



Alex Bland and Harry Martin-Dreyer all set to Row across the Atlantic

Friday 1 November 2013



Intrepid would-be Atlantic rowers, Alex Bland (and Harry Martin-Dreyer (both Rt 2000-05) are all set for their ordeal and will be shortly leaving for the Canary Islands.

Alex and Harry gave a moving presentation at the House Singing Competition on 18 October, explaining to the audience why they were undertaking this extraordinary challenge to raise money for Cure Leukaemia and JDRF, the world's leading type 1 diabetes research charity.

Alex and Harry report that, respectively, the charities have been an invaluable support to Harry's mother Alexandra, who died during this campaign as a result of complication in her leukaemia treatment and to Alex's brother Ross, who has type 1 diabetes.

Until you actually see the cramped size of the boat that they will be using (on display at House Singing) it is hard to imagine the scale of their challenge. The Salopian Club wishes them the best of luck and read more at:

<http://us7.campaign-archive1.com/?u=90878af2e44ecc274c71468bb&id=bef54fe2db&e=0fd504b050>



Rob Lilwall's new book, *Walking Home From Mongolia*, is about to be published

Friday 1 November 2013

Rob Lilwall (SH 1990-95) has just finished a new book, *Walking Home from Mongolia*, about the tribulations he and his friend Leon faced as they walked 3,000 miles from the Gobi Desert to Hong Kong.

Their route took them along the Great Wall, past the frozen Yellow River, and 'through the toxic insides of China's longest road tunnel, encountering -30C blizzards, interrogations by the Chinese police as well as the exuberant hospitality of desert nomads, cave dwellers and villagers.'

The TV series has also been premiered on Nat Geo Adventure Channel in Australia and Asia.

and Rob has issued an invitation to the book and DVD launch.

LONDON – Tue Nov 19, from 6.30pm, The Yager Bar.
Confirm your place here [\[L L L L\]
\[SEP:SEP\]](#)

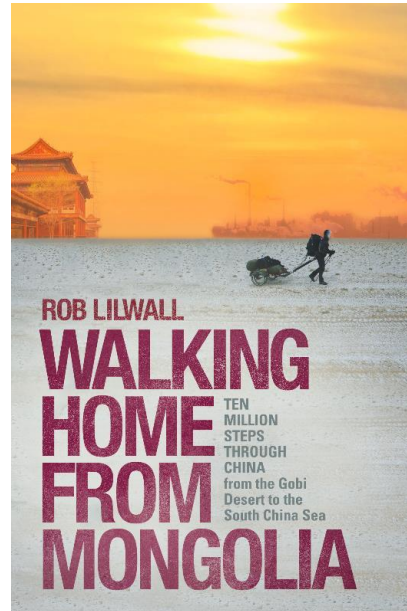
OXFORD – Fri Nov 22, from 6.30pm, The Mitre. Confirm your place here [\[L L L L\]
\[SEP:SEP\]](#)

HONG KONG – Mon Dec 2, from 6.30pm, Grappa's Cellar, Jardine House Confirm your place here

www.robililwall.com

www.facebook.com/walkinghomefrommongolia

Twitter: @robililwall





Dominic Martin has just published a new online novella - 'Hotel Nuremberg'

Monday 4 November 2013



Dominic Martin (2000-02) has just published a new online novella called 'Hotel Nuremberg'

It is about one woman's desperate attempt to recover her memory after a road traffic accident. Contact the author Dominic Martin on dominicmartin84@gmail.com

Read the novella at Dominic's blog: <http://hotelnuremberg.blogspot.co.uk/>

Robert Mather incorporates solar cells into cloth - with a variety of applications

Monday 4 November 2013

Robert Mather (M 1957-1961) is a director of a small development company, Power Textiles Limited, which he founded with his colleague, John Wilson. The company's goal is to develop and innovate the direct incorporation of solar cells onto textile fabrics.

Robert pictured here on the left, and his colleagues have already established that there are a host of potential applications for this concept:

disaster/humanitarian relief, awnings and canopies, polytunnels, military/defence and many more. Robert says that people have suggested some really intriguing uses for the solar fabric, and that it is certainly a privilege to be involved in such stimulating work.

More information is available on: www.powertextiles.com





Wild wind and driving rain in Snowdonia – the challenges of an autumnal Gold D of E Training Expedition

Monday 4 November 2013



This was the wettest and windiest Gold DofE Training trip that I can remember. It was a huge shock for the candidates, many of who had just arrived from Hong Kong, where they had been enjoying temperatures in the mid twenties.

The week-long training camp started in Beddgelert Youth Hostel in Snowdonia with basic training in subjects such as nutrition, cooking, packing, equipment use and care, emergencies and first aid, to name but a few. There was undoubtedly some resistance to taking the training outside when the wind was blowing the rain sideways, but eventually – and after some careful planning – we managed to hide from the wind by travelling to the northern slopes of the National Park, keeping our height below 600 metres.

The week continued with days out on the hills, covering basic navigation training and emergencies. Every day concluded with drying out and hanging absolutely everything to dry in the hostel's well used drying room.

The final night was 'Camping Night' and sadly the weather still didn't lift for us, so the team had a very challenging night in a tent. Fortunately we were well pitched in the shelter of a low hedge so the tents didn't get flattened by the gale force winds.

It was an eventful and challenging trip, even for the instructors who are used to these kinds of weather conditions.

Well done to all!
Major Jo Billington



Tremendous results in the National Schools Equestrian Championships

Monday 4 November 2013

Many congratulations to Archie Lywood (Rt UVI), Thomas Tulloch (Rt IV), Hugh Davies (Rt IV), Scott Walker (M 3) and George Holder (Ch IV) for their tremendous performances in the National Schools Equestrian Association (NSEA) National Championships at Addington Manor, 25th - 27th October.

Representing Shrewsbury School and competing against teams from across the country, the boys worked brilliantly together and produced many personal bests to achieve fantastic results in each of the events they entered.



L to r: Scott Walker, Archie Lywood, Tom Tulloch and Hugh Davis

In the Open Show Jumping (1.5m), the team finished 5th of 23 teams. In the Open Jumping with Style – a combination of show jumping and cross-country, with marks awarded for style as well as overall performance – Thomas Tulloch, Scott Walker and George Holder finished 4th of 22 teams. With only three in the team – only one of whom (Thomas) had had any experience of competing in an event of this kind – this was a particularly impressive result.

The climax to the boys' excellent individual and team performances came in the Intermediate Show Jumping (0.90m) on the final evening. The team of Archie Lywood, Thomas Tulloch, Hugh Davies and Scott Walker all jumped clear and were excited to be leading the event right up until the last of the 28 teams jumped. Although they were eventually nudged into 2nd place, this was a tremendous result and tribute to the wonderful team spirit, tactical riding and individual performances of the entire team.

RSSBC: Head of the Charles Regatta

Monday 4 November 2013

The Boat Club took a group of 21 boys and girls to compete at the Head of the Charles Regatta in Boston over half term. The trip provided an opportunity to race in the world's largest two-day rowing event, which is held over the three-mile course of the Charles River. The group were generously hosted by the Salopian community living in the village of Beverly Farms, 30 miles north of Boston.



After a late arrival on Wednesday 16th October, the group found it easy to get a good night's sleep before hitting the water in two eights on Thursday morning. The crews used equipment kindly provided by Boston College, St Joes Prep and Northeastern University. The first paddle on the course was in ideal conditions and a great chance for the coxes and steersmen to see the course before all the competing crews arrived on Friday. For jet-lagged legs it was a sharp wake-up call as the crews did some full pressure work back up the course to Union Boathouse, before heading off to Harvard boathouse and a tour around the facilities by assistant coach and Salopian Pat Lapage. At lunch most of the group headed for burritos at Chipotle in Harvard Square – the not-so-perfect preparation for taking on the Harvard Stadium stairs afterwards. A further tour around the impressive athletics facilities was an eye opener for most. In the afternoon the crews took to the water again for a short technical paddle before heading back to the host houses for dinner and an early night.

On Friday the crews got another chance to paddle over the course before heading off to Boston College High School for a late breakfast. A generous full English breakfast went down well before the two quads and the four headed back to the course to get their boats set up for

Sunday. The boys' eight had a tour around the school which is a Jesuit school with approximately 1,600 day pupils. In the afternoon the eight headed to the beach for a different training session and stretch before heading to the Lymans' for a pizza supper and a chance for the whole group to chat about their experiences.



Beach training session

On Saturday the two quads took to the water again in the basin beyond the start to make final preparations. The eight and the four had a more relaxed start before heading into Boston to meet up and watch some of the racing and visit the multitude of stores selling various bits of rowing paraphernalia. At 1pm the group assembled *en masse* at the Harvard Stadium to watch Harvard take on Lafayette in American Football. Later in the afternoon we headed back to Beverly Falls for a group stretching session on the beach before a pasta party kindly hosted by the Hodgsons.



Relaxing round the fire at the Hodgsons'

Sunday was race day and an early start for most of the crews. The boys' four were up first and taking on 84 other youth crews from around the world.



Boys' Four - Ed Carroll (cox), Alex Powell, Will Hayes, Henry Rassmuss and Ulrik Cappelen

The four produced a strong display to record an impressive result, coming 29th out of 85. The girls' quad followed in an open category event which saw them taking on 29 other crews. The girls had had little preparation together in the boat due to injury but performed extremely well, coming in 13th out of 30 on raw time.



Girls' Quad (far side) - Lizzy Collins, Francesca Molyneaux, Claudia Kimpton-Smith and Lettie Tay



The boys' eight started near the back of the field of 85 crews, amongst crews from Canada and South Africa. They made a strong start over the first half of the course and quickly overtook Shawnigan Lake and were sitting in 8th and 10th place through the first two timing markers. In the second half of the course the crew fell back slightly, having to take a slightly wider course coming into the last bend, and had to settle for 19th place at the finish. The result was pleasing knowing the quality of the field, but the crew will need to make gains over the winter if they hope to be in contention at the top come the summer.



Boys' Eight - Charlie Clarke, Will Dodson-Wells, Niall Barrow, Will Angell-James, Toby Thomas, George Patterson, Moritz Bensele, Brandt Beckerman and Rob Homden

The last crew to race was the boys' quad. The crew were also racing in an open category event and finished a respectable 25th out of 38 on raw time. The challenge of steering the boat through six bridges and around five sharp bends is a challenge in itself and deserves praise to both Lizzy Collins and Elliot Robinson-Boulton for steering coxless boats down the course without incident.



Boys' Quad - Charlie Clarke, Charlie Johnston, Charles Duckworth and Elliott Robinson-Boulton

After thanking our host clubs and getting a last chance to take in the event, the crews got a chance to watch some of the national team crews competing against the top university crews in the Championship Eights division. We all headed back to the Kerrs' house for a celebratory barbeque and a chance to relax after all the build-up to the event.

Monday started with an early morning training session on the beach in the form of various different exercises and games. After breakfast we drove 80 miles south to Brown University, Providence. There we were given a tour of the campus and facilities by their freshman coach, Graham Willoughby. After lunch we headed to the boathouse for a chance to see their facilities. In the evening we headed back to downtown Boston to see Quincy market and enjoy dinner at Durgin Park.



A final beach training session

The weather had been kind to us all week and Tuesday was no different. After another long training session on the beach, we headed to the North Shore Mall for lunch and last minute shopping before heading back to Beverly to pack up and say goodbye to our host families. Our appreciation goes to the Kerrs, Lymans, Hodgsons and Phoebe for inviting us into their homes and making us feel so welcome.

ATH



Port Hill win second place in the House Singing Unison competition

Monday 4 November 2013



James Warburg, Jamie Channon, Toby Lansdell, Henry Povey, Joe Thevathasan, Alec Barnes, Rhys Trevor and Jay Cherukat sing out 'Mr Blue Sky' on their way to a most impressive second place in the House Singing Unison competition.

House Singing 2013 – Moser’s win the Martin Cup.

Tuesday 5 November 2013



House Singing Competition: always a special event and a great way to end the first half of this busy term – boys from all year groups united for the common cause! The order of competition placed us 13th and last to perform, but maybe this gave more time for the boys to get their breath back after the lung-busting efforts of the Tuck’s Cross-Country race in the early afternoon... But perhaps the adjudicators and the audience would themselves be exhausted from the marathon of music through which they had been sitting? A tough test for us all.

First up for Moser’s were the Part Song Squad, singing Andrew Spicer’s ambitious and witty medley of more than thirty well-known songs drawn from all eras of musical history. Ambitious, yes, but sung very well as each song evolved into the next – Darwin would most certainly have approved, as did the audience on the night. A tremendous performance worthy of all the time and effort devoted to practice since the start of term.

