowledged as one of the most picturesque grounds in the country, The Nevill is a marvellous place to play cricket. There is a comfortable pavilion with a well-stocked bar, so even non-playing members can just call by and take in some cricket while relaxing over a cool drink.

The Club celebrated its bicentenary in 1982 and has hosted Kent County Cricket Club for a Cricket Week since 1902. The Nevill has also staged international matches - most notably the 1983 World Cup fixture between India and Zimbabwe ('Kapil Dev's match').

Source: Tunbridge Wells Cricket Club website [www.tunbridgewellsc.org.uk]



Bankside House, London SE1 (Tour accommodation)

Bankside House is ideally located in a vibrant part of London, adjacent to the Tate Modern. Several major attractions are within a short stroll: you can visit St Paul's Cathedral by crossing Southwark Bridge, passing the Financial Times building on your way. You will have 24 hour access via a security card and security staff are present throughout the night.

London Bankside House offers comfortable halls of residence accommodation on the south side of the River Thames. With the exception of some single rooms, which have a wash basin, all guestrooms contain private bathroom facilities. All of the single, twin and four-bedded rooms contain a bed, wardrobe, desk, telephone and hospitality tray. London Bankside House offers disabled access as well as limited parking, a games room, TV lounge, laundrette, bar and both continental and English breakfasts.



Kowloon Cricket Club

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The Touring Party

Simon Scanlon

Captain of Cricket
Australian



DOB: 28 August 1970

First Cricket Club played for: Lesmurdie Cricket Club, Australia

Occupation: Airline Pilot

Favorite Film: The Right Stuff

Favorite drink: Beer

Favorite food: Steak

Most remembered sporting moment, personal or international: Steve Waugh's final inning's

Reason for touring: Chance to play in the home of cricket, England

Number of people in your family: 6

Clive Howard

Tour Manager
English



DOB: 17 September 1957

First Cricket Club played for: Toft CC, Cheshire, UK

Occupation: Chief Inspector of Hard Knocks

Favorite Film: Zulu

Favorite drink: Beer

Favorite food: A full fried English breakfast

Most remembered sporting moment, personal or international: Winning the Royal HK Police Spoof Championships 1991-97

Reason for touring: So I don't miss anything.

Number of people in your family: Too many

Matt Collins

Tour Chairman
Australian



DOB: 27 July 1971

First Cricket Club played for: Mackie Cricket Club, Victoria, Australia

Occupation: Export Sales

Favorite Film: Flying High

Favorite drink: Gin & Tonic

Favorite food: Steak

Most remembered sporting moment, personal or international: Hit 6 consecutive sixes off the final over to lead the Leigh Street boys to an improbable victory over arch rivals, the Thornton Street thugs. Venue: South Oakleigh Bowls Club car park... January 1983

Reason for touring: A once in a lifetime opportunity for me to play in England

Number of people in your family: 4

Travis Pittman

Media
New Zealander



DOB: 13 July 1965

First Cricket Club played for: Cornwall Park Cricket Club, Auckland, NZ

Occupation: IT Consultant

Favorite Film: Shawshank Redemption

Favorite drink: Champagne

Favorite food: Japanese

Most remembered sporting moment, personal or international: Organising the RLCCC's tour to Hong Kong in 2004 to celebrate the KCC's centenary.

Reason for touring: Have toured many times with KCC but never to England. Looking forward to catching up with the RLCCC boys again!

Number of people in your family: 4

Todd Johnsen

Fines Master
Australian



DOB: 1 November 1972

First Cricket Club played for: Mt Eliza, Victoria, Australia

Occupation: Tennis Pro

Favorite Film: The Red Violin

Favorite drink: 'JD' on the rocks

Favorite food: 4 n' 20 meat pie

Most remembered sporting moment, personal or international: Warnie's 500th test wicket (son born on same day)

Reason for touring: To have a crack with the lads.

Number of people in your family: 4

Bharat Gohel

Indian



DOB: 4 July 1955

First Cricket Club played for: Craigengower CC, Hong Kong

Occupation: Business

Favorite Film: Scent of a Woman

Favorite drink: Vodka lime with fresh lime

Favorite food: Anything not living

Most remembered sporting moment, personal or international: Taking 6-11 on debut for Hong Kong

Reason for touring: Nothing better to do.

