



Stamfordian





Editorial

It was only very recently that it dawned upon me that my time at Stamford is coming to an end. So, as this is my penultimate magazine, I hope it will be a publication that is not only concise and informative but something that can be enjoyed. Over the past three years we have developed the publication into an exciting and interesting read, focusing on the day to day life at Stamford School. This year I think that the magazine highlights Stamford School's involvement in world issues. By this I mean our work in combating climate change, helping the underprivileged and undertaking extensive charity work. For instance, after last year's success in winning the Green Flag award, our boys have continued their work as part of the Eco Schools programme. Recycling paper, 'switch off and save' and the development of the new cycle storage facilities are all schemes that make up this programme. As will become apparent later, the school also sent two groups to two different areas of Africa, one on a rugby tour to South Africa the other as part of a Duke of Edinburgh Gold Award to Kenya. I myself took part in one of these expeditions and both trips required hard work and fundraising from those involved.

This magazine also documents other important activities that the boys are involved with that may not always be fully recognised. This year saw one of our most successful rugby and cricket seasons, plays of the highest order, a significant CCF parade involving Sir General Mike Jackson, national recognition in science and debating, a whole array of first-rate Musical events and another record breaking year of exam results.

I hope the editorial team this year has produced a magazine that is representative of our school and that accurately reflects the hard work, commitment and enthusiasm that characterises the boys. For this the team has to be thanked. We are a much smaller group in comparison with previous years. Matthew Brown and John Ferdinand both left last year and their computer skills and breadth of knowledge have obviously been missed. We wish them both all the best in the future. But as they say, out with the old and in with the new. We have been joined this year by Ben Searle who, we hope, will lead the magazine in the future. He has aided James Ho with the increased workload. The two have been responsible for the construction of the layout designs and the general assembling of the magazine. Daniel Murphy and Mr Jack Dawson also have to be thanked for their thorough and painstaking editing of material before production. Dan Murphy has also added some interesting interviews and has aided myself and Miss Rachel Tomlinson in the design work. Which leads us to Miss Rachel Tomlinson. She is undoubtedly the main leader of the magazine and her methodical organization has been vital to this year's product. We have built upon the cutting edge and unique designs of last year whilst at the same time reducing the publication's length.

We hope that you can now sit back and digest and reflect on a year that marks a new time at Stamford. We have completed our first year under new leadership and obviously things have changed but arguably for the better. Thus I feel coming up to my final year, the school has the opportunity to enter an exciting new period, where opportunities of new ideas and principals could take place. I just hope the school Staff, Parents and Boys will lead the school into the future with the same passion, vigour and enthusiasm that we have collectively shown in the past.



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Stamfordian Team

RL Tomlinson, Daniel Murphy, JW Dawson, James Ho, Ben Searle, Jonathan Yeates

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Headmaster's Report

Stamford School's boys, staff, parents, governors, old boys and friends can look back at this year with great deal of pride in the high standards achieved in all the activities of the year, culminating in the scenes of great joy, and occasionally relief, when the GCSE and A-level results were received at school by the boys in August. Our GCSE candidates had achieved the highest percentage of A* and A grades ever by boys, thus bucking the national trend for boys. Our A-level candidates enjoyed their best year in the remorseless three year schedule of examinations that our country's teenagers face these days. The fact that our boys managed so many other activities and experiences during this time is a tribute to their talent, the commitment and versatility of the staff, and the school's determination never to lose sight of the fact that it is our role to prepare young people for the broader challenges of life, to develop their all-round skills and to ensure that they maintain a sense of enjoyment and perspective in all that they do.

In this edition of the Stamfordian you will see and read a great deal about the vast range of academic, adventurous, musical, sporting and cultural activities of the school, as well as get

a feeling for the terrific spirit and sense of community that exists here. Boys, staff, parents and governors have all played their part to the full, with ambition being the key to each individual boy finding fulfillment and self-expression in his undertakings during these formative years. I would like to pay tribute at this early stage in my report to the superb efforts of the team of staff and boys who have worked for hours and hours to produce this excellent publication. The team consists of Ben Searle, Dan Murphy, James Ho and Jonathan Yeates. I am sure that they would not mind my singling out Miss Rachel Tomlinson, whose vision, creativity and determination have led to a really startling level of presentation and professionalism for what remains an 'in-house' production. All of the articles, photographs, art and design work have been contributed by boys and staff and stand as further evidence of the tremendous, often humbling, talent and potential we have within our school.

Our academic year began with a focus on the imminent arrival of the Independent Schools' Inspectorate. In the three days that they spent observing lessons and activities, meeting boys and staff and reading through selections of work and departmental handbooks, the team gained a very favourable impression of the school. In their report, they highlighted: the very good academic standards achieved by boys at Stamford School; the high quality of the teaching; the high quality of the pastoral care and the excellence (not a word often used by inspectors) of the broader curriculum and opportunities for personal development and leadership. I have not known a staff more deserving of such praise, nor a group of boys and parents more supportive of our shared ambitions. The report also gives us help and guidance, which we welcome, to improve further and fine-tune the nature of what we do for young people here.

As the year progressed, so we learned of the departure of some valued colleagues. You will read more of their contributions in the pages that follow. It does need underlining, however, what a wonderful contribution the Reverend Michael Ruff made to our spiritual life, spanning three decades with his service. His 'send-off' was an emotional occasion attended by vast numbers of friends and colleagues. Michael delighted us to the end with his wit and anecdotes in a memorable leaving speech. David Johnston also left us after a superb

spell as Head of Middle School, having been appointed Vice Principal of Campbell College in Belfast. Many boys owe their success to his leadership and guidance. Anne Johnstone does not travel so far, taking over as Head of Biology at Stamford High School after a great contribution in the classroom and on the athletics track. Jason Sturman has become Head of Design Technology at Bourne Grammar and Paul Goldbrum Head of Maths at King's Gloucester. We wish them all well.

As well as teaching in a challenging way, it is very much part of our aim at Stamford School to prepare our boys for the future by involving them in other ventures taking them outside of their normal surroundings and 'comfort zone'. This manifests itself in so many ways: through charity and community work, often with the underprivileged and infirm; through our excellent drama productions and debating; through our exchange programme with schools in France, Germany, Russia, Poland and Norway; through science and musical tours of the USA; cultural, historical and field trips throughout the UK and Europe; through our CCF and Duke of Edinburgh expeditions and through our sports tours to wonderful locations all over the world. Wherever we go, we go with purpose and a desire to give something back to the communities that welcome us. Nothing fills me with greater pride than hearing of groups of boys and staff who have brought entertainment, much-needed resource and practical help to people as far away as townships in South Africa and isolated villages in Kenya.

Our life at Stamford School has been enhanced by increasingly close links with Stamford High School and Stamford Junior School. Joint productions, choirs, projects and academic initiatives have added great value to our provision and in particular made our co-educational Stamford Endowed Schools' Sixth Form a very attractive option, leading to increased numbers and allowing us to offer more flexibility academically, more teams sportingly, more opportunities culturally as well as a truly excellent preparation for university. Our sixth formers' campus is spread across one of England's most beautiful towns and their time here will be treasured forever. In the meantime, all three schools maintain their traditions and honour the sacrifices and inspiration of those who founded us.

The school has made great strides in the past few years and our governors have played a highly significant part in that. Their careful thought and planning, supported and inspired particularly by the work of the Principal and the Estates and Finance Bursars, have led to exciting developments such as new Buildings for Design Technology and Art, a new languages laboratory, refurbishment of science, floodlighting for our astropitches and the creation of the SES Foundation, whose aim is to help the schools continue to offer an education of the highest quality to as broad a community as possible. The social mix of the Endowed Schools is genuinely unique and all benefit hugely from this, both now and later in life where one needs to show the ability to work and communicate with all sorts of people from all walks of life.

My personal vision for the school is very clear. I demand three things: firstly, academic effort and ambition; secondly, a full contribution to the broader life of the school, sometimes excelling, sometimes supporting, and thirdly, a real commitment to learning in a community where respect is mutual and utterly even, regardless of age or perceived place in whatever hierarchy there might seem to be. Boys, teaching staff, support staff, parents and our wider friends – all have their role to play and their individual importance is worthy of our full respect. If we can all continue to play our part in fulfilling the three ambitions of effort, contribution and respect, then we will have a very happy, positive environment within which to strive for our dreams.





Leaving Staff



Rev. Michael Ruff

Boys and staff will remember Rev. Michael Ruff as the consummate professional, someone who represents all that is good about Stamford School.

A while back, I was chatting to a former Stamford schoolboy who Michael and I had had the great pleasure of teaching at GCSE and A-level. The word which this Old Stamfordian used to sum up his view of Michael was 'respect', and such a sentiment is shared by other former and existing pupils to whom I have spoken. Respect is surely the cornerstone of teaching; one can be the world's leading authority on a particular subject, but without respect from one's pupils, imparting that knowledge is going to be extremely difficult, if not impossible. Respect can be earned in a number of ways, and each one of us as teachers adopts our own method. The fact is, however, that Michael's approach has served him – and, more importantly, served his pupils – exceptionally well over the years he has taught at Stamford School.



So how, from the moment of his arrival at Stamford in 1987, did Michael establish and maintain such a formidable reputation among his pupils? Perhaps it is due, in part, to the fact that Michael's teaching style can be described as 'traditional'. Such a description is often used today in a critical manner by so-called educational 'experts'. Michael, however, would, I am sure, be *delighted* to be described as employing 'traditional' methods. In what sense, though, has he been 'traditional'? Well, first, he has been a great advocate of what we might refer to as 'talk and chalk'. For him, the most important teaching 'resources' were one's voice, command of one's subject, and a blackboard and chalk. Boys in Michael's lessons knew that they really would be *working* – expending energy as they busily noted down Michael's words of wisdom, and requiring their concentration levels to increase dramatically from (in some cases!) milliseconds to minutes. There was no doubt who was in charge; who controlled the pace of the lesson; who created the learning environment.



