

DEVON CRICKET

# SOUTH AFRICA U15 BOYS TOUR 2025



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## ITINERARY

DATE	DETAILS	VENUE   OPPOSITION   FORMAT
18 October	Practice Session	Skukuza Cricket Club - 9:30am
19 October	Match Day 1	Skukuza Cricket Club Johan Rudolph Cricket Academy 50 over - 9:30am
21/22 October	Match Day 2 & 3	Skukuza Cricket Club Nelspruit High School 2-Day - 9:30am
24 October	Match Day 4	Milnerton High School Western Province Dev XI T20 x 2 - 1:30pm & 5:30pm (D/N)
26 October	Match Day 5	Pinelands High School Western Province Hub XI 50 over - 10:00am
27 October	Match Day 6	Rondebosch Cricket club Western Province Youth XI 50 over - 10:00am
29/30 October	Match Day 7 & 8	Rondebosch Cricket club Western Province Invitational XI 2-Day - 10:00am



## TOUR ITINERARY

16 OCT - 1 NOV







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## WELCOME FROM THE TOUR MANAGERS

We're delighted to welcome you to this year's Devon U15 South Africa Tour brochure. As Joint Tour Managers, we're incredibly proud to be part of a programme that has created lifelong memories, helped to develop exceptional talent, and built strong international friendships over 23 years.

This brochure is more than just a record of fixtures and facts, it's a celebration of the tour. Inside, you'll find insightful articles, player profiles, and messages

from our valued sponsors who help make this tour possible.

We encourage you to take the time to explore each page, as they offer a glimpse into what makes this tour such a special experience for everyone involved.

Thank you for your continued support, and here's to another unforgettable chapter in our tour's story.

**Matt Theedom & Matt Cooke**  
*Joint Tour Managers*





## WHY SOUTH AFRICA REMAINS A SPECIAL PLACE FOR DEVON CRICKET

**South Africa continues to be a favourite destination with its stunning scenery, amazing wildlife, rich culture, and a deep passion for sport. For cricket lovers, it's more than just playing games, it's a chance to experience a country where competition is part of everyday life.**

**But what makes it the perfect place for Devon's yearly cricket tours?**

For Devon's Under-15 cricket team, these tours are more than just matches. Since starting in 2002, the tour has become a proud tradition, thanks to founder Alan Swift. It's helped build lasting friendships and given over 320+ young players a chance to develop their game in one of the most beautiful countries in the world.

Matt Theedom, Tour Manager, explains:

*"Our success hinges on the strong bonds we've forged with our hosts in Kruger National Park and Cape Town. These relationships ensure our tours are not just memorable but also impactful, both on and off the pitch."*

Over the years, the tour has helped launch many cricket careers. Some former players have gone on to play for their counties or even represent England. Players like Lewis Gregory, Dom Bess, and the Overton twins are great examples of the tour's lasting impact.

Alan Swift, Tour Founder, adds:

*"The principal reason for travelling 6000 miles is to provide players with an opportunity to widen their cricket experience through playing against capable and competitive opponents in unfamiliar conditions."*

Of course, not every player will make it to the top, but the tour has still seen many go on to play professionally:

- » Tom Allin (2003 Warwickshire)
- » Adam Dibble (2005-06 Somerset)
- » James Burke (2005-06 Somerset, Surrey & Leicestershire)
- » Lewis Gregory (2006-07 Somerset & England)
- » Craig Overton (2009 Somerset & England)
- » Jamie Overton (2009 Somerset, Surrey & England)
- » Dom Bess (2011-12 Somerset, Yorkshire & England)
- » Ben Green (2012-13 Somerset)
- » Kazi Szymanski (2014 -15 Glamorgan)
- » Tom Lammonby (2015 Somerset)
- » Sonny Baker (2018 Somerset)
- » Fin Hill (2021 Cancelled due to Covid-19 Somerset)

Winning is never guaranteed, but progress always is. Playing in new conditions forces the team to push their limits. It's about more than just runs and wickets, it's about growing together.

Coach Paul Heard puts it perfectly:

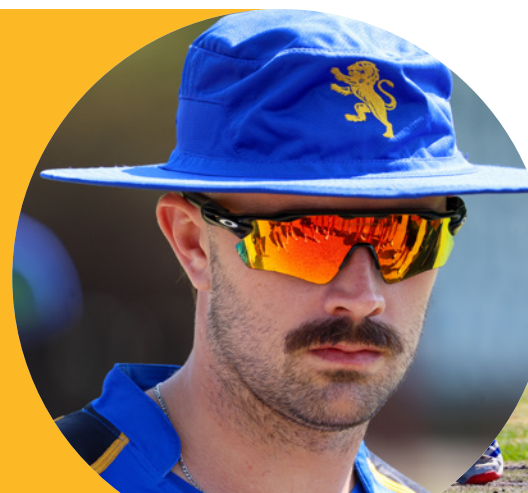
**"We don't expect every match to end in victory. What we do expect is for every player to give their best, both individually and as a team. It's about realising one's potential and embracing the journey of improvement."**

There's also much more to the tour than cricket. Players get to see South Africa's wildlife, meet local people, and experience different ways of life. These moments help them grow into more well-rounded people.

The tour gives young players a real test, tough games, new conditions, and strong opponents. These challenges help them grow as players and people. They learn resilience, teamwork, and how to adapt quickly.