Number of people in your family: Too many

Anthony Barnet

Australian



DOB: 24 February 1971

First Cricket Club played for: East Torrens Cricket Club Adelaide, Australia

Occupation: Operations Manager

Favorite Film: Caddyshack

Favorite drink: Beer

Favorite food: Italian

Most remembered sporting moment, personal or international: Being a part of the Crusaders Cup win in 2007 (on third attempt!)

Reason for touring: Cricket/ Sightseeing/ Dan's coming

Number of people in your family: 5

Damian Kelleher

Australian



DOB: 25 November 1972

First Cricket Club played for: Kingborough District CC, Tasmania, Australia

Occupation: Educator

Favorite Film: Platoon

Favorite drink: Victoria Bitter

Favorite food: Lasagne

Most remembered sporting moment, personal or international: Crusaders winning the Saturday Cup in 2007

Reason for touring: To get pissed.

Number of people in your family: 1

Anoop Nainani

Indian



DOB: 13 May 1969

First Cricket Club played for: West Gymkhana

Occupation: Import / Export business

Favorite Film: Sholay and Lage Raho munna bhai.

Favorite drink: Beer and ginger ale

Favorite food: Indian

Most remembered sporting moment, personal or international: Scored 81 not out in finals to make my school win inter school trophy after 20 years.

Reason for touring: Cricket is my passion and it will be a dream come true to play in England at some outstanding grounds.

Number of people in your family: 10

Afzaal Haider

Pakistani



DOB: 12 December 1971

First Cricket Club played for: ZAFAR Memorial Cricket Club in Lahore, Pakistan

Occupation: Cricket Coach & Sports Business

Favorite Film: I am not very big fan of movies but still like watching Indian movies

Favorite drink: Café Late

Favorite food: Traditional Pakistani Food of Lahore

Most remembered sporting moment, personal or international: Scoring 27 runs in the final over to beat UAE and win the Plate Final at the Hong Kong International Cricket Sixes 2002.

Reason for touring: There is nothing like going on tour with friends especially in the home of cricket, England.

Number of people in your family: 5

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The Touring Party (continued)

Shiroy Vachha

Indian



DOB: 26 December 1964

First Cricket Club played for: Kowloon Cricket Club (Saracens)

Occupation: Head Hunter

Favorite Film: The Pink Panther (All 4)

Favorite drink: Dark Rum and Coke (Myers Dark Rum)

Favorite food: Indian, Chinese

Most remembered sporting moment, personal or international: Watching India win the World Cup in 1983

Reason for touring: Not played in England since 1984 and would like to catch up with old friends

Number of people in your family: 1

Ray Brewster

Australian



DOB: Too old to remember but my Mum says it was in 51!

First Cricket Club played for: Sandgate-Redcliffe District Cricket Club, Brisbane, Australia

Occupation: Civil Engineer

Favorite Film: No idea – no time to watch except repeats of last Ashes tests in Aussie – 5 zip wasn't it?

Favorite drink: Wine

Favorite food: Kangaroo steak

Most remembered sporting moment, personal or international: 7 catches in Brisbane 1st grade & also playing with Graeme Pollock, Sachin Tendulkar & Greg Chappell in HK Charity games

Reason for touring: I'm a masochist with nothing better to do

Number of people in your family: 4

Daniel Davern

Australian



DOB: 6 March 1951

First Cricket Club played for: St Mary's CC Preston

Occupation: Air Traffic Controller

Favorite Film: Cinderella Man

Favorite drink: Gin & Tonic

Favorite food: Steak with seafood

Most remembered sporting moment, personal or international: - no answer -

Reason for touring: Love beating the POMS and to play a game at Lords

Number of people in your family: 10

Roy Lamsam

Hong Konger



DOB: 18 May 1980

First Cricket Club played for: Kowloon Cricket Club (Dragons)

Occupation: Architect/interior designer/professional golfer wannabe

Favorite Film: Empire of the Sun

Favorite drink: Sweet martini

Favorite food: Pate du foie gras

Most remembered sporting moment, personal or international: Playing in the ACC Trophy against Pakistan and Bangladesh

Reason for touring: Golfing

Number of people in your family: 600 (6th generation in HK)

Trevor Willis

Australian



DOB: 17 July 1965

First Bedford Junior Cricket Club (Perth, WA). 1974

Occupation: Airline Pilot

Favorite Film:

Favorite drink: Beer

Favorite food: Italian

Most remembered sporting moment, personal or international: Watching Rod Marsh score a century between Lunch and Tea at the WACA

Reason for touring: Have fun.

