

Home International 045 Mens Report

It was a decidedly early start when some of us headed off to Bristol airport to catch the 8:05 am flight to Dublin. The 045 men's team consisted of Nick Jones Richard Murphy Ian Fenner Evans Gary Hales and Greg Watkins. A team of 5 tasked with confronting all before us and playing all 3 matches which was going to be tough. After a stroll around the city and a light lunch it was Ireland first up. On paper they had their strongest side for a few years and so it looked a tough ask for us. It turned out to be a brutally tough encounter. First up was Greg cheered on by Colgate superstar wife Jen. Greg played his heat out but just went down 3-2 in an hour and 20 minutes to David Borton who spills every drop of blood...literally to win. Spurred on by his very young son who cheered him on with the cry "come on daddy.....try harder". Gary restored the balance in his usual assassin style of squash so much so one English supporter was heard to say that it was like "watching a daddy long legs having his legs pulled off one by one" Great stuff Gary supported by the lovely Sally who was there all weekend long. Enter the fray Nick Jones. A brutal match with Nick having a form of man flu to defeat in 4 very tough games his Irish opponent who is very fit himself. Ian finished the match off effectively after dropping the first game. Captain Murphy rounded it off with a tough 3 -0 win against Swiss fell runner Michael Cowhie. A great 4 -1 team win

Saturday morning and there were some stiff limbs. Scotland were missing some influential players but the job needed to be done. Greg was first up...but where was Jen ?!! Only gone shopping hadn't she !! Greg duly did the business and put a point on the board. Straight forward and comprehensive wins for the dynamic duo of Hales and Fenner Evans saw us home before Nick again took to the court. He holed out 3-2 against a difficult opponent to again secure the point. Richard then completed a five nil win for the Welsh boys.

Onto the final match against England. Always very tough and this would be no different. There was great endeavour and nothing was left off the court by the boys but that extra bit of quality was always there and we tiredly succumbed to a final defeat. Ian was dangerously near in taking any of the three games emphasising the closeness of the contestants and this was mirrored in some of the other matches but England deservedly took the spoils.

Second place secured we moved on to the customary frivolities and the commitment shown on the court in the previous days was continued on the dance floor and late into the night in the bar. Captain Murphy showed his steady hand on serving the food and then promptly threw all the roast potatoes all over the table causing Wendy Norris to dive full length to ensure none hit the floor. Having eaten my starter, my bread roll and saving the spuds - this was a superhuman effort.

Nicks shirt was commented on during the speeches. Its amazing what you can pick up these days in a charity shop! You would not have been able to pick him out in a snowstorm. Nice one Jonesy !!

I never cease to enjoy the completion and all the support and camaraderie that go with the weekend. People give everything they have on the court and enjoy themselves afterwards. Playing for your country is very special and I would like to thank all the players in all the teams who travelled. On Sunday morning it was time for an early departure to the airport - We would soon be home.....!!!!