The final song of the competition was therefore the Moser’s Hall Unison offering: ‘Minnie the Moocher’ - made famous by the film ‘The Blues Brothers’. With most of our best singers now deployed in the blues backing band (and making a fine job of it, I must point out), the spotlight fell squarely on the rest of the House, with the Blues Brothers themselves (Tim Atkins and Lawrence Arnold) leading from the front. As has become tradition, the boys themselves take full responsibility for leading the rehearsals and making all the key decisions, and so under the guidance of Tim Atkins and Harry Sargeant this song also ‘evolved’ during its preparation. The result, however, was a flowing arrangement that was really good fun to sing for the boys and quite a few of the audience too! Perhaps the euphoria of reaching the end of a long evening got the better of everyone? Nonetheless, with so much time and effort being invested in this event, by pupils in all the Houses, it remains a superb achievement to be awarded the Martin Cup, for the most entertaining House. Well done troops!

PP



The Tucks 2013

Tuesday 5 November 2013

The Tucks provided an exhilarating sporting climax to the first half of term, with almost the entire School population and many of the staff tackling the tricky three-mile course. Amongst the many impressive individual performances, Andrew Spicer (M UVI) also deserves special mention for adding another 'first' to the annals of the race - running and making a film at the same time. To view, please click on the link included at the end of Peter Middleton's report.



L to r: Rory Fraser, Ben Remnant, Freddie Huxley-Fielding, Charlie Tait-Harris and Sophie Pelling

An early bid for glory came from The Grove in their final year as a boys' boarding house, though their lead at the front of the pack was rather short-lived, and by Pulley Lane, most of the tipped athletes had positioned themselves in the top 20 or 30 runners. A strong start was made by Huntsman Rory Fraser (Ch), who got out of the blocks quickly and was unhindered by the charge of the masses at the gun, which many have likened to the hordes of migratory wildebeest on the Serengeti Plains.

Mr Haworth took to the front up Pulley Lane, and this was a lead that was never in doubt, with ageing Housemaster Mr Middleton struggling to keep pace behind. Fraser came under attack from Fourth Form challenger Freddie Huxley-Fielding (R) who last year pulled off an incredible feat by placing 4th as a Third Former. Huxley-Fielding's bold move was resisted, however, and by Farmer Tucks' fields, a new challenger had emerged in Fraser's fellow Churchillian Ben Remnant. By the end of the race, the gap had narrowed to three seconds, but much to the Fraser family's delight, it was Huntsman and Head of School Rory who took the tape as first pupil home, and he was duly presented with the Hector Rose Bowl, the much-coveted winner's trophy.

With Remnant just metres away, and Huxley-Fielding taking up the final podium spot, next year's race looks already to be a very exciting contest between our talented juniors, with fellow Fourth Former Charlie Tait-Harris (S) only seconds behind Huxley-Fielding, and Fifth Former Oscar Dickins (R) not far after that in 5th.

Despite the difficult conditions (wet and muddy, with little traction in the fields), the top ten boys all ran under 20 minutes. In the girls' race, we were all excited to see what new entrant Tory Mobley (EDH) could do, and given her pedigree (5th place in the national Knole Run in 2013) she was sure to give many of our top boys a run for their money. Sure enough, Tory was right in the thick of it from the start, and despite the scrum at the start, had nestled in to the top



50 runners by Pulley Lane. Her stamina proved the deciding factor in moving swiftly through the positions, and not only did she comfortably come home as first girl (by nearly two and a half minutes), but she came home in the top 30 pupils, a superb achievement, and well-deserved!

Individual silver went to Girls' Captain of Running Lucie Cornwell-Lee (MSH), with 3rd place going to an ever-improving Sophie Pelling (EDH).

To view Andrew Spicer's video of the Tucks, please click on the link below:

[The Tucks 2013](#)

*Back row (l to r): S Pelling, C Rogers, J Dempsey, R Fraser, C Tait-Harris, O Dickins, F Huxley-Fielding
Front row: C Godman, C Cornwell-Lee, T Atkins, T Mobley, W Hayward, B Remnant*



Results

IPH 17.41

PJM 18.18

1 R Fraser (Ch) 18.22

2 B Remnant (Ch) 18.25

3 F Huxley-Fielding (R) 18.39

4 C Tait-Harris (S) 18.45

5 O Dickins (R) 19.15

6 C Godman (M) 19.35

7 J Dempsey (Ch) 19.38

8 W Hayward (R) 19.50

9 C Rogers (Rb) 19.57

10 T Atkins (M) 20.00

1st Girl T Mobley (EDH) 20.59

2nd Girl L Cornwell-Lee (MSH) 23.25

3rd Girl S Pelling (EDH) 24.14

Churchillian Double Act - 1st and 2nd place in The Tucks and Part Song winners on the same day!

Wednesday 6 November 2013

Huntsman and Head of School Rory Fraser finished first in The Tucks with a time of 18.22, three seconds ahead of fellow Churchillian Ben Remnant. In seventh place with a time of 19.38 was John Dempsey, with Henry Newbould (20.26) and Alex Shaw (20.28) finishing in 14th and 16th places respectively, giving Churchillians five places in the first 20 runners. Over 600 competed in the race. The Housemaster came 410th, but his time was mercifully unrecorded.

Below left - RTH basking in Rory Fraser's Tucks success; right - Laurence Jeffcoate and Rory Fraser toast their respective musical and sporting triumphs





Football: 1st XI captain Ollie Brown selected to play for ISFA North team

Wednesday 6 November 2013

Congratulations to Ollie Brown (G), 1st XI Football captain, who has been selected to play for the Independent Schools Football Association (ISFA) North team against Leicestershire Schools on Sunday 10th November. Following this match, the ISFA North team will play against ISFA South as a final trial for the full ISFA squad on Sunday 1st December.

William Waterworth (Rt) was unlucky not to be included in the squad but he is a non-travelling reserve should anyone be unavailable.

House Singing Competition 2013 - the best year ever?

Wednesday 6 November 2013

Dr Charlie Oakley describes some of the highlights of a hugely entertaining and impressive display of talent and commitment. We are also extremely grateful to Julia Chamberlain for the majority of the wonderful photos included with his article

- www.juliachamberlainphotography.co.uk. (Moser's Hall photo taken by their proud Housemaster, Dr Paul Pattenden).

The Alington Hall was set for the annual spectacle, the swirling stencilled light show was in force and the video feed through to the Ashton Theatre seemed to be working...

First up were Oldham's Hall with their take on the Tremeloes' hit 'Silence is Golden'. That it might be, but we still had 25 songs to go. Ed Shave-Taylor commanded his duodecet of white-shirt-and-jeans-clad Oldhamites with a well worked piece using a good range of voices. The rest of the House congregated for a blast of Bowie's 'Rebel Rebel', then made way for Ridgemount.

Ridgemount played the unison card first with a heartfelt tribute to Mr Knox (Tutor in Ridgemount for a great number of years, who left this year) with a version of Abba's 'SOS' with lyrics by the new addition to the tutor team, Mr Bell. The possibility of emotion being shown by the judges was pre-empted with a presentation of a box of tissues. Their part song may have started as a football chant but the harmonies put together by Tom Lloyd came together for a very enjoyable few minutes of South African music with a comic moment; it was one of the few pieces of the evening that made good use of a treble voice.

Up to this point, 25 people had taken to the stage for part songs; the next House up could only add another six – but this did represent over the half the House, as this was The Grove's last stand in its current guise. The sextet produced a good rendition of the Beatles' 'Come Together' with three of them putting themselves forward for a solo skit. The other five House members joined them to start an emerging theme for the evening: how many songs can one House sing under the banner of one entry? The Grove aptly went for 25, one for each year of the House's existence. This was a truncated version of Axis of Awesome's 'Four Chords' which contains 36 well-known songs with the same four-chord progression, ranging from Alphaville to U2 via Maroon 5 and Lady Gaga (twice). The successful attempt of the high note in A-ha's 'Take On Me' deserves a special mention.



The Grove - unison

Next on stage were 'The Grove's neighbours, Mary Sidney Hall, with a mash compiled by Imogen Richardson, including 'Season of Love' from Rent (thankfully we are not in a leap year, as 527,040 minutes does not scan as well), a bit of Mumford and Sons and another nod to Maroon 5. After her Eurovision comeback, Bonnie Tyler was the choice for the unison with some energetic bopping on the front row, as the House 'Held out for a Hero' and then cleared the stage for Severn Hill.



MSH - unison

Severn Hill merged two songs – 'Embers' by Just Jack dowsed with Coldplay's 'Charlie Brown'. The uniform was well thought out as they represented "embers from the same fire" with black T-shirt and flame logo; it was also a very active performance, with something resembling a dance routine. The remainder of the House joined them in dark trousers held up by fluorescent

coloured braces and, with the support from their backing band, gave a fun rendition of Mika's 'Big Girls'.



Severn Hill - part song

School House then inserted the coin into George Fowler's 'Juke Box' for a smart octet in black with maroon pocket squares, performing a range of exciting numbers from 'Blame it on the Boogie' to 'Bohemian Rhapsody' with some neat bridges in between. It was a very ambitious piece with exemplary execution. There were solos from a number of them, but the total number of songs covered did not usurp The Grove's 25. The unison was dedicated to two of their housemates, who tragically lost their father and step-brother three weeks ago in a plane crash. The choice of 'A Little Help from my Friends' – selected weeks earlier – was poignant in its aptness. Miss Eglinton (now Mrs McKenzie) accompanied on saxophone with other musically minded members of the House.



School House - part song

Eight Ingramites adopted the familiar uniform of white shirt and dark trousers with a quiet yet close harmonised version of 'Free Fallin'. (The programme attributes this to John Major, but I believe it was John Mayer, or possibly Tom Petty, who should be credited.) The remainder of the House joined in suits and in some cases with paper plates in hand for a bit of Buggy Malone's 'Bad Guys'. The stage was soiled in a pie-flinging finale, which may also have resulted in the need for a bit of dry-cleaning; it is a good thing that they had two weeks until they were due in School again.

Rob Homden left Radbrook to perform his arrangements without him, as he was in Boston, USA with fellow members of the RSSBC, getting ready for the Head of the Charles Regatta. With the Classics trip leaving for Rome and the Bay of Naples the next day, the choice of 'Pompeii' by Bastille for the part song was inspired. They made very good use of the stage and held the tune together as they shifted around their arena. The unison gave credit to Shrek as their inspiration for the choice of Smash Mouth's 'All Star'. The front row were on their knees, their Housemaster was backing them up on bass and the hand gesture choreography was pulled off with great aplomb.



Radbrook - part song

The novelty of having the Housemaster performing was then trumped by Churchill's, who had both their Housemaster and Assistant Housemaster (in shades) in their backing band. A second extended reprise of 'Celebration' by Kool and the Gang echoed the finale of School House's montage earlier. Most of the House managed to dance, with a few tiring towards the end after their exertions in the Tucks earlier in the day. The part song was certainly not as two-tone as their choice of dress. A very slick and accurate merge of the Beatles' 'If I Fell' and 'Help' had a well delivered melody, and the harmonies shone through.



Churchill's - part song

Port Hill fielded ten voices for the most modern of the songs on offer – ‘Counting Stars’ by OneRepublic. It was very well engineered with good diction and a subtle interlude of ‘Wonderwall’ by George Birt. The white shirts were again employed and ELO’s ‘Mr Blue Sky’ was a good choice for their unison and they managed to keep the energy right up to the last bar.

Emma Darwin then went for a two-song combination for their part song: ‘Dog Days are Over’ by Florence and the Machine and ‘Firework’ by Katy Perry, with their seemingly traditional round of thigh slapping. As they did last year, they went for the two-row formation for their Unison and, like MSH before them, used a song by a Eurovision group, this time the 1997 victors, Katrina and Waves. The front-row dip and side-stepping saved them from burning feet in their interpretation of ‘Walking on the Sunshine’; a song that brings back memories of summer holidays of days gone by.

Two more Houses remained and all that separated them was a small segment of Ashton Road. Rigg’s were up with a bit of Gospel music – the spiritual ‘Joshua Fit the Battle of Jericho’ – and then paid their respect to the old Riggite, Michael Palin with the comic touch in ‘Always Look on the Bright Side of Life’. Whistlers were carefully selected and the expletive well covered up. The exit of a row after every key change at the end worked well.

The stage was then left for Moser’s to give us the most entertaining finale to the evening. Andrew Spicer’s ‘Brief History of Song’ went from monastic chants to Korean rap in reasonable chronological order (‘Hey Jude’ and ‘Bohemian Rhapsody’ were slightly out of place but ‘Billie Jean’ was correctly placed before ‘Thriller’ even if they are on the same album). They eclipsed the record of 25 songs set by the Grove. I have counted 31, but I am sure I missed a couple. Then came the Blues Brothers (Tim Atkins and Lawrence Arnold) with a fantastic finish to the evening with ‘Mini the Moocher’, which enticed a bit of audience participation towards the end. They thoroughly deserved the Entertainment Award.



Moser's - unison

There were five more awards up for grabs. The Best Arrangement Award was given to George Bates of Severn Hill for his excellent Just Jack/Coldplay composition. Port Hill gained Most Improved and were placed second in the Unison behind School House (Churchill's, Emma Darwin and The Grove were also placed). Coincidentally, the other song to feature Maroon 5, Mary Sidney, was placed 5th in the Part Song category behind, Radbrook, Moser's, School House and winners Churchill's.