Number of people in your family: 5

The Kowloon Cricket Club wishes to say a BIG thank you to the sponsors and supporters that have helped to make the 2008 Tour of England possible:

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Devang Shah
Indian

Jenny Lethbridge
English



DOB: 6 January 1968
 First Cricket Club played for: KCC
 Occupation: Diamonds
 Favorite Film: Day After Tomorrow
 Favorite drink: Gunner
 Favorite food: Italian
 Most remembered sporting moment, personal or international: Playing cricket in Taiwan
 Reason for touring: Love playing cricket
 Number of people in your family: 4

DOB: Whatever makes me 21
 First Cricket Club played for: KCC (scorer)
 Favorite Film: Bewitched
 Favorite drink: Perrier with lime juice
 Favorite food: Strawberries and cream
 Most remembered sporting moment, personal or international: It's a tie!
 Scoring for the Rest of the World team against the Australian test side who were on their way to the UK for the Ashes series some years ago and Crusaders winning the Saturday Cup in 2007!
 Reason for touring: My first chance to score in England!
 Number of people in your family: 2 daughters



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Kowloon Cricket Club

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Tales From Tours Past...

Mark Giles, KCC member as boy and man since 1972, formerly with the South China Morning Post and now working on The Times Sports Desk in London, recounts some of his experiences on the Club's Seventies and Eighties tours.

When it was first mooted around Christmas time 1976 that perhaps I might want to join the boys on the next Chinese New Year trip to Bangkok, I waved away any such notion. I'd seen pictures of Jungu Vachha being carried off the Royal Bangkok Sports Club field in a wheelbarrow and, while a great laugh, I felt the trip was just a case of a bunch of old codgers getting a rare chance to let their hair down with wives a) not in attendance or b) been flown to Pattaya for a few days as a bit of recompense.

I'm glad I allowed my mind to be changed.

I'd celebrated my 21st with a big party (thanks Mum, thanks Dad) at the KCC a few days before departure so I was in a pretty good state of mind, if not body, when we took off. I still can't believe that we inveigled the China Airlines staff into serving us drinks before take-off on account of the flight being forced to hang about on the tarmac for an hour. That was a good start.

I'd only been working for the SCMP for just over two years but had managed to move on from being a 10-stone college boy to 13-stone-plus, beer-guzzling journo, so I was well-equipped for the rigours of four days in Bangkok.

Lo and behold, I actually scored runs in the one-day match. Indeed, my innings in 1977 ranks as my career-best adult knock -- a mighty 46 not out -- but all I got from the boys in the pavilion was "why didn't you blast the last one for six, you could have had your first fifty". That the RBSC boundaries were rather too big for me in the first place, that I was so bloody drained from batting for an hour or so that all I wanted to do was sleep (nothing to do with the previous night's endeavours) seemed not to be taken into account.

My Dad was captaining -- here Mark, open the bowling. I could hardly get my arm over. Embarrassed by my efforts at trying to get one to go straight, he assigned me to third man after two overs, though he did relent later and I think I might have even taken a wicket.

It is worth pointing out at this stage that I was supposed to be a demon fast bowler, not a reliable middle-order batsman.

We duly came away with most of the trophies on offer but the honour of daftest bugger on tour must have been Len Cooper. There was a 1am curfew but Len (and I'm sure he wasn't alone in this) had to have one more down town. Rolling home to the Suriwongse Hotel (can't understand why that place was never given its 5th star), he was stopped not once, but twice, by the local constabulary who made him cough up a few of his hard-earned baht for the right to continue to his room rather than spend the night in a cell.



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I know 1979 had its moments but I couldn't make it. In 1981, though, I met Muhammad Ali -- the female version. We walked into the Pitstop in Patpong and my first memory is of this woman's back, rippling muscles but all in deadly proportion as I took the opportunity to size up the rest of her bikini-clad body. Muhammad -- actual name "Toy", believe it or not -- was a good laugh and she loved the hippy-like sun-bleached blond mane that hovered around my shoulder area.

Hence why, after I had ditched the house DJ each night and played what I wished with no regard to anyone, "Toy" and her mates decided to dress me up in drag on our last night and stuck me in the "cage" -- come on, you know what I'm talking about -- to entertain them, as a bit of a change. Jesus, they put rouge, lipstick and all sorts on me, tied my hair in a bunnish-type thing and put me in a very slight bikini top.

