

The Mystery Of The Fifth Bagel
England v South Africa Days Two & Three
By Ged Ladd

[Five Bagels From Papa Joe's]

Day Two

"So you didn't get cricket yesterday, you got rain instead", said Papa Joe, mordantly, as I entered his Bagel Emporium, first thing in the morning.

"True I said", "but I did enjoy your börek."

Papa Joe had my five bagels ready for me. "Proper boiled bagels you know", said Papa Joe, "not fake baked ones." Eager to try them, I dashed home to make the picnic.

I arrived at Lord's around the same time as [Awesome Simo](#). We agreed a vital playing condition for the day: no mention of "those" political clowns. I then showed Simo the above photograph of the bagels and described the picnic: one smoked salmon bagel each, one ham and cheese bagel each, salad cups, strawberries and grapes.

Simo thought for a moment and said, "but there are five bagels in the photo".

"I bought an extra bagel for my lunch tomorrow – I'm playing tennis and will need to eat something after play, if that's okay, Simo?"

"Be like that", said Simo in his passive – aggressive voice.

It was a warm sunny day – Simo had brought no head protection with him. He soon went for a stroll, returning with a bright red Ruth Strauss Foundation cap on his head.

"Lovely", I said cheerfully.

"Hmm", said Simo, "I sent a picture of it to the other half, who responded with a two word message: BURN IT".

We just about avoided discussing the clowns all day, thus we parted company in good spirits.

Day Three

I got to Lord's in good time with my solo bagel and a portion of fruit.

My first stop was the Warner Stand, but it was sunnier than the forecast predicted, so I retreated to the writing room, as my purpose was to do some writing that morning.

I am writing a short performance piece about wine, tennis and music in 14th century Burgundy. It might be the maddest idea for a performance piece I've ever had. Given my canon of fairly mad ideas, that's quite a thing.

By the time I had played tennis, changed, showered and taken up a seat again, the cricket match was over.

I quietly ate the mystery fifth bagel and fruit before walking home.