

The UK Jesters Squash Tour to South Africa 2016

Report

Introduction

The tour left Heathrow on the evening of Tuesday 6th September with nine of its ten participants:

Players:

Jamie Douglas
Jon Gliddon
Ross McHoul
Paul Robbins
Richard Winter
Charles Fuente

Partners:

Rose Fitzgerald
Kerry Gliddon
Jan Fuente
Sophie Winter (joined us on 9th September)

The Tour

Wednesday 7th September

We arrived and met our Cape Town hosts before meeting up at Western Province Cricket Club, visited Table Mountain, enjoyed a tour of Newlands Cricket ground, including a walk on the hallowed turf and drinks in the Newlands Long Room.



Thursday 8th September

Climbed Lion's Head in the morning, had lunch on the waterfront in Cape Town and played (and won) our first squash match against Western Province Cricket Club in the afternoon. We all enjoyed private dinners with a variety of hosts in the evening.



Friday 9th September

The players (except Jon) played golf at Atlantic Beach. Sophie Winter arrived and joined the others to shop at the waterfront. A wonderful dinner was enjoyed at Atlantic Beach courtesy of Bruce Kaiser.



Saturday 10th September

A fascinating tour west of Cape Town leading to a wine-tasting in Constantia. Our second match (a 3-3 draw) against Kelvin Grove was moved to WPCC and featured three of the players from the first match. Our visit to Cape Town culminated in an excellent dinner hosted by Martin Brossy.



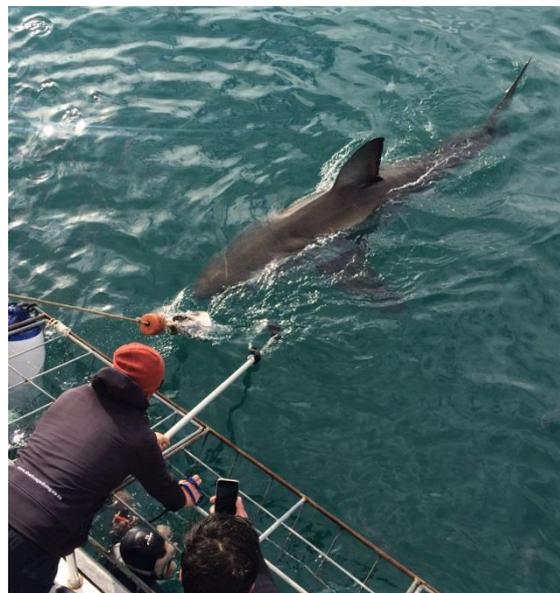
Sunday 11th September

We met at WPCC and left by minibus for Gansbaai, via Khayelitsha, Gordon's Bay and Hermanus where we met Jonny Leslie. We then met Dave Sawtelle at Stanford Wine Estate for a wine-tasting lunch before an impromptu squash match at Gansbaai's only court followed by dinner at Saxon Lodge courtesy of his wife Caron.



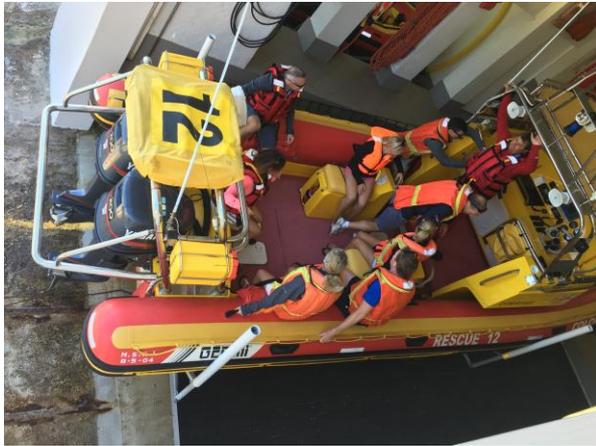
Monday 12th September

Thanks to Dave Sawtelle, the whole party went cage diving with Great White sharks early on Monday morning. We then left for Knysna arriving at Eric Brotherton's Kynsna Hollow in the afternoon and enjoying dinner with Jesters hosts that evening.



Tuesday 13th September

A large party of UK Jesters enjoyed a thrilling trip on the Knysna lifeboat out through the Heads into the Indian Ocean and back into the lagoon. This was followed by water-skiing in the lagoon with Keith Cretchley, a squash match (which we won) featuring both singles and doubles in the afternoon with the Kynsna Jesters, and dinner afterwards hosted by Rein and Hilda Hofmeyr.



Wednesday 14th September

Breakfast at Kynsna Hollow and then travelled to visit the Kynsna Elephant Park before starting our journey to St Francis Bay. En route we stopped at the Blaauwkrantz Bridge, where Jon and Richard completed the world's longest bungee jump, before meeting our hosts at St Francis Bay squash club. We played another enjoyable series of doubles matches (which we won) before drinks in the bar and a braai at the club.



Thursday 15th September

A relaxed morning with our respective hosts (walking, canoeing and jet skiing) before meeting for lunch at The Big Time Taverna. A late lunch for some, and horse-riding for others, before an evening braai hosted by Greg Darke and his wife.



Friday 16th September

Travel to Port Elizabeth and fly to Durban. Rose flew on to Johannesburg and London. We were then taken to the Durban Country Club for an excellent squash match (which we won). An excellent dinner then took place at Café 99 (organised by Marten and Sheila Corfe) before staying with our respective hosts overnight.

Saturday 17th September

Sophie returned to London. We visited a crocodile centre and Zulu village in the morning. This was followed by lunch at Cotwolds Downs where there was a rain-shortened game of golf for some and impromptu doubles squash at Gillitts squash club for others. In the evening Martin and Sheila Corfe hosted an excellent dinner.



Sunday 18th September

We travelled to Pietermaritzburg where we met our respective hosts and lunched with them before playing a wonderful squash match (which we won) at Michaelhouse followed by a most enjoyable informal supper afterwards.



Monday 19th September

The party divided with one half playing golf and the other visiting Benvie Gardens. In the evening our hosts arranged a wonderful dinner (in the presence of Rex Pennington) at the Fleur-de-Lys Club at Hilton College.



Tuesday 20th September

We travelled to Spienkop where Garth Van Rensburg gave us a marvellous talk on the historic Boer war battle that took place there. From there we travelled to Tugela Lodge and swam in the Tugela River before a wonderful braai overlooking the river.



Wednesday 21st September

After breakfast, we travelled to Johannesburg and lunched with our hosts. We enjoyed an informal series of coaching games with boys at St Stithian's College before dinner with our hosts.



Thursday 22nd September

Dave Jacques organised a fascinating tour of the Cradle of Mankind at Maropeng, followed by lunch there, before all but Jon, Charles and Jan travelled to the airport to return home.



Conclusion

The level of hospitality provided by our hosts was outstanding. They were highly organised and entertained us at no small cost. We enjoyed a great number of excellent dinners, wonderful accommodation, visits to a number of interesting sites, travel by minibus from Cape Town to Port Elizabeth, by plane from Port Elizabeth to Durban, and otherwise with our hosts (sometimes over long distances), all at the cost of the South African Jesters.

I think the UK tourists formed the unanimous view that the generosity of our hosts was exceptional, was very gratefully received, and will always be remembered by everyone of us.

November 2016