

England Rounders U14s Dubai Tour, 2011

Monday

Monday was just travelling, as the flight there lasted seven hours. The time flew by as we were occupied well by the built in TVs we had. We arrived around 7:00pm Dubai time and we decided to eat out but we soon found out it was very easy to get lost in Dubai, so we turned back to the hotel and had a nice meal there instead.

Tuesday

Tuesday morning we were given a lie in, so we got out the map and went out for breakfast at a place called *Pauls* where they did some nice pastries and amazing hot chocolates which were just like melted chocolate. In the afternoon we went to Wellington International School where we had our first training session. During that training session we had two friendlies against the school.

After a day of training we went to a giant shopping mall - much bigger than any in England. It was called the *Mall Of Emirates* and there were hundreds of shops there. That night we went for a team meal at *TGI Friday's*. For dessert my family and I went to a chocolate shop where I had the best chocolate that I have ever tasted.

Wednesday

On Wednesday we had an early morning as we had to go to their school at the start of their school day which was around 7.30am. We had breakfast in their canteen and then one of the teachers took us on tour of their school and from what we saw their school was huge (if I went there I could guarantee I would get lost). Once the tour was finished we were asked to take part in one of their Year 8 PE lessons, which was fun because we got to ask them what sort of things they liked to do out there.

After that we finally got to go to Jumeirah Beach: it was beautiful as the sea was clear and you could see the fish swim around you. We enjoyed that the most because that was where our team really started to take shape. Once we left the beach we had to get into game mode as our very first international match came. We knew it was serious as there was a ceremony where we sang the national anthem – although our anthem went a little pear shaped as we started our singing a little too early.

Before the match we were given great gift of a nice glass trophy by the opposition. We were all doing great from start to finish. All high balls were caught and nearly every ball that we hit we managed to score from. It was a great moment for me when the first ever ball I faced, I scored my first ever rounder for England.

First game- Eng vs. WIS B we won by 15½ -3½

Next game- Eng vs. WIS A we won by 11- a ½

That night was a free night allowing us to eat where ever we wanted to, so we ate at a spicy Italian restaurant.

Thursday

The first thing we did was have breakfast at another shopping mall even bigger than the *Mall of Emirates*. We ate at a cafe called *More Cafe*. After breakfast we were all stuffed but we had a chance to shop round the mall and there was this huge sweet shop called *Candylicious* where they did the biggest lollies you could have asked for. We then got the chance to go up the tallest tower in the world and the views we could see were very impressive.

For the final time in Dubai we had to go back into game mode, but this time we weren't just playing a school we were playing the best in Dubai. Once again fielding was tight and our batting got stronger throughout (and this time we did our anthem right!).

First game- Eng vs. Dubai A we won by 7½- 4½

Next game- Eng vs. Dubai B we won by 8-6.

That night we went out as a team to *Burger Fuel* which was very nice.

Friday

Friday, our last full day was a free day where we got to go to *Aquaventure*, their biggest water park, at the Atlantis Hotel. It was great fun. Their slides were fun and scary especially the Leap of Faith as it was literally a drop into a tunnel filled with fish. Another one was called Shark Attack where you go into tunnels in pitch black and come into a tunnel filled with fish, sting rays and sharks. The best thing was when we met Peter Andre there! He was so nice to us. He talked to us and had pictures with us. He even came on the rapid ride with me! Afterwards we went to a very posh restaurant to have our presentation evening, where we were given a speech from our manager and our coach Harriet. This is when we got a medal and a lapel pin of an English rose.

The Dubai Rounders tour was a proud experience to be part of and will not be forgotten.