Though it may seem ironic, such an approach won the respect of the boys. In a world where the pace of change can leave the boys increasingly breathless, Michael's lessons provided a bastion of stability. The boys knew exactly what was expected of them. They knew they would not be patronised with gimmicks. They knew that their teacher had a command – indeed, a love – of his subject. They knew at the start of the lesson that the next 35-40 minutes would be no time for idleness, but by the end they would undoubtedly know much more about a topic than they did at the start. Even when boys asked a question, tradition was maintained: they were addressed by Michael by their *surnames* – at least until the end of Year 11. Those boys pursuing the subject to A-level had the very special privilege of being addressed by their *Christian* name. Such a change of address, trivial though it may seem, was appreciated greatly by the 6th formers. It was almost a rite of passage for them: it demonstrated to them that the Chaplain recognised their graduation to young adults.



I have referred to the fact that Michael's lessons were characterised by hard work and orderliness. This could only be achieved, however, by ensuring the endurance of the quality for which Michael is particularly well known: discipline. Boys were 'fearful' of Michael's



reaction if they fell short of his standards. Yet, as I have already noted, such fear was combined with respect. Why? I suggest it was because boys hate perceived unfairness, and inconsistent punishments. In contrast they respected Michael for being utterly consistent in his discipline. Although offenders could be frightened at the time by Michael's display of what we might call 'righteous anger', they came to respect him for his transparent, no-nonsense approach, which taught them a lesson, and made them work a good deal harder – indeed, they often produced their best work in Michael's lessons. It is significant that some of those boys for whom sustained application to their school work was difficult opted to pursue Divinity at GCSE level, knowing full well that Michael would be teaching them. They knew that they lacked self-motivation, and they realised that they needed a firm but fair hand to keep them on the straight and narrow. Michael provided that firm but fair hand, enabling them to achieve highly respectable GCSE Divinity results. No boy taught by Michael ever failed his GCSE; indeed, the percentage of top grades was among the best of any department at Stamford. The same can be said for the grades achieved by his A-level students, and over the years there has been a steady stream of boys pursuing the subject at university.

Michael's contribution to the academic life of the school is all the more impressive when one considers that it has gone hand-in-hand with his duties as school Chaplain – a role which required him to devote, literally, seven-days-a-week to the life of the school, since he led the weekly boarders' Sunday Chapel services.

Michael adored the Chapel, and its services, day by day, were invariably prepared by him with the same meticulous care. He went to great lengths to ensure that, in contrast to the often frantic pace of the rest of the school day, a quiet and respectful atmosphere pervaded the Chapel as boys and staff arrived. Once they had done so, it was an extraordinary achievement for him always to be able to have something new and interesting to say; but, more than this, Michael always strove to speak to everyone, Christian or otherwise. No one could feel they were being marginalised or that what was being said was irrelevant to them. Neither could they be unaware of what the Christian viewpoint would be on the matter in hand. His sincerity inspired dozens of boys to be guided by him through Confirmation during his time at Stamford. Special mention should also be made of Michael's support for the Chapel's choral tradition; such support was vital in ensuring that it flourished over the years.

Beyond the walls of the Chapel itself, one of the highlights for many existing and former Stamfordians was the Christmas Carol services. Here, too, Michael was responsible for ensuring that they were conducted impeccably – as acts of worship, rather than simply as 'concerts'. Just how highly the services were regarded is demonstrated by the fact that they had to be conducted to a packed congregation in the Hall on three consecutive evenings.

Although invariably associated with the Chapel, Michael always considered it important to maintain a high profile at as many wider school events as possible. He was particularly committed to supporting the rugby fixtures, and could always be found on the touchline on Saturday afternoons, urging on our teams. I know that the boys really appreciated his presence.

Michael leaves Stamford School with our heartfelt thanks and our best wishes, to take up a new challenge as Priest-in-Charge of St. Mary's and St. Martin's churches.

ARW, with DLB.



David Johnston



David Johnston joined Stamford School in 1998 as a newly appointed teacher of history. He immediately impressed all whom he met, with his calm and measured demeanour. David made a huge contribution to a thriving and very successful department. He was regarded with respect and admiration by the boys and girls that he taught; he prepared lessons with typical thoroughness and was able to adopt a range of teaching styles to make learning fun. David has a dry sense of humour and a sharp wit both of which were clearly evident to those of us who knew him well.

David loved his sport. Who can forget the Tuesday evening staff 5 a side football matches? Twinkle-toes himself would leave many an opponent bewildered with his array of skills. He was also a tough player. I recall a bone-crunching tackle which left Alastair Gloag clutching his right knee in agony! I also recall David offering advice to the school's cricketers. "Put your foot down the pitch and slog it boys!" Perhaps cricket wasn't this Scotsman's favourite game.

David accompanied 8 annual pilgrimages to the First World War battlefields of France and Belgium with boys in Y9 during his time at Stamford. On a wind swept ridge at Notre Dame de Lorette, nicknamed the 'hill of death' he would always mutter, "this is the saddest place I know". After the day's visits were over, he would relax in the bar with a small beer and entertain his colleagues with tales of Scotland and a rather suspect style of 10 pin bowling!

However, DJ will be best remembered for being a fine Head of Middle School. He worked tirelessly for the benefit of the boys in his care. He was unflappable in his approach and possessed the enviable ability to stay calm even during the most testing of situations. Boys always knew exactly what was expected of them and what is absolutely clear is that David made a massive contribution to the success of these boys.

David has many talents, a fact that was recognised by Campbell College, Belfast. We wish him, his wife Ros and his son Robert every success and fulfilment as he embarks upon the next stage of his career as deputy head of Campbell College.

ANP

Anne Johnstone

Mrs. Johnstone joined the biology department at Stamford School in October 2001 to cover for Jane Lloyd's maternity leave. Fortunately for us, she stayed for the next five years, during which time she would prove to be an invaluable member of the biology department.

First and foremost, Mrs Johnstone is an intelligent and versatile biologist who has an excellent understanding of, and passion for, her subject. This was reflected not only in her delivery of the curriculum to the students, but also in the many stimulating conversations she had on a daily basis with myself and other colleagues. Another great strength was her ability to show initiative, whether it was in the development of different teaching styles or introducing new topic areas. She could spend hours working on ideas to facilitate the understanding of the concepts she was teaching - who could forget her "Marshmanimals" to help explain the mechanics of genetics or "the prokaryotic song" to describe characteristics of cells. All this was a consequence of her genuine interest in, and concern for, the students in her charge and from whom she expected the highest standards.

Her talents also extended to extra curricular commitments, both within the house system and with her seemingly tireless work to improve the profile of athletics in school. I will always remember Mrs J sitting in the pouring rain, soaking wet, writing down and calculating (enthusiastically!) the results of the interhouse pentathlon competition so the students could find out their positions. She is, in my opinion, the "complete schoolmistress."

For those students and colleagues who worked with Mrs Johnstone, you could not fail to be impressed (or even exhausted) by the boundless enthusiasm and commitment she showed in all aspects of her work. Fortunately, when she left it was not to go very far. We wish her well in her new role as Head of Biology at SHS, and I look forward to continuing working with her as my new "opposite number".

NJP





Suzanne Palmer



In July 2006, Suzanne Palmer, known as Zanne to many teachers and friends, retired after 18 years as School Nurse.

Suzanne has been associated with the school for 20 years. Her sons James and Robert started attending the school in 1986, and Nick joined them in 1989.

In 1988 Suzanne started working one day a week in "Sick Bay," situated in Browne House, as Relief Matron. In 1989 the post of Matron became non medical and a full time position of School Nurse was created. The nurses, who job shared, were still situated in Browne House. They were known as the "Sanatorium Sisters." Suzanne has been working three days a week ever since. She has been the constant, having shared with 8 different nurses.

In September 2001 the Medical Centre was opened on the old O'Briens site. Suzanne played a major part in the design, planning, organisation and eventual realisation of this well equipped facility. All policies and procedures were prepared by her. The role of school nurse requires many qualities of caring, compassion, empathy, patience and great understanding, along with excellent listening and communication skills. The ability to remain calm, but think quickly and assess a situation when dealing with accidents and sporting injuries, is essential

Suzanne had all these qualities and more. She had great affection for the boarders, helping them settle into boarding school life, doing their medicals, treating their illnesses and following their progress, then saying goodbye to them as young men as they leave school to embark on their futures

Suzanne not only loved her job but she had immense respect for and loyalty towards the school. She will be a hard act to follow and will be greatly missed. We wish her a very enjoyable retirement with her family, friends and travels.

SYLVIA MURRAY

Jason Sturman

Mr Sturman arrived at Stamford School to teach design technology in September 2002. He was well qualified for the post, having previously been an engineer in the Royal Navy and then Head of Design Technology at Woking High School. A fine classroom teacher, he brought many new ideas to the department and to the school. His knowledge of ICT was extensive, and he proved to be a keen advocate of computer aided design. In addition he became involved with the use of value added and pupil tracking in order to monitor progress and raise standards. It was no surprise therefore when he accepted the role of assistant head of SES ICT. In this position he introduced revised schemes of work for ICT in the Lower School, and was always keen to implement new ideas. In 2004 he started to teach across both the senior schools, and helped to improve the standards of achievement and also the enjoyment of design technology at the High School. He was often to be seen commuting across town from one site to the other. On one famous occasion he fell off his motorbike en route to the High School so concerned was he not to be late for lessons! The pedestrians of Stamford may now be able to breathe more easily! We wish Jason and his family well as he takes up his new post as Head of Design Technology at Bourne Grammar School.



Paul Goldbrum

Mr Goldbrum joined us from Arnold School, Blackpool in September 2005, taking up the post of Second in the Mathematics department.

Although he stayed with us for only one year, he established a reputation for excellent classroom teaching; his lessons full of variety and interest. Mr Goldbrum has a wry and self deprecating sense of humour which was appreciated by boys and colleagues alike.

Mr Goldbrum was a popular Year 9 tutor, a resident tutor in Browne House and a coach of Lower School hockey. He packed a lot in to his short stay at the school.

He left for a promoted post as Head of Mathematics at The King's School Gloucester where we wish him success and happiness.



This is my final report on Stamford School Chapel. What should one say after nineteen years? Should one produce something sensational or indulge in a bout of nostalgia? In my view, God's Kingdom advances slowly but steadily in our ordinary everyday lives when they are lived in faith, hope and love. So I shall describe the way in which the worship of God has remained central to the life of the School and set the tone for all that we have done together over this last year.

Week by week the boys of Stamford School have attended chapel on the day allocated to them. They have sung hymns and taken part in the offering of prayers as well as listening to the Chaplain's address. Hopefully they will have received some guidance to assist them in finding their way through life.