**"The South Africa tour was pivotal in my cricketing journey. It's not just about the matches; it's about the invaluable lessons learned both on and off the field."**

Ben Green, a former guest coach in 2022 and 2024





Alan Swift encourages players to embrace every aspect of the trip:

*"Don't be too insular, either as an individual or a group. Take the opportunity to talk to people you meet and gain some insight into their way of life and the contrasting cultures. If you do, South Africa and its people will repay you with interest."*

*Behind the scenes, many people help make these tours happen, sponsors, volunteers, coaches, and the management team. As Devon prepares for its 23rd tour, the appreciation for everyone involved runs deep.*

*In the end, this tour is about more than cricket. It's about new friendships, personal growth, and unforgettable memories. Every player who goes on this journey brings home lessons that last a lifetime.*

## SO WHY SOUTH AFRICA?

**Because the real answers aren't found in words, they're heard on the pitch, shared in team talks, and remembered in stories told for many years to come.**





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# THE BEST TOUR I'VE EVER BEEN ON!

It's difficult to put into words how much being a part of this tour means to me. Touring South Africa with the Devon Under 15s made a big impression on me both as a player and a person, and it's still the best tour I've ever been on!

Age group tours like this are incredibly important for a player's development, both on and off the field. Not only will you learn a lot about yourself as a player, you will also learn a lot about yourself as a person.

It's incredibly valuable to get the chance to execute your skills in different conditions, and it's equally important that you experience different places and cultures.

It's an absolute pleasure to be involved in something that proved so valuable to my development, and I hope that the 2025 squad will find it as beneficial as I did.

It was a tour that I still look back on with fond memories and I can't wait to be a part of it again this year.

Tom Lammonby

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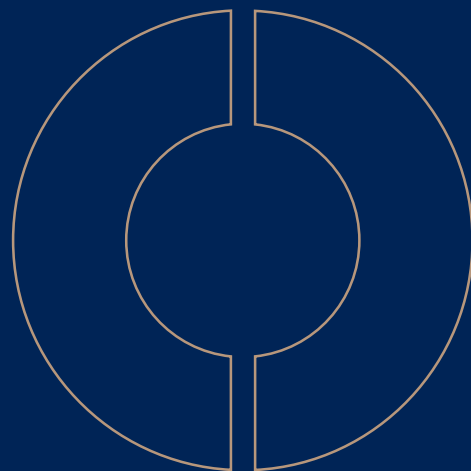
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*Good Luck* to Freddie Tucker and  
the squad out in South Africa.  
What a fantastic opportunity!

Best wishes, Christo Nation and  
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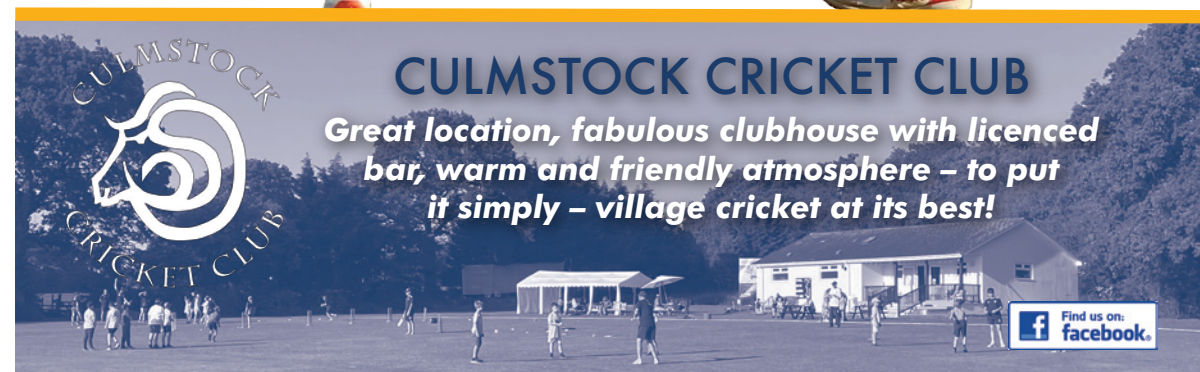
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## A WILD ENCOUNTER IN SKUKUZA

By Frik Rossouw – Our host, Groundsman at Skukuza Cricket Club and the General Manager of Environmental Crime Investigations, SANParks.

**When the Devon Cricket Tour first ventured into the wilds of South Africa in 2002, few could have imagined the enduring bond that would form between a group of young cricketers from England and our community nestled within the Kruger National Park. As a Senior Ranger here at the time, I had the privilege of initiating contact with Alan Swift, laying the groundwork for what has become a cherished annual tradition.**

Skukuza, our home base, is more than just a rest camp; it's a vibrant village teeming with life, both human and wild. Skukuza Cricket Club, situated in the heart of our staff village, offers a unique playing experience where the boundaries are shared with the untamed bush. For most cricketers, the idea of sharing

a pitch with Africa's Big Five roaming just beyond the boundary rope seems like something out of a dream, but in Skukuza, this is simply the norm.

Skukuza Cricket Club is unlike any other in the world. Surrounded by the wilderness of the Kruger, this ground offers a unique combination of sport and safari. There are no stands filled with spectators here, just trees, bushveld, and occasionally the odd impala grazing near the boundary. It's not uncommon for games to be paused while elephants amble past or for players to spot giraffes from the pavilion. The sight of monkeys inspecting kit bags or warthogs trotting across the outfield is all part of the experience.

This is cricket in its wildest form, both literally and figuratively. For young cricketers from Devon, playing in Skukuza won't just be about runs and wickets. It'll be about memories, perspective, and respect for nature.

### MY JOURNEY

Over the years, the Devon boys have become part of our extended family. My wife, Petro, has taken on the role of team chef during their stays, preparing hearty meals that fuel their adventures both on and off the field. Her dedication ensures that the team experiences not just the thrill of the game but also the warmth of our hospitality.

