

Sport

Dream trip to Mumbai for young cricketers



The Cricket Lovers Global Academy team with Naman Ojha
ALL PHOTOS: CRICKET LOVERS GLOBAL ACADEMY

MID-ESSEX BASED CRICKET LOVERS GLOBAL ACADEMY WENT ON NINE-DAY TOUR OF INDIA

THEY say practice makes perfect and when you get to practise against your peers in another country, it is perhaps the best exposure you can get.

It is with this objective that mid-Essex based Cricket Lovers Global Academy organised a pre-season tour to India for its students. The team has recently returned from a nine-day tour to Mumbai where they got an opportunity to play against teams from the best local clubs and gain valuable experience.

"When we conceptualised the tour and shared the idea with parents, we did not anticipate taking a group of 45 individuals on our maiden tour. The idea of an all-inclusive cricket and sightseeing trip to Mumbai appealed to the families and we even had some grandparents join us," says Piyush Somaiya who is one of the co-founders of Cricket Lovers Global Academy.

During their nine-day tour, the team stayed at the iconic Taj Mahal Hotel in Mumbai and got a taste of local food at various restaurants across the city.

"We meticulously planned every single detail including flights, trans-

fers, hotels, transport and everyday meals which allowed for smooth execution and enabled us to offer the tour at rock-bottom prices," said Rahul Vyas another co-founder.

Piyush added: "Mumbai Cricket Association were very helpful and supportive in organising this tour. We are extremely grateful to them and look to build a long-term relationship with them".

The group also got an exclusive tour of the renowned Wankhede Stadium during their trip.

The academy also managed to squeeze in a training session for the team with a local expert so they could take advantage of local expertise and develop their skills.

The team spent one afternoon with esteemed coach Jwala Singh to learn about playing in Indian conditions and tackling spin bowling. Jwala Singh is well-known in cricketing circles being the coach of Yashashvi Jaiswal and Prithvi Shaw. He also gave the team guidance on how to develop mental strength and reading of the game.

With the temperature hovering around 35C accompanied by humidity, the team were tested in



Enjoying a meal at a Mumbai orphanage

every game they played and learned a lot. Ex-Bermuda international, Dean Minors who is a coach at the academy accompanied the team on the tour wanted to see how the boys and girls utilise what they've learnt on tour at home this season.

The academy is a big believer in giving back to the community - as part of the tour, the group spent half a day at an orphanage in Mumbai. Children, parents and even grand-

parents enjoyed playing cricket matches with them. They all spent time with the children from the orphanage, including having a meal with them.

Having started just 18 months ago, Cricket Lovers Global Academy trains more than 100 children and adults throughout the year in Chelmsford and Witham. The academy aims to provide high quality coaching at affordable prices to those who want to develop and improve their skills. The coaching team at the academy includes national and ex-international play-

ers along with regular visits by Essex heroes like Tom Westley and Nick Brown and international players like Andre Nel and Naman Ojha.

The academy is looking to make this Mumbai tour an annual feature in their calendar and expand it to students outside the academy. A tour to the UAE and Caribbean in the next 12-month period is also being contemplated.

■ If you want to join on any of these tours, you can contact them via their website www.clgacademy.co.uk or through their Instagram handle [cricket_academy_clg](https://www.instagram.com/cricket_academy_clg)

The team out on the pitch in their whites



The team with Australian batting legend Matthew Hayden (back, right-hand side)