

Eva's Admonitions

Texas XXXs RFC -- Buenos Aires Tour Guide Issue: Numero Uno

Welcome to the inaugural issue of *Eva's Admonitions*, a sometimes, off-and-on, irregular attempt to communicate with those members and guests of the Texas XXXs RFC who make up the very exclusive traveling party to the 2006 Vintage Games in Buenos Aires, Argentina. The inspiration for the ghostly title of an ephemeral newsletter is the famous hooker, Eva Peron, who achieved immortality with Madonna's rendition of *Don't Cry For Me, Argentina* in the movie, *Evita*. For a free camping trip to Brokeback Mountain, can you name the actress who portrayed Evita in the original Broadway production? (Answer at the end of the newsletter.)

Roster update -- Our tour is effectively full, with 28 "players" and 22 guests. For the mathematically challenged, that's a total of 50 people, ranging in age from 13 to Michael Dowling. Everyone who sent deposits and other payments in advance of the well publicized deadlines is on the tour. A waiting list has been established for those who missed the deadline; we even have checks in hand from folks anxious to go if for some reason a confirmed tourist must drop out. Keep in mind that the refund deadline from the event organizer has effectively passed, so if for any reason you need to drop out, let Pooh-Bah Dave Tutton know ASAP. We can probably sell your spot to someone on the waiting list, allowing you to recoup your investment to this point. As we get closer to departure day, this will become more difficult.

Payments -- The penultimate (that's next-to-last for those who went to the University of Georgia) payment for the tour package was due on March 1. We have only about three folks who are late with this obligation; you know who you are, so no need to name names ... yet. Folks have sent in various amounts -- some have fully paid, others are a few bucks ahead of the schedule, still others a few bucks short -- so everyone will be receiving a personalized statement on what you owe as a final payment prior to the due date of June 1.

For most folks, the tour package is \$1,034 per person -- so if you know what you've sent, you can figure out approximately what will be due June 1. Included are the tournament ground package, the Gaucho Ranch Day Out, and one extra night in the hotel (so we can arrive on Saturday, as opposed to arriving jet-lagged and drunk on Sunday, just barely in time for the opening).

Other Costs -- In addition to the ground package as noted above, you should be setting aside a few shillings -- well, quite a few -- for your **airfare**. Pooh-Bah Dave, thanks to the lovely Bente, has a hold on a large group of seats on the non-stop Continental flight from Houston on Friday night, September 15 (arriving the next day). This tariff is \$1,040. You are free to seek a better deal, knowing that these seats are there as a back-up, but payment in full for the group airfare option will be due in June (though it will not show up on your credit card until July). Folks who are not flying out of Houston should be actively looking to purchase tickets.

Also, you will soon be receiving a **kit order** form. A long list of items will be offered so you can have a complete XXXs wardrobe suitable for trading. When you receive it, please pay particular attention to the deadlines for ordering and payment.

Fast Fact – Did you know that Buenos Aires is the 9th largest city in the world, with a population of 12 million people? It is a very European city, with about half of the population tracing its roots to Spain, and the other fifty percent to Italy. So when we get tired of red meat, there should be no shortage of pasta and garlic.

Passports – Seems sorta obvious, but if you do not have a passport, this is something you **MUST** take care of right away. If you are getting a passport for the first time, it is possible that you will be asked to provide an itinerary. Renewing a passport is generally pretty easy, but in this post 9-11 world, you really should have taken care of this chore by now. Also, **check the expiration date of your passport**. If your passport expires within six months of our entry into Argentina, you should have it renewed before we go. Many countries will not allow you to enter if they think your passport may expire while there, as they do not want foreign nationals stranded and undocumented. For further information on passport renewals, or to download forms, go to www.travel.state.gov.

Texas XXXs Trivia – Test your knowledge of Texas XXXs history by answering the following:
The Texas XXXs played their first match in:

- a) 1977
- b) 1981
- c) 1983
- d) 1989
- e) 1812

Answer: According to F. Maxwell Evans, who charged up San Juan Hill with Teddy Roosevelt, the correct answer is the second option. The first match occurred in May of that year, in Santa Fe against the Anasazi. Talk about karma, this sets up perfectly our ...