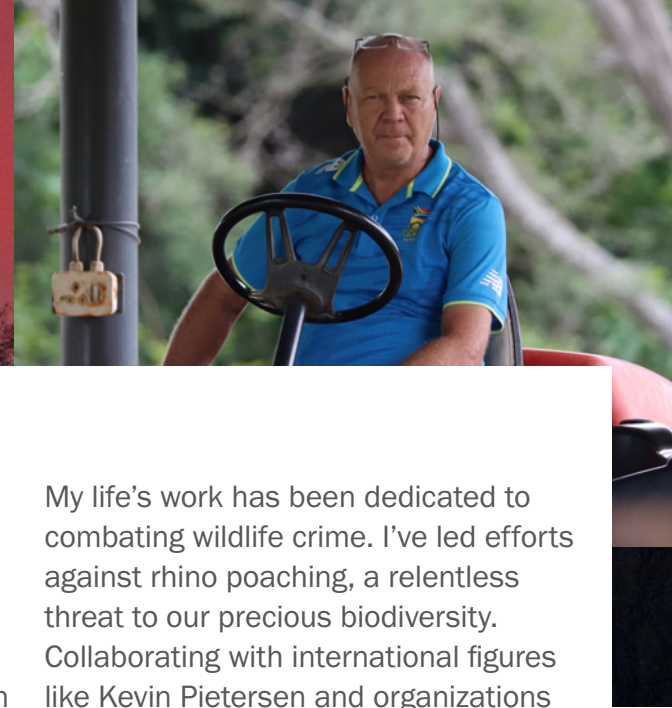
Our son, Jean, has enjoyed this cross-continental camaraderie. Through the initial exchange programme set up by Alan, he spent time playing at Heathcoat Cricket Club, immersing himself in English cricket culture. Today, Jean serves as the head greenkeeper at the Skukuza Golf Club, renowned as the wildest golf course in the world. With no fences, the course is a haven for wildlife, and Jean's mornings often begin with ensuring the fairways are clear of any overnight animal activity.

Having grown up in South Africa and served for many years with SANParks, particularly in the Anti-Rhino Poaching Unit, I've come to know the Kruger National Park not only as a conservation area but as a living, breathing ecosystem filled with stories, danger, and beauty.

My life's work has been dedicated to combating wildlife crime. I've led efforts against rhino poaching, a relentless threat to our precious biodiversity. Collaborating with international figures like Kevin Pietersen and organizations such as SORAI, we've strived to protect these majestic creatures. I was also featured in a BBC documentary alongside Prince Harry, highlighting the grim realities of poaching and our ongoing battle to preserve wildlife.

My role was never just about protecting rhinos, it was about preserving a way of life, a piece of our natural heritage under threat from greed and exploitation.

The work is often dangerous. Poachers are desperate and heavily armed. We had to be more than just rangers; we were trackers, strategists, and at times, soldiers. Many long nights were spent on patrol, listening to the sounds of the bush, trying to distinguish between natural rhythms and signs of illegal activity. And through it all, the one constant was our love for this land, its silence, its sudden roars, and its uncanny ability to remind you how small you really are.





## A GLIMPSE INTO THE WILD

For the Devon squad, the Kruger experience will be more than just a couple of cricket fixtures, it'll be a journey into the soul of Africa. The park is home to over 140 species of mammals and more than 500 species of birds. From the haunting call of a fish eagle at dawn to the stealthy prowling of a leopard at dusk, every moment here is rich with discovery.

Players might catch sight of herds of elephants crossing the Sabie River or lions lounging beneath the fever trees. Crocodiles and hippos occupy the riverbanks, and the early morning drives might reveal everything from lions on the hunt to elusive wild dogs darting through the scrub.

The young cricketers from Devon will not only train and play in one of the most unique locations on Earth, but

they'll leave with an understanding of conservation, culture, and connection to something far bigger than themselves. They'll hear stories around the braai (barbecue) fires, learn local traditions, and maybe even pick up a few words in Shangaan, the language spoken by many of the park's staff.

As someone who has lived and breathed this landscape, I can say with certainty: the Kruger changes you. It teaches patience and respect.

For the Devon U15s, this part of their South African journey will likely become one of their most treasured memories.

As we prepare to welcome the team once again, I am filled with gratitude for the memories we've created and the friendships that have blossomed. Here's to many more years of cricket under the African sun, where the spirit of the game thrives amidst the wild beauty of Kruger.



## BACK AGAIN FOR THE BATTLE OF KRUGER!

**The Battle for Kruger will once again be played between the Devon U15 Cricket Team and Nelspruit Hoërskool.**

Our annual two-day fixture between Devon and the High School is always a great test for all players. Devon have taken the spoils in recent years, so fingers crossed for 30+ degrees and some good cricket!

Your tour will once again take you to the two most-visited tourist destinations in South Africa — the Kruger National Park and Cape Town. We at Kruger will strive to help you experience the magic and hospitality of our National Park and fulfil all your expectations.

**Frik Rossouw**

**Here in the Kruger, we look forward to welcoming our friends from the UK once again.**





# JT | WEALTH MANAGEMENT



Good luck  
to Alex and  
all the squad in  
South Africa

**Jonathan Tipper**  
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The JR Cricket Academy was established by myself and Elmarie du Plessis in 2014. Over the previous eight years I had gained experience coaching the Namibia and Uganda national cricket teams.

However, it had long been in the back of my mind to establish a cricket academy back in RSA. Now, ten years on, the JR Academy is the biggest cricket academy in Mpumalanga province. We started with coaching primary and high school youngsters and then launched a junior coaching programme, JR Cubs, which caters for grades 1 to 3 children.

Throughout the year, the academy also organises various tournaments, tours and matches for all the children. At the JR Academy, I am assisted

by Xander Pitchers and Roy Junior Chirwa. They are experienced and qualified coaches who add great value to the programme and also coach various teams at Nelspruit Hoërskool.

