

## **Herts in a 'Beefy' Mood**

### **Report by Mohammed Bashiruddin**



**Members of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Youth Association in Hertfordshire have given up their time to assist Sir Ian Botham in the 'Beefy's Great Forget Me Not Walk' in Milton Keynes in aid of Leukaemia & Lymphoma Research.**

On 17<sup>th</sup> April 2010, members of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Youth Association (AMYA) from the Hertfordshire region gathered together in numbers to take part in the fundraising and marshalling of Sir Ian Botham's walk at the Centre MK.

The day started at 9.15am outside Milton Keynes Central Library where 20 sprightly members of the youth organization arrived and were given a short briefing by Shiraz Sethi, Director of Charities and Social Welfare for AMYA. Shiraz explained to the volunteers the reasons for why we were undertaking such a collection and the local co-ordinator, Mohammed Bashiruddin then gave a brief overview of the plans for the day. After a short silent prayer, the team headed over the Marks & Spencer store to meet the charity representatives.

Hazel Staten from Leukaemia & Lymphoma Research greeted us and was surprised to see so many volunteers. Hazel explained that we had permission to cover four areas of the Centre MK shopping centre. For those that don't know or have not been to the Centre MK, it is the largest indoor shopping mall in Europe and therefore our volunteers had to cover a lot of ground.

Mubariz Ahmedi, Regional Coordinator devised 4 groups of 4 volunteers as follows:

1. **Group Leader:** Shaheed Sheikh  
Team: M. Khurshid, Tariq Mehmood and M. Atta-ul- Mohsin.
2. **Group Leader:** Nabeel Choudhry:  
Team: Sagheer Ahmad, Aamir Sohail and Anjum Sami.
3. **Group Leader:** Abdul Choudry  
Team: Razah Khan, Abdul Hadi and Amir Ahmed.
4. **Group Leader:** Tahir Ahmed,  
Team: Rashid Mahmood, Rizwan Kokhar and Zayyad Rathor.

At about 10.30am, we called in all the groups as we were awaited the arrival of Sir Ian Botham to commence his walk outside the Marks & Spencer store. Whilst waiting in anticipation for Sir Ian, the lead announcer introduced the Ahmadiyya Muslim Youth Association volunteers and explained that we were here to help during the course of the day to raise funds for the charity and we were all given a round of applause from the general public. After seeking further clarification from Shiraz Sethi, the announcer once again announced the fact that the youth association were volunteering their services throughout the day and that our motto was simple 'LOVE FOR ALL HATRED FOR NONE' and this message echoed around the shopping mall.

To our surprise, before Sir Ian Botham even turned up, we were joined by a few other England cricketing legends - Devon Malcom, Andrew Flintoff and Darren Gough were also present and ready to take part in the walk alongside Sir Ian Botham.



Sir Ian Botham then made his grand entrance into the MK1 arena and took out some time to meet with the volunteers and take some photos. Sir Ian thanked us and shook each of our hands personally and was very grateful for our support. The walk soon started thereafter and each volunteer was then given a packed lunch courtesy of Marks & Spencer. Each of the groups returned to their designated areas for their collections which continued until 12.30pm. At that

time, we were then advised by the organisers to make our way towards Willen Lake where we were due to marshal the 5 mile conclusion of the route.

At the lake we were provided with more refreshments. Unfortunately 4 of our volunteers had to leave early whilst the rest of our volunteers were directed and taken to the marshalling points around the lake. All marshals were in situ prior to Sir Ian passing the relevant posts. At each point, Sir Ian thanked the marshals for their support.

Sir Ian passed the last marker at around 3.30pm. However, as there were other participants, the marshals had to remain in their positions until all walkers had passed. The final walker completed the course at 4.30pm and was walked in by Mohammed Bashiruddin, Mubariz Ahmedi and Shiraz Sethi. The charity handed out medals to all participants, as well as to all

volunteers and bid farewell to all of the participants and volunteers present.

It was fortuitous that the announcer once again thanked AMYA for all its hard work and dedication throughout the day and furthermore gave Shiraz Sethi the opportunity to introduce the Community to all of the participants and spectators who were in attendance. Sir Ian Botham himself was sitting behind us listening to the short presentation, which Shiraz delivered.

We then attended to the organising committee who we thanked very much for the opportunity. We provided them with all of our buckets that we were using in the shopping centre to collect the various funds. For ease of accountability, we emptied all contents of the buckets into one box and labelled it AMYA in order to determine the collection we as a youth organization assisted in.

The volunteers who attended the event were as follows:

M. Bashiruddin	Mubariz Ahmedi	M. Khurshid	Rizwan Khokar
Shiraz Sethi	Aamir Ahmed	M. Atta-ul-Mohsin	Tahir Ahmed
Usman Choudry	Abdul Choudry	Nabeel Choudhry	Shamle Ayub
Shaheed Sheikh	Razah Khan	Tariq Mehmood	Avais Ahmad
Zayyad Rathore	Anjum Sami	Aamir Sohail	
Sagheer Ahmed	Abdul Hadi	Rashid Mahmood	

By the grace of Allah, the event was a monumental success and we had more exposure than any of us could have imagined. We look forward to working closely with other charities over the course of the year.