



NIGEL SMART

CLASS OF 1980

PERSONAL PROFILE

Nigel Smart, left Lord Grey in 1980.

Nigel now works as a Senior Procurement Manager for BAE Systems, based in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

ARE YOU DOING WHAT YOU THOUGHT YOU'D BE DOING WHEN YOU LEFT SCHOOL?

Definitely not.

WHAT WOULD YOU SAY IS YOUR BIGGEST ACHIEVEMENT TO DATE - THE THING YOU ARE MOST PROUD OF (PERSONALLY OR PROFESSIONALLY?)

Two achievements come to mind, firstly succeeding in my chosen sport, basketball, representing my country at school boy level and playing national league until I was 30.

Secondly managing to become a successful senior manager in an internationally recognised company even after starting my career in later life.

WAS THERE A PARTICULAR TEACHER, OR MOMENT IN SCHOOL, THAT INSPIRED YOU?

Bob Gair, PE teacher through my time at Lord Grey, who taught me the importance of team work and to believe in my abilities.

The basketball team was fairly successful during this time and I remember road trips to Sheffield, Hayling Island and other schools around the country with Bob driving and the team playing music, laughing and enjoying life in the battered old Transit van with bench seats down the sides and no seat belts.

We used to take it in turns to sleep on the floor on long trips!



England quarter ... Lord Grey had four players take part in the England team at Walsall. Back — Nigel Short, Robin Gooch. Front — Eddie Long, Michael Francis.

HOW IMPORTANT DO YOU THINK YOUR SCHOOL DAYS WERE IN SHAPING WHO YOU ARE TODAY?

I wouldn't be the person I am today without the grounding gained during my school life.

Although not academically minded, the teachers managed to get me through and I obtained enough qualifications to enable me to get a start in life.

More importantly, for me, are the early life lessons I learnt, mostly centred around sport, how to win and lose with respect, how to pick yourself up when down and be a better person.

WHAT IS YOUR WORK/LIFE BALANCE LIKE? HOW IMPORTANT IS THIS TO YOU?

Work / life balance is incredibly important to me especially as I live and work away from my family now.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO TODAY'S STUDENTS, WHO MAY BE STRUGGLING TO CHOOSE WHICH PATH TO TAKE BEYOND SCHOOL?

If you have a dream follow it. If you don't know what you want to do try anything, but most importantly never give up, enjoy life to the full; you get one shot at this life and always keep smiling.

WHAT'S THE ONE THING LIFE HAS TAUGHT YOU?

Hard work and common sense can get you through the hardest of times.

FINALLY - DO YOU HAVE A FAVOURITE QUOTE OR MANTRA THAT INSPIRES YOU TO KEEP GOING?

Obstacles don't have to stop you. If you run into a wall, don't turn around and give up. Figure out how to climb it, go through it, or work around it.

Michael Jordan.