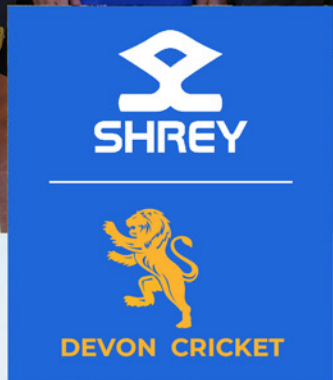
The Devon Development Cricket tour is the highlight of our cricket calendar. We have had some exciting and competitive matches at the Skukuza cricket oval — a great experience for our boys to play an U15 overseas touring team.

Many thanks to both Matts, Frik and their support teams for organising the 2025 tour.

**We are all looking forward to hosting you guys again!**

**Johan Rudolph**





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## CRICKET IN SOUTH AFRICA: A JOURNEY THROUGH HISTORY

As we prepare for our 23rd tour of South Africa, we reflect not just on the opportunity to play cricket in one of the most spectacular and passionate sporting countries in the world, but also on the unique and complex history of the game in South Africa, a story that spans generations, geographies, and, at times, profound societal change.



Cricket was first introduced to South Africa in the early 19th century by British colonists, with the first recorded match played in 1808. By the late 1800s, South Africa had become the third Test-playing nation, after England and Australia, with its first Test match in 1889.

Early South African cricket was predominantly white and elite, rooted firmly within colonial

structures and separated from the vast majority of the population.

Despite this, the game was passionately embraced by all communities. Black, Coloured, and Indian South Africans formed their own clubs and associations under extremely limited circumstances, playing in segregated leagues, often with little to no resources, but with deep commitment and love for the game.



## APARTHEID AND SPORTING ISOLATION

From 1948, apartheid entrenched racial segregation across all aspects of South African life, including sport. Cricket, like many other institutions, was divided along racial lines. Talented players of colour were systematically excluded from national selection, and entire communities were denied fair access to facilities, development pathways, and recognition.

In response to the injustice, the international cricket community eventually imposed a ban on South Africa, and from 1970 until 1991, the country was excluded from official

Test cricket. This period of sporting isolation became a powerful global symbol of resistance against apartheid, reinforcing the message that equality and fair play should extend beyond the boundary rope.

## REINTEGRATION AND TRANSFORMATION

In 1991, with the dismantling of apartheid underway and Nelson Mandela soon to walk free, South Africa were welcomed back into the international fold. The country played its first post-isolation ODI against India in Kolkata that same year. Just a year later, South Africa competed in the 1992 World Cup, a tournament that

reintroduced the Rainbow Nation to the cricketing world.

But reintegration brought new challenges. The need to redress the past and ensure equal opportunities for players of all backgrounds led to the introduction of transformation policies, including quotas aimed at increasing representation from historically disadvantaged groups.

These remain a subject of debate within South African cricket, balancing the legacies of history with the demands of merit, fairness, and unity.

Today, South African cricket reflects a country still on a journey, one striving to reconcile its history while fostering a more inclusive and competitive future.

The nation has produced some of the greatest cricketers the world has seen, from Jacques Kallis to Makhaya Ntini, from AB de Villiers to Kagiso Rabada, players who have captivated fans across the globe.

Cricket in South Africa is as much about community as it is about elite performance. Townships, schools, and clubs across the country remain vibrant centres of grassroots cricket. Touring sides like Devon Under-15s are not just visiting a country with breathtaking scenery and rich wildlife, from the Kruger National Park to the Table Mountain coastline, they're stepping into a sporting culture shaped by resilience, hope, and an undying love for the game.





## WHY WE TOUR SOUTH AFRICA

For our young players, this tour is about more than runs and wickets. It's about experiencing a country with a deep and powerful story, learning to understand different perspectives, and forming connections that last far beyond the final match.

### CRICKET IN SOUTH AFRICA IS PLAYED WITH HEART, PASSION, AND PURPOSE.

For 23 years, Devon's Under-15 tour has been privileged to be part of that story, and we look forward once again to contributing, learning, and enjoying everything this extraordinary country has to offer.



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and the rest of his team mates on their tour of South Africa

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Wishing Warwick Green and his teammates the very best of luck on their tour to South Africa with U15 Devon Cricket



## SIDMOUTH to NEWLANDS



**Some of my fondest and most formative memories in cricket began with a passport in my hand and a bag packed for tour. I still look back with huge gratitude on the opportunity I had to tour South Africa with the Devon Under-15s in 2011 and 2012. That was really where it all started for me.**

I was lucky, I went a year early, which meant I got two cracks at it. Not many get that kind of opportunity. That first trip was eye-opening. The heat, the pitches, the quality of cricket, the culture, it was nothing like what I'd known back home in Sidmouth. But more than

anything, it lit a fire in me. It gave me the sense that this was what I wanted to do. I came back knowing I wanted to be a professional cricketer.

Those tours didn't just help me improve on the field, they helped me grow off it. Being away from home at a young age, learning how to adapt, how to carry myself, how to play as a team and represent something bigger than myself, those lessons stick with me. Touring helped me mature quickly, and that's something I've carried with me all the way through.



I was fortunate to come through the Devon youth system, playing for Sidmouth and spending a bit of time at Exeter, before progressing into the Somerset Academy. Since then, I've gone on to play for Somerset and now Yorkshire, where I've just had the huge honour of captaining the four-day County Championship side, which was a really proud moment for me.

Along the way, there have been many more tours. I've spent time in Australia, including a spell at the Darren Lehmann Academy, where I really worked on refining my game and understanding what it takes to play at the top level. Then came the ultimate moment, being selected to tour with the England Test squad.

That took me back to South Africa in 2020, full circle from those first under-15 days. To walk out at Newlands in Cape Town and play a Test match for England was surreal. I'll never forget that feeling. Touring with the national side was everything you'd imagine, intense, exciting, challenging and I believe it was

all those early experiences on junior tours that laid the foundation for me to handle it.