On Sundays we have been joined in chapel by boarders from the High School and the Junior School, together with their staff. This year our worship has been led by the new Stamford Endowed Schools' choir under the leadership of Mr P. J. White, who has worked extremely hard to maintain the high standard of music enjoyed in our chapel over the years. Mr D. L. Brown has remained as organist giving invaluable advice, and reminders, to the Director of Music.

There have been other Services of a seasonal nature that have also shaped our lives: the Commemoration Service at which the Revd. S. Goatcher preached, the Advent Service, the Carol Services, the Confirmation Service conducted by the Bishop of Lincoln and the Leavers' Service held in St. Martin's Church in July. The latter Service has provided a fitting end to our Sixth Formers' time at school and has become very popular in the short time that it has been going.

I have felt honoured and privileged to plan, organise and lead these acts of worship for members of the School and their families over the years. My priestly ministry has been greatly enriched during my time here and for all that I have received I am truly grateful.

Each year it is my duty and my joy to thank those who have preached in Chapel. This year my thanks go to: Dr. P. R. Mason, Mr D. R. Moss-Bowpitt, Mr S. A. Burns, Mrs Y. L. Powell, Miss E. M. Craig, the Revd. G. B. Austen, Mr M. C. Caseley, Major I. C. Hankinson, Mr A. R. Wilkes, Mrs H.A. Austen and Mr P. J. White.

The flower arrangers have also played their part and my thanks go to Mrs S. Mason, Mrs S. Stafford, Mrs M. A. Good and Mrs A. Ruff. My gratitude goes also to the sacristans who have helped with the administration of Holy Communion: N. Bacon, P. Diamond and J. Wilson.

M. R. R.

Chapel



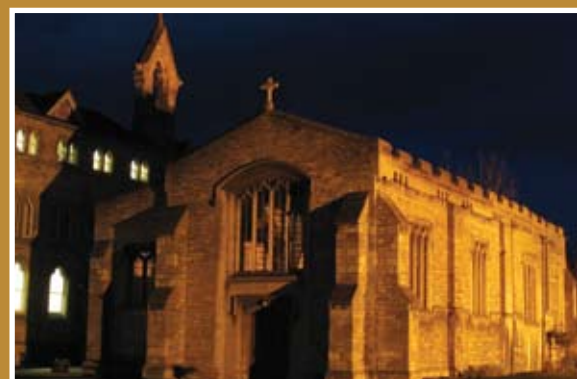
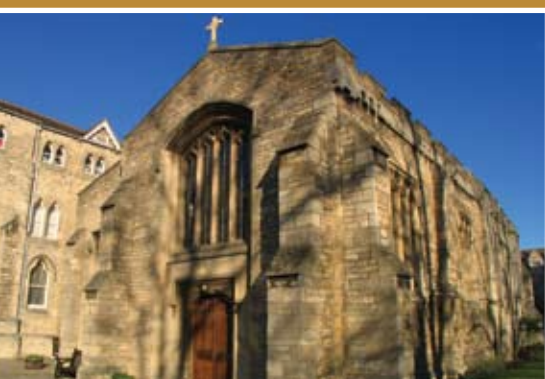
JCU

What do the red dragon with seven heads and ten horns, the rider on the white horse, the harlot and the beast bearing the number 666 all have in common? These are some of the things we chose to explore in the book of Revelation at JCU last autumn. So absorbing was it that it took most of the term to pick our way through the apocalyptic imagery to the final victory at the end of time. Yes, there is a happy ending! Thanks to Robin's encyclopaedic knowledge, we all found much to give us hope in this complex book of the Bible.

Another highlight of the year was the big debate Pete Burnett v Mr Fox arguing the case for "Does God really exist?" Who could forget the calm, measured, but ever-persistent Pete, who convinced the whole room with his persuasive arguments?

This year for the first time we invited girls from the High School and a number of them joined us on Valentine's Day for Mr Johnson's talk on "Relationships", which added another dimension to the discussion! Mr Wilkes came to speak about our Christian responsibility to care for the environment. If the created world is a gift from God for us to enjoy, then it matters how we treat it. Mr Hankinson showed us a powerful film from his time serving with the army in Iraq, and we discussed the question "Can a Christian go to war?"

JCU is open to any boy (or girl) in Y7-9. We meet after school in B22 and just in case you are hungry, there are always refreshments provided!



Senior Christian Union

Is Christianity boring, irrelevant and untrue?

That was the challenge that we set out to disprove when we followed the national Youth Alpha course at the start of the year. Over 8 million people, in 153 countries, have now followed the Alpha course. 25 were added to that number as a group of boys and girls from Y10 – Y13 met every Wednesday to have lunch together and follow the 10-week course. Topics such as "Does God heal today?" "How can I be filled with the Holy Spirit?" "How does God guide us?" were discussed in an informal, low-key setting. In the summer term we continued to explore tricky issues such as "Why does God allow suffering?"

To round off the year a group of us spent a week in August at Soul Survivor, a national Christian youth festival. Along with 11,000 other teenagers we listened to top Christian bands, heard inspiring speakers and attended seminars on a huge range of topics relevant to being a Christian in the 21st century. Our thanks go to Mr Knowles and Miss Storey for their support. To find out more, come along to B22 on Wednesday lunchtimes.

Matthew Fox

Byard House

In my last year as housemaster of Byard it was with ease that I could reflect over eight truly enjoyable years. 2005/06, like all years, had its ups and downs, but the ups are always larger in number and more memorable than the downs. I will reveal a few snapshots of some of the many highlights of the year.

The year started with the Indian summer we have become so used to. The boys made the most of the swimming pool and the fields. The start of term was tinged by the delayed return of Mrs Clement. However Miss Brady and Mrs Cole filled the matron role for us and helped those new to the house to settle quickly. We had the usual sports hall football during the week, with skills (or lack of them) on display. At the weekends most of the house was busy with school sports fixtures but a few found time to contribute to the Boarders Banter newsletter. In the summer term some found time to go sailing on a Saturday morning.

Early morning runs became a feature in the Autumn term. At 6:30 a hardy few led by My Wilkes, can be seen jogging through the streets of Stamford, getting very strange looks from early morning commuters and ducks alike!

Many embarked on the ambitious 100K challenge. Simply to challenge oneself to complete 100kilometres by running, cycling, swimming and rowing. A few achieved this – a particular mention to Patrick Conboy and Dan Moses who did so in record time! The house raised money for the Macmillan charity through it's effort. For some this culminated with a cycle around Rutland Water. Iain, Norman and Aiden managed to get slightly lost – but all got home safe in the end!

In addition we had the usual array of trips and activities. In the first term we went to Alton Towers. In the second term a trip to the Snozone at Milton Keynes. In the spring term we all enjoyed the international societies Chinese New Year, with fantastic food and a speech from Spencer Lai.





Certainly the talent show at the end of the spring term was great entertainment. Memorable performances from Sam Vickers on the drums, Lee Dobney's magic show, Norman Law and Andrew Holland-Jones on the piano – to name but a few. Even the corny gags from Dan Moses and Ed Cameron got the occasional laugh!! We also had a house seven, led by captain Berridge, play an invitational seven at the end of term. The highlight was an outstanding performance from non rugby player Andrew Holland-Jones. Unfortunately the boarders lost with the winning try being the last play of the game.

The summer term is always great fun and hard work. In school it is dominated by the exams and the boys revised hard for these. In the evenings we use the swimming pool and it is always wonderful to see the boys playing cricket, football, baseball, frisbee.... infact almost any game. Toward the end of term we had the Boarders Bar-B-Q. This was a big day with chapel in the morning, followed by the Bar-B-Q and then the Wellard plays.....

The Wellard Plays.

This year the boys from Byard and the girls from Welland joined forces to present the Wellard plays. Great fun was had by all and after some rigorous rehearsals, and last minute nerves. There were some memorable performances.

Finally a few thanks. Firstly; to all those over the years who have made my years in boarding so enjoyable. To all the staff, in particular Mrs Margaret Clement, I will miss those evening chats and there is no doubt that my ability to finish the Telegraph Crossword will suffer. I must add my thanks to Reverend Michael Ruff. The Chapel is the tradition and cornerstone of the school and I appreciate those who make the effort to read in Chapel (Henry Wallis and Iain Downer last year.) Of course to all the boys over the years, as I mentioned at the end of term it is they, neither the staff nor the building that make the boarding house. Finally; to my wife. Without Beth I simply could not have run the boarding house at all!

Gentlemen – it has been fun. My sincere thanks for the present of the garden hammock – which I know I will enjoy!

JPH

Browne House

After 4 years as a house tutor, I was extremely fortunate to be allowed to take the helm for the first time, and hopefully steer the house onto new adventures and a successful future. The boys have always (well, nearly always) been extremely positive and heavily committed throughout the school. My wife and I were completely overwhelmed by the hectic start to the year, a few days after our return from rugby tour in South Africa. One can never be fully prepared for the early baptism of airport runs and parental drop off's, but we got by. A large, ebullient group of fresh faced Year 10's arrived and from the first day, we knew we were going to have an enthusiastic set of boys, who appeared to have boundless energy. Perfect for Ethan and Henry (our sons).

What a diverse group of young men! Bartosz Klofik, our Polish scholar, Partrick Marre (from our German exchange school in Bonn), Ilja Iljina (from Finland), Slava Malyshevsky (from the Ukraine), Tom Jia (from China) and several students from Hong Kong.

My head of house, James Wilson was a perfect choice, as he took his duties



seriously (but not too seriously), and led by example on all occasions. The house tutor team would be new this year as well, and we welcomed Mr Wilkes (in a fine Ambramovich like transfer from Byard House), Mr Hankinson (from sunny Basra), Mr Goldbrum (in between mathematical problems) and highly fortunately we retained the services of Mr Dawson. Mrs Janet Walker would guide me through the year and our dog walks around the field in the morning and evening gave me a perfect chance to discuss all the events of the day. Janet definitely kept me on the right path and I thank her for all her hard work and continued dedication in the house.

Very shortly into the year, we enjoyed a school and boarding inspection. The boys were very open and talked about their positive experiences of boarding within the school. We were all very pleased with the glowing report which we received; it was a credit to the boys and house staff.