Anniversary Weekend – in Galveston, May 5-7, vs. the Anasazi. 25 Years!! Our Officers of the Day (weekend, actually) are Joe Luna and Al Mazur, and they are planning a great event. The festivities will kick-off Friday evening with a welcome-in gathering over brews, with dinner on your own. Saturday will see the renewal of the “rivalry” between old friends, capped off with a traditional rugby feedbag that evening. Sunday will be given over to recovery and departure. There is discussion of golf Friday afternoon as well. Watch for the all the details in missives which are being sent to the full XXXs mailing list.

This will serve as an excellent pre-tour gathering for those going to Argentina, allowing the distaff side to get to know other tourists better, and giving us a forum to exchange ideas/information about the trip. The headquarters hotel is the brand new Holiday Inn Sunspree Resort, 17th and Seawall. It has a great free-form pool and swim-up bar, along with other resort-type amenities. Rates in Galveston on the weekend for decent properties are already high, and you are unlikely to beat the \$109 group rate arranged by Al and Joe. **So call now to make your reservation:** (409) 762-4141 and ask for the Rugby Rate. Of course, you can always just come down for the day and the match, then slink back to Houston or wherever, but we will be talking about you if you do, and probably will give you a very unsavory assignment while on tour.

Web-heads – Ken Coulter has done a great job with the club's new website. Check it often for important news. Listed below are a few sites to whet your tour whistle (the last two sites listed are for our hotel in Buenos Aires, and the Sunspree Resort in Galveston). In the next issue, we'll list a few more of general interest about Argentina, so please pass along any fun sites you have stumbled across.

www.texasxsrugby.com
www.vintagerugby.com
www.aspentowers.com
<http://www.ichotelsgroup.com/h/d/hi/1/en/hd/glssr>

Who's in Charge Here? – Dave Tuten took over the reins last fall, having acceded to the office of grand high exalted Pooh-Bah following a secret and mysterious selection process. So when you're looking for someone to blame, he's da' man. He is, however, ably assisted by a strong Tour Committee comprised of gentlemen who have "been there, done that." These include Max Evans (holder of the purse), Ken Coulter (web master, records keeper), Dave Brzezinski (kit boy), Jerry "Beav" Riggins (immediate past kit boy), Angelo Parrish (legal services), Bryant Winn (physio consulting), Ron Britt (Tango Lessons Organizer), John Galloway (immediate past Pooh-Bah), and Paul Mabry (newsletter, Otter chairman).

In subsequent newsletters, we will be announcing the various Officers of the Day for each day on tour, and eventually an Aid de Camp (aka "bitch") to each OD. So there will be plenty of opportunity for everyone to share in the joy of making this the best Texas XXXs tour ever.

One missing component of the Tour Committee is the **Women's Auxiliary**. It would be great for the gals to get together well in advance of the tour (as they have on other trips) to plan unique outings designed to enhance their tour experience. In the past, they have taken in museum exhibits about the country being visited, attended lectures, traded reading lists, and arranged for discussion groups to share research on a region's culture, agricultural exports, GNP, etc. Sounds like lots of fun. At least until Ron Britt FINALLY comes through with the promised tango lessons.

Answer – Remember the question from the first paragraph (I know, that was a while ago). The role of Eva Duarte Peron was originated on Broadway by Pattie LuPone, a role which won her a Tony Award in 1980. Winners get to sit next to Ken Coulter on the opening night of the next Gilbert and Sullivan production. Speaking of the Coulter clan, they are busy planning June nuptials for son Stephen and his intended Kelly.

And remember – "training," "practice," "working out," and similar jargon is expressly forbidden in the unwritten but sacred by-laws of the Texas XXXs RFC. Those caught suggesting, discussing and – most egregiously – participating in such activity are subject to severe fines, or worse.

Entre más viejo el violín, más dulce la música