



**Northwich U.10's  
&  
The Case of the Tesco Three**

## Chapter One

# Friday

&  
A little bit of Saturday

In the evening sun the boys in black set off for the northeast, many would return as men.....*still wearing the same socks and underpants.....* Before the bus had even left the boundaries of Northwich, Tom had his Nintendo DS confiscated, Jordan's dad was enjoying a Thorough Goods smoothy and Dave was relaxing with a bottle of Indian mineral water. The children were busy devouring the excessive amount of sugar that their parents had so kindly provided.

The coach operator had kindly provided a vehicle with a built in toilet which would have been invaluable had the door been able to opened. So three service stations along the M6 it was toilet stop number 1, all the passengers were relieved whilst the toilet door was made usable.

Approximately 45 minutes after the gorging of sugar began the noise on the bus began to rise and rise and rise and rise again, amongst the cacophony of noise a little voice began to sing ....*Olly, Olly, Olly, xxxx in a trolley, xxxxx in a biscuit tin.....* Obviously a favourite in the Houghton household which has been passed down through the generations, this solitary voice became a choir!

The journey progressed with much frivolity and its funny how a year can make so much difference to the content and nature of a joke. Last year the boys happily exchanged '*knock, knock*' jokes, this year they were, like the song, of a more anatomical nature.

Keeping the anatomical theme going, the toilet seemed a great source of amusement to all the children.....*probably something to do with Dr Who, Tardis's and when you have to go you have to go.....* Alex F had to go and go he did. Everyone on the bus became aware of an almost visible odour and with everyone looking around and blaming each other Alex ascended the stairs from the toilet and returned to his seat. A moment later he returned to the toilet but was asked was he alright and did he really need to go again? "*I think I've dropped something in the toilet*"..... Yes Alex you most certainly had.

The children were given chance to purchase more Brain Licker and Toxic Waste at Southwest services.....*just in case their sugar levels became low.....* however healthy snacks and refreshing health drinks for the adults remained elusive and were unable to be purchased at the services. Apparently there was a Tesco in Hexham, after all every little helps!

After almost 5 hours of "Olly, Olly, Olly, rude jokes, and sugared children (*note sugared, not sweet!*) The adults on board needed a '*fruit*' fix to maintain the stamina required for the impending arrival at the centre. With the car park

entrance too narrow for the coach to enter the coach had to pull up at the side of road, with coach number 2 pulled up behind it. A quick dash into the store saw Bananas, Oranges and a variety of *'fruit'* purchased, those first through the self serve checkouts returned to the awaiting coach which was now accompanied by members of Her Majesties Constabulary.

Obviously 2 coaches parked up in the centre of Hexham at 11pm had started alarm bells ringing and the dog handlers had asked the coach drivers to move their vehicles rather quickly or risk a good telling off, so move they did. Fortunately no children had gone to the store, only adults, six got off but only three returned, so stranded in the centre of Hexham, the Tesco 3 were named!

The local constabulary very kindly gave us an escort to the Kingswood centre where staff were waiting to show us to our billets. The children of the Tesco 3 showed character despite adversity and bravely dragged their fathers suitcases along the dark pathways of the centre, Tom was happy that he would escape a telling off about the DS...*I mean at least he didn't spend 5 hours on a coach and end up taking taxi for the last 3 miles.....* Harry mentioned something about telling his Mum when he got home and Jordan was expecting to be at Toys-R-Us first thing Bank Holiday Monday by way of recompense.

The main concern however lay as to the whereabouts of a missing case of *'fruit'* where had it gone? Surely no-one from our club would do such a thing and pillage it from under our coach? ...Or would they?

The scrabble for bed space resembled the January sales, teeth, hair and nails flying everywhere, it then becomes apparent of how much or in some cases how little children actually do at home in the way of making beds or that such a task does indeed exist....*No, there is no such thing as the bed fairy...*With the carnage coming to an end thoughts turned to the missing case of *'fruit'*.

Fortunately the adults had purchased enough *'fruit'* to last them well into the small hours and settled into several hands of Bridge a few played Chess. As the night wore on and the *'fruit'* ran out, it was night-night for the big boys.

## Chapter 2

# Saturday

&  
Some of Sunday

Approximately 90 minutes after retiring Ian was awoken by the sound of banging doors, tittering and the patter of feet. Opening the bedroom door seemed to startle the youngsters. Alex F was startled to such an extent that he broke the indoor 20 metre sprint record. With bleary eyes Ian checked the dorms of doom to find all 18 boys wide awake, time 5.45am!

As we had arrived in darkness we had not seen our surroundings...*well apart from the Tesco3.....*To the rear of the dorms was what looked like an adventure playground.

Step 1. Open external door.

Step 2. Release children.

Step 3. Find caffeine!