A quick analysis of those results would suggest it would take a scoring system to rival the one employed in the figure skating at the Salt Lake City Winter Olympics in 2002 for anyone other than School House to be worthy overall victors.

Thanks go to all the music staff who gave up their time to help with the rehearsals and the technical crew who worked tirelessly behind the scenes to make the evening such an entertaining spectacle.

More than £700 was raised during the evening for Cure Leukaemia and the diabetes research charity JDRF – the two charities for whom Old Salopians Alex Bland and Harry Martin-Dreyer will shortly be rowing 3,000 miles across the Atlantic. They will be embarking on their epic and entirely unsupported challenge on 1st December – see www.rowing4research.com.

DVDs of the event will be available to order soon.

CWO

School House, the morning after... George Fowler and proud Housemaster Hugo Besterman



Diary Note: George will also be starring in the next major event in the School's musical calendar - playing the first movement of Beethoven's 3rd Piano Concerto in the St Cecilia Concerts, Sat 16th and Sun 17th November. Tickets on sale now and selling fast!



Will Bayliss (Rt IV) raises over £4,000 for the Shropshire Blood Trust Fund

Thursday 7 November 2013

Huge congratulations to Fourth Former Will Bayliss (Rt), who has raised more than £4,000 for the Shropshire Blood Trust Fund by mountain biking non-stop for 57 kilometres.

Cycling at the Llandegla Forest Mountain Biking Centre in North Wales, Will completed the black route once and the red route twice – a major physical and mental challenge. The money he raised will be used to refurbish and upgrade the Haematology Ward at the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital, where his father has been receiving treatment.

Will was delighted with the tremendous support he received for his efforts and was particularly grateful to family and friends who rode with him on the day.

*Below left: Will Bayliss setting off on his first lap with Master in Charge of Mountain Biking, Paul Kaye
Right: Mission accomplished - Will (centre) with Hector Kaye (left) and Sasha Arridge (right)*



Former pupil returns to Shrewsbury to give CCF Cadets a ride in his helicopter

Thursday 7 November 2013



Thirty cadets from the CCF had the excitement of a helicopter flight courtesy of the military today. The pilot, Captain Henry Clive is the Army Air Corps Regimental Liaison Officer and is also an Old Salopian (Rt 1997-2002). Henry was almost as excited to be back at school as the cadets he flew.





Netball: Shrewsbury to represent Shropshire in the West Midlands Championships

Thursday 7 November 2013

In an impressive display of skill and determination at the County Netball Tournament yesterday, Shrewsbury's 1st team were victorious in all but one of their six games and finished as runners-up in the Trophy Competition, winning through to represent Shropshire in the West Midlands Finals in January.

The 2nd team also played very well, narrowly failing to retain their status as reigning champions in the Plate Competition.

The weather forecast for the afternoon was not good and, as predicted, the rain started just as the 1st team began their first match against Adams' Grammar. This didn't deter Shrewsbury, however, who played well. The result was a 4-4 draw; a fair result and important not to lose at this early stage. From here Shrewsbury continued to play well and improved every game.

Match 2 was against Ludlow College, who had some strong defenders, but Shrewsbury worked the ball into the D well and came away with a 10-5 win. Match 3 was against Shrewsbury Sixth Form College, who we have struggled against in the past, but we never allowed them to really get going and produced an impressive 10-3 victory.

Our next game was against Shrewsbury High School – always a difficult one – and with only 12-minute games, it was important to take the lead early on. Shrewsbury managed to do this and although it was close at half time, we pulled away in the second half and won 8-5.

Our penultimate game was against Wrekin, who hadn't lost all afternoon and have won this competition for the past ten years. It was a tough match and at half time Shrewsbury were 0-5 down. We pushed hard in the second half and to our credit finished the game 3-10. Having only lost one game all afternoon, it was important to get a good result in our final game against Thomas Telford to secure the runners-up position. We did this by producing our best performance of the afternoon and winning 11-1. This meant Shrewsbury will go through with Wrekin College to represent Shropshire in the West Midlands Finals in January. A first for Shrewsbury and a fantastic achievement!



About to do battle - the 1st and 2nd teams just prior to their departure for the County Championships

In the Plate section, Shrewsbury were reigning champions and we were keen to achieve back-to-back wins. The draw was in group stages before going into semi finals and then a final. Our first game was against Adams' Grammar and although they were strong opposition, Shrewsbury played well and won 11-5. Game 2 was against Shrewsbury Sixth Form College 3rd team, who again struggled with our tall defence and Shrewsbury came out quite easily on top. Match 3 resulted in another win for Shrewsbury, this time against Bridgnorth Endowed School and it seemed likely we would make the semi finals.

Perhaps because of our confidence at making the semis, Shrewsbury were a little less focused against Concord College and despite pushing hard, could only manage a draw. This still meant we were through to the semi finals and would face Shrewsbury Sixth Form College 2nd team. As the rain continued to come down, both teams made mistakes, but it was Shrewsbury who made fewer and converted the chances they had. A good win meant we had made the final for the second year running. It was going to be a tough ask, as the final was against Ellesmere College who hadn't lost a game all afternoon. At half time there was very little between the two teams, with some excellent defending from both sides, but in the second half we were just not able to make the most of our chances and the final result was Ellesmere 5 Shrewsbury 3. All in all, a great afternoon of netball and performances to be proud of from both teams. We wait excitedly for the West Midlands Championships in January.

Churchill's wins Part Song prize for second year running

Thursday 7 November 2013



For the second successive year Churchill's Hall has won the coveted Part Song prize at the fiercely competitive House Singing Competition which took place just before half term on 18th October.

The Unison Song took third place, with the customary appearance of both the Housemaster and Deputy Housemaster in the backing band.

Particular congratulations to Deputy Head of House Laurence Jeffcoate (UVI) who arranged the part song (a capella versions of the Beatles hits 'If I fell' and 'Help!') and rehearsed both this and the Unison Song (Kool and the Gang's 'Celebrate'), ably assisted by his enforcers, Head of House Ben Lyster-Binns and his other Deputy Angus Hayward.

The fabulous photos are reproduced by kind permission of professional photographer Julia Chamberlain (www.juliachamberlainphotography.co.uk), mother of Fifth Former Edward.





Giles Bell's 'Team of the Week' - the mighty 5th XI

Thursday 7 November 2013

This week we are focusing on a team who epitomise what flowing football is all about. Indeed, if ever the phrase “football was the winner” could be applied to a current team, it has to be the Shrewsbury School 5th XI. The coaching duo of Hugo Besterman and Giles Bell were both schooled, as coaches, in the Barcelona style and see this season as work in progress. Mr Besterman stated: “Developing the passing game to the level we aspire to takes time.” When probed about what level he was aspiring to, he suggested: “A good run in the FA Cup and a big money day out at a Premier League club should be within our grasp next season, as long as we can hold on to some of our big name players.” That may prove to be a problem, with some senior members of the squad considering moves to university clubs next season. “Holding on to our Upper Sixth players may be a problem,” admitted Giles Bell. “But I’m hoping to convince their parents that another year of academic consolidation before university and a chance to play football at a high level would be time well invested. So I’m hopeful that most players will still be with us next year and possibly for a few seasons after that.” Mr Besterman agreed with Mr Bell that this seemed like a good plan. “This seems eminently sensible,” he said.

Certainly holding on to players has been an issue for a team that has been seen as something of a greenhouse for budding young players. This is clearly demonstrated by this season’s results. An excellent 1-1 draw with the Liverpool Ramblers Veteran’s side was followed by a wonderful 7-0 victory over Hulme Grammar School. This result had other coaches casting a green eye over this slick footballing machine, and the fact that eight members of the team that beat Hulme are now in the 4th XI and one is in the 3rd XI might perhaps illustrate how hard it is for even the best of coaches to maintain their vision of total football. “It can be hard when each week we have to start with a new set of players and immerse them in the mantra of total football as played by Barcelona and Brighton and Hove Albion,” said Hugo Besterman. Giles Bell agreed and went on to state: “It is lovely to watch our brand of football being developed throughout the School.”



The 5th XI - psyched up and ready for some serious football

On Wednesday the 5th XI played the Wrekin College Development squad and lost 1-0, despite playing 'all the football'. There was a suspicion of offside about the goal but Referee Giles Bell gave it anyway, thinking the home side would almost certainly go on to score four or five, given the way they were playing. After the game was over, Coach Giles Bell was disappointed with the refereeing. "The goal was clearly offside and the Referee has cost us the game. He is an absolute disgrace and I hope he is not refereeing any more of our games this season. I have written to FIFA and asked for him to be taken off games of this standard." Referee Giles Bell refused to comment on the incident but did say it was a shame he had forgotten his football boots, as the combination of torrential rain and trainers was not conducive to keeping up with play, despite being in superb physical shape. Football expert, sports editor and mother of the present team captain James Warburg, Annabel Warburg could not believe that the team lost the game. "I cannot believe the team lost, the way they were dominating the game – it was just like watching Barcelona. Shame about the ref."



Left to right: Giles Bell, Coach; Giles Bell, Referee

Club captain Jonty Newbould is one of the players who has been loaned to the 4ths. He was keen to express his delight and support for the coaches and their inspirational playing style. "I love playing football in the Brighton/Barcelona style. I have tried to bring that freshness of approach to the 4th team but I have found we tend to end up looking playing like a pack of Wolves all too often. I really hope I am dropped again soon."



Above left: Mr Bell explains to three disappointed players - Jack Hodges, Tom McHugh and Sam Morris - that they're on the bench.

Above right: Determined to impress, they continue with their enthusiastic warm-ups.



Despite having lost a few players to the 4ths, there were plenty of footballing gems on display. Sam Morrisinho is a striker with a keen eye for goal and the fancy footwork required to trick the most accomplished of defenders. Ben Tang has the pace and ability to be playing at a very high level indeed. Fred Adair is like a cat with a mouse. He cannot resist playing with defenders again and again rather than leaving them for dead. Tom Robinson and Will Schofield are both able midfielders with the ability to play visionary balls to our strikers; and the word is that Alex Walker is simply a visionary.



L to r: Kit Hartley waiting for another gem of inspirational advice from his coach; Alex Walker "visionary"; Reiss Rashid - most improved player; defenders Archie Lywood and George Bradshaw anticipating leaving a mark on the opposition; Fred 'the cat' Adair

Kit Hartley is whole-hearted and robust when flying down the left and James Warburg is Mr Reliable at left back. George Bradshaw is keen to leave his mark on attacking opposition players, as is Archie Lywood. Both Charlie Robinson and Max Hulse, having honed their skills at right back for the 5ths, were in more elevated company yesterday and so Tom McHugh and Yutaro Sato were settling into the total footballing system with great alacrity. Misha 'Lepricorn' Lepekhov added some magic upfront and Jack Hodges talked a good game in midfield. Victory seemed assured, especially with Reiss Rashid – the team's most improved player – proving difficult to beat in goal.

But sometimes life is about dealing with the unexpected and with handling disappointment. As Mr Besterman and Mr Bell both said at the same time: "Everything you do in life involves learning. We have learnt we need a better referee."

Arsene Fergusson (writing in place of Mr Bell this week)

Photos: Andrew Spicer (M UVI)



Dan Howie all set for the Talisker Whisky Atlantic Challenge

Thursday 7 November 2013



Dan Howie (Ch 1998-03) and his rowing partner, Will North, report that their forthcoming Atlantic Row is now fully funded and they have also raised an impressive £80,000 for their charities, Cancer Research UK, Leukaemia & Lymphoma Research and St Anna's Hospice.



As reported before on this site, Dan, pictured left, and Will will be taking part in the gruelling Talisker Whisky Atlantic Challenge, competing against 18 other boats. Look out for coverage of the race on Sky Sports and other main stream channels from 2 December, 2013.

Dan says, 'The school logo will be on deck with us and I will try and get it included in our video at the end.'

To find out more, go to <http://www.atlanticrow2013.com/>



Cricket: Ed Barnard (PH UVI) signs 2-year contract with Worcestershire CC

Friday 8 November 2013

Congratulations to Ed Barnard, who not only spent half term on an England U19 batting camp in Sri Lanka but has also signed a two-year contract with Worcestershire County Cricket Club. He will service the county on a Summer Scholarship during the 2014 season, before switching to a full contract for the 2015 season.

Last winter, as we reported on this website, Ed played for the England Under-19 team in South Africa, hitting an unbeaten 114 in the first Test and taking the winning catch to be named man of the match.

In Worcestershire CC's press release announcing the signing of both Ed and his fellow Worcestershire Academy player Joe Clarke, Director of Cricket Steve Rhodes said, "Both Ed and Joe have tremendous potential to make a big impact here at New Road. We can proudly say they are products of our Academy system and are presently experiencing an England U19 batting camp in Sri Lanka. I am aware the England age group coaches also hold them both in high regard and they have bright futures ahead of them."