Every weekend, after the heavy commitment from Saturday sporting fixtures and the calm of Sunday

trip. The first weekend of term is a whole house trip to Rutland water, where the lads thoroughly burn off their energy. The free ice cream at the end of the stressful activities was warmly received by boys and shop owner alike! Other activities include trips to Alton Towers and Drayton Manor theme parks (with the other SES boarding houses), karting, paintballing, Snozone skiing at Milton Keynes, Ice hockey trips, rugby trips and the old favourite eat! Saturday morning the inclusion of Many of CCF

morning chapel, we have an afternoon – cinema and as much pop corn as you can activities remain popular, especially with extra CCF and claypigeon shooting. the Y13's were senior NCO's in the

James Wilson, Chris Oliver and Luke Dodington-Boyes ably assisted Mr Hankinson. The Nitex's became the stuff of legend (often with twenty of our boys on manoeuvres!), with vast quantities of blank ammunition being expended, and the house became thoroughly Army Barmy, especially with General Sir Mike Jackson's retirement visit to his old school.

The Boarders formal dinner is always popular, as the Sixth form houses organise and run a wonderful evening. And who could forget the house Christmas meal and Karaoke? My rendition of "Its raining men" was a bizarre high point in the house's singing talents, watch out next year....

The spring term saw our traditional football match against Lorne house,



Uppingham school with Mr Johnstone at the helm. To thoroughly prepare this year, we enjoyed Sunday afternoon trials and a practice fixture against the Head Boys XI. Adam Rimmer brought an athletic and skilful side to test our young men. On a beautiful Sunday afternoon we were treated to a festival of football, and with a never say die attitude roared to a 3 – 2 lead, only for "Maradona" Downer to give away a penalty in the dying minutes. Extra time followed and the agony of penalty shootouts. We lost 4-3 but what a splendid way to spend an afternoon. And so to an away fixture in Uppingham where a well fought fixture saw Chaz Wilson in goal crowned man of the match with a string of fine saves. Mike Lutterodt and Sam Edwards had chances to win it, but we narrowly lost a great game. Thanks to Lorne house and the Johnstone's for such great hospitality, hopefully we can be victorious next year?!?!

"Band of Boarders" was unleashed on the world. Stuart Roche, Charlie Clayton, James Cattermole, Chaz Wilson, Slava Malyshevsky and Mike Fairbairn played a brilliant set at the Charity Rock. The hall was packed

and loved the slick music and great stage presence by all, a great performance!

The summer brought balmy days by the pool after prep, cricket fixtures, baseball matches and BBQ's. The house via the house council had decided to design shirts with the Browne house design (similar to William Browne's trading badge from the fifteenth century). How bizarre it looked when the boys did a "Thomas Crown Affair" and all turned up to play cricket in the same shirts!!

As a family we have had a thoroughly fantastic year. The house were constantly involved in school sport, CCF, Duke of Edinburgh award, drama, music, Young Enterprise, choir etc. Fourteen boys achieved awards on Speech day, Eugene Kan became a School prefect and Stuart Roche was made a Middle School prefect.

It was sad to lose Mrs Sheila Cole at the end of the year. As matron she worked in the house for twelve years. The boys gave her a great retirement meal and we thank her for her cheerful and caring approach to the boys. We also said goodbye to Mr Goldbrum and wished him well as Head of Maths at Reigate.

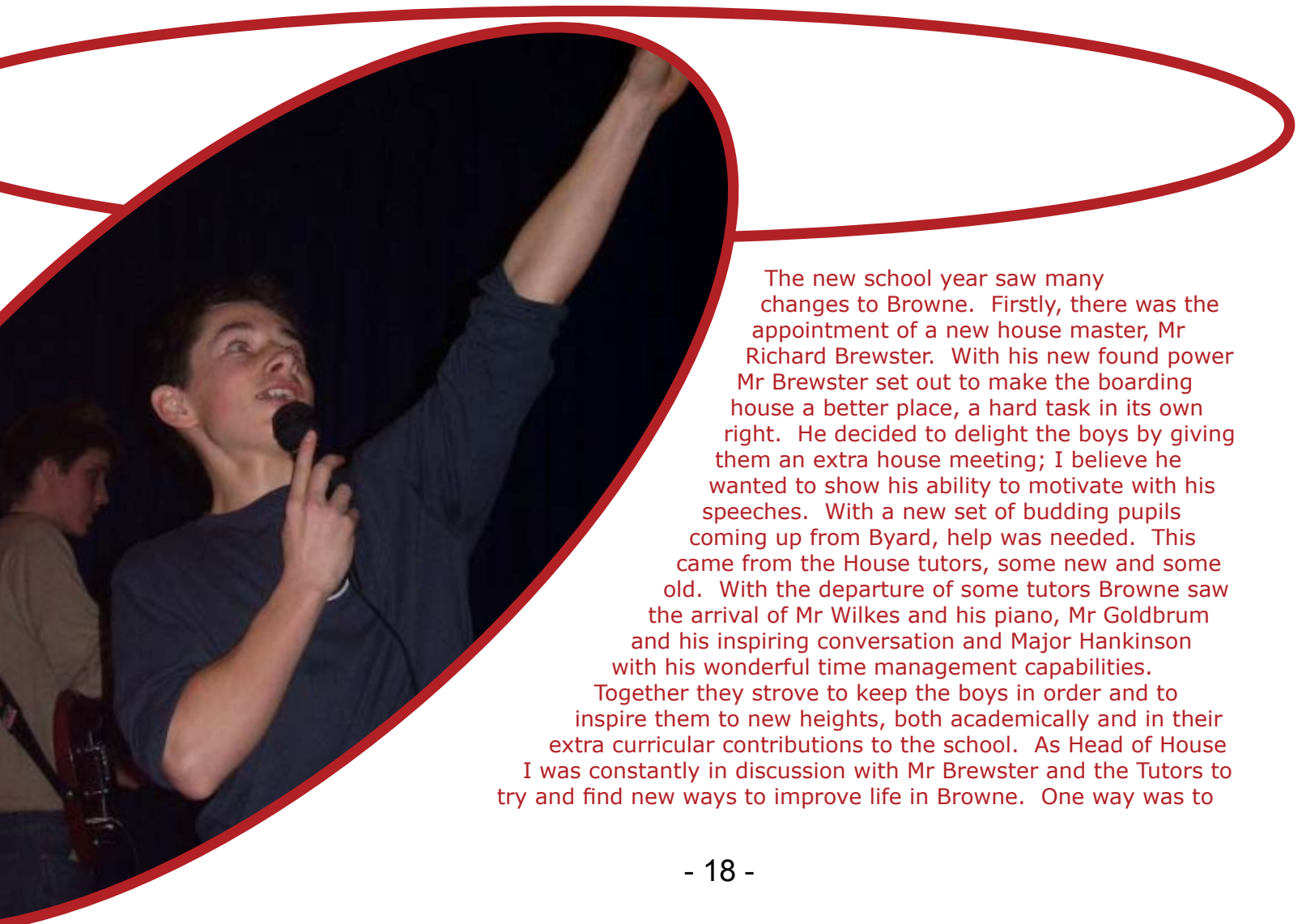
I wish the Leavers Well on their future exploits and remind them to keep in touch and visit often so that we can follow their progress. I am sure that Head of House next year will do a great job. He had a superb role model in James Wilson, who made such an impact on the house, and made my job so enjoyable and much easier. I would like to thank all the boys (my sons' "big brothers") for a wonderful year. Here's to many more....

Leavers 2005-6

David Salvat (working) , Ilja Iljina (home in Finland) , Luke Dodington Boyes (Gap Year)

University

Neal Bacon, Charles Clayton, Peter Diamond, Tom Jia, Spencer Lai, Ben Miles, Philip Moses, Chris Oliver, Andrew Thorpe, Alasdair Watson, James Wilson.



The new school year saw many changes to Browne. Firstly, there was the appointment of a new house master, Mr Richard Brewster. With his new found power Mr Brewster set out to make the boarding house a better place, a hard task in its own right. He decided to delight the boys by giving them an extra house meeting; I believe he wanted to show his ability to motivate with his speeches. With a new set of budding pupils coming up from Byard, help was needed. This came from the House tutors, some new and some old. With the departure of some tutors Browne saw the arrival of Mr Wilkes and his piano, Mr Goldbrum and his inspiring conversation and Major Hankinson with his wonderful time management capabilities.

Together they strove to keep the boys in order and to inspire them to new heights, both academically and in their extra curricular contributions to the school. As Head of House I was constantly in discussion with Mr Brewster and the Tutors to try and find new ways to improve life in Browne. One way was to

appoint four mature and sensible house prefects from the Upper Sixth. Spencer, Luke, Chris and Neal were put to the challenge and, after convincing Luke that a Code Red was not suited to a boarding environment, they began to help where they could in the house. The house shirts were also a great idea, after a design competition we produced a brilliant shirt which was an instant success. A true sign of the house council doing its democratic best!

This year saw the departure of our assistant Matron (aka Sheila) and Mrs Lilly began as a new assistant Matron

There were many events this year that directly involved the boarders. The first of which was the Boarders Formal Sixth Form Dinner. This was organised by Chris Oliver, Mike Lutterodt and myself, along with 3 young ladies from Park and Mrs Horton from the High School. After much careful planning and organising the Dinner was held on the 6th December and saw all the young men of Browne attempt to dress to impress the ladies of Park. Even Andrew Thorpe managed to get himself a tux, which amazed even the optimistic ones among us. After a wonderful four courses the boarders and guests got the pleasure of listening to my speech in which I tried to put how amazing the boarding experience is into words. There was also the Chinese New Year meal to celebrate the coming of the year of the Dog, this was a wonderful event,

organised by some of the Cantonese boys in the house. Their DT project of making a fully working Chinese dragon was awesome!

Every year the school holds a Charity Rock Concert and this gave me the idea of getting together a house band. This was made easy by the hugely diverse musical talents of the boys. Stuart Roche, James Catermole, Charles Wilson, Mike Fairbairn, Charles Clayton and Slava Malyshevsky made up the 'Band of Boarders'. Front man Stuart put on a marvellous performance for the School and entertained everyone. The band was advertised by posters made by Max Physick who also made a large sign for the event. The school Spedebird has never looked so good.

