

MEMORIES OF MALAGA MARCH 2004

Controversial appointment of sgt at arms at the airport due to some spurious rule about forgetting the “pile ring”. Our scouse lawyer and part time Welshman, “Davies Isn’t it” had invoked the ruling to take his mind off the memory of the aforementioned piles so lovingly gathered on the previous trip to Nice, it also excused his telling of the “ole man river” joke to fellow scouser Green, hereafter referred to as Green scouse.

Thus “absolutely” was appointed and hesitantly began surreptitious note taking to fight back and to ensure that the kitty would not go hungry.

So successful was this process that the fines on the first Saturday morning were so numerous that the kitty doubled in size, unfortunately I was instructed to destroy the notes relating to those fines to protect the guilty, and hence they are omitted from this summary. Suffice it to say the messrs Dymond and “Isn’t It” –paid a heavy price for constantly having a go at “Absolutely”. “Yosser” paid heavily for excess giggling, David...”nasal sick”..Currran for over-confidence in the flying department..... he remained sober until landing. David ...Air miles... Barrow was fined for being too blasé about the whole flying thing and for completing the Telegraph crossword before we had got on the plane. Coleman was fined for invisibility, a consistent theme throughout his year. Lee...”are the shops open yet”.....Childs was fined for over-spending at the airport. Jim for looking like death warmed-up, and then a remarkable recovery at the sight of the first school child. NK was of course fined for potential “snapping” at any vague hint of criticism from the assorted travellers about any of his public transport arrangements. “Are the shops open yet” fairing particularly badly in this area. Lawrence...”if I were a rich man”.... Kershaw for under-packing, carrying all his worldly goods in a bag no bigger than a briefcase. New travel member Mr Lovett, wearing trainers at the airport but without the required shell suit. Mr Khan, in the interests of bad taste, was fined for already having a tan before we set off.

The story therefore can only commence on Saturday, and memories of Friday will need to be added if anyone can remember what happened.

Saturday fines were as follows, and you can fill in the gaps to work out what we were doing.

1/ NK spilt something on his trousers during breakfast in memory of Mr Pennell so that the tradition of remembering where we had been by the ceremonial reading of the trousers could now continue.

2/ "Isn't It" was fined for short-term memory loss for asking Neil what the plan was after Neil had just told us.

3/ Jim for asking directions to the children's play park.

4/ Lovett and "nasal sick" for wearing trainers. So that's a double fault for Lovett.

5/ Khan for wearing Jesus sandals, but failing to provide extra bread and fish for breakfast.

6/ Whilst waiting for the tour bus, Russell and "Isn't It" engaged some enthusiastic palm-readers in merry banter, finishing on a jovial note with "May their curses go with them", to much arm waving and obvious bonhomie emanating from the aforementioned Gypos.

7/ Jim, fancy dress, a bright red ensemble, no doubt signalling danger to any passing youth groups.

8/ During a group photo session at the castle Mr Coleman went missing, thus preserving his invisibility.

9/ "Ja tomar por donde amargam vamos a tomar una cervesca". I have no idea what that means but it caused much hilarity when read out of "Are the shops open yet" phrase book. Answers on a postcard please.

10/ NK for over-exciting us on a Bus trip, with no apparent sights to see, but a lovely trip into and out of the Bus station.

11/ Khan avoiding incriminating photos by always having his back to the camera, and the bar if it was his round.

12/ "Are the shops open yet" continued with quotes from his phrase book and found this particular gem. "The waterfall was as big as a fuck", which proved of inestimable value for the remainder of the trip.

13/ "Mr Invisible" was fined for telling Russell to buy "Isn't It" a brandy, which clearly was the last thing he needed, and Russell was fined for his response.

14/ "Are the shops open yet" was fined for assuming the appearance of a "wide-boy", due his wrap-around sunglasses, and obviously not for any other reason.

15/ "Yosser" was fined for sitting in the shade when specifically insisting we went somewhere warm on our trip.

16/ "Absolutely" self-imposed fine for potential "boat-rocking" and mutiny re ongoing comments about the bus trip.

17/ "Isn't It" was fined for wearing a floppy hat that made him look a "dick" in a public place. I can't see the novelty in that with hindsight.

18/ "Nasal sick" for finding another use for a shaky hand, the purchase of the ubiquitous snow storm gift.

19/ NK for his nineteenth mention of his trip to Barbados, and gloating about the joys of retirement.

20/ Myself for a very bad Lovett joke, no idea what it was, again answers on a postcard please.

21/ "Isn't It" for sleeping in the bar, normally he only falls asleep after a "baa".

22/ "Green scouse" for stealing the Chairman's beer. See dictionary reference for "Scouser", cross-referenced under hub caps, and thieving git.

23/ "Invisible" for sleeping with "Isn't It" in the bar, and no noticeable difference to when he is awake.

24/ "If I were a rich man" challenging the Sgt at arms over the speed of fines being added to the list, and could he have discount for bulk.

25/ Jim had seen a CD shop but couldn't find it again and was dying of frustration, despite walking around for 2 hours in search of it.

Myself and "Air miles went straight to this shop to wait for Jim as arranged, eventually giving up and going for a beer.

26/ Jim and "are the shops open yet" fined for salivating over Sylvia the charming shop assistant we met on our exciting bus trip, who was proffering her wares in a china shop.

To the evening;

Due to hazy recollection of events the notes taken were correspondingly brief and you can fill in your own gaps.

1/ Dress code was to be smart casual;

To "are the shops open yet" this means a new cream suit.

To "Isn't It" this means a Welsh rugby shirt and anorak.

2/ "Yosser" missing grace.

