From top: Blackpool Pleasure Beach, pic 'n' mix from Woolworths, Sebastian Faulks' On Green Dolphin Street, Star Wars, Elton John, giraffes in Botswana and Elvis Presley

'I was Preston chess champion at ten – I just moved where I fancied and it threw people!'

The DEFINITE ARTICLE

We ask a celebrity a set of devilishly probing questions – and only accept THE definitive answer. This week: cricketer Andrew 'Freddie' Flintoff

The prized possession you value above all others... The cap I earned playing for Lancashire Under-11s, aged nine. I was so chuffed when I got it, I wore it everywhere for weeks afterwards.

The unqualified regret you wish you could amend... Whatever you do shapes who you are, so you shouldn't have regrets. I've made mistakes, but nothing that keeps me awake at night.

The way you would spend your fantasy 24 hours, with no travel restrictions... I wouldn't need to do anything grand. Wake up at home in Preston, then take my wife, Rachael, and the kids [Holly, eight, Corey, five, and Rocky, three] to Blackpool Pleasure Beach. We'd go on the rides, play on the beach, then have lunch at a chippy called The Cottage. In the afternoon I'd take Rachael to see the giraffes at Okavango Delta in Botswana, then have a few pints at the Friargate Social Club in Preston with her and my closest mates, followed by a curry.

The temptation you wish you could resist... Curries. I normally have a mixed grill with a very spicy sauce and naan bread. Fattening, but so tasty.

The book that holds an everlasting resonance... On Green Dolphin Street by Sebastian Faulks. The England team physio convinced me to read it when we were touring New Zealand. He kept saying that it gets better, but it was dreadful right to the end!

The priority activity if you were the Invisible Man for a day... I'd watch my kids in the classroom to see how they behave in a different environment.

The pet hate that makes your hackles rise... Rudeness, especially on the road when people don't wave when you let them out or stop to let them cross.

The film you can watch time and time again... I've seen Star Wars 50 times. My older brother Chris and I can pre-empt the dialogue all the way through.

The person who has influenced you most... My dad, Colin. He sacrificed a big chunk of his life to help me with cricket. We didn't have much money, but he made sure I had all the kit and took me all over the country to play.

The figure from history for whom you'd most like to buy a pie and a pint... Elvis. He was cool, but I'd like to know what he was really like.

The piece of wisdom you would pass on to a child... Everyone is good at something and once you find it, what you can achieve is limitless.

The unlikely interest that engages your curiosity... Chess. I started playing when I was eight and won the Preston Championship aged ten. I didn't plan many moves ahead. I just moved where I fancied and it threw people.

The treasured item you lost and wish you could have again... All the Star Wars figures and spaceships my brother and I collected. Some were very rare, but our mum got rid of them when I was about 15. I was gutted.

The unending quest that drives you on... Being a good father. All I want is for my kids to grow up happy.

The poem that touches your soul... Er, me and poetry don't really happen.

The misapprehension about yourself you wish you could erase... People think I'm a larger-than-life party boy, full of confidence and aggression. But much of that was my cricket persona. The bigger side of me is quite shy and comfortable sat at home quietly.

The event that altered the course of your life and character... Meeting Rachael in 2002 at Edgbaston cricket ground. I was drifting, but Rachael has real drive and helped me focus, which had a profound effect on my life.

The crime you would commit knowing you could get away with it... I got away with nicking lots of pic 'n' mix when I was working at Woolworths aged 16, but these days I'd be happy speeding without getting a ticket.

The song that means most to you... Rocket Man by Elton John. It was the dressing room anthem during the 2005 winning Ashes series. Elton played at my testimonial dinner in 2006 and got me up on stage to sing Rocket Man!

The happiest moment you will cherish forever... Being captain in 2006 when England won its first Test match in Mumbai for 21 years. On the day we won, I flew home to see my three-week-old son, Corey, for the first time.

The saddest time that shook your world... The death of my good mate Ben Hollioake aged 24. He was cool, handsome, a talented cricketer. I found out during a Test Match and was out on my third ball as my eyes were full of tears.

The unfulfilled ambition that continues to haunt you... I wish I had played my last few years at Lancashire and given something back to the county, but my knees gave way and I retired at 31.

The philosophy that underpins your life... Life's a game. It's how you play it that matters. I play it to the full.

The order of service at your funeral... I'd want a wake in Preston with an open mic for people to say whatever they like about me. Let's get some Elvis on: The Wonder Of You, Suspicious Minds, and Burning Love. I used to want my ashes scattered at Old Trafford but players hate diving into that stuff!

The way you want to be remembered As a good dad and husband; a decent bloke.

The Plug... The spring/summer collection of Freddie's fashion line Flintoff by Jacamo is out now, with sizes for the bigger man. www.jacamo.co.uk. ■

As told to Rob McGibbon

PHOTOGRAPHS: XXXX