

# A nice young man with a lovely smile...

In our last issue, we brought you a report on Nottingham nightclub Cabaret's 'Evening with Stuart Pearce', which took place at the end of last season. The night in question was a great success – so much so that last month Cabaret followed it up with a similar event starring Nigel Clough. RICH FISHER went along...



I'm glad you're here, Andrew... didn't want everyone noticing how much weight I've put on

Having been born in the late '70s and gotten the Forest bug around the age of nine, Nigel Clough was naturally one of my very first City Ground heroes.

Though derided as a 'daddy's boy' by opposition fans and often criticised for his lack of pace, he was one of those rare players who was simply a step ahead of everyone else on the pitch. On countless occasions Forest won matches simply through his knack of being able to play that perfect killer pass.

But while Nigel gave us many great memories during his years as the Reds' number nine, I wasn't entirely sure if he was an obvious choice for an 'Evening With'-style event. A nice young man, sure, but surely a bit too squeaky clean

and diplomatic to have an audience hanging off his every word.

Or is he? If this night at Cabaret was anything to go by,

'We had fantastic holidays when I was growing up, but not to the exotic places people imagine. We used to go every year to the Scilly Isles! Who the bloody hell goes to the Scilly Isles?'

then Nigel's actually a lot more like his dad than you might think. Not as idiosyncratic, for sure, but as he talked about his life and his career with compere Andrew James, he was surprisingly outspoken,

passionate, charming and witty.

With the event taking place just two days after the anniversary of his dad's death, Old Big 'Ead naturally dominated the chat. It was both funny and moving to hear the warmth with which Nigel talked about his father, particularly some of his childhood memories of him.

"He wasn't around a lot because he was out working seven days a week," Nigel recalled. "But the nature of the job demanded he put in long hours, and we understood that. And he made up for it in the summer, as we had some fantastic holidays when I was growing up. But we didn't go to the exotic sort of places that people probably imagine we went to – for quite a few years, we used to go every year to the Scilly Isles! I mean, who the bloody hell goes to the Scilly Isles?!"

"What we didn't know at the time though was that my dad was actually shit scared of flying! Which was why, to get there, we used to drive from Derby to Penzance. It used to take up a week of the holiday just to get there!"

He continued: "To be fair, he did get a bit more adventurous. One year, he decided to take us to Spain. And we drove! God's honest truth! There were seven of us in the car, and it took us four days!"

Of course, Forest's dominance of Europe in subsequent years meant Brian would have to get used to flying. Does it bother Nigel though that his dad never received a Knighthood for his successes as a manager? "Not too much," he said. "If he was going to get a Knighthood, I think he should've been given it at the time of the European success – but the wrong people were in power at the time. I don't think he was ever going to get a Knighthood while

Margaret Thatcher was in power!

"But he did end up with an OBE, and I think he was pretty pleased with that. He was proud as well at being given freedom of the city in both Nottingham and Derby – although I think they were

'They were missing the point slightly in giving my dad the freedom the city in Nottingham and Derby, because he'd had the freedom of both cities for years anyway – he used to just do pretty much whatever he wanted'

missing the point slightly in giving him that, because he'd had the freedom of both cities for years anyway! He used to do pretty much whatever he wanted.

"Growing up in Derby, I remember he used to take us shopping to Marks & Spencer, and he used to drive the wrong way down a one-way street and park right outside the store, where cars weren't allowed. As little kids he'd say to us, 'You stay in the car, I won't be long', and we'd be like, 'But dad! There's a traffic warden!' This traffic warden would just come over though and go 'Brian! How are you? Listen, you go and do your shopping – I'll look after your car!' Amazing..."

**For more highlights from 'An Evening With Nigel Clough' – ranging from a withering verdict on Joe Kinnear ("Twat!"), to a surprising revelation about Frank Sinatra's 'My Way' ("Contrary to what people think, my dad absolutely bloody hated that song!") – head over to [LTLF.co.uk](http://LTLF.co.uk).**