Browne has been very directly involved in the CCF this year. With the Commanding Officer being a house tutor there was an obvious connection and many of the



Upper Sixth were leading Senior NCOs in the CCF. Many of the boarders were members of the CCF and attended the weekend Field Training Exercises regularly. On one particular weekend we managed to take 13 boarders out on exercise out of the 30 going. We were also directly involved in the new Saturday morning training, which was maintained by the high level of involvement from Browne.

The Browne XI was reformed again this year under the

captaincy of myself. Armed with brand new shirts we were unstoppable. Unfortunately it was not the most successful of seasons for us as we managed to lose both our matches: against the Head Boy's XI and against Lorne house at Uppingham.

This is just a small look into the goings on in the past year. Now as the year ends, the majority of the Upper Sixth are heading to university. Looking back on the experience of boarding at Stamford, it has been amazing. I have always been of the opinion that boarding makes you such a rounded person, I have fully enjoyed my experience of boarding and I would do it all again tomorrow if I had the chance! So if you are reading this and are considering becoming a boarder, my advice is to become one and enjoy what it has to offer, it's brilliant!! Browne house rocks!

Bronze Expeditions

The Benefits of The Duke of Edinburgh Expedition

Skills

The main skills in the Duke of Edinburgh are the use of map reading and the use of a compass. These are skills fewer and fewer people are learning. I found that without these skills the expedition would have been impossible, as the route we took was extremely confusing. So learning these skills was vital to our success.

Challenge

I found that the expeditions challenged many personal qualities:

Fitness – walking with full kit.

Skill – using a map and compass.

Teamwork – cooking and tent building at camp.

Speed – a race with the darkness.

Stamina – to withstand two days walking.

Initiative – to do the right thing under difficult situations.

These are all things that the Duke of Edinburgh teaches to young people that otherwise might never have been discovered.

Achievement

By far the best part of the Duke of Edinburgh was that of achievement at the end of the expedition, when everything is blocked out and all you want to do is finish I realised how far it really was and have that sense of triumph that seemed to make it all worthwhile.

James Bramley



Day One

So it began. Our 26 Kilometre was spread over two days in murky, damp October weather. Thankfully, however, day one was a rain free walk. We aimed to schedule our stops at every village or smallholding. Unfortunately with four boys of varying ability and stamina, tolerance had to come to the fore, as stops every ten minutes were not practical. Nor was a two hour hike at break neck pace, without time to draw breath until arrival at the campsite! Our first scheduled stop was at Uffington.

The next section of our walk was not particularly long and was an almost straight line (on the map!) along a country lane. This is actually a winding, muddy track suffering from a combination of neglect and over use. The ruts were deep enough to break an ankle in and the road surface was non-existent. The rest of the route was relatively simple; however I soon learnt that two members of my group were afraid of cows. This did pose a problem!

Having finally completed the 13 kilometre trail, we reached our destination for the night (Maidens Farm Campsite). Elated, sweaty, tired and hungry we dropped our packs and started to set up the tent. We chose a flat spot for the tent and spread our ground cloth over that spot. Then Oliver Kew laid on it and gave the spot a test-rest. He confirmed it was reasonably level and not too lumpy.

Richard Sham and I employed the golden rule of tent erection and followed the seams. It's easy to start criss-crossing poles and begin inserting them into the wrong pole sleeves. Set up becomes simplified when you follow the seams.

While we set up the tent Oliver Kew set up the kitchen (!). We cooked our supper with little effort and then went back to the tent to empty our backpacks and set up our sleeping bags. The sixth form arrived and they checked that we had all got there and had set up our tents to survive the increasing breeze. Pretty much exhausted from the day we collapsed into our sleeping bags and tried to get some sleep before dawn.

Day Two

The day began at four o'clock in the morning as someone was shouting. After sticking my head out of the tent I decided it wasn't serious and it was far too early for breakfast. Almost four hours later and after a small breakfast we set off. Our tents had gone back into our packs relatively easily, although our packs seem to weigh much more than they did the day before when we set off. It was cold and damp. The mud under our feet got stuck on our boots. We trudged along like First World soldiers heading for the front line. Not much singing or joke telling could be heard.

On the map we had to do a large loop to make up for the short journey on the first day. This loop passed through what were to us completely unknown villages. These included too many names ending in - ton.

The fields on the route posed the greatest task as our boots became heavy with the mud. This slowed the group down considerably. The solution was to stop for about 2 minutes to clean your boots at the end of every ploughed field.

We arrived back at LMS car park at 12.05 almost exactly and handed in some of the equipment to Mr Jackson. In all it was a good walk but the one thing I have learnt from this is that although people do the Award for lots of different reasons, the most important reason to get involved is because you will enjoy it. Let's face it: there's no point in doing the Award if you don't have fun along the way.

"Isn't hindsight a wonderful thing?"

Michael Morgan-Williams

Silver Expeditions

The best part of my Silver Duke of Edinburgh Award was, undoubtedly, the three-day expedition at the end of it. The aim of my project is to try and share some of my experience, by way of a diary of each of the three days.

Day 1

Having completed our pre-expedition check the previous day, our team was given a final briefing by Leigh (our assessor), and John Ferdinand (our supervisor). Then, at 9.30, we waved goodbye forever to our base camp, and set out with high spirits, glad that the expedition was underway, and we would soon be going home.

The walk itself was thoroughly enjoyable. For most of the day we stayed on a main footpath, called Cumbria Way, which offers excellent walking, as it is not too steep but provides some beautiful views.

Our destination was Castlerigg campsite. The campsite itself was excellent, with laundry, drying and even shower which were a welcome relief after a hard day's walking. Luckily, the weather was good to us as well, and we were able to get to sleep fairly quickly, unaware of what the next day would hold.

Day 2

The second day of our expedition dawned, grey and miserable. This symbolised the feeling of the group for the entire day. As we set off, the rain hardened and showed no sign of receding. It kept its promise, and by lunchtime, we were completely soaked from head to toe. Thankfully, the rain did stop briefly when we reached a small café, where we were met by Leigh and Ferdy, who were both wearing huge, smug grins. However, Leigh was kind enough to buy us all a drink, and there is nothing like a cup of tea when you're soaked and freezing. After our lunch, we faced the 6-mile walk to our second campsite. Happily, the rain clouds decided that we were wet enough by this point and decided not to rain on us all afternoon. This meant that the afternoon's walking was much more enjoyable than the morning's. The scenery was very rocky, and this added to my enjoyment of the walk, as you had to pick your route through the most stable stones. One wrong foot, and you could be flat on your back.

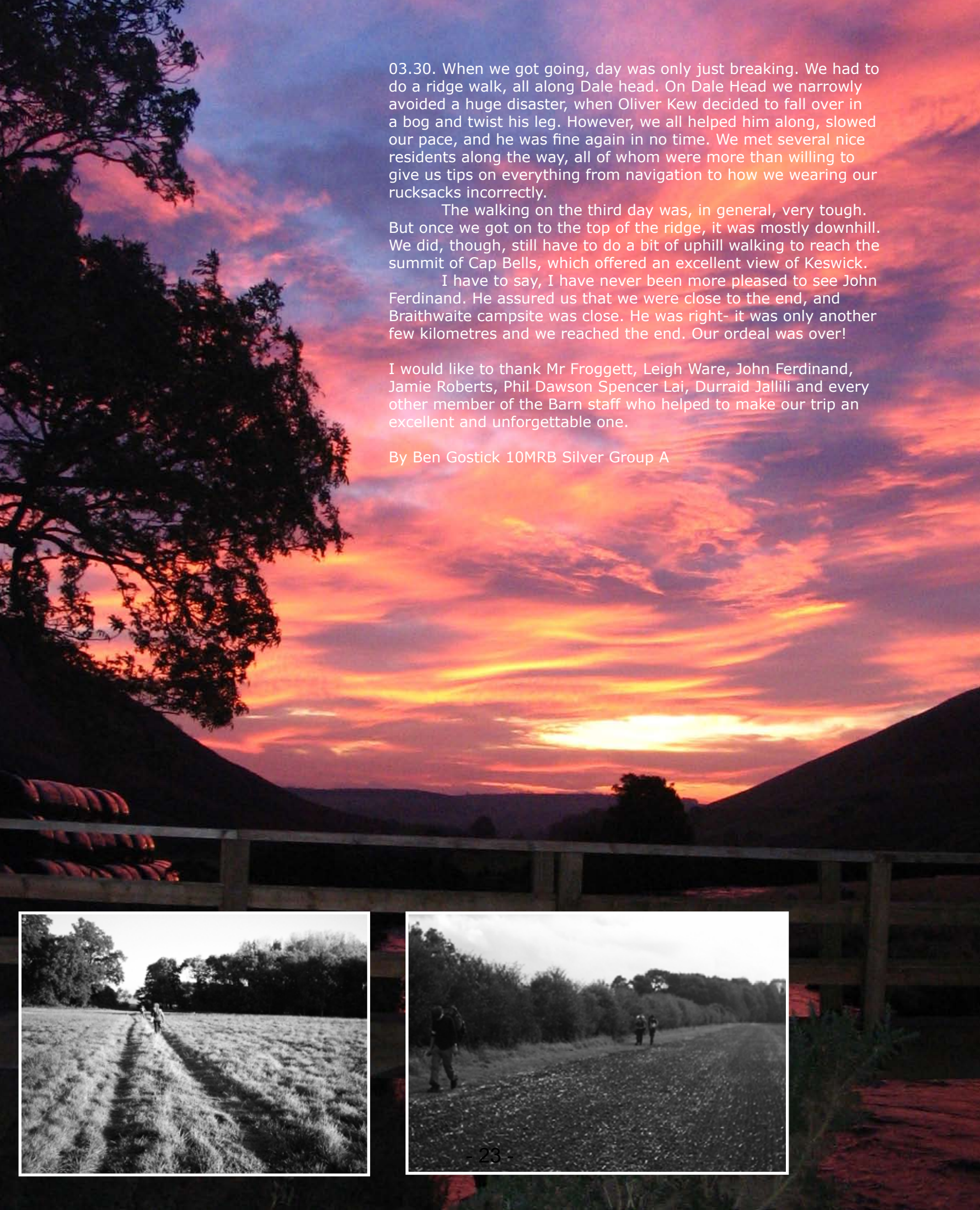
Our second campsite was, to say the least, basic. It consisted of a field and a toilet block. However, since the weather was nice by this point, we had no need of warm laundry rooms, and we knew that we had a long day tomorrow, coupled with a ridiculously early start. The next day, we knew, would be worse than the morning we had just endured.

