

COMIC SAYS MPs HAVE LOST THE PLOT

PALLY: Funny-man Matt Forde is well respected by politicians of all parties

Politics is a funny old business!

MATT'S FAVOURITES

- FILM:** Dead Man's Shoes. Or The Goonies.
- BOOK:** Last one I loved was All Out War by Tim Shipman.
- TV SHOW:** Line Of Duty
- ACTOR:** Vicky McClure
- COMEDIAN:** Lloyd Langford
- SPORTSPERSON:** Stuart Pearce
- SPORTS TEAM:** Nottingham Forest
- SPORTING EVENT:** I'd love to go to an Old Firm derby.
- SONG:** Don't Look Back In Anger by Oasis
- SINGER:** Lorraine McIntosh from Deacon Blue has the best voice I've heard live
- BAND:** Oasis
- FOOD:** Chicken Madras
- COLOUR:** Whatever makes me look slimmest
- DRINK:** Gaviscon
- CITY:** New York
- HOLIDAY DESTINATION:** Anywhere quiet with a beach and a free bar
- GADGET:** iPhone
- APP:** JustEat
- SUBJECT AT SCHOOL:** History or English
- FIGURE FROM HISTORY:** Brian Clough
- ANIMAL:** Rabbit



Pictures: HUMPHREY NEWMAR

POLITICAL comic Matt Forde was at Lord's one sunny afternoon a couple of years ago ("I'm not into cricket but a mate got me a ticket") when who should he spot but Jacob Rees-Mogg, super-posh Tory MP and arch-Brexiteer?

Now, Matt is no Tory. And no Brexiteer. Plus: "I was stumbling out of the bar, roaring drunk, hammered..."

Oh dear. So we can guess what happened next, right?

"I went: 'Oi, Jacob! You all right, mate?!' And Jacob went: 'Oh, Matt, how lovely to see you. I must introduce you to my friends.'

"He was completely unfazed.

"Honestly, he's one of the nicest people I've met."

To suggest Matt Forde is this pally with all MPs would be an exaggeration. But he seems willing to be.

He'll gladly poke fun at them in his stand-up routines (let's hope they've braced themselves for his upcoming Edinburgh Festival Fringe show, Brexit, Pursued By A Bear) but he's also hugely respected by politicians - well, pretty much all.

It's thanks to his critically acclaimed podcast The Political Party, launched in 2013, where he chats to them in ways they're just not used to getting chatted to.

By which I mean he treats them as - gasp! - human beings, whatever side they're on.

Matt would rather learn what makes a guest tick than ram his own agenda down their throat.

"Politicians in most interviews get treated with suspicion, Mike" he tells me. "They rarely get a platform like this, just to be themselves, relax a bit and have a bit of a laugh."

And any stand-out shows? Too many to list.

"The Alastair Campbell and Adam Boulton one, the Christmas special, where Adam has a few gin martinis as the recording goes on, and it starts to take its toll - that was totally class!"

What sets Matt apart is he genuinely loves

THE MIKE WARD INTERVIEW

MATT FORDE

POLITICAL COMEDIAN



politics. And he's intrigued by its personalities, even those whose views he doesn't share.

"I can passionately disagree with someone but that doesn't mean I think they're a bad person, he explained.

"It's good to sit down with people you agree with and be reassured, but I find it far more interesting to talk to someone I don't, to figure out where they're coming from.

And would that, I wonder, include Jeremy Corbyn? Despite having been Labour all his life, Matt was so concerned by the direction the party was taking that he quit the day Corbyn took over.

And he sounds in no rush to go back. Not because he's turned true blue (he reckons both main parties have "lost their minds") but because Labour is "not the Labour Party anymore.

"It's totally deserted traditional Labour values. It's a hard-left thing it was never meant to be.

"Jeremy Corbyn bears no relation to any previous Labour leader. He's not patriotic. He doesn't believe in the defence of the realm. His alliances internationally completely break with British tradition."

So what are the chances of getting JC on Matt's show? "Very low, I think! But I'd love to have him on, and John McDonnell. And I'd give them the same treatment I give everyone."

● **Brexit, Pursued By A Bear is at Edinburgh's Pleasance Forth from July 31 to Aug 25. Matt is also recording his podcast at the Gilded Balloon Debating Hall on August 14 (3pm) and August 20 (1.30pm). Go to mattforde.com**



NICE GUY: Rees-Mogg

STATUS: The telescope

Space icon on top list

JODRELL Bank in Cheshire has won Unesco World Heritage status.

The space observatory, owned by the University of Manchester, is best known for the dish-shaped Lovell telescope.

The listing puts it alongside sites such as Machu Picchu, the Great Wall of China and the Taj Mahal.

Prof Dame Nancy Rothwell from Manchester University said: "This is fitting recognition of the history of science and discovery at Jodrell Bank, and the work there today."

£1M POT AT RISK

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