



*This sport only truly comes in handy if you have been sent to prison. At the time I considered each practice session worth every ounce of energy.*

### Representing the Official Monster Raving Loony Party

So life went on. We would dress as policemen and look people's cars over pretending to give out tickets. Having seen my friend Nick a few months before I knew we were in for a treat when the general election came round, as a deposit had been raised for us to represent Screaming Lord Sutch's Official Monster Raving Loony Party.

We would be representing the Official Monster Raving Loony Party for the Derbyshire West Constituency in Matlock. We did not realise that we were about to go down in the history of politics with a first. I had dressed as the barking mad monk and following a relatively thorough tour of Matlock's hostelrys had stuffed beer down my front for later consumption. In the counting hall, after I had accidentally touched a ballot paper, a whole batch of votes had to be recounted – whoops! The final straw came when my stomach wrap tie on my barking mad monk outfit gave way and cans of beer went smashing to the floor, twirling around and squirting beer everywhere in little helicopter effects. As the whole election hall is supposed to be a dry site, we were quickly ejected from the building by the already present police amongst raucous laughter from the viewing gallery. JJ with the leg was arrested and slammed into the back of an already waiting Black Maria. Perhaps an overreaction as all he had done wrong was shout a little as he fell out of the building and down the steps when we were being escorted out.

We became the first ever party in the history of British politics to be kicked out of the count at a General Election before the results had been announced. The following day we were featured with photos and accompanying interviews in the paper where it also laid out the political first. When being interviewed by the paper we had given our manifesto of "Introducing more Whales to Wales" and "The introduction of elephants to the Derbyshire countryside."



*Representing Official Monster Raving Loony Party - Myself (as The Barking Mad Monk) looking after Nick Delves (Official Monster Raving Loony Candidate - dressed as the Persian Prince) candidate for the May 1997 General Election representing Derbyshire West region. We got more votes than the Independent Candidate and we were delighted to secure 0.5% of all votes cast – that is one in two hundred votes. We are obviously very popular.*