Top awards at the Royal Russell School MUN

Friday 8 November 2013

Shrewsbury scooped a Distinguished Delegation Award at the Royal Russell School MUN Conference during half term – one of the three top awards. Four of the team - Mark Huang, Toby Harvey-Scholes, Charlie Bibby and Sonny Koh – also won individual Distinguished Delegate awards in their respective committees.



During the first four days of half term, twelve members of Shrewsbury's MUN team attended the Royal Russell School MUN in Croydon, along with 500 pupils from the UK, Ireland, Greece, Turkey, Germany, the USA and Japan. The RRS MUN is the longest-running MUN in the country, and the school that hosts it, now has an Old Salopian, Chris Hutchinson, as its Headmaster.

Shrewsbury's A team, Azerbaijan, led by the irrepressible Mark Huang, won a Distinguished Delegation award, one of the three top awards at the conference, and four of the team (Mark Huang, Toby Harvey-Scholes, Charlie Bibby and Sonny Koh) won individual Distinguished Delegate awards in their respective committees.

For the first time RRS MUN introduced an ICJ (International Criminal Court) to deal with an international pollution incident. Witnesses drawn from the different delegations were called to testify before the court and were, in turn, cross-examined by the advocates for the prosecution and the defence. Shrewsbury were represented in the ICJ by 'Judge' Dan Edwards, one of 15 judges drawn from different schools. Dan enjoyed the experience, despite the relative lack of

'banter', saying that it was an exhausting, but very useful experience for anyone interested in a career in Law.

Shrewsbury's performance is an encouraging start to the MUN year. Let's hope that this can inspire our delegations (India and Mali) for a strong performance at the Paris MUN in UNESCO at the end of November.

The Azerbaijan team were Mark Huang (Ambassador), Toby Harvey-Scholes, Charlie Bibby, Sonny Koh, Daniel Edwards and Theo Simmons

The South Sudan team were William Allott (Ambassador), Mary Parrott and Akaash Patel.

The Cuba team were Andrew Humpish (Ambassador), Sylvia Yeo, Sasha Arridge and Ivan Tivodar.

Accompanying staff: Huw Peach and Jenny Burge



Rugby: Shrewsbury's A XV win an historic match at Rugby School

Monday 11 November 2013

Last Saturday the A XV made history as the first Shrewsbury rugby team ever to play Rugby School on the pitch where the sport was first invented.



Rob Treasure (Shrewsbury, Captain), Charlie Jefferson (OR, Referee) and George Beard (Rugby, Captain)

Having beaten Bedstone in our previous match, the team arrived at Rugby to face their 3rd XV with confidence but still expecting one of the hardest games of the season. After a long and detailed warm-up we kicked off, with Rugby receiving the kick.

The first half saw Shrewsbury with most of the possession and territory yet unable to penetrate the strong Rugby defence. This remained the case up until the final ten minutes of the half when Shrewsbury managed to score two tries in quick succession, with

Rob Treasure scoring off a quick tap and go penalty and Leo Sartain picking the ball up on the wing to cross the line. This, combined with Roan Kirkby's kick, took us into half time 12-0 up. During the second half neither team's defence gave way, despite several attempts from Shrewsbury coming very close to scoring.

Likewise Rugby pushed to break through our line throughout the game, forcing Ben Lister-Binns to make several try-saving tackles. However, as the game came to a close Shrewsbury relaxed slightly, allowing Rugby to score their only try of the match, leaving the final score at 12-5 to Shrewsbury. An excellent win for the team with some outstanding individual performances (Man of the Match going to Ben Lister-Binns). Thanks go to Mr Johnson and Mr Kirkby for taking and coaching us.

Rob Treasure (captain, I UVI)

Below: Shrewsbury's A XV in front of the Webb Ellis stone at Rugby School



The inscription reads: "This stone commemorates the exploit of William Webb Ellis who with a fine disregard for the rules of football as played in his time first took the ball in his arms and ran with it, thus originating the distinctive feature of the rugby game A.D. 1823"

A cross code weekend

Tuesday 12 November 2013

Roman Faithful (UVI) describes a weekend of rugby - league and union.

On Saturday 5th October Mr Cowper took a group of us to see the Super League Grand Final at Old Trafford. In the weeks before, we had been subjected to much 'rugby league propaganda' on Mr Cowper's part, of how rugby union was just "aerial ping-pong" and "half an hour of reset scrums". I must admit I was slightly sceptical. As a union player myself, I had never really followed rugby league too closely. That was to change, however, after seeing eight tries scored and 80 minutes of bone-crunching hits from Wigan Warriors and Warrington Wolves, all of it played at such a quick pace.

Before we took our seats at the stadium, we had a bite to eat on the way down and caught some of the South Africa v New Zealand game on an iPhone, whilst chatting about the different codes and rugby at the School. Ed Harrison bought a scarf and I participated in a 'Yorkshire, Yorkshire' chant, and we made our way into the ground. Our seats were quite high up, dead centre and we had spectacular view of the field. Some representatives from each of the clubs in the Super League were there and paraded



round the pitch carrying their respective flags. One of them did fall over whilst running on to the field, however, to much applause from the fans. There were a lot of pyrotechnics to greet the teams when they came out, but they were nothing compared to the action of the next 80 minutes. Warrington had the first half, after a Wigan penalty goal they scored tries from Simon Grix, Joel Monaghan and Ben Westwood. However, later Monaghan had to be stretchered off the field after a huge hit on Pat Richards. Darren Goulding then scored for Wigan to leave the half time score 16 – 3 to the Wolves.

The second half was a different story, however, with Wigan notching up 24 unanswered points, consisting of four great tries which included cross kicks and some great offloads for Wigan to win 30 points to 16. This was great for me as I had decided to become a Wigan fan just before the game, due to it being slightly more northern than Warrington and the fact that Sam Tomkins was among their ranks. There was to be no try-scoring send off for him before he moves to Australia, however. We made our way back to the minibus and drove home.

The next day a larger group of us went down to Kingsholm Park with Mr Johnson to see Gloucester take on Exeter Chiefs in what was familiar territory for me – Rugby Union. It ended up a sorry day for the cherry in whites as they went down 29-12 in their own back yard, despite having a number of internationals in their squad, including England's Billy Twelvetrees, Freddie Burns and Ben Morgan. They did score the first and last tries but it was not enough to stop the giant men from the south.



On seeing Exeter's Will Welch, Brandt Beckerman (O UVI) offered comments such as: "That guy is huge", "that guy is a monster" and "that guy could eat me". There was a slightly comical moment when one of the players went down and a physio came on to the pitch. I had said to Brandt, "Oh, there are so many injuries in rugby, it's such a hard sport" only for the physio to assist the player in putting his contact lens back in. At the end of the game we got to see all the players as they walked in, as we were seated right next to their entrance, which was good as I hadn't yet seen a pro rugby player standing next to me and I was able to appreciate just how huge they really are – Exeter's Australia International Dean Mumm and Ben Morgan being the biggest. Getting some of their pictures capped off what had been an amazing weekend of rugby, in both codes. I would like to give a big thanks to Mr Cowper for getting us tickets and taking us down to Old Trafford and to Mr Johnson for taking us to Gloucester and even paying for my ticket!

Roman Faithfull (O UVI)



A Classic Trip - Rome and the Bay of Naples, October 2013

Wednesday 13 November 2013

In what has become a biennial event, the Classics Faculty to Rome and the Bay of Naples took place during a balmy Michaelmas exeat. It is described here by Guy Cabral (Ch V).

On our arrival in Naples Airport, we collected our bags and boarded the coach marked “Gruppo Shrewsburg” - hopefully not a German school - and embarked on a three-hour coach journey to Sorrento. When we arrived at the hotel, the local six star, we gratefully dumped our bags in the rooms and partook of some nourishing supper, including that delicious Italian dessert, the apple. Thankfully, though, Mr Percival had arranged for us to ‘hit the town’ and visit a *gelateria* (ice cream shop). Eventually our Holy Grail was found and we all bought large quantities of gelato. I personally had a three-scooper: rum & chocolate, Ferrero Rocher and hazelnut. Then bed and sleep called, and so ended the first day.



The second day was a real treat as the group visited Pompeii. I could have walked around there for the whole day; unfortunately we only had a few hours but what bliss they were. First we saw the usual semi-ruined amphitheatre and military training ground but then, having turned a corner, the ancient city of Pompeii opens up before you; you find yourself looking through a gate up a street with the Roman buildings lining it, very much like they did before destruction fell upon the city. I spent a long time wandering around; however

I never found the one building which caused people particular amusement: the brothel, complete with explicit frescos. Having looked at Pompeii, it was time to see that which had destroyed it, so we went to Vesuvius and had a look at the crater. Despite there being no “Mount Doom”-style lava pool, it was still awe-inspiring due to the size of it - there was space for several billion tons of earth.

The following day was much the same; however Herculaneum was in even better repair, with many of the building still being two storeys. When we finished walking around Herculaneum, it was time to leave Sorrento; so we boarded the coach and headed for Rome.

Our first stop was the Colosseum. It was quite amazing to be in the place where so many people died to the rapt cheers (or boos) of hundreds of thousands of people. Dinner at a local trattoria followed soon after; for the second night in a row we were served pasta followed by chicken followed by tiramisù. Not satisfied with the dessert of the evening, four of my companions ordered a half-kilogram of ice cream from the local ice cream stand!

The following day “Gruppo Shrewsburg” crossed Rome, starting at the Vatican, where Scott Reynolds and Bella Shi managed to walk through the wrong door and ended up in the Papal

Apartments. A walking tour of Rome from Mr Percival and Mr Fitzgerald (and we didn't get lost!) took us past the Piazza Navona, Pantheon, Trevi Fountain and Spanish Steps. With the sun on our backs, our final stop was the Galleria Borghese, which contained possibly the finest art collection in the entirety of Europe. In my opinion the two greatest bits of artwork in the gallery were the sculptures by Bernini, who surpasses even Michelangelo. In his sculpture 'The Rape of Proserpina', a viewer can see the indentation in Persephone's leg caused by Pluto gripping it. While in the gallery we were met by Benjamin Netanyahu, the Prime Minister of Israel, who was in town and could not pass up the opportunity for an audience with some Salopians. When we were carted out, we spent the rest of the day in Rome; then returned to our local trattoria for supper. We didn't have tiramisu for desert!

All good things must come to a close, and so on the final day, we departed for Rome's airport, ready for our return. La Bella Italia is a fantastic place and I can't wait to go back.

Guy Cabral (Cb V)





RSSH tour to East Africa, October 2013

Wednesday 13 November 2013

A year ago, we were honoured to welcome to the School the Hunt's first Coach in Residence, Ethiopia's Sentayehu Eshetu, who has trained over a dozen Olympic champions and world record holders. It was an inspirational week, and as 'Coach' talked about running in his small home town of Bekoji, a seed was sown in the mind of Master in Charge, Peter Middleton. During half term, he and Ian Haworth led a group of 12 Hunt runners to the spiritual home of distance runners - East Africa.



Touching down on African soil, we breathed deeply that distinct aroma and on our journey up to the small town of Gilgil in Kenya, cameras and iPhones worked overtime to capture the stunning views over Lake Nakuru. Our first stopover was at Pembroke House Prep School, where we would be based to acclimatise to the high altitude (a stunning first dawn run took us up Sundowner Point with views of the Aberdare Hills and beyond), and would also provide us an opportunity to visit the Restart Centre, home to orphaned and abandoned Kenyan street children. As a group we had sought to raise funds for the Centre in advance of travelling to Africa through our marathon world record attempt and other sponsored events. It was a significant afternoon, therefore, for our students to spend time with the Restart children, who despite having suffered unbelievable and unspeakable cruelty and sadness, nevertheless manage to smile continually and retain a genuine optimism and hope for a future that is surely far more positive under the framework and support of the Centre and its staff. In bold letters on the wall are the words, 'Think not what you are, but what you can become'. These were words that would remain with us on the tour, and no doubt for many years to come, and our time at the Restart Centre was a memorable first experience of the reality of African life.



At the Restart Centre, Gilgil, Kenya

As we said goodbye to our hosts at Pembroke and to the children at Restart, our attention turned to our first serious training in Africa as we travelled north-west to Iten, the 'home of champions', where we would be based at the Lornah Kiplagat High Altitude Training base. It was here that such athletes as Paula Radcliffe and Mo Farah have based themselves in the past, and we quickly could see why. There is a very special atmosphere in the town, with quite literally hundreds of world class athletes training each day on the roads, trails and forests around the small town, perched atop the escarpment of the Great Rift Valley. If the Hunt is proud of its history of success, then you can imagine just how impressive it was to visit the local school - St Patrick's - which under the coaching of Irish priest Brother Colm, has produced multiple Olympic champions and world record holders, most recently 800m record holder David Rudisha.

Our time in Iten involved some very challenging training sessions where we were paced by young steeplechaser Silas Too and by 800m runner Timo Limo. We learned a great deal from speaking with Kenyan athletes and looking at the way they live and train, observing the simplicity and dedication they bring to their daily lives. Meeting African junior 5000m champion and current St Patrick's pupil Moses Letoiye showed us just how dedicated you need to be to reach the top.