Day 3

On our third day, as it was our final day, we had to be in Braithwaite campsite (approximately 10 miles away) by 12.00 midday. We were informed that if we did not achieve this goal, then Mr Froggett would not wait for us. He'd just drive off.

We had to be up and ready to walk at dawn, and this meant getting up at





03.30. When we got going, day was only just breaking. We had to do a ridge walk, all along Dale head. On Dale Head we narrowly avoided a huge disaster, when Oliver Kew decided to fall over in a bog and twist his leg. However, we all helped him along, slowed our pace, and he was fine again in no time. We met several nice residents along the way, all of whom were more than willing to give us tips on everything from navigation to how we wearing our rucksacks incorrectly.

The walking on the third day was, in general, very tough. But once we got on to the top of the ridge, it was mostly downhill. We did, though, still have to do a bit of uphill walking to reach the summit of Cap Bells, which offered an excellent view of Keswick.

I have to say, I have never been more pleased to see John Ferdinand. He assured us that we were close to the end, and Braithwaite campsite was close. He was right- it was only another few kilometres and we reached the end. Our ordeal was over!

I would like to thank Mr Froggett, Leigh Ware, John Ferdinand, Jamie Roberts, Phil Dawson Spencer Lai, Durraid Jallili and every other member of the Barn staff who helped to make our trip an excellent and unforgettable one.

By Ben Gostick 10MRB Silver Group A



Kenya Expedition

Kenana School

Having spent a relaxing week at Ol Gaboli Lodge, we made the long journey cross-country to Embu, where Kenana School is located. We arrived in style (we had to push the bus for the last couple of metres!!!) in our aptly named "cheese-wagon" to meet group 3, who had spent the last week at the school. We were greeted by Albert (project leader), Kim (our chef) and Kihara (kitchen assistant). We were cooked a pleasant meal of vegetable curry and rice, which were looking forward to as we had never had it before! Over dinner, we conversed with the other group, discussing what was in store for us. Little did we realise how much we had to do, and how little time we had to do it in.

The following morning, we woke early to see off the other group who were returning to Laikipia to climb Mt Kenya. We wished them luck, and with their broken watermelon, they left. We were anxious about going to the school and about what we were going to find. The journey to the school took us along the railway line to Kenana which was about a 15 minute walk. At the school, we were greeted by the whole school who sang and danced for us. Some of the children were confused, as they had never seen a white person before, apart from the other two groups. Many children came up to us and shook our hands and greeted us in English. We then toured the school with the headmaster, deciding what needed to be done and what equipment and materials were required. We left the school before lunch, to enjoy a luscious meal of guess what, vegetable curry and rice. Albert then took us for a tour of the farm at Embu where we were staying. At the farm was a company called Kenana Knitters, where many of the children's parents from the school worked. They produced hand-knitted goods that were exported all around the globe.

That evening, having eaten our meal, we ventured into the bar. As we are all under-age, none of us had anything to drink, and all we consumed that night was orange juice and coca-cola. There was definitely no sampling of local brews and intoxicating mixtures, but even so, due to the extreme Kenyan darkness, many of the group fell over on the way back to the tents. The following morning, it was found that some people had thrown up (food bug??).

For the following couple of days the group made great progress with the project. Jono Yeates, Henry Ker and James Goodwin (named the Capulets) started the enormous task of painting a mural for one of the classroom walls. Richard Lester headed the team painting the nursery classroom, helped by Ben Derrett, Ben Wilkinson, John Hunt, Rachel Minter and Claire Marsh. The barbed wire team, headed by Gordon O'Neill, with Dave Purcell, James O'Shea and Dom Bangay, made great progress on surrounding the school with barbed wire, and digging a trench for trees – not an easy job when there is over a kilometre to cover. But, with the help of many children who left their normal lessons to assist with this task, it was done. They were so dedicated to the task they came in on their weekend to help us to improve their school.





Amusing incidents during the week included the “badly-dressed” evening, where it became apparent that, after a drink or two, cross-dressing became rife, and the majority of the group dressed up in the ugliest clothes imaginable, courtesy of the Kembu Bar! First prize for the sluttiest dress went to Richard Lester. Another great night was the birthday of our own John Hunt, who turned 16 on the trip. We celebrated in style, starting off with a barbeque in the bar, and drinks until after midnight. It was a brilliant event and John assured me it was the best birthday he had ever had (possibly due to the group buying him drinks all evening – strictly soft though!!!)

The main news of the week was the Kenana v. Stamford football match. This match brought all members of the team together in a joint objective, and we also managed to get some loaned players from the Rift Valley Adventures FC. Here is the match report, courtesy of Richard Lester:

“A quick goal from Bangay left us far too laid back and a Kenyan wonder-goal left us level. Jonny Yeates took my advice of “let’s break their legs” too seriously by stamping on a child, giving away a penalty which was close to being saved by Dave Angel but not quite close enough. Dom once again struck to leave both sides 2-2 at half time, but with the Kenyan side dominating the home soil a third came quickly. They tried to play the same set piece but I played their striker offside, and then we had to quickly remind the referee that he should have gone to Specsavers because he was completely blind, biased and should stick to teaching, or so I understood. With all this advice he wisely decided to disallow their goal. However we were at a deadlock with minutes to spare and everyone anticipating extra time. A rash challenge sent Ben Wilkinson flying just outside the box and Pat, stepped up to the mark and floated the ball over the goal keeper to slot nicely under the cross bar putting Stamford and Rift Valley Adventure FC ahead. With the St. Paul’s Street Terrace singing all the songs they knew the referee finally blew the whistle to signify 4 – 3 in the game and 2 – 1 in the series for Stamford and Rift Valley. Man of the match was



split 3 ways – Dave for his blistering runs, Dave Angel for his amazing saves that kept us in the game and Dave Derrett because his name is Dave and we didn’t want to leave any Dave out.”



The majority, if not all the group agreed the project phase of the trip to Kenya was the best part both for us, and the community who benefited from our labours. But, in spite of the children at the school having literally nothing, they are still happy. Never once did any child complain, or get angry.

Gordon O’Neill



The climb to end all climbs, the ascent of Mount Kenya was an adventure, an experience and an achievement brought about with team work.

The adventure started in the back of a very bouncy yellow safari truck, which took the team up the long dust ridden windy roads to Sirimon Gate and the start of our adventure. As we dismounted from our rather dust beaten transport the hair on the back of our necks tingled with excitement as we looked up at the dazzling sight that stood before us, Mount Kenya. Soon enough Steve and Sam had us on our way with the team of porters. The sun beat down on our necks but we kept the fluids high and morale higher. The day seemed to pass quickly but not without a few scary moments, like when Steve halted us and put his ear to the ground and listened for tell tale sound of wild life. But the coast was clear and danger was avoided. As we pulled up to campsite number 1, Old Moses, we threw our sweaty packs to the floor and rejoiced that we were one day closer to the top. One hour later and all relaxed our guide Steve gave us more input. "Climb high sleep low." This information was explained so well to us that we all volunteered to walk for 40 minutes up the mountain and then return to camp. This really did help us acclimatize to the altitude as next day we all walked well. As the sun started to drop and everyone had collapsed from one too many games of extreme Frisbee, we settled down to a delightful meal put on by the porters. We were most grateful. As we sat and



munched upon our grub, we could see the summits in the distance looking so beautiful whilst being bathed in the warm glow of the setting sun, a sight which cannot be quite described with words. Then to the hay we went only an hour or so after sun set, and like babies we slept warm and cozy in sleeping bags and woolly hats for extra protection from the cold nights.

It was an early start and a warm breakfast for our grateful stomachs gave us a boost for the rest of the day; well, till the first snack break. We were on our way to Shiptons, the base camp for the three peaks. It was a long trek, with some dangerously knife like rocks and steep rises and speedy descents with some free style rock jumping. The team stuck together and on we trekked through the bogs and rocks. As the mist cleared we were blessed with some much needed rays from the sun. So we trekked on and ran into some funny looking creatures that were apparently related to the elephant, but were no way as big (rock hyrax). As we entered Shipton's Camp we were taken aback at the view that surrounded us. There were huge rock faces on three sides and a view down an endless valley floor on the fourth. The peaks stood what seemed to be miles above but this did not dampen spirits so we set up tents, had some tea, and out came the Frisbee for another round. As the sun started to set behind the peaks and we tucked into another great meal, thoughts turned to the day ahead: would we all make it, would the weather stay clear and what was the top like? As eyes started to droop, most of the party headed for the snug tents, but a few stayed up and admired the amazing stars which looked like a million bright burning candles and as the shooting stars whizzed past and light murmurs from tents where card games were being played, the group felt at peace with the world and the campsite dozed off beneath the heavenly stars.

The morning started early for some going for early morning toilet break brought on by one too many teas. We started the ascent to Point Lenana in the afternoon. On the way up Steve revealed some fresh leopard tracks to us and everyone gave a nervous glance as we followed these tracks upward. Everyone started strong with numerous rounds of match a singer with the letter. There were only a few breaks on the way up but half way up some people started to feel the effects of altitude sickness. Headaches kicked in but a very strong team spirit carried the team on, and the great guidance of Steve. As we almost hit the top Tom Williams had a shoulder dislocation, but like a brave warrior carried on, throwing himself up the rocks with one hand. The top was 6ft away and almost everyone was praying for a helicopter but spurred on by the two Bennies, the whole team reached the summit and hugs and camera snaps were being passed around. The view was stunning: crisp skies further than we could see. With distant clouds which would soon be on our heads. So we bombed it down the mountain scree skiing all the way and pulling off some rather extreme tricks on the boulders. On the way down there was a trickle of snow which really made the day. We had one of those days we would truly remember for ever. In the evening we were blessed by another fantastic star laden sky. As Jack Frost rode onto camp we hit the hay knowing that day was a day of achievement.