Breakfast was served at 8.15, about 30 minutes after the children were told by centre staff not to play on the equipment. Then on with the activities:-

### Laser Quest

What more could an Under 10 want than copious amounts of sugar, little sleep and then given a gun?

In teams of four they ran, chased, hid and then shot each other with lasers at point blank range. Then did it over again just to make sure they had not spared anyone!



### Quad Biking

Sixteen children and two quad bikes equals a lot of waiting around, however leuan had his own ideas of how to liven things up.

By increasing his speed and decreasing his turning circle not only did leuan manage to throw himself off his Quad but somehow managed to get the Quad to run over his own leg. A trip to 1<sup>st</sup> aid was required where he was given the all clear.

### Team Challenge

Team challenge took place on where the children spent the early hours of the morning. They were supervised by a very officious supervisor who couldn't stress enough the importance of safety on this equipment..... *so much so that he spent over 30 minutes doing so.....*

This was not so entertaining for the children but highly funny for the on looking adults as the instructor bore a remarkable resemblance to the picture.



## Archery

As the sun started to take its toll on the pasty southern contingent a sport of skill and accuracy provided rest and shade.

It is however a good job we didn't have to catch our own tea as we would have starved.



## Nightline

A curious title at 3 o'clock in the afternoon and one that left Ian and Dave wondering if they too were allowed to blindfold their players or indeed use any other forms of audio visual control.

Quite simply all the children were blindfolded and told to do various movements as a group. This culminated in an assault course which the team had to navigate through blindfolded using a fixed rope as a guide.



## Feeding time at the Zoo



## Abseiling

Everyone did it! ...apart from Ian and Dave who allegedly had a duty of care which excluded them from dangerous activities....*yeah right!*.....

Two members couldn't do it at the first attempt but hats off to Jonny and Ali as they went back up the stairs and abseiled down the wall.



Ali,



Jonny

## Hotspots

Apparently a huge game of twister, the centre staff took charge whilst the adults hit the after sun lotion.

There were a lot of tired little cherubs Saturday evening as the boys were given a 10.30 curfew as their minds were turned towards the following day's rugby. The curfew was almost impeccably observed!

The adults gathered and mused over the day's events, whilst in the distance an apparition from the Under 11's billets appeared, it was the missing 'fruit',.....*scoundrels!*.....

It was however not the only item(s) missing that returned that evening, as the Tesco 3 again returned after a session sampling the local hostelries.

## Chapter 3

# Sunday

&  
NONE of Monday

Due to the laws of gravity.... *and sugar*....What goes up must come down and down with a bump they came, there was to be no 5.45 wake ups today. Breakfast was eaten and in some cases worn, bags were packed and loaded on the coach as we bid farewell to the centre.

Blaydon awaited the boys and girls from Northwich, could they serve up a final match treat? Could they finish the season in a blaze of glory? Could they actually wake up long enough?

Dave tried, Ian tried, Gareth tried, John chipped in, the arriving parents tried, thoughts even turned towards employing a local clairvoyant to perform a séance, the only saviour, the God of sugar.....Coca Cola.....

### **Game 1**

Lost 5-0 to the hosts, a spirited performance but out done on the big pitches again.

### **Game 2**

Lost 6-0 to Sheffield 1<sup>st</sup>. No-one in the tournament had an answer for an awesome Sheffield team who played their 2<sup>nd</sup> team in the final. Nathan and Billy both learnt don't pick the ball up if your first into a ruck as the first "2 men over" put Nathan a good 6ft back on his bum.



### **Game 3**

Didn't happen, so all the team selection preparation went out of the window. It went further out of the window after lending the Under 9's 3 players.....thanks to Ali, Harry and Alex B for volunteering.

### **Game 4, 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> place playoff**

The god of sugar had done his stuff, the decision was taken to go for it and then 2 players said they were too tired or injured so that changed it again.

Fierce tackling is something the team have been short on all season but not today, the backs of James HC, John Luke, leuan, Cameron, Billy and the awesome Alex F stopped any attacks before they started.

The ball was finally being passed wide and created chances as Tom and Cameron were stopped short of the line. The pressure told as Billy crashed over from a 5 yard penalty for his 1<sup>st</sup> try of the season.

Both teams really didn't want to finish 6<sup>th</sup> and the blacks put them selves in the way each time there was threat. Nathan replaced Mathew at half time and there were further changes, James C, Jordan then made a miraculous recovery from his injury, Jamie came back on as bumps and bangs took their toll.

Jordan scored what proved to be the winning score after a trade mark touch down. Aldwinians pulled a point back but it was too little to late and like last year the blacks won their last game of the season.

That was it, tour over, season coming to a close and 5 hours on a bus, this time no toilet but a TELLY, the electronic babysitter did wonders on keeping an already tired bunch of children quiet.



Under 10's



Under 7's & 8's



Under 9's



7's 8's 9's & 10's