3/ "Absolutely", heavy self-punishment for old ham jokes and inflammatory remarks re: smoke emanating from the kitchen area.

4/ Mr Lovett for discussing the environment and his "re-cycling" proficiency award.

5/ Mr Lovett for admitting to everyone's amazement that he is not "a speed merchant".

6/ "Nasal sick" during deep discussions about "Isn't Its" dietary problem suggested that rather than sit there wrestling listlessly with his steak he should, "stick it up his arse to thicken things up a bit".

7/ Cigar smoking was tolerated but pudding eaters, “Invisible”, “are the shops open yet” and Khan were heavily fined for being heavy.

8/ “Isn’t It” bed early.

9/ Russell refused to bribe me with beer content in the knowledge this would ensure I would tell him to “**** off”, which always seems to give him a purpose in life.

10/ “Green scouse” regaled us with too many bad jokes, many of which he could not remember the punch lines to, but as he had stolen them from various other comedians (see earlier reference to scouse) this was not surprising.

The evening then degenerated into “are the shops open yet” determined to find live music, Green scouse determined to find anything he could. “If I were a rich man” determined to find a reason to go to bed, as two glasses of wine had made him woozy. “Invisible” couldn’t be seen anywhere. Russell, “Yosser”, NK, “nasal sick” and “Air miles” opted for a quiet drink in Kellett’s bar, that unique treat in Malaga an Irish bar run by a Dutchman. “Absolutely” was wide-awake and looking for mischief.

I believe most achieved their desired aims.

Sunday, Fuengorola day

All assembled for breakfast fines, apart from “Isn’t It”, Russell informed us he was still practising his open Spanish vowels and he found the bathroom provided the best resonance.

1/ NK complained that the fines were too excessive on day 1 and yet on day 2 complained that the “kitty” was short of funds. Typical accountant overstocked too risky, under-stocked balance sheet weak.

2/ “Invisible” in a new attempt to get noticed appeared in a rugby shirt, but no one said a word about it.

3/ Jim sent himself a text “Missing you, love Jan” to help him remember to not call her Sylvia at a critical moment.

Off to Mijah;

1/ Jim for walking around semi-naked.

2/ "If I were a rich man" for wearing a jumper in the hot Sun until 2.23pm when everyone else was sweating buckets.

3/ Lovett over-efficient time keeping re the days planned agenda when the rest of the party were firmly in neutral.

4/ Despite the extremely bright sunlight nobody had seen "Invisible for hours".

5/ Mr Khan stayed in the shade to keep out of the sun, and then expounded his plans for world domination in the Lake District. Far too ambitious for the present company.

6/ When offered further opportunities to travel by public transport Russell through a "wobbler" claiming to have had a "public transport overload", NK gave him a look, and Russell was suitably contrite.

7/ I managed to use my mobile to send a jug of Sangria to my wife and was therefore instructed to fine myself for over-generosity.

8/ "Isn't It" was fined for going to the bar and coming back without my gin and tonic, and despite the fact I hadn't actually ordered one he should have "known".

9/ Jim, NK and "Invisible" were despatched as food gatherers, but as the final order was left with "Invisible" nobody saw him so nothing happened.

10/Jim had spotted a school party in the square so was fined for removing some more clothing for maximum impact.

11/ "If I were a rich man" was fined for suggesting Mr Khan was a terrorist, it takes one to know one was the general consensus.

12/ Green scouse having stolen the chairman's beer the day before now proceeded to eat Kevin's dinner.

13/ "Nasal sick" returned with another particularly tasteful snow storm gift, featuring dolphins leaping over the virgin Mary, or something equally grotesque.

14/ "Isn't It" was fined not for eating lamb chops, a quite reasonable action, but for sucking far too enthusiastically on the thighbones. "Nasal sick" wasn't sure when he had last seen that, but would hunt out the video.

15/ Russell thoughtfully informed us that "Isn't Its" vowels were coming on nicely, more like stroganoff now than the previous soup consistency. Nice.

The evening and beyond

1/ Jim's restaurant choice was a triumph of style over substance. It was Fawlty Towers gourmet night, but similarly without any food.

2/ NK remembered a similar night in Barbados and cleverly ducked the bread rolls that headed his way, if only we had known about the lack of food we wouldn't have been so profligate.

3/ "Air miles" was so hungry he was prepared to get a carry out and sneak it into the restaurant. This was frowned upon as we all felt the sight of food in this restaurant may have proved too much for the owner.

4/ Green scouse ordered the bill without NK's permission, and was severely reprimanded by all.

5/ "Nasal sick" decided to work out the cost of eating nothing as an exercise in creative thinking, and he under-estimated.

6/ Russell seemed oblivious to all the complaints around him, a bit like when he puts windows in, as he was wearing a contented smile despite the vast amount of Euros being sucked out of his wallet. It transpired that from where he was sitting the waitress' dress was made completely transparent by the lighting behind her, and the leather thong she was apparently wearing was much to be admired. Unfortunately Russell didn't reveal all, unlike the waitress, until we were leaving.

7 Mr Lovett at the next bar spills my G and T, the waiter asked him if he would like another one. "Air miles" suggested he should order two more, one to drink and one to knock over.

The evening degenerated into a very long session in the Irish bar, with a unique game of “double or drop” based loosely on how many gifts we could con out of mine host, and how little tonic you could get away with in a half pint of gin. Yosser trying valiantly to tell us a story about his mother but dissolving into giggles at every other word.

I am sure that this brief record of events is the tip of the iceberg, but hopefully it will provide an aide memoir to all involved and bring back happy memories, and provide stimulation to the required humour download requisite for our forthcoming touring party to Lisbon.