



Falkland Islands Government News Release

NEW TERRITORY FOR CRICKET HISTORY

A Cricket World First as Falkland Cricket Club Tours the Falkland Islands

26 February 2009

Falkland Cricket Club (FCC) from Newbury, Berkshire, will today travel over 7,000 miles to the Falkland Islands in the South Atlantic to play its international namesake, the Falkland Islands Cricket Association (FICA). Included in the three-match tour of the Falklands will be a thrilling return-leg on 5 March, during which FICA will hope to avenge their 22-run defeat to FCC in July 2007, during FICA's seven-game tour of England. FCC will be the first sporting team in history to visit the Falkland Islands with the purpose of playing sport, although teams from visiting naval and cruise ships have played in the Islands.

The visiting Falkland CC team will commence their three-match tour by playing Stanley, a team from the Islands' capital, on 1 March. Their next match (3 March) will be against Mount Pleasant, a team representing the military personnel serving in the Islands. Finally they will face the FICA, a combined team of civilians and military players, on 5 March. The team will then tour Chile, where they have arranged to play a further three matches.

The FCC tour coincides with the week-long 'Spirit of Cricket' festival being held in the Falkland Islands to celebrate the centenary of the founding of the International Cricket Council (ICC). The Falkland Islands Cricket Association was awarded Affiliate membership of the ICC in 2007. During the festival week there will be six matches, including two juniors' games, and also social events for the players and their families. The festival will end on 7 March with the closing match of the annual South Atlantic Ashes series between the Governor's XI and the Commander of the British Forces' XI.

Another cricket first will take place in July 2010, when FICA will send a team to Scotland to compete in a tournament with Falkland CC, Newbury, and Falkland CC, Fife, to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the founding of Falkland CC, Fife. This will be the first time the three 'Falkland' teams will meet; whatever the outcome, it will make for an interesting 'sporting triangle'.

The Falkland Islands are a UK Overseas Territory and as such have a love of all things British, including cricket. Laying claim to the southernmost cricket ground in the world, cricket in the Islands is going from strength to strength. The population of around 3,000 boasts four teams, which may be the largest ratio of players per head of population of any country. In April, the Junior Team will embark on a four-match, week-long tour of Chile. Developing closer links with the Chilean Cricket Association is a key part of the strategy for developing the junior game in the Falklands which should lead to a much stronger adult game.

Looking to the future of cricket in the Falklands, planning permission has been granted for the development of a new cricket pitch in Stanley on part of the Golf Club site. The long term aim is to build a joint clubhouse with indoor facilities. The formation of a women's team is also being actively encouraged, with several ladies already attending practice sessions.

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For further information, photography or interview requests please contact Katie Liddell on 020 7839 2140 / katie@keenepa.co.uk. Match reports and photography will be available after each match. Further information on the Falkland Islands is available at www.falklands.gov.fk.

Notes to Editors

The Falkland Islands

- The Falkland Islands are a United Kingdom Overseas Territory situated in the Southern Hemisphere about 350 miles east of the South American mainland. The Islands are made up of two main Islands (East and West Falkland) and some 700 smaller Islands, covering an area half the size of Wales. The capital Stanley is located on East Falkland.
- Over the past 26 years, the Falkland Islands have become one of the most modern and dynamic Overseas Territories of the United Kingdom. The Islands enjoy a sophisticated system of internal government and are economically self-sufficient in all areas except defence - which is estimated to be less than half of one percent of Britain's overall defence budget.
- The Islands' population has risen from 1,800 in 1982 to around 2,500 in 2006 (the latest Census). Nearly 96% of the population is British and 79% of the population is aged 55 years and under. The majority of young Islanders chose to return to the Islands to live and work, contributing to its thriving private and public sector.

Falklands Cricket Facts

- Cricket was formally introduced to the Falkland Islands in the 1920s and 30s.
- The Falkland Islands Cricket Association (FICA) was the 100th member to be elected to the ICC in 2007.
- The highlight of the season is the annual 3 match series between the Governor's XI and the Commander British Forces XI for the 'South Atlantic Ashes'. The unique and unusual trophy was made in 1989 at the start of the series by Mrs Reggler, wife of the then civil/military liaison officer, who was a sculptress. It is in the form of a turkey beak emerging from an egg symbolising a chick hatching and is supposed to represent the re-birth of the phoenix. The egg was made from the ashes of the bails used in the inaugural match and the base is made of Falklands sandstone.
- Falkland CC in Newbury is named after Civil War commander Lord Falkland killed at the Battle of Newbury in 1643. The Falkland Islands were named after Viscount Falkland, an Admiralty commissioner, in 1690.