Our time at Iten came to an end, and we made our way east again, this time stopping off overnight in North Laikipia, hosted by Aidan and Claire Hartley at Palagalan Farm, possibly the most remote place any of us had ever been to. A night under the radiant stars to the accompaniment of Africa's symphony of animals was a memory to treasure, and a glimpse of an Africa rarely seen by your average tourist. The next morning, Aidan had prepared an unforgettable run for us - a 10km route that would see us run alongside ostrich, antelope and

even two rather large bull elephants. I don't suppose we will ever again run under the watchful gaze of marshals with rifles and elephant guns!

Further time experiencing African game was had in Ol Pejeta game conservancy, where we were fortunate to see a vast menagerie of animals - most memorably of all, a cheetah scouting out its evening kill. A 'kill' of different sorts was on our mind as we traveled back to Nairobi to face Peponi School in a 4km race on the Kenyatta family ranch. (For those unfamiliar with Hunt vernacular, a 'kill' is a win, not anything more sinister!) This race would be a significant event in the Hunt's history, for this would be our first ever international fixture.



RSSH v Peponi School



What nerves there were about competing at altitude, in the intense heat of an African afternoon and against an unknown opposition, quickly evaporated with a strong start from our runners. Fifth Former Ben Remnant led the runners out, with four or five of the Hunt packing well behind him. By the end of the first lap, it was clear that the Hunt's stamina and speed could not be matched by the Peponi runners, despite their advantage of being acclimatised to the altitude. Indeed, it became less of a race between the two schools, and rather a race to see who could be the first Hunt runner to 'kill' on foreign soil. That honour went to Fourth Former Freddie Huxley-Fielding, with Ben Remnant settling for second home and Huntsman Rory Fraser making up the podium. In fact, the Hunt posted the top eight positions, and in the girls' race there was further success for our two girls with Captain of Girls' running Lucie Cornwell-Lee coming home third, and new entrant Tory Mobley taking the 'kill' over Peponi's five-time independent schools' national champion. It was a

triumphant afternoon, and as we celebrated with dinner and an overnight stay at the world-famous Muthaiga Country Club, we reflected on a fitting end to our week in Kenya.

Our final leg saw a flight back in to Addis Ababa at an unspeakable hour in the morning, followed by yet another lengthy bus journey south to Bekoji, where the seeds of our African journey began. It is a town rarely visited by Westerners (or 'faranji' as we would be known) and a far more untouched part of Africa than we had experienced in Kenya. That said, as Ian Haworth and I set off on an evening run as the sun set on the town, it became quite clear that there was no hostility here, and as countless children ran alongside us or cheered us on with 'Go America!' and 'Run good!' we felt like privileged guests in this remote corner of Africa. That evening, we were delighted to have a surprise visit from 'Coach' who showered us all with bear-hugs, his ever-present beaming smile stretched across his face.

As we congregated amongst Coach's young Ethiopian athletes in the early hours of the next morning, it became clear just how seriously they take their running. Over 120 young men and women had woken early to attend the session, most wearing running shoes barely hanging together, yet all were there believing that they could be the next Ethiopian superstar, and that Olympic glory could be theirs if they worked hard enough. The talent on display was really quite mesmerising, and as we began the workout weaving in and out of the hillside trees, interspersed with sections of unfathomable speed, we reflected on the privilege of being able to train with such impressive athletes. It was an experience that we all felt was one of the most memorable of the tour, and we were only sorry that our time in Bekoji was so brief. Nevertheless, we feel sure that our partnership with 'Coach' and the 'town of runners' Bekoji will continue for many years to come and no doubt he will be back in Shrewsbury at some point soon to train the next generation of Hunt runners.



With Coach at Bekoji - clockwise from back left: William Hayward, Charlie Davis, Peter Middleton, Coach, Ben Remnant, Theo Clarke, Lucie Cornwell-Lee, Ian Haworth, Sean Sanyer, Jake Samuel, Freddie Huxley-Fielding, Charlie Tait-Harris and Tory Mobley

Our final few days would see us back in the outskirts of Addis staying at YaYa Village Athlete training camp. The facility is co-owned by Haile Gebreselassie and provided our athletes with yet more memorable running experiences. Spending time with Ethiopian prodigy Davit Gashite on our final afternoon (who has already posted 1.52 in the 800m and 3.52 in the 1500m) and hearing about his own ambitions and aims provided a clear view of the commitment needed at this level. As an athlete roughly the same age as the majority of our runners, running with Gashite fired them up to aim high themselves.

Of course we hoped that our talented athletes would leave Africa feeling inspired, motivated and wanting to aim high. Yet the tour was about so much more than that. It was less of a training or racing tour, and instead more experiential. Our pupils gained an insight into a very different world to their own. They saw extreme poverty, hardship, toughness. Yet in amongst it all, there is hope, optimism and a thankfulness for each day and the air that they breathe. There is a real belief that anything is possible against this backdrop, and I hope that this has been the overriding message that our runners have come away with. I hope that they have become better runners, but also more rounded individuals, and young men and women who look ahead not only at the promise of their own future, but also to the future that they can help shape for others. As they say at the Restart Centre, think not what you are, but what you can become.

PJM

Huntsman Rory Fraser has also written an account of the tour: [Running with Elephants](#)

Below: Ian Haworth and Peter Middleton with 800-metre World Champion Mohammed Aman





RSSH: Two new 'Gentlemen of the Runs' and a spectacular 'Hash' run in South Shropshire

Thursday 14 November 2013

As ever, it has been a busy week for The Hunt, as winter training continues apace, and we build on the strong foundations laid during our Africa tour over half-term. Two of our athletes on that tour were this week awarded their 'Gent' status, which is an ancient Hunt version of 'colours', and is awarded following strong performances in the weekly 'run-ins' during Long Runs where first home is said to have 'killed'. Traditionally, 'Gentlemen of the Runs' were awarded batons (in the early days, these were sawn-off umbrella ends), with lanyards in House colours, and notches etched in to mark their Kills and podium finishes. We maintain this tradition by awarding batons to our Leavers who have been granted 'Gent' status. This week, Huntsman Rory Fraser (Ch) and Senior Whip Ralph Wade (Rb) presented the first awards of the year, the first of which went to Fifth Former Ben Remnant (Ch), with five kills this year, a second place in Tucks and second place in our international fixture against Peponi School, Nairobi. Our second award posed more problems in that it was an historic 'first' - an award to a female Hunt runner. There has been considerable debate as to what the correct term should be for a female Hunt runner who achieves 'Gent' status, but thus far, it is a debate that has been unresolved! Nevertheless, we were proud to be able to make that historic first award to Sixth Form entrant Tory Mobley (EDH) following her significant achievements already this year, coming home 1st girl in The Tucks (and 32nd overall) and winning the girls' race by a considerable margin in Nairobi, defeating their five-time independent schools' champ. Both Ben and Tory are impressive athletes, and each has a promising future ahead of them.



L to r: Ben Remnant, Rory Fraser and Tory Mobley

The following day we made the one-hour trip south to Ludlow for the second of the term's 'Hash' runs, hosted by the Wiggins family of Downton House. In one of the most spectacular settings in the county, we were treated to a run of stunning scenery, plenty of mud and at least half a dozen very wet river crossings! The 'scent' was laid by Messrs Fraser and Wade, NPD and Monty, the fittest terrier in Shropshire. Twenty-one runners took to the fields, hills, and rivers - our largest ever number - and it was generally agreed that this had to be up there as one of the best ever Hash runs. Six of the group were new to Hash running, and as such they were 'blooded' in the traditional way, where the remaining 'scent' (flour these days) was liberally doused upon their heads. This always proves an entertaining spectacle and a wonderful way to end the afternoon's running, but this particular afternoon was especially enjoyable to watch Huntsman Rory Fraser dare to blood his English teacher, the formidable Dr Law!

"Book Heaven" - author Pauline Fisk visits the School's Ancient Library

Thursday 14 November 2013

"For somebody who loves books, on Sunday morning I was as near to Paradise as life on earth can get."

Pauline Fisk, a local author with an international reputation, has been writing a fascinating blog about life in the town of Shrewsbury during the course of 2013. It is full of intriguing nuggets of information about local people, places and events - highly recommended reading for anyone with an interest in the town.

On Sunday she was given a tour of the Ancient Library by Mike Morrogh, and the post she has written in her blog about the experience vividly captures her excitement. We include a short extract here. To read the blog post in full, please click on this link: [Shrewsbury School's Ancient Library](#)

"The Shrewsbury School library is a treasure house of books, not just old ones either, but modern books too. On display I found everything from the latest Booker prize-winner to a collection of graphic novels. There were easily a dozen books I could have stopped to thumb through, but I had a date with something older than them. These were not the books I'd come to see.

I'd come to see the old guys. The really old ones. The ones that made my own personal 19th century acquisitions from Candle Lane Books seem like Johnny-come-latelies. Some of these books were chained. Others were kept in a strong-room so strong that it felt like walking into an air-conditioned safe [but then I was walking into an air-conditioned safe].

In that library's inner sanctum - a small room packed floor to ceiling with what I heard described as 'the crown jewels' - I saw an illustrated Bible from the 13th century, Charles Darwin's personal atlas, with his name - and other comments - written inside it, and a Tyndale Bible. This is a big deal. It's the book, above all others, that I'd come to see..."



Pauline Fisk's blog is called [My Tonight From Shrewsbury](#)

Football: Giles Bell's 'Team of the Week'

Thursday 14 November 2013

This week - the under-14 A team.



In many ways the strength of Shrewsbury School football can be gauged by how well the under-14s are doing. They are the nursery plants that will grow and flourish, if they are nurtured appropriately, into the mighty stemmed figures we see hurtling around the 1st XI pitch. One day these fragile seedlings will bear fruit in the form of golden goals and tasty tackles, entertaining large crowds and providing them with a feast of vibrant football. Who could the School entrust with such an auspicious role? Who could protect these frail stems from the violent storms of competitive football? Who could develop their mental toughness and instil in their innocent minds the ways of 'total' football? The answer of course is Second Master Mr Michael Tonks. Mr Tonks has been overseeing 'Tonksy's Tots' for the last nine years and has been joined this year by Spencer Gunnell. Before I analyse the current Tot Squad, I think it is important to have a quick look at where their coaches' influences originate.

Mike Tonks was born and bred close to the 'Roker roar' in his native North East. Football was in his blood. I like to picture a young urchin kicking a ball around in the back streets of Sunderland with a cheeky smile on his impish face and a bag of humbugs in a coal-encrusted paw. The last time I went to watch Sunderland a policeman advised me to remove my Brighton scarf – presumably in case I got it stolen or may be he thought it was just a bit too tight; whatever the reason, I sensed that Sunderland was a tough environment. Footballers honing their skills on these streets would have to learn a few tricks and stay mentally strong. Mike has a winning streak running through him, which is possibly why he rejected the 'Black Cats' and became a Manchester United fan. He has watched and played football for a very long time (he has an important birthday coming up on the 22nd of this month). Who better to prepare his



charges for games against state school pupils who have played together for three years? These youngsters have to learn fast and Mr Tonks puts the ‘Mr T’ into Tot!

Spencer Gunnell’s mum played football for England. She was a big influence in his upbringing. She told me that Spencer was a “good dribbler from a very young age”. She was not surprised when he joined the Stoke City youth team, and having watched Spencer play for the staff team I am surprised he is not still playing there!

Spencer (*pictured right, working on jumping techniques which he told me were particularly important for Stoke players*) is a very highly qualified coach and he brings the technical expertise to go with Mr Tonks’ streetwise knowledge. Together they are a formidable coaching team and a string of impressive results suggest this is a team that is maturing fast. Indeed they had won four of their last five games until I cursed them with the honour of being Team of the Week!



Their 3-0 defeat to a Manchester Grammar team that have been together for three years is no disgrace and both coaches felt with a little more concentration and precision in front of goal the result could have been very different. The Tots consist of Robert ‘the impassable’ Ford in goal, Sam ‘the reliable and awesome left back’ Bayliss, Tom ‘the set piece specialist and 007-style’ Bromley Davenport, Tom the ‘trickster’ Brunskill, Ivor ‘never been known to not smile’ Featherstonehaugh, George ‘goal machine’ Garrett, Lucas ‘pit-bull’ Paul, Oliver ‘clown and entertainer’ Sykes, Harry ‘head it or hoof it’ Wasdell, Jordan ‘the brick wall’ Zaza, Jom ‘the silent assassin’ Umpujh, George ‘I used to like rugby’ Sandy, David ‘the brave and therefore usually injured’ Schofield, Mungo ‘hard to dispossess or tackle’ Hargreaves. Their mentors are very impressed by their ability and think they have a bright future.

A 50% win ratio at this juncture in their fledgling Shrewsbury careers suggests this group of players have a bright future. All Hail Tonksy’s Tots!