Most recently, I spent the 2023-24 winter in Zimbabwe playing for the Southern Rocks. It was another brilliant experience, getting out of my comfort zone, playing in different conditions, learning about the world and myself at the same time. That passion for travelling and playing overseas, especially in Africa, has stayed with me.

For any young player reading this, embrace the tour. It's about more than just cricket. It's about resilience, independence, friendship, and seeing the world through the lens of sport. For me, every tour has added something: a new skill, a new perspective, or a renewed love for the game.

I owe a lot to those early tours with Devon. They helped shape the player and person I am today. And if you get the chance to tour, take it, you never know where that journey might lead.

**Dom Bess**



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ECB LEVEL 3 Coach

Assistant Pathway  
Coach

This will be my seventh tour to South Africa and sixth as a coach, and the excitement never fades. Kruger National Park remains my favourite overseas spot, second only to Beaford.

Since becoming Devon Cricket's full-time Assistant Pathway Coach in 2022, it's been incredibly rewarding to help shape young cricketers daily, especially on these tours. The cricket is challenging, the schedule intense, and the conditions unfamiliar, but the experiences are always lifechanging. It's a privilege to support players on and off the field, helping them grow through every opportunity these tours provide.



Guest Coach

Professional Player

I'm really excited about the opportunity to be involved in the Devon Cricket tour to South Africa once again. Having toured there as a youngster in 2014 and 2015, returning a decade later will be a

special moment for me. I'll be proud to represent Devon and to give back to the pathway that played such a huge role in my development. I'm looking forward to sharing my experiences with the younger players, supporting their growth, and enjoying some competitive cricket in a country that has meant a lot to my journey as a cricketer.



## TOUR SQUAD

DEVON U15 BOYS - 2025







CLUB	FIELDING POSITION
BOVEY TRACEY CC	EXTRA COVER
SCHOOL	OTHER INTERESTS
SOUTH DARTMOOR COMMUNITY COLLEGE	GOLF & GENERAL FITNESS
BATTING	SPORTING HERO
LEFT HAND	BEN STOKES
BOWLING / KEEPER	FAVOURITE FILM
RIGHT ARM SEAM	GROWN UPS

CLUB	FIELDING POSITION
NORTH DEVON CC & EXETER CC	SLIP
SCHOOL	OTHER INTERESTS
KING'S COLLEGE TAUNTON	HOCKEY, RUGBY, SQUASH & GOLF
BATTING	SPORTING HERO
RIGHT HAND	PAT CUMMINS
BOWLING / KEEPER	FAVOURITE FILM
RIGHT ARM SEAM	THE MAZE RUNNER



CLUB	FIELDING POSITION
EXETER CC	FOURTH SLIP
SCHOOL	OTHER INTERESTS
KING'S COLLEGE TAUNTON	HOCKEY, ACTING, RUGBY & COOKING
BATTING	SPORTING HERO
RIGHT HAND	JIMMY ANDERSON
BOWLING / KEEPER	FAVOURITE FILM
WICKET KEEPER	21 JUMP STREET

CLUB	FIELDING POSITION
IPPLEPEN CC	FIRST SLIP
SCHOOL	OTHER INTERESTS
PLYMOUTH COLLEGE	RUGBY & GOLF
BATTING	SPORTING HERO
RIGHT HAND	MOEEN ALI
BOWLING / KEEPER	FAVOURITE FILM
RIGHT ARM OFF SPIN	FAST & FURIOUS - HOBBS & SHAW



CLUB	FIELDING POSITION
SANDFORD CC	EXTRA COVER
SCHOOL	OTHER INTERESTS
BLUNDELL'S	FOOTBALL, GOLF, FOOD & COOKING
BATTING	SPORTING HERO
RIGHT HAND	JOE ROOT
BOWLING / KEEPER	FAVOURITE FILM
RIGHT ARM OFF SPIN	22 JUMP STREET

CLUB	FIELDING POSITION
PLYMSTOCK CC	MID-OFF
SCHOOL	OTHER INTERESTS
PLYMOUTH COLLEGE	RUGBY & GOLF
BATTING	SPORTING HERO
LEFT HAND	RORY MCILROY
BOWLING / KEEPER	FAVOURITE FILM
RIGHT ARM SEAM	TOP GUN (THE ORIGINAL)







CLUB	FIELDING POSITION
EXETER CC	MID-OFF
SCHOOL	OTHER INTERESTS
EXETER SCHOOL	GOLF & HOCKEY
BATTING	SPORTING HERO
RIGHT HAND	RAKHEEM CORNWALL
BOWLING / KEEPER	FAVOURITE FILM
RIGHT ARM SEAM	THE GENTLEMEN

CLUB	FIELDING POSITION
BUDLEIGH SALTERTON CC	COVER
SCHOOL	OTHER INTERESTS
EXMOUTH COMMUNITY COLLEGE	GOLF, RUGBY & NFL
BATTING	SPORTING HERO
RIGHT HAND	JOE ROOT
BOWLING / KEEPER	FAVOURITE FILM
LEFT ARM OFF SPIN	HAPPY GILMORE



CLUB	FIELDING POSITION
EXETER CC	THIRD MAN
SCHOOL	OTHER INTERESTS
EXETER SCHOOL	RELIGION, COOKING & HISTORY
BATTING	SPORTING HERO
RIGHT HAND	BRIAN CHARLES LARA
BOWLING / KEEPER	FAVOURITE FILM
LEFT ARM OFF & LEG SPIN	CARS, RATATOUILLE & THE GODFATHER