Cameras, of course, were not allowed on tour apart from picturing the temples and the snake/crocodile farm on the first day, but the naughty Mussie Fincher had infiltrated the all-male group and, true to form, got it all on pictorial record. The snap is now residing in a montage of various "family" photos on the wall at the entrance to the Hertfordshire abode I share with Carol. When I ask her why she included that one, she always says "you just look so happy". When I tell her the professions of a couple of people in the pic, she remains unswayed. Good on ya, Carol.

We really got ambitious in 1982, deciding that the next year we would travel farther afield, with tour blazers, the works. We were not used to this. Anyhow, the itinerary became Bangkok, Kuala Lumpur and Singapore.

We were very lucky to get away with victory in the two-day game against RBSC -- to lose to them was unheard of -- but they had recruited a former Lancashire player called Doug Beckett. We managed to drop him something like 13 times on the first day and needless to say he helped himself to a hundred. I went in to face one ball as last man with us needing two runs for a first-innings lead -- you needed that to win in case of a draw, if you understand that Irish -- and I didn't get near it.

So we were up against the 8-ball the next day and had resolved to make sure we did all in our power to rescue the trophy. A bunch of us went to the Thai Room, intent on having a good curry and maybe one or two ales. On this trip, though, was one Noel Morris, an affable Welshman with a strong yearning for the amber fluid who was the scorer for Infidels and Saracens.

Noel was not much of an eater -- beans on toast would always do him -- and said he'd just have tomato soup. We pointed to something similar on the menu (you know where this is coming from now, I think). Sure enough, after asking for some pepper to accompany his meal, he managed to spray the first mouthful all over the club president sitting opposite, Pat O'Dea, who was resplendent in his tour blazer et al.

Well, although of cricket went out of the window after this hilarious start to the evening. Thankfully the cab driver knew where to drop us -- "the one with the big blue light outside" -- and half a dozen of us trooped to our rooms.

Hang on, something's not quite right here, more than one of us thought. The staircase is on the left, surely. No, we've been given our keys. We're just drunk. But sure enough, the rooms were full of clothes, suitcases etc, only they were not ours. Ridiculously, the same cab driver picked us up (or did they all look alike?) after we handed back all our bogus keys and managed to get us home.

On the field, we scampered home in a barmy run-chase and all was forgiven. Beckett, by the way, was to serve KCC with distinction in the not too distant future after that.

On to Kuala Lumpur, where the Selangor Club managed to put out almost a Malaysian national team against us in 35-degree heat in the first game, of limited overs. Geoff Lever, my predecessor as captain of Crusaders, had me opening the bowling and came up approaching my fifth over saying "I'll give you a breather after this". I advised him in no uncertain terms that I would be bowling 10 straight or no more than five all day and it was thereupon that Banerjee, an excellent player, decided he liked my medium pace. Thankfully, he got bored and was caught off the fifth ball of one of my overs, on the boundary by Brian Catton, so that the over went 1-0-18-1. One of my better efforts.

Anyway, Jim Middleton managed to abuse the home umpires during a tie-exchanging session after the second game -- something about specs and a white stick -- so off we trooped to Singapore.

John Hansen's legendary blues collection took over on this leg. He barrelled us all down to Change Alley -- nothing like it is today -- and said if there was one place in the world that we could buy "Crazy Lemon" by Joe Ely, it would be here. I think every member of the tour party bought a pirated tape of said man -- "Live Shots" is the album if anyone is interested, and Crazy Lemon became our theme tune for the few remaining days.

More than two decades on, it is this type of tour that means I occasionally have the urge to ring Mr Justice John Hansen in New Zealand at 3 in the morning after a Saturday night's entertainment and start singing "Well it's true that I stole a Budweiser truck ...", to be greeted with "Jesus, not you again".

I hope the 2008 KCC tourists can bring back such memories. Good luck to you all on and off the pitch.



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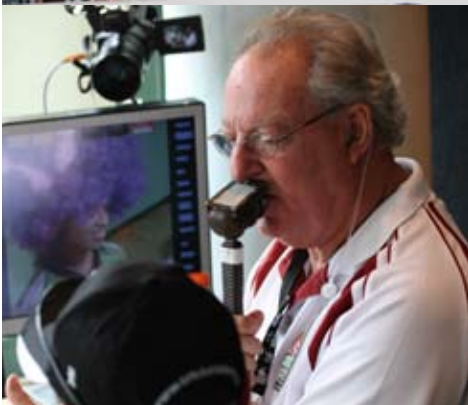
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Kowloon Cricket Club... home of the Hong Kong Cricket Sixes

Scenes from the 2007 Hong Kong Cricket Sixes. Photos courtesy Travis Pittman





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