GJFB

Below left: A typical piece of nifty footwork from captain Harry Wasdell; right: Keeper Robert Ford poised to make another spectacular save





Spanish Faculty's exchange trip to Rosario, Argentina

Friday 15 November 2013

The Spanish Faculty has established a strong exchange link with San Bartolomé School in Rosario, Argentina. During half term, 15 pupils and two members of staff spent ten busy and happy days in Rosario, as described by Sam Roberts (Rb UVI).

Day 1



After a 30-hour journey, we could have been forgiven for not being in the mood to watch a football match. However, “El Clasico” was exactly what we needed to wake us up. In a stadium with a capacity of just over 40,000, there must have been 50,000 people at least. Every seat was filled, and then some! All of these fans were Central supporters, as fans of their rivals, Newell’s Old Boys, weren’t allowed into the stadium on the day of the local derby. The match ended as a

win for Central, which was a relief, because as happy as these fans were, I daren’t think how their attitude would have changed if the result had been different! After the match, we met up with our host families at the school and retreated back to their houses for a much-needed sleep.

Day 2

This was our first day at San Bartolomé School, and we met at 8 o’clock for breakfast before going for a tour around the city. This took us out to the outskirts of Rosario, and we saw for the first time the Rosario-Victoria Bridge, which spans 608m over the Paranhá River. The tour also took us to the famous Monumento a la Bandera (National Flag Memorial). The monument was inaugurated on 20th June 1957, on the anniversary of the death of Manuel Belgrano, the creator of the Argentine flag.

After the tour, we had lessons with the students at San Bartolomé, in which we got to learn more about the people we were staying with and the other pupils. After classes we made the classic Argentinian food, empanadas. If we didn’t like them now, we would have to learn to like them, as they seemed compulsory in Argentina...

Day 3

This was the big day – the England v Argentina football match. We would have to wait, as first we went to the nursery school of San Bartolomé, where we read books to the kids, and got to learn about “The Rabbit and the Bear”... It was then time to head out to the field for the big international. But even with the captaincy of Jake Morris, we couldn’t salvage a win. In the end we lost 3-2, and there was no “hand of God” to blame it on.

A well-deserved barbecue was in order, Argentinian style.



Day 4

We started off the day with a chemistry lesson, in Spanish of course, followed by a presentation made by a few of the Upper Sixth to those students intending to come to England next summer. We then continued with the lessons, with students our own ages, before having tango lessons – which didn't help our British "two left feet" stereotype...

Day 5

Finally, a day to do nothing. We met in the morning at school and then took a bus to "La Estancia". This is a ranch where you can spend the day horse-riding, fishing and generally dossing about, and that's exactly what we did. Most of us voted for fishing, as it didn't require much activity, which was a fairly unsuccessful venture. After proving our fishing incompetence, we rode back to the ranch on the trailer of what can only be described as a "classic" tractor.

After returning to school, we all went to a bar called "Johnny B. Good", which gave us more time to learn about our Argentinian counterparts.

Day 6

The morning was spent helping out with the kindergarten, mainly helping to make dulce de leche cakes – reason enough to visit the country! This was followed by a tour around "El Circulo", the main theatre in Rosario, and then a walk along the Paranhá River to the modern art museum. Despite it being closed, we made the most of it and had lunch looking out to the river.

Day 7

Today was the second day of the trip when we could relax completely. We took a speedboat to the island on the other side of the river. After a week of speaking Spanish, this is exactly what we needed.

Day 8

This was our final full day in Rosario, and we all met up to spend the final day with all of our hosts. The day was spent mostly playing a football tournament, which slowly turned into Argentina vs. England. Again, a day mainly dedicated to chilling out, it was our last real opportunity to spend some time with our fellow Argentinians.

Day 9

The day we all dreaded... leaving Rosario. We met at the school with our suitcases in hand and proceeded to Starbucks with everybody for our last meal in Rosario. After a goodbye that lasted far longer than intended (everybody said goodbye about six times), we sadly left the school, but I think most of us knew we would be back as soon as possible.

Then came a four-hour coach journey to Buenos Aires, the neighbouring city to Rosario. We arrived about midday, and after checking into our hotel we went to the local shopping mall, where everything cost about twice as much as in Rosario. That night was spent at a tango show with a sit-down meal. We had been feeling pretty happy with ourselves after the tango lessons a few days previously, so the show quickly brought us back down to earth. We arrived back to the hotel fairly late, which was a good thing in the end, as we had a 12-hour flight and a 24-hour journey ahead of us the following day.

Day 10

The morning began with a tour of the city, including a trip to Boca – in my opinion the most memorable place of the trip, as it had a classic appearance and had probably not changed much in the past century, with all of the tango dancers on the street. The tour came to an abrupt end, as we headed off for the airport – with none of the enthusiasm we had felt as at the start of the trip...

I would recommend the Argentinian trip to anyone looking at doing Spanish in the future, as it provides experience of the language, instead of just sitting in a classroom with a grammar book. We would like to thank Mr Wright and Matron Donohue for making it a great trip – and of course everybody in Argentina for being so hospitable and welcoming towards us.





RSSBC: Internal Match – Sunday 17th November

Monday 18 November 2013

On a crisp Sunday afternoon the J16 squad challenged the J14s and J15s to a race. To make things a little fairer, the J16s raced in coxless pairs, the J15s in coxed fours and the J14s in octuples.



The winning J15 4+ Harry Marshall, Bentley Moss, Rory McKirdy, Rory Davies and Guy Cabral (cox)

A number of the J14s were competing in their first race, so a number of important lessons were learned, and they raced well to post some good times.

The more experienced boys of the Fourth and Fifth Forms recorded times that were very close. At the top of the time sheets it was the J15 4+ of Harry Marshall, Bentley Moss, Rory McKirdy, Rory Davies and Guy Cabral, who were only 1.4 seconds ahead of the fastest J16 pair of Henry Thomas and Tom Sykes.

A superb afternoon of racing with the future of the Boat Club on show.

RMW

Below: Winning J16 pair Henry Thomas and Tom Sykes



Below: Winning J15 8, Cox E Jones, F Simmons, A Lyster-Binns, B Fox, B Moss, C Speed, A Inglis-Jones, C Cowan-Taylor, I Zagrebelnyy





The 2013 St Cecilia Concerts, reviewed by Martin Knox

Wednesday 20 November 2013

Capacity audiences in the Alington Hall were treated to a feast of music last weekend, demonstrating not only the wealth of talent across the Music Faculty but also the scale of its ambition. We are extremely grateful to Martin Knox for his review.

At first sight the programme for this year's autumn extravaganza seemed to contain more than could possibly be prepared in time, but from the first bars of the Beethoven Piano Concerto No 3, it was evident that the Symphony Orchestra was in top form. A rich and unified exposition was a prelude to a concert full of good things, triumphantly dispelling doubt. The soloist in the concerto, George Fowler (SH UVI), has an impressively varied CV and his musicianship was apparent in the best of his playing, notably in his sensitive transitions from loud to soft. There was much to commend in this, his first appearance as a concerto soloist.

The trumpet concerto by Alexander Aratiunian makes huge demands on the technique of the soloist, to which Harry Sargeant (M UVI) proved flamboyantly equal. This was a superlative offering, again given confident accompaniment. Harry re-appeared later in the evening to lead the cello section. How does he do it?

Already impressive in the concertos, the orchestra scaled new heights in the last movement from Shostakovich's fifth symphony. The expertise of soloists in the wind sections is already familiar, but the power and tone of the strings surpassed anything I have heard at the School, and John Moore must have been as thrilled by the response of his players as we were by his fiery interpretation.

It would be easy for Maria McKenzie to set the pulse racing and the feet tapping with her wind ensemble, but in choosing the Jazz Funeral as the first of two items, she challenged the soloists within the group to create a mournful mood before a lively second section. The effect was both subtle and successful. The band goes from strength to strength.

After the interval, Dympna Nightingale's Chamber Choir showed that they, too, continue to flourish. They brought a contrasting serenity to the proceedings, diction and tonal blend as fine as ever. I repeat a previous plea for a concert in the Chapel, the acoustic properties of which are ideal for their repertoire.

The String Orchestra in Kallinikov's Serenade provided further evidence of the quantity and quality of players in the Music Department. David Joyce is to be congratulated on producing such polished sound, as well as on casting around for lesser-known pieces in which to display it. They, too, would benefit from a hearing in the Chapel, if it could be arranged.

The Community Choir and choristers from the School's Chapel Choir had waited patiently for their turn. When it came, they were straight in with a sharpness of attack which was to be sustained throughout Mozart's Solemn Vespers. Choir and conductor have been together for a long time now and the rapport that has been established is a joy to watch and to hear. Every cue meets with instant response, every gesture is reflected in the desired change of tempo or dynamic. They cannot but enjoy singing as they do and it is uplifting to witness such fervour. It is also good to see the solo vocal parts being taken by members of the School, their

contribution being enthusiastically received. Particularly memorable was Henrike Legner's beautiful rendition of the famous solo for soprano, Laudate Dominum, and she was part of a talented quartet featuring Awen Blandford, Laurence Jeffcoate and Henry Craig.

As in every item in which they were involved, the orchestra accompanied the choir magnificently. The amount of hard work that must go into a concert of this scale and this quality is enormous. Never has it sounded so worthwhile.

Martin Knox

Art Faculty Exhibitions

Thursday 21 November 2013

During this academic year, each member of staff in the Art Faculty is exhibiting their latest work in a series of fortnightly individual shows in the Art School Gallery, which is open to the public 7 days a week, from 8am to 6pm.

All Art Faculty members are practising and exhibiting artists, and they each have their own show in the Art School Gallery once every five years. This is their opportunity to share their creativity with the pupils and the local community.

At the beginning of November, photography teacher Mrs Christine Jacks and her husband Arthur gave a joint exhibition of their recent works entitled 'More of the Same... but different'.

Currently on show is Director of Art Philip Woolley's exhibition of New Digital Paintings, which opened on Monday 18th November. Philip has exhibited widely in both the USA and the UK - recent shows include the 'Scapes' Exhibition at the Royal West of England Academy in Bristol, a two-man show at Elliot Smith Contemporary Art in St Louis, and Lyon Fine Art in Chicago, as well as Firbob and Peacock, and Cambridge Contemporary Art in the UK.

"Two years ago I made the transition from using the traditional fine art materials, to combining painting and drawing with Adobe Photoshop. This has enabled me to combine the richness of past techniques with the flexibility of digitalisation. As everything in the world is permeable to digital transmission, this shift enabled me to draw upon a huge range of subject matter and experience that would have been difficult to use with traditional painting media. The cumulative effect of this process is the ultimate 'Post-Modern' situation – all styles and all possibilities meet in an exciting new 'synthesis'."



Left - Christine and Arthur Jacks; right - Philip Woolley

Philip Woolley's exhibition continues until Saturday 30th November; the Art School Gallery is open 7 days a week, from 8am to 6pm.

On Monday 2nd December, Fergus Reid's exhibition of New Photography opens to the public with a private view in the Art School Gallery at 6.30pm. His exhibition continues until the end of term.

Further exhibitions will be taking place in the Lent and Summer terms.

Football: Giles Bell's 'Team of the Week'

Thursday 21 November 2013

This week, the Under-15 A team...

It has become increasingly apparent to me over recent weeks that it is impossible to write this column without the featured side losing after a run of success. This week I have been having a look at the Under-15 A team who were in the middle of a nice little run of four victories on the trot. Until yesterday, when they went to a big state school called Cardinal Griffin and discovered the conditions were not conducive to their finely tuned passing game. The 'rugged terrain' (mud bath) saw the ball seldom reach its desired destination, the wind and rain did not help the fragile intellectual types that Mr Pridgeon prefers to select (they have to be able to cope with his sophisticated game plan); and the opposition were strong and good which was a further 'fly in the ointment'. Despite losing 5-2, Mr Pridgeon was supportive of his players and considers them to be a hard working and pleasant bunch who have improved as the season has progressed.

In terms of their school development, it should be remembered that these lads have only been together for a season and have thus far been carefully nurtured - as we noted last week - by the caring and kindly Mr Tonks (Happy Birthday, old man). By the time they have reached the age of 15, it is deemed possible to let Paul Pridgeon loose on them. Paul, of course, is best known as a cricketer who played for Worcestershire from 1972-1989. I remember as a small boy watching him play on TV in the John Player League as I sat on my Grandpa's knee and 'wondered' at his phenomenal hairstyle. In those halcyon days it was still possible for a professional cricketer to play football for a professional club too. In the winters Paul played centre half for Hereford, Kidderminster Harriers, but mainly Stourbridge FC. His uncompromising defending and no-nonsense approach would lead to many strikers leaving the game and his loyal fans lovingly called him the 'Pridgenator'. He brings a certain steel to his coaching and demands hard work and physical toughness from his 'little Pidgeons', as he likes to call his teams. He has been joined by Richard Pike, who is an ex-Shrewsbury Town youth player and a UEFA B licence holder; (this means he is a properly qualified coach!). Richard brings the technical know-how to go with the more traditional style that epitomises Paul's style of play.





I was lucky enough to watch the team at their best against Darland High School last week. A fine 8-1 victory included a penalty scored by Josh Malyon which I luckily managed to capture on film! And his proud grandfather was there to witness it, to boot.