CLUB	FIELDING POSITION
CULMSTOCK CC	SLIP
SCHOOL	OTHER INTERESTS
UFFCULME SECONDARY SCHOOL	FOOTBALL, GOLF & BADMINTON
BATTING	SPORTING HERO
RIGHT HAND	JIMMY ANDERSON
BOWLING / KEEPER	FAVOURITE FILM
RIGHT ARM LEG SPIN	HAPPY GILMORE



CLUB	FIELDING POSITION
SIDMOUTH CC	POINT
SCHOOL	OTHER INTERESTS
EXETER SCHOOL	FOOTBALL
BATTING	SPORTING HERO
LEFT HAND	SHUBMAN GILL
BOWLING / KEEPER	FAVOURITE FILM
LEFT ARM OFF SPIN	PONYO

CLUB	FIELDING POSITION
EXETER CC	LONG-ON
SCHOOL	OTHER INTERESTS
KING'S COLLEGE TAUNTON	RUGBY, SQUASH & PADEL
BATTING	SPORTING HERO
LEFT HAND	AB DE VILLIERS
BOWLING / KEEPER	FAVOURITE FILM
LEFT ARM SEAM	WHITE HOUSE DOWN







<b>CLUB</b>	<b>FIELDING POSITION</b>
NORTH DEVON CC	EXTRA COVER
<b>SCHOOL</b>	<b>OTHER INTERESTS</b>
WEST BUCKLAND SCHOOL	FOOTBALL
<b>BATTING</b>	<b>SPORTING HERO</b>
RIGHT HAND	AB DE VILLIERS
<b>BOWLING / KEEPER</b>	<b>FAVOURITE FILM</b>
RIGHT ARM LEG SPIN	THE HANGOVER



<b>CLUB</b>	<b>FIELDING POSITION</b>
KILMINGTON CC & CULMSTOCK CC	WICKET KEEPER
<b>SCHOOL</b>	<b>OTHER INTERESTS</b>
UFFCULME SECONDARY SCHOOL	FOOTBALL , FORMULA ONE & SKIING
<b>BATTING</b>	<b>SPORTING HERO</b>
RIGHT HAND	BEN STOKES
<b>BOWLING / KEEPER</b>	<b>FAVOURITE FILM</b>
WICKET KEEPER	JAMES BOND - NO TIME TO DIE



## Media

### Head of Communications

Working in sport and travelling the world while doing so has been something I have wanted to do since leaving university just over a decade ago. I have been privileged

enough to have now done the former for three years at the Devon Cricket Foundation as Head of Communications, and I am excited at the opportunity to fulfil the latter by going on this special tour. The Under 15 Boys Tour of South Africa is a stand out feature in the calendar at Devon Cricket, and I feel immensely privileged to have been asked to be a part of it.



# TOUR SQUAD

## DEVON U15 BOYS - 2025





# A STEPPING STONE ON A PATHWAY OF POTENTIAL

By Sandy Allen  
Head of Men & Boys' Pathway



**For many young cricketers, the opportunity to represent their county on an overseas tour is their biggest dream come true. But for us, the upcoming Under 15 boys' tour to South Africa will be far more than a milestone, it will be a crucial developmental experience, purposefully placed in the pathway designed not just to continually identify talent, but to nurture young people through the game.**

**This isn't the final stop. It's the next step on a journey focused on holistic growth, long-term progression, and individual potential.**

The South Africa tour will immerse players in a high-performance environment, exposing them to new challenges on and off the field. They will compete against strong opposition in unfamiliar conditions and experience cultural life vastly different from home. This experience will build resilience, adaptability, and leadership - qualities central to our Devon Cricket ethos.

"Having coaching on the 2015 and 2016 tours, some of the most powerful moments came off the pitch.

I remember one player in 2015 saying the experience made him feel more independent, more responsible and that he viewed himself differently. The cricket was outstanding, but the personal development was what really stuck with me."

"In 2016, our team really bonded in a way I hadn't seen before. Long travel days, hard matches, and shared moments created a depth of team spirit and maturity that carried back into the summer season. It wasn't about creating finished players, it was about laying down experiences they'd build from in future years."

## A PATHWAY BUILT ON PURPOSE & PROGRESSION

The Devon Cricket Performance Pathway has been carefully designed to support players from early potential to high-level performance. It begins at Youth Development Cricket (YDC), progresses through County Age Group (CAG) squads, and for some, continues into the Emerging Player Programme (EPP).



At each stage, purpose and progression are key. Players are supported equally, roles are rotated, and multi-format cricket ensures all players can showcase and develop their skills.

Each stage serves a specific purpose:

- ▶ YDC (U11-U15): Focuses on enjoyment, skill exploration, and awareness of the game in a safe and developmental environment.
- ▶ CAG (U13-U18): Introduces more competitive elements, refined technical and tactical coaching, and wider match scenarios.
- ▶ EPP (U13+): Offers elite development for players with long-term potential, combining advanced training, physical preparation, and performance psychology.

Throughout, players are encouraged to be curious, resilient, and team-focused - values that underpin Devon's player development framework.

## RESIDENTIAL CAMPS

Our Southwest Development Camps, held over three days for both boys and girls, are another cornerstone of the pathway. These camps provide young players with a chance to train at a higher level, live and learn alongside their peers, and build confidence away from home.

Here, cricket is only part of the journey. The camps are about self-management, communication, shared responsibility, and character development - all essential elements for players preparing to take the next steps in their sporting and personal lives.

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## OVERSEAS TOURS

Overseas tours to South Africa and Sri Lanka are not rewards for talent, they are opportunities for growth. Playing in new and different environments challenges players tactically and technically, but also emotionally and socially. It broadens horizons and deepens understanding of the world.

“The players who went on our tours in 2015 and 2016 came back changed, not just better cricketers, but more aware, more thoughtful young men. We’re not just shaping cricketers, we’re helping shape people who can contribute meaningfully wherever life takes them.”