Morning broke with an icy frost and our departure was delayed because the tents had to defrost. So we packed up and practically ran to Old Moses where we set up the tents for the last time. We were chilled right to the core until the Frisbee came out and people got competitive. Then one member of the group, Tom B, got tricked into showing us what football can do to a sane man's head, as he gave away his deepest fantasies, in a game concocted by Mr. F. So the last day on the mountain, the team spent the evening star gazing and there were some very tense games of cards where order had to be restored many a time. Then to bed, with two emotions in our heads, excitement for moving on but also disappointment that we had to leave a place of such beauty and peace so soon.

The morning was relaxed and calm; we packed for the last time, but without the tents, and started towards Sirimon Gate to be collected. We strolled down what seemed now easy mountain side and collapsed in the sunshine at the bottom and basked for a while reflecting on the great team effort we had just made. We had a small debrief and most people seemed to be impressed with the way we had clung on as a team and we had all made the trek. As we loaded on to the "bad boy" mini buses and said good bye to Steve, Sammy and the porters we took one last look around and knew we had come, seen and conquered and in some cases brought the t-shirt.

By Harry C. Farnsworth



Shell Eco-Marathon

It was a hot summer's day and the Shell Eco Marathon team were slaving away in the pit lane as the opposition's cars roared past - at 10 miles an hour.

The Shell Eco Marathon is essentially a motor racing event held at the infamous Rockingham Speedway where teams of every conceivable walk of life come together to see who can make the best motor vehicle. The best being those which use the least fuel as possible to go round the circuit ten times. There are several categories including petrol, diesel, L.P.G. and new hydrogen powered vehicles - the wonderfully innovative Stamford School design was in the Honda class for schools, a specially created category that enabled our team to effectively dedicate our efforts to the clever design whilst the Honda supplied us with a finely tuned engine. The fantastic vision which defined the car, originally the brainchild of Mr. Holdsworth himself, is based around the principle of an extreme sport known as 'Mountain Boarding' which was loosely developed from a mix of snowboarding and skateboarding. As you lean from side-to-side, the front wheels of the enhanced skateboarding actively turn, much like a car, whilst using your momentum to retain more control and efficiency as you turn. By using a three-wheeled design for our entry, one driving wheel at the rear and two steering wheels at the front, the driver can use his body weight to tilt the car and manoeuvre the vehicle. The team of diligent school boys, who could have refused the idea, immediately loved it.

After two years of hard graft and three complete re-shuffles of the entire design due to successively better ideas from the think-tank that is Mr. Holdsworth, we gradually came closer and closer to the sleek, red tarmac cruiser that we had all dreamed of from the start. Despite the pupils' best efforts, the project was placed in hiatus whilst we turned our attentions to GCSEs and internal examinations. Mr Holdsworth, never afraid of some good hard work, still continued alone to bring the craft closer to completion. Race day loomed. Suddenly the team realised that the examination period had taken too much time away and, ever devoted to the cause, extra time slots were filed to carefully piece together the remaining parts. Many of these timeslots occurred after school had officially ended, yet despite this the team worked on without a second thought. Many crucial components from our extremely generous sponsors RS Components and Falcon Racing Cycles were attached within the closing weeks, the extra effort truly boosting the incredible progress made.

Then, as if by magic, the race day arrived. The entirety of Stamford School's reputation weighed upon the team - Unfortunately two members of the team couldn't come to the race day due to the Shooting Team being at Bisley and an expedition to Kenya. However, the teams strived onwards, ignoring that two major contributors were not there. After two exhausting 15 hour days in which we not only built and finished our little motor vehicle but also spent our spare time aiding other school teams, particularly trading expertise and tools when either side were lacking - there was an absolutely wonderful community atmosphere. Naturally, our first year entry couldn't compete with French Universities with literally tens of thousands of Euros at their disposal. Indeed, we were one of the five school-based teams who even arrived at the circuit in the first place from a total of 37. This is a massive achievement, even if our car did fail the scrutinising process at the race track, as acknowledged by the organisers of the event, Shell. It had been said that many vehicles don't even get to the track in their first three years - We were in a minority of dedicated schools who put our necks out to support the project until the end.

However the story does not end there; the Shell Eco Marathon scheme is not yet over for our school. No, for in 2007 we're going to go again with new ideas and better equipment, with new team members and new determination. See you at Rockingham in the summer!

The team was Liam Cattell (captain), Gordon O'Neill, Ben Searle, Matthew Fox, Julian Adams, James Petrie and Timothy Moore and supported by the general organisers, Shell, and our amazing sponsors Honda, RS Components and Falcon Racing Cycles. The most crucial member was easily Mr. Holdsworth, the ever calming presence that organised the whole scheme for Stamford School.

Julian Adams

Kingswood

Year 7 Trip

On the 19th of October 2005, Year 7 departed on coaches heading towards Staffordshire. As our journey was delayed for ages on the motorway we were all relieved to arrive finally at Kingswood in the late afternoon. As soon as we got there we were given a tour of the centre and shown where our dormitories would be. Then we had dinner (which wasn't quite up to the standards of school food) and got ready for our first activity. For our group this was "Aeroball", where four people were on a trampoline each bouncing in their own quarter. Working with your partner (diagonal to you), you aimed to score in your opponents' goal, which was a couple of metres above the ground. It was great fun and a nice start to the trip.

Over the next couple of days we got to try a mini scrap-heap challenge, movie making, quad biking, nightline (an assault course that was really muddy that you did blindfolded), a low rope assault course, orienteering and "Mission Impossible". I really enjoyed quad biking around the looping course, although I was not able to avoid the tyre barriers, nor was I able to avoid the mud, but I aimed for that! Another adventure that I enjoyed was the low ropes assault course, which was a team-building exercise that we all really got in to and had a great time on.

I think that it was great fun and it was a good opportunity to get to know my year mates and teachers better. The weather was lousy on the last day but it didn't spoil the experience. Although we had a great time, I think we were all looking forward to coming home. As I had managed to leave a rucksack behind on the last day I can also compliment Kingswood on their excellent postal service in getting the bag back to me! In all a tiring and muddy but great trip.





ITALY ART TRIP



Saturday

Considering that I was leaving my house in the middle of the night (7am in the morning), on my way to a foreign country to live with people I barely knew, I was surprisingly relaxed. The flight from Stansted was not too long and proved to be the most exciting bit of the day, when Lucy and Cat realised that an actor from 'Cutting It' was sitting in front of them. This led to two hours of 'subtle' photograph taking and impromptu giggles from all the girls and at times from Jono and Stu too. We arrived at Bologna airport, and were met with warm hugs from ALL the family members. We then set off back to the exchanges' houses in their cars - never to see the other 'Englishes' again! Until that night, when we all met up in the square in Ferrara, to just stand around, (which we noticed seemed to be their favourite past time in Ferrara). For me it was nice to see other English-speakers again. As a non-Italian speaker it was tough on that first afternoon in my family's house, but I soon became able to make myself understood and to understand them. NB. 'Englishes' is a term we applied to ourselves whilst out there.

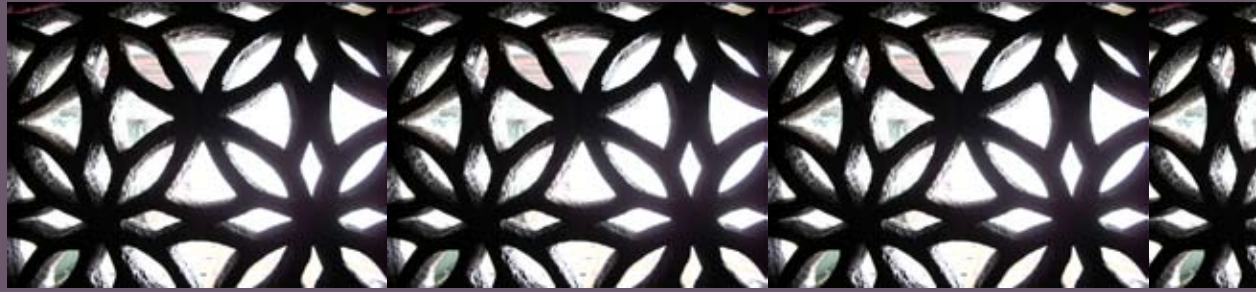


Today was a day of relaxation and so we went into the main centre of Ferrara. We travelled by bus and the drivers slammed on the brakes so hard, that you had to hold on really tightly, otherwise you would fall over.

Whilst in Ferrara we did a bit of shopping as there is a very big market. Then Lauren, Amy, Kelly and I went on another bus to Anna's house (an Italian exchange student) for lunch, as she lives outside Ferrara. Our lunch smelt really good as it was being prepared. We first had lovely pasta followed by a sort of sausage meat with fried potatoes. We also had a delicious potato and cheese concoction. Everyone soon began to look a bit full as we had just eaten two fairly big portions. For dessert, I realized that they had made tiramisu which is my all time favourite. After saying thank you, we headed back into Ferrara again. They took us to a little bar which sold the best hot chocolate I have ever had; much better than Beans in Stamford! In the evening we went to a pizza restaurant where we all had huge pizzas and many people, including Kelly and Amy, could not eat theirs as they had had such a big lunch. Overall the day was great fun and I could not wait till tomorrow as we were going to Venice!

Sunday





Monday

Today was a day which most of us were pretty excited about as we would be visiting the famous 'City of Canals', and would perhaps have the opportunity to go on a gondola! At 8.00am we were all assembled at Ferrara station with packed lunches, ready to depart at 8.25am. On arrival we made our way to Piazza San Marco (St Marks' Square) where we met our guide, who then gave us a guided tour of the Palazzo Ducale and the Basilica San Marco. The Ducal Palace, or the Doge's Palace, was the residence of the Doge up to the fall of the Venetian Republic in 1797. By far, the most spectacular room in the palace was the Grand Council Chamber or Sala del Maggior Consiglio, which was originally the meeting place for the legislature. This huge hall is filled with paintings which line the walls and ceiling. One of which, Tintoretto's huge 'Paradise', is reportedly the world's largest painting on canvas. There is also the "Bridge of Sighs" which leads from here into the adjacent prison, from which Casanova escaped. We were then taken by the guide to see the Basilica San Marco (St Mark's Basilica), which is the most famous of the churches of Venice. Afterwards, Tara, Kelly and I joined Mrs Holland in visiting the Peggy Guggenheim Collection. This collection is the most important in Italy for European and American art of the first half of the 20th century.