Both coaches are pleased with their squad. The goal keeper is Patrick Jacobs, who continues the fine tradition of being a head case which is deemed a necessary requirement if you want to play in goal. The full backs are Charlie ‘hard man’ Lennox, Adam ‘sick note’ Aslam-Baskeyfield, or Olli ‘I can kick it further than anyone else’ Dixon. The big men in the middle of the defence are Kwaku ‘often goes missing David Ruiz style’ Antwi, Alex ‘the organiser’ Walton. In midfield there is Jonty ‘the crosser’ Schofield, and the engine room consists of George ‘why play one touch when I can have twenty’ Pearce, Josh ‘I love Pridge shouting at me’ Malyon, Angus ‘I talk complete drivel’ Drummond, Freddie ‘the flyer’ Huxley-Fielding and Daniel ‘I play the viola’ Orchard. Up front there is Alex ‘should have been a goalkeeper’ Webb, Charlie ‘goals galore’ Tait- Harris and Thomas ‘I love headers’ Tulloch.

Mr Pridgeon told me: “As you would expect, under my control – having been a cultured Franz Beckenbauer-type of defender – we play a controlled passing game similar to Brighton. I am pleased with the results so far and we are all looking forward to a reunion with Mr Clancy (last year’s under 14 A coach), when we visit Wolverhampton Grammar next Wednesday.” Lets hope Pridge’s ‘little Pidgeons’ can rule the roost!

GJFB

Below: Josh Malyon scoring a penalty v Darland





A week in the life of Alex Lawson (O IV)

Friday 22 November 2013

A keen and committed rower and a member of the School's J15 squad, Alex Lawson was thrilled to spend last week representing his home country of Bolivia at a training camp in Peru for young rowers from South America, organised by FISA (the International Rowing Federation).



Towards the end of the summer holidays, I had the idea that I would like to see if it would be possible to do some international rowing. I had no idea just how well it would all eventually turn out. I put a small rowing application through to the Olympic Committee of my home country, Bolivia. After a few weeks of tedious waiting, with people telling me all the time not to get my hopes up, I finally got a written letter from the South American Rowing Committee of FISA – the International Federation of Rowing Associations (rowing's equivalent to FIFA for football).

After all that waiting and all the anxiety I was relieved to hear this news. Bolivia immediately organised my kit and sent me lists of all the events I could enter and training camps I could attend. Since I was the only rower for Bolivia, I would have to go in a single scull and I was yet to have a coach.

I really felt I needed to immerse myself in this while I could, so I was overjoyed when I heard that the School would allow me to miss a week of term to go to a training camp as a representative of my country.

Saturday

I woke up with a sore back at around 5am. My taxi took me to Manchester Airport while it was still dark and I boarded the plane for my ten-hour flight to Atlanta. Then I changed planes in Atlanta and took a seven-hour flight to Lima in Peru. Fortunately the flights were paid for by FISA.

Sunday

I met a FISA group arriving from all around South America. In Peru the top female and male rowers (generally two per country) and a coach were brought by FISA. The rowers were all under 18. I met other rowers and coaches from Peru, Brazil, Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Uruguay, Ecuador, and Venezuela. The head coach of the whole camp was the coach of the Mexican national team.

Monday

Due to unsafe weather conditions ocean currents in Lima, the camp and the upcoming Bolivian games were moved to Albufera Medio Mundo, which is three hours north of Lima along the Pacific Coast. We stayed in bungalow type rooms and I shared a room with people from Ecuador, Chile and Brazil. The boats were beautiful new Empachers and Wintechs, courtesy of the Peruvian Government. These were the Ferraris of the rowing world.

Then training started with a 30-minute ergo test and a five-kilometre run on the beach.

Tuesday – Thursday

We woke up at six in the morning to do an hour of stretching and fitness circuits. Then after breakfast we rowed for about 18 kilometres and at last we had lunch. We rowed about three times a day on average. In the evenings when it was cool, we took advantage of our terrain and ran up and down sand dunes for resistance training. Some were almost two storeys high!

Friday

Finally on Friday I said my goodbyes. I had made a lot of friends in the South American rowing community and I had been invited to row in places from Brazil to Argentina. The rest of the group would stay for a week or so more and then compete. I missed the initial competition, but I have been invited to row in the South American Championships this spring in my single scull. I am happy with the progress and knowledge I took away and the result of my efforts. But I am most pleased with the number of amazing people I met and the new environment I was immersed in.





Opening next week - Senior School Play: 'Antigone'

Friday 22 November 2013

In an exclusive behind-the-scenes preview of next week's Senior School play, Ralph Wade (Rb UVT) talks to lead actor Hugo Scott (Rt UVT).

For the past term, a select cast has been meticulously rehearsing for this year's Senior School Play: what promises to be a particularly powerful rendition of Sophocles' 'Antigone'. Although he doesn't yet know it, Creon (Hugo Scott), who stars alongside Jess Walker in Brian Parsons' new production, has kindly agreed to an exclusive interview. I arm myself with a dictaphone borrowed from my long-suffering Housemaster, and duly quiz Hugo:

RW: So Hugo, could you begin by giving us a York Notes-style synopsis – for those who aren't sure what to expect?

HS: *(collects thoughts)* I, the King, forbid the burial of Antigone's brother, Polynices. And she goes out, and basically buries the body, and because it's early in my reign, I feel that I should do something about it ... so I kill her. But she's also betrothed to my son ... he then goes off and kills himself. This is not before I've realised that in fact I probably should have never sentenced her to death – because Tiresias [the prophet] comes to me. And then pretty much everyone else dies apart from me.

RW: Obviously it's a very ancient play (441 BC). Should we come expecting a more traditional format, or something more modern?

HS: No, it's quite modern. Most of the chorus are women for a start; so that's quite edgy! But the set itself is pretty amazing...

RW: And what do you make of Brian Parsons' direction? *(Hugo is under special instructions to be diplomatic.)*

HS: *(with enthusiasm)* I love Brian's direction! But at times it borders on ... What's that thing Daniel Day-Lewis does... Method Acting?

RW: And what about your co-star, the new drama scholar? Apparently Jess Walker's really impressive...

HS: Oh, she's very good. She's put me to shame – quite a lot. She learnt her lines much earlier than I did; and she's been a lot better than me ever since. So I'm just trying to play catch up.

RW: You open on Wednesday 27th November. Are you nervous?

HS: *(Good taste, and Hugo's wishes, prevent me from publishing the exact response. He assures me that yes, he is very nervous.)*

RW: *(With self-satisfaction at his brilliant journalistic ploy)* You've got twenty words to sell it to our readers. Why should we come?

HS: I think that we probably need to have a good cry at times, and I think that this might help people with that.

In 23 words, (benefit of the doubt given!) I think we've touched on the most compelling reason of all. Come and let out your inner Athenian! Get emotionally involved in one of the civilisation's greatest tragedies! For the pragmatists amongst you, there are also free drinks every night at the Top of the Shop (19:30).

Antigone will be performed in the Ashton Theatre at 8.00pm on Wednesday 27th, Thursday 28th, Friday 29th and Saturday 30th November. Admission is free. Please reserve your tickets at www.shrewsburyschool.ticketsource.co.uk or from Dawn Dunn on 01743 280500.





Galin Ganchev (M V) performs Brahms' Piano Concerto No 2

Friday 22 November 2013

On 28th November, one of our most talented current music scholars, Galin Ganchev (M LVI) will give a performance of Brahms' 2nd Piano Concerto in his native Bulgaria with the Varna Philharmonic, comprising players from the Varna Opera Orchestra. The performance will be conducted by Shrewsbury's Director of Music, John Moore. Those lucky enough to be able to respond quickly to the announcement that at an open rehearsal, Galin and John Moore would be giving a lunchtime performance of the work on two pianos in the Alington Hall, were treated to 50 minutes of sheer delight on Monday 18th November - as Richard Hudson describes.

A cancelled meeting suddenly left me free to attend the Alington Hall on Monday lunchtime for a performance of Brahms' gigantic second Piano Concerto, the orchestral parts transcribed for piano (by Emil Sauer) ably played, possibly even sight-read, by Director of Music John Moore, a virtuoso feat in itself.

At the extreme end of the repertoire even for the most hardened and experienced professionals, this is no work for the faint-hearted, and Galin had his audience enraptured from the word go. The thing about Galin that makes him so rewarding to listen to is that no allowances need to be made, no disbelief suspended, because he is only a 17-year-old schoolboy. He looks like a professional, moves like a professional and, boy, does he play like a professional.



From the lyrical opening arpeggios ushered in by that most exquisite of horn introductions (was that really just John Moore on the piano?) through to the welter of scales with which the concerto finished 50 minutes later, the audience was spellbound. There can be few works whose emotional range is so vast, and that a 17-year-old, with so little experience of life, can be equally at home in the gossamer pianissimo melodies in the slow movement, the playful interludes in the last movement and the muscular might of so much of the rest of the work is incredible, and all the more incredible when one reflects that professional pianists are not normally studying for their A levels in addition.

And what did Galin think of his performance? "It was OK," was his characteristically laconic reply.

RTH

On Sunday 1st December, three days after Galin's performance, the Shrewsbury School musical 'Jekyll!' will be performed in the Varna Opera House by members of the Varna Children's Opera and singers from Varna Opera with a professional orchestra, conducted by Galin's father, Gancho Ganchev.



School House victories in the House Singing Competition make history

Saturday 23 November 2013



School House Unison - 'A Little Help From My Friends'

In a fantastic finale to the first half term, School House swept the board in the House Singing Competition. School House won the Unison category, came runners up in the Part Song and won the Overall trophy. In what was widely acknowledged to be the highest standard of entries ever, this was a particularly outstanding achievement. Furthermore, it is the first time in the history of the competition that two of the three main trophies have been awarded to the same House.



School House, the morning after... George Fowler with his proud Housemaster

George Fowler's time, dedication and talent had a huge part to play in both victories. "Juke Box", George's incredibly ambitious arrangement of many different songs, seamlessly woven together, took the Part Song to a completely different level. Not only was the musicianship outstanding, but the boys had carefully choreographed their performance to great effect. The boys formed a smart octet in black with maroon pocket squares, performing a range of exciting

numbers from 'Blame it on the Boogie' to 'Bohemian Rhapsody' with some neat bridges in between. The execution was exemplary. George led the group, which consisted of Alfred Mitchell, Nick Entwisle, Ralph Assheton, Stanley Hau, Harry Al-Adwani, Will Hargreaves and Brook Plumptre. There were excellent solos from a number of them, including 'Stand By Me' from Nick Entwisle (see below).



*Above l to r: Harry Al-Adwani, Alfred Mitchell, George Fowler, Ralph Assheton and Stanley Hau
Below: Nick Entwisle*



The unison was a true reflection of the very special and unique School House spirit. The boys chose the Beatles' number 'A Little Help From My Friends', only a couple of weeks into term. The choice became particularly apt and poignant when two brothers in School House tragically lost their father and step-brother in a plane crash at the beginning of October. In their absence,



the rest of the boys in School House decided to dedicate the song to their missing housemates. The result was a genuine, heartfelt performance that demonstrated the lads' support for each other. The singing was great too! It really was a full School House effort, with Mrs McKenzie and Mrs Besterman accompanying on the saxophone and piano respectively, as well as Mr Besterman reading a variety of motivational quotes in order to rally the troops before the performance: Mohammed Ali, Shakespeare, William Wallis, Martin Luther King and Russell Crowe's 'Gladiator', all featured, to name just a few!

Below: James Attenborough (left) and Zakee Afsar (right) dedicate the unison song to their absent friends



Since then, George Fowler performed brilliantly in the St Cecilia Concerts (16th and 17th November), where he was the soloist in Beethoven's Piano Concerto No 3.



Harry Marshall (SH IV) comes first in GB sculling trials

Sunday 24 November 2013

Congratulations to Harry Marshall, who beat more than 70 other rowers yesterday to come first in the GB sculling trials in his age-group for the West Midlands.



Four Old Salopian Women help Oxford Eton Fives team to victory

Tuesday 26 November 2013



Oxford Women's Eton Fives recently successfully defend their National University Championship title, beating Cambridge University in the final. Among the winning team were Old Salopians Alice Walker (MSH 2008-10), Lucy Rands (MSH 2009-11), Hannah Pritchard (EDH 2011-13) and also Hannah Pritchard who left EDH in 2013.

Read more at.

<http://www.sport.ox.ac.uk/eton-fives-win-womens-university-championship/>

Pearl of Africa Children's Choir

Wednesday 27 November 2013

In a vibrant explosion of song, dance and drumming, we were delighted to welcome the Pearl of Africa children's choir to the School last Thursday. After an impromptu performance to a highly appreciative audience who were tucking into lunch in KH, they then led a fun and uplifting pupil workshop in the afternoon. Their sell-out concert in the evening was stunning.



The Ugandan children's choir 'Pearl of Africa' brought the long forgotten sunshine back to Shrewsbury School for one night only last Thursday. It was a true pleasure to behold.