These experiences strengthen the county’s cricketing culture. Players return to their clubs and schools with renewed energy, confidence, and leadership, inspiring others along the way.

Ultimately, Devon Cricket’s Performance Pathway is about far more than performance. It is built to help young people grow as complete individuals - physically, mentally, emotionally and socially. It recognises that success looks different for every player, and that each journey is unique.

Some will go on to national pathways or First-Class cricket. Others will captain their clubs, become coaches, or simply enjoy the game for life. All outcomes are celebrated.

## SOUTH AFRICA IS JUST THE BEGINNING

As the Under-15 boys prepare to embark on their South African adventure, the message from Devon Cricket is clear: this is not the destination. It’s a chance to challenge, to learn, to grow and to take another important step along a lifelong pathway.

Here in Devon, every step matters, and strive for every player to have the chance to find their potential.



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to the whole squad**

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# ENDURING CRICKET FRIENDSHIP

**When you think about long-distance friendships, few are as enduring and as cricket obsessed as the one between Devon and the Western Province Cricket Association. More than two decades on from its inception, it's a connection we are proud to continue fostering.**

The journey started in 2002, when Alan Swift, who was then leading the Devon U15 cricket programme, connected with Roger Newman, a well-respected cricket mind, Academy Director at Warwickshire CCC at the time and later the first Director of Cricket at Oxford MCCU. He had strong ties with South Africa, and in particular, a man by the name of Nabeal Dien, then the General Manager of Western Province Cricket Association.

Originally, Alan had been exploring the idea of taking Devon's U15s on tour to Zimbabwe, he wanted players to experience something completely different, to see Africa and to be taken out of their comfort zone. But when the South Africa opportunity emerged through Roger and Nabeal, it was too good to pass up. The first Devon tour took place in 2002, and from that moment, our cricketing ties with Cape



**Clinton Du Preez**

CRICKET SERVICES  
MANAGER



**Camillah Adams**

YOUTH CRICKET  
CO-ORDINATOR



**Nabeal Dien**

TOUR ADVISER

Town and the Western Cape have never looked back.

Nabeal quickly became a central figure in making the tour what it is today. He helped organise fixtures, liaise with clubs, and essentially built an itinerary that allowed our boys to experience not only top-quality cricket but the vibrancy of South African life.

In return, a player exchange programme developed, Devon clubs would host talented young cricketers from South Africa for a season in England.

It's hard to overstate the impact of that initiative. Through Nabeal's connections



and drive, names like Vernon Philander, J.P. Duminy, Qaasim Adams, Craig Alexander, Dominic Telo, and most recently Kyle Verreynne came over to cut their teeth in the Devon Cricket League. These players brought with them not only talent, but a fierce passion for the game, and in turn, Devon cricket became richer for their presence. For many of our clubs, hosting these players was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, to learn from, train with, and compete alongside cricketers who would go on to represent their country on the world stage.

Alongside Nabeal, we must also mention Michelle Ernstien, his PA and secretary, who played a huge role in the day-to-day running of logistics, communications, and simply getting things done. Without Michelle, many of the smoother moments of those early tours wouldn't have been possible.

When Alan passed on the reins in 2014, Mark Ansell from North Devon Cricket Club picked up the baton. Mark, a

stalwart of the David Shepherd Cricket Trust and a passionate supporter of youth development, ran the tour superbly for the next six years. His relationship with Nabeal ensured that the tour kept its warmth, its character, and its cricketing edge right up until Nabeal's retirement in 2019.

Since then, the torch has passed to Matt Theedom and I. Matt has been involved with the Devon Cricket Foundation for nearly 20 years, and while I've moved on to pastures new from the working for the Foundation, I remain heavily involved in youth coaching and the development side of the game. Together, we've aimed to continue this legacy, modernising where needed, but staying true to the tour's heart and soul.

Naturally, the relationship has changed. It's now more professional than personal, but no less effective. Our thanks go out to Clinton du Preez, the Cricket Services Manager at Western Province Cricket, and to Camillah Adams, who leads much



of the youth cricket coordination across the region. Their dedication and support have been second to none. They work tirelessly to provide us with the very best venues, the strongest opposition, and a competitive yet welcoming environment for our boys to grow in.

Due to the increasing complexity of visa regulations in the UK, especially around the Tier 5 visa scheme, the exchange programme we once enjoyed so fruitfully is unfortunately much harder to sustain today. But while those logistics might be more difficult, the essence of the partnership remains. We still feel part of the Western Province cricketing family.

Since moving from February to October, it's opened up a new dimension: we now tour at the start of the South African season.

This gives local coaches a great chance to see their young players tested in match situations early in their season, almost like a trial period before competitive fixtures like their National "Coca Cola Week" begin. And for our lads? It's the challenge of playing in foreign conditions, against strong opposition, with the mountains of the Cape as a stunning backdrop.

So, as I write this, it's with a deep sense of gratitude. To Clinton, to Camillah, to all the clubs and coaches who host us, and of course to the trailblazers like Roger, Nabeal, and Alan who helped get this all started, you've all played a huge part in creating something really special. Long may it continue.

**Matt Cooke**  
*Joint Tour Organiser*

### **Congratulations to all the boys who have been selected to represent Devon.**

Consider it an honour bestowed upon you to act as ambassadors for your region and country. This provides you with a great opportunity to foster new friendships and to understand the wonderful characteristics of this great game. We at the Western Province Cricket Association look forward to hosting you during your tour and we hope we will assist in ensuring it is a particularly memorable one."

**"It's an honour and privilege to welcome the players, management and officials of Devon to our Mother City.**

## **WHEELS ON THE GROUND**

Every successful tour has its unsung heroes. For us, those heroes often come not just with a steering wheel in their hands, but with local wisdom, unmatched generosity, and a deep love for the game. When we speak about the long-standing success of our South African adventure, we cannot go far without mentioning two key names: Shaheem Taleip and Shamiel Williams.

