



THE LORD'S TAVERNERS

Diamond Jubilee
1950-2010

Thursday 10 June 2010

SHROPSHIRE TEACHER TO PEDAL ACROSS THE UK TO RAISE £48,000 FOR DISABLED MIDLANDS YOUNGSTERS

Dr Andy Wood, Head of Science at Church Stretton School in Shropshire, will cycle from Land's End to John O'Groats this summer to raise money for charity in memory of a former pupil who died in 2008. Dr Wood, who didn't own a bicycle until he started training last September, sets off on 27 July and aims to complete the gruelling 1,000-mile trip in just nine days.

In 2008, 15-year-old Zeeshan Ahmad, a keen cricketer from Dr Wood's year 10 form group, was killed in a car accident. The school organised a sponsored walk in Zeeshan's memory, raising £3,000 for The Lord's Taverners, the official Charity for recreational cricket and the UK's leading youth cricket and disability sports Charity, as cricket was so important to him.

Keith Bradshaw, then Chairman of The Lord's Taverners West Midlands Region, received the cheque on behalf of the charity in Spring 2009. Keith was accompanied by former Warwickshire cricketers, Ashley Giles and Dougie Brown, who are big supporters of the charity and challenged the school to raise enough money to put a wheelchair-accessible Lord's Taverners minibus – costing up to £48,000 – on the road in Zeeshan's memory.

Dr Wood was inspired by the charity's response and decided to undertake the cycle ride and get the whole school community involved with fundraising, challenging them to cycle 1 mile for £1 sponsorship. Many have risen to the challenge (see www.drwoode2e.org.uk for photographs) and a number of pupils will cycle part of the route through Shropshire and Church Stretton itself. Fundraising events are also being hosted at the school to get as many people involved as possible, but Dr Wood is eager to secure more support from the local community and businesses within the Midlands.

Dr Wood said: *"After Zeeshan died we decided to raise money for The Lord's Taverners as he was such a talented cricketer and the charity does such great work for young people with cricket and other sports. We are looking to contribute money towards a wheelchair-accessible Lord's Taverners minibus for somewhere in the Midlands region in Zeeshan's memory. The minibuses cost up to £48,000 so I need as much sponsorship and support as possible."*

The Lord's Taverners donates nearly one minibus per week to schools and youth organisations across the UK and will donate nearly £3 million this year to help give young people, particularly those with special needs, a sporting chance.

- ENDS -

More information about Dr Wood's charity cycle ride can be found at www.drwoode2e.org.uk.
If you would like to make a contribution towards sponsorship please call 07941 046804.

For more information about The Lord's Taverners please contact James Gillson
on 020 7821 2828 or james.gillson@lordstaverners.org

The Lord's Taverners - Notes to Editors

The Lord's Taverners is the official Charity for recreational cricket and the UK's leading youth cricket and disability sports Charity whose objective is to **give young people, particularly those with special needs, a sporting chance**. This year The Lord's Taverners will donate nearly £3 million to help young people of all abilities and backgrounds participate in sporting activities by channelling funding into specific schemes:

- Encouraging participation in **youth cricket**, particularly in disadvantaged areas – providing grants towards Non-Turf pitches, funding for youth cricket competitions and donating hundreds of cricket bags to clubs and school teams across the UK.
- Supporting **recreational and sporting activities for youngsters with special needs** – donating specially adapted minibuses and sports wheelchairs giving young people vital transportation and access to sport, and providing grants for play and sports equipment.

Fifty per cent of the funds awarded go to cricket projects - equipment and competitions for those young people playing the game at grass roots level in schools and clubs. The other half is awarded to special needs schools or organisations, supporting their work to encourage youngsters to participate in recreational activities and a wide range of disabled sports. The Lord's Taverners is passionate about providing mobility and supplies specially adapted minibuses at a rate of almost one every week. It is also one of the leading funders of sports wheelchairs.

The Lord's Taverners benefits hugely from the support its highly regarded members, many of them drawn from the world of sport and entertainment. The list includes Mike Gatting, Alastair Cook, Chris Tarrant, Andrew Flintoff, Bill Tidy, Dame Tanni Grey-Thompson, Rachael Heyhoe Flint, James Haskell and Colin Salmon.

The Lord's Taverners was founded in 1950 (2010 is our Diamond Jubilee) and has raised and distributed over £30m to schools, clubs and special needs organisations in the UK in the last decade.

You can find out more about The Lord's Taverners and future fundraising events at www.lordstaverners.org

The Lord's Taverners – Registered Charity No. 306054