The beautiful faces of energetic African dancers, accompanied by drums and bells, enthralled the audience who were touched to the soul by the powerful singing voices of these children, aged up to around 17, and by the older drummers and their passionate group leaders. More than once I was close to tears. The children's energy, innocence and courage to make a better life, shone through their performance and took us with them on an uplifting spiritual journey.

The choir have daily all day long schedules all over the UK for three months, dancing and singing their hearts out to raise money for a better life, including the chance to go to school, in Uganda.

The supportive audience were moved to give something back for their evening of entertainment and so bought the small crafts and jewellery the children themselves make and donated money to a very worthwhile cause. This year's visit to Shrewsbury School raised over £1200.

They will be back next year and I urge you not to miss them.

Nikki Bevan

Three Shrewsbury musicians reach the semi-final of the Shropshire Concerto Competition

Thursday 28 November 2013

Three of our musicians have got through to the semi-finals of the Shropshire Concerto Competition: Harry Sargeant (M UVI - trumpet), Awen Blandford (EDH UVI - cello) and Henry Newbould (Ch V - saxophone) - *pictured left to right.*

They continue the School's strong tradition in this annual competition, which is organised by the Shropshire Music Service. In 2011 the competition was won by the then Fourth Former Galin Ganchev (M LVI); and Dorit Hasselberg won it last year, when three of the four finalists were from Shrewsbury.



This year's semi-final will be held at Concord College on Wednesday 15th January 2014 and the final will take place in the Alington Hall, Shrewsbury School in March.

School football kits delivered to the Sanata Restart Centre in Gilgil, Kenya

Thursday 28 November 2013

Steve Biggins, Master in Charge of Football, received a letter this week from Wing Commander Neil Hope MBE, thanking him for the School's donations of football kit to his Taking Football to Africa and Beyond Appeal, which he runs in collaboration with the RAF Football Association. The kits have been delivered to the Sanata Restart Centre which cares for and educates orphans and stretchildren from the town of Gilgil, Kenya.

Members of the School's Hunt spent a day at the Restart Centre during the October half-term exeat, taking with them other donations from the Salopian community which were warmly and gratefully received. As Peter Middleton described in his report on the Hunt's East Africa tour (see [RSSH Tour to East Africa, October 2013](#)) the opportunity to see the inspiring work that goes on there left a deep and lasting impression on the entire tour party.



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Shrewsbury reaches National Final of UKMT Senior Team Maths Challenge

Thursday 28 November 2013

Congratulations to the Maths Challenge Team of Arthur Kung, Dan Hart, Sophie Zhou and Jonathan Cheng, who have qualified for the National Final of the UKMT Senior Team Maths Challenge.

The competition tests mathematical, communication and teamwork skills and is jointly organised by the UK Mathematics Trust and the Further Maths Support Programme. It includes challenges such as 'cross numbers' (like a crossword but with numerical answers, when one pair in the team has the across clues and the other has the down clues) and 'mini relays', when members of the team have to answer mathematical questions which they can begin work on immediately but information passed from other members of the team is needed to solve them completely.

A total of 1050 teams entered the competition this year and the Shrewsbury team are now in the last 64. The final will be held in the Camden Centre, London on 4 February 2014.

Floreat Salmopia's Movember reaches its cut-off point

Friday 29 November 2013



Above left: Floreat Salmopia, 8th November; centre and right: 28th November

To the huge relief of the families of the Floreat Salmopia brigade, Movember comes to an end on 30th November. Nick David, Colm Kealy, Dr David Law, Andy Barnard, Colm Kealy, Dr Matthew Clark, Kevin Lloyd and Seb Cooley would like to thank all those who have made donations to their Movember Campaign, which will go to help fund men's health programmes that combat prostate and testicular cancer and mental health challenges.

Donations can still be made to the Floreat Salmopia team via the Movember website www.movember.com.



Ed Barnard joins the England U19 Cricket Tour to the UAE

Friday 29 November 2013

We wish Ed Barnard (PH UVI) well as he tours with the England Under-19 Cricket Squad in the United Arab Emirates, 1st - 23rd December.

Ed will spend the next three weeks in the UAE competing in a Tri Series against the Pakistan and UAE Under-19 teams – preparation for the Under 19s World Cup in the UAE in February.

Ed, who has just turned 18, has been part of the England Development Programme for the last three years and has recently signed a two-year contract with Worcestershire CC. Last winter he toured with the England Under-19s in South Africa – memorable in particular for his ‘Boys’ Own’ dream performance in the first Test. When he came in to bat on the first day, England were deep in trouble in their first innings on 89 for 5. By the end of the day, Ed had scored his first international century and was unbeaten on 107. He finished on Day 2 with a score of 114 off 294 balls, including 12 fours, and England eventually won the Test by 107 runs. Ed even took the final catch to secure England’s victory - and he was duly named Man of the Match.

After a frustrating summer this year, when he had to miss 12 weeks of the cricket season due to a back injury, Ed was delighted to return to the game in style in August, captaining England’s Under-17 side in two of their one-day international games against Sri Lanka. He spent the October half-term exeat on an England Under-19 batting camp in Sri Lanka and hopes to return to bowling by the end of the UAE tour.

It will not all be cricket in the UAE, however. Ed will be sitting A levels in Geography, Business Studies and PE next summer, and the ECB are as keen as his teachers to ensure that his exam results are not compromised by his international cricket commitments. So as part of the England Development Programme’s ‘Dual Aspirations’ scheme, Ed and the six or seven other squad members who are still at school will be spending 25 hours in supervised study time.

Ed returns to the UK just in time for Christmas. In the meantime, many at the School will be following his fortunes and those of the England Under-19 squad every bit as keenly as those of the England senior team in Australia.



Football: Giles Bell's 'Team of the Week'

Friday 29 November 2013

Having reported on several of the School football teams during the term, this week Giles Bell turns his attention to the grass roots of Salopian Football - the House Leagues, which have involved some 400 boys this season and are now reaching their dramatic conclusions.

In the days when I was a Housemaster, I always enjoyed the start of the year as the new 1st Leagues Captain began to analyse his chances of League success. There was optimism in the air as new boots were polished and taken out of their packaging, with colours and designs reminiscent of the Speech Day Art Exhibition. The optimism did not always last, however, and as the League progressed and the position in the table faltered, morale could get low! Yet there is always something to play for.

In the last round of matches this season, Moser's, The Grove and Riggs's could all have won the 1st League trophy. The Grove had to lose if they were not to be crowned champions – and they managed to do so by 3 goals to 2 at the hands of a competitive Severn Hill side, for whom victories had been in short supply in this campaign. Rigg's had to win and hope that Moser's would either draw or lose. They did their part in a fine 4-1 win over Oldham's. But sadly for their fans, Moser's won 5-0 against Churchill's. So it was congratulations to Moser's for a consistent and successful season.

Meanwhile at the bottom of the table, my former protégés in School House were beaten by Radbrook, who won their first game of the season. Manager Des Hann told me that had been a transitional year and he was delighted that the lads had won their last game, as it showed his footballing 'vision' was beginning to take a more lucid form. For School House, though, a season that had started so promisingly with a first match victory had turned into something of disappointment, as their first victory remained their only win. New Manager Hugo Besterman admitted it had been tough adapting to the demands of the League in his first season at this level, but was hoping for some summer signings to reinvigorate his squad. "I am hoping for some summer signings to reinvigorate my squad," he said. Having refereed a handful of games, I can say that I was impressed by the passion and skill levels on show.

No one in the School 1st or 2nd XI squads is allowed to play in 1st Leagues, and it is a tribute to the School and the players that the competition remains so tightly contested and played in such a good spirit. The joy of such competitions is that each week someone can become a hero, if only for a few hours. A couple of examples might be Kit Hartley scoring all six of Oldham's goals against Radbrook and Charles Cooper scoring on his debut for Riggs's in the last game of the season.

If you cannot get into your House 1st Leagues team, then there is always 2nd Leagues – this year won by Oldham's, with Port Hill and Ingram's not far behind. The games are played between teams of nine-a-side and refereed by some of the staff's lesser known footballing cognoscenti, which can add spice to events! There has to be a result, and if the teams are drawing at the end of the game there is a penalty shoot-out. Perhaps the FA should take note, with a World Cup campaign about to start!

For younger footballers, there are A Leagues and B Leagues. A Leagues is generally for Fifth and Fourth formers who are not in School A team squads, although robust Third Formers can play if

selected. Port Hill narrowly pipped Churchill's to the title this season, with Oldham's finishing third.

If you are bored of the ever increasing prices, hype and brilliance of the Premier League, you want to come and watch B Leagues. B Leagues is for Third and Fourth formers who are not in A Leagues or School A squads. It is designed to be played with true Corinthian spirit. It is about participation and enjoyment, yet it is also about courage, valour, spirit, teamwork and a desire to win.



Ridgemount B League Team

I caught up with the Ridgemount B League team just before their triumphant final match, which saw them clinch the League from School House by one point. Manager Will Hughes was delighted that recently retired Ridgemount Tutor Martin Knox – a long time lover of B Leagues and possibly the world's leading expert on the history and playing patterns of this unique League – had returned from a scouting mission in Italy in time to witness the young Ridgemountaineers' moment of glory.

Mr Hughes told me that before the start of the season he likes to spend an evening with each of his League teams, going through what he expects of them. He let me into some of his motivational tactics but asked that I only share them with a few 'select' people. I felt that those of you still reading this article at this juncture will surely fit those criteria!

At the heart of his talk to the B Leagues squad is his power point presentation on what B LEAGUES stands for.

B = 'Beautiful Football' in all senses of the phrase. Beautiful one-touch passing and finishing; true sportsmanship; courtesy to match officials and the crowd. "Beautiful football is important to me," murmured Tristan Lywood.

L = Look. It is important to look the part with smart kit and well polished boots. "I was always taught to look good," Mr Hughes told me.

E = Eating. It is important to look after the body that is part of the machine that is the team. Pasta snacks are important before a big game, and certainly trips to the Grot Shop are frowned upon. "My body is a temple," stated Magnus Chaplin and one or two others!

A = Athleticism. The Ridgemount training regime is sharp and rigorous. Mr Hughes himself supervises early morning training sessions before a healthy breakfast. Strict bedtimes and careful stretching is also an important part of the daily routine. "I love to be fit," said utility player James Tollemache.

G = Goals. Each striker has a goal target for the season and Lysander Adair, Jack Humphreys and Richard Walker all met their targets. “Goals are important in football,” said Jack.

U = You have to do your best. “Each member of the team has to be at their best all of the time,” said defender Archie ‘I’ll never let you be’ Free. “To be like a Swiss clock takes 100% concentration from everyone,” added Ed Owen.

E = Education. Midfielder Charlie Home told me he regarded football as an ‘education’. “It involves teamwork, hard work, mental toughness and physical fitness. A successful team is a team well educated in the arts and history of the sport. It is also important to have something to talk about on the way to and from matches.”

S= Solid. Defence is about the ‘impenetrable barrier’. Ridgemount as a team are trained to defend in a pack. Led by team ‘Hardman’ and Captain Henry ‘Joey Barton’ Bradshaw, the squad will put their lives on the line for others. Henry’s brother George was mentioned earlier in the season as a robust defender, and one has to wonder what ‘football’ in the Bradshaw garden is like. Henry’s ‘enthusiasm’ in the challenge led him to an ‘early bath’ on a couple of occasions and he felt some referees misunderstood him. The team were also helped by the sudden availability of Will ‘the cat’ Redgrave-Scott who was ‘released’ by the under-14 As and became the goalkeeper for the last few games of the season.



After his talk, Mr Hughes tells me he leaves it up to his captains to inspire their teams. In the photo above, Henry Bradshaw can be seen speaking to his team from the heart. We will all be able to share Mr Hughes’s powerful footballing vision when his long awaited book “Tactics for B League success” comes out in time for Christmas.

Just before I leave the topic of League Football, it is important to acknowledge that behind every League is a very good organiser. Nick Jenkins retires at the end of this term before almost immediately coming out of retirement to take up his new role as Director of the Salopian Club in February. Nick can be seen whatever the weather, ensuring that referees have turned up, monitoring that the wearing of shin pads and the correct kit is being worn. He is responsible for crowd behaviour, the player response to poor decisions, and at times he has to calm managers down. He is FIFA, UEFA and the FA rolled into one. They tried to beat his love of football and organising things



Nick Jenkins in Gordon Strachan mode

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out of him at Rugby, but thrilled by playing football for the Staff Ramblers team earlier on in his career here, he has rekindled his love affair with the national game. Once it was more likely that you would hear his impression of Bill McLaren, the famous Scottish rugby commentator, but now it is Alan Hansen or Gordon Strachan. I believe Will Hughes may have found the same tactics manual as Nick and I would like to take this opportunity to thank Nick for the huge amount of time he has put into running House Leagues and ensuring grassroots soccer at Shrewsbury has never been greener!

At a rough estimate, some 400 boys will have played House League football at some point this term. I think that is called mass participation – and maybe that was the goal!

GJFB