Since the very first tour back in 2002, Shaheem has been at the heart of our transport operation. Quite simply, he is Cape Town's answer to "Mr. Fix-It." There's no road he doesn't know, no contact he can't find, and no situation he can't smooth over with a warm grin and a word in the right ear. For over two decades, Shaheem has helped shape the logistics of this tour, ensuring the boys have not only made it to matches on time, but also experienced the full beauty and depth of the Western Cape.

While these days Shaheem leaves most of the driving to others, his presence is still felt throughout the tour. You'll often find him on the boundary, soaking up the action with the same enthusiasm he brought behind the wheel. And when it comes to making arrangements, solving problems, or simply pointing us in the right direction, he's still the man.

Stepping into the driver's seat in more recent years has been Shamiel Williams,



**Shamiel Williams**

TOUR ADVISER



**Shaheem Taleip**

'MR FIXIT'

another gem of a character. Shamiel might have a rugby background more than cricket, but you'd never guess it from the way he's embraced this tour and its traditions. He's got a fantastic way with the boys, approachable, positive, and always up for a laugh. Shamiel's calm manner, knowledge of Cape Town, and reliability make him not just a driver, but a real part of the touring family.

So, from everyone involved in Devon cricket, past and present, we'd like to say a heartfelt thank you to Shaheem for being the ever-present backbone of the operation for over 20 years, and to Shamiel for carrying that torch with such pride and care.

**Without you both, the tour wouldn't feel the same. Here's to many more miles, memories, and matches together.**







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## MOTHER CITY

**Cape Town, affectionately known as the “Mother City,” stands as a testament to South Africa’s rich tapestry of history, culture, and sport. Nestled beneath the iconic Table Mountain, this coastal gem has been a focal point of human settlement for millennia, with archaeological findings in nearby Fish Hoek dating back over 12,000 years.**

The city’s recorded history commenced in 1488 when Portuguese explorer Bartolomeu Dias first rounded the Cape. However, it was in 1652 that Jan van Riebeeck established the first permanent European settlement on behalf of the Dutch East India Company, laying the foundations for Cape Town as a vital resupply station for ships enroute to the East. Over the ensuing centuries,

Cape Town evolved into a vibrant port city, marked by the confluence of diverse cultures, languages, and traditions.

The 20th century cast a long shadow over Cape Town with the institutionalization of apartheid, a system of racial segregation that permeated every facet of life. The city’s District Six became emblematic of this era, witnessing the forced removal of over 60,000 residents in the 1970s.

Yet, Cape Town also played a pivotal role in the nation’s journey toward freedom. Nelson Mandela, after 27 years of imprisonment, made his first public speech from the balcony of Cape Town’s City Hall in 1990, heralding a new chapter for South Africa. Today, a statue commemorates this momentous occasion, serving as a beacon of hope and resilience.

Cricket’s roots in Cape Town trace back to 1808, with the first recorded match played between British service teams.



The sport flourished, culminating in the establishment of the Newlands Cricket Ground in 1888. Renowned for its picturesque setting against the backdrop of Table Mountain and Devil’s Peak, Newlands has hosted numerous historic matches and remains a symbol of the city’s enduring love for the game.

Today, Cape Town stands as a testament to transformation. Its bustling markets, vibrant arts scene, and culinary delights

attract tourists from around the globe. The city’s commitment to preserving its rich history while embracing modernity is evident in its restored neighbourhoods, museums, and cultural festivals.

For the Devon Under-15 cricket team, touring Cape Town offers more than just competitive matches; it provides an immersive experience into a city that embodies resilience, unity, and the unifying power of sport.

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## ALBIE BRADLEY

Wishing him and the rest of the touring party the best of luck in South Africa



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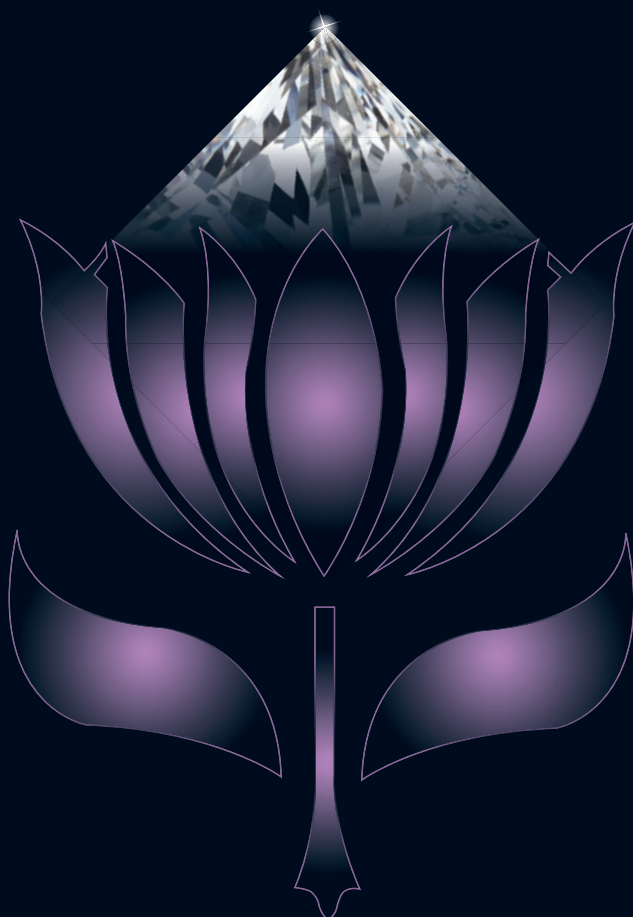
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