It is located in Peggy Guggenheim's former home on the Grand Canal in Venice. Pieces of artwork included here were Pablo Picasso's 'The Poet', August 1911 and Vasily Kandinsky's 'White Cross', 1922. Other artists whose work was exhibited in the collection included Salvador Dali, Rene Magritte, and Giacomo Balla. After a fantastic day we managed to fit in some shopping time in order to buy Venetian masks and glass jewellery before we boarded the train back to Ferrara. To finish the day some of us went to visit Daisy's exchange partner, Vittoria, for a movie night – trying to watch Ocean's 12 while Italian subtitles pop up at the bottom is near impossible!



Tuesday



Our itinerary for this morning simply stated 'At 8.45am Assemble in the town square, next to the Town Hall or Palazzo Municipale.' Here we were met by one of Ferrara's council representatives who welcomed us to Ferrara and told us of the work that she does in the town. We also had the chance to see a small room, not usually open to the public which is the 'Stanzino delle Duchesse'. This was 'a small room sumptuously decorated with grotesques, cupids, festoons, caryatids and mermaid, made of wooden panels painted between 1555 and 1560 by the Filippi workshop. We also visited the town's castle, 'Castello Estense', which is a brick building surrounded by a moat, with four towers. After visiting these two attractions we were given free time to spend with the Italian exchange partners, most of which was spent at Parco Massari, a huge park, where we were able to relax and unwind. We spent the rest of the afternoon shopping in Ferrara then all went back to our houses, (or hotel in mine and Tara's case) where we were intending to get an early night so we would be up early for the Florence visit the next day.

Wednesday



A HORRIFICALLY early morning - but it was worth it once we got there. To start with, we had a guided tour around a church with some beautiful art, followed by a fairly lengthy walk to the Cathedral. Another highlight of the trip was visiting the place where the man was hung in 'Hannibal', slightly creepy but exciting nonetheless. We then spent about one and a half hours in the Uffizi art gallery which was amazing and then were allowed to walk around Florence. I was on the hunt for some socks and plasters, as hideous blisters had made walking unbearable. The day finished on a quite fun journey home, featuring several card games. That night we all went out as it was our last night in Italy. It was good fun and I think we all went back home that night with a smile on our faces.

Thursday



Today I felt sad about going home but also excited as I felt very homesick. Last night was a panic as we had to pack our suitcases - a nightmare. Today we visited the Italian school which is in the centre of Ferrara. We arrived at the school which looked a bit like an American school inside. We then went into a classroom with all the Italian students and waited for the head teacher to arrive. This was made fun by taking various photos of everyone in the room. The headmaster then gave a big speech and thanked us for coming and said that he hoped that we would keep our friendship with the two schools for years to come.

After that we travelled to the train station with our luggage and by this time many of us were quite upset to be leaving. We got onto the train, waved goodbye and set off for the airport. The airport was very busy and we waited quite a long time to get our bags checked. Sadly there were no famous people on the flight home, much to Cat's and Lucy's disappointment. We landed back in gloomy England wishing that we were still in Italy. Over all I think that the trip was excellent and I cannot wait to go back!



GCSF



The Welland Art Society is held in high esteem here in the quaint town of Stamford and every year each school enters it's most promising GCSE student to clench the first prize reward of £60 and of course the fame and pride that goes with it. Jack and one of his GCSE final pieces were entered into the competition by the inspirational Mrs Walklin, who has cared for and nurtured many a young art student in her time, including the notorious Ben Murphy who won this award the year previously. The piece entitled 'Unusual Perspective' featured 'some random kid' that Jack had photographed himself and had decided to use for his final. When I asked what was behind the idea, Jack replied that it 'just came to me – it was like an epiphany'. Using the mixed media of coloured pencils with a hint of guoache – a quite expensive media, but well worth the price – Jack managed to produce a masterpiece of his time. Spending only ten hours on this A2 masterpiece, Jack still managed to produce an absolutely quality and professional finish.

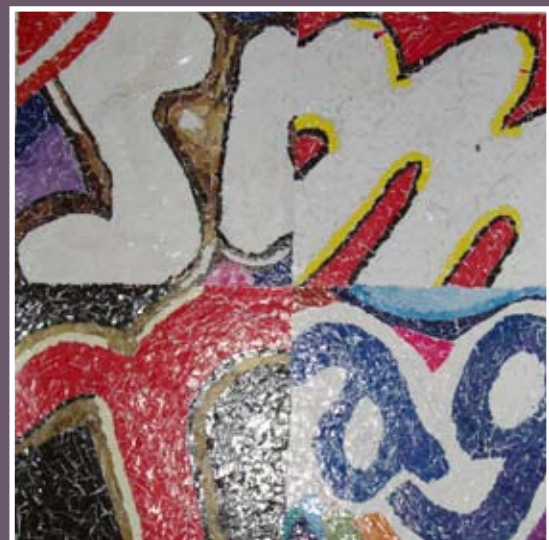
As the candidate for the school, Jack went along to the presentation afternoon at Stamford's Art Centre with Mrs Walklin to join teachers and students from across the Stamford area for the pieces to be judged. The competition was tight but in the end the judges decided that there was only one clear winner. Jack was 'very proud' to win an award of such high esteem and the £60 prize money wasn't exactly a bad thing either.

Jack has a very promising future ahead of him and hopes to put his talent to use in the film industry with inspiration from film directors such as Peter Jackson and of course Spielberg himself. He leaves me with nothing more than the simple yet motivational quote, 'be creative!'.

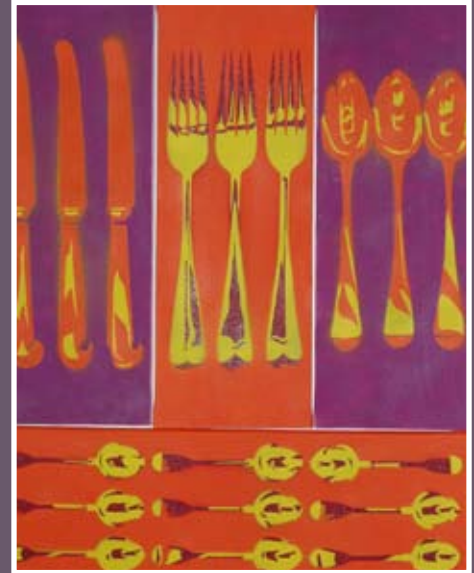
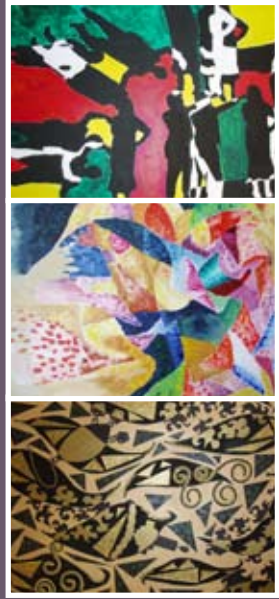




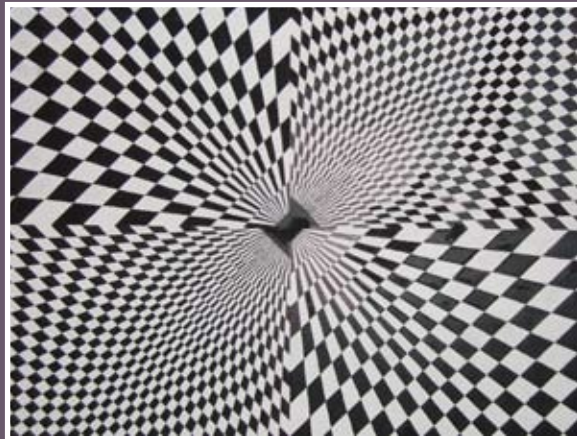
AS Level







A2 Art







Last year Willoughby House was characterised by the noble qualities of fair play, commitment and participation. Boys were volunteering to represent the house at every available opportunity and it was especially encouraging to witness the 'non-stars' becoming more and more involved in house activities. Would this house spirit remain evident this year?

The initial signs were promising. The Y6 'taster day' in June, which included a plethora of sporting pursuits, produced a group of eager, fresh-faced boys for whom the sorting hat had been kind enough to place them in Willoughby for the first 3 years of their school life. It was immediately apparent that those selected enjoyed their sport and were incredibly competitive. Blood, sweat and tears were all secreted during the afternoon and it became increasingly clear that the future fortunes of Willoughby House would be in safe hands.

September arrived and with it came a host of house activities. Willoughby boys proved supreme in the tug-of-war competitions winning the trophies in all three year groups - what do they feed them on? Our general knowledge team of Jack Atkinson, Robin Virgo and Jordan Clarke was also impressive in action. Victories over St. Peter's and St. Paul's set up a nail-biting encounter with pre-competition favourites, Cecil. The drama which ensued did not disappoint. The lead changed hands several times throughout the rounds but ultimately Cecil proved to be slightly sharper on the buzzer towards the end. They emerged as deserving victors but all credit to the boys from Willoughby for a fine effort.

The rugby tournament, held over three consecutive weeks, is perhaps the premier competition of the autumn term. 'House Match Monday' is certainly eagerly anticipated by all boys and it was with great excitement the Willoughby lined up against St. Peter's in the first of three bruising encounters. The 1st XV and 2nd X performed with great aplomb, playing some fluent attacking rugby and securing comfortable victories. The 3rd X also did themselves proud despite being made up exclusively from boys in Y7. Three victories was a fantastic start to the rugby campaign of 2005. Three further victories against St. Paul's put Willoughby in a strong position going into the final round of the competition against the might of Cecil. The 1st XV led by the likes of Tommy Mitchell, Nathan Graham, Sam Andrew and James Hounslow controlled the ball well and denied the Cecil backs possession. A thrilling encounter ended in the narrowest of wins and the much coveted 1st XV trophy was ours. The 2nd X played some attractive rugby to beat Cecil and the young and inexperienced 3rd X battled well but succumbed to a stronger Cecil side. Two out of three trophies was a fine achievement for the boys in red.

The Y9 hockey tournament was the next major house event. Tim Anders picked a team that was thought strong enough to defeat the other houses. Cecil were our first opponents on the day. Some excellent dribbling and incisive passing saw Willoughby land an impressive 3-1 victory. This was followed up with a 3-0 demolition of St. Peter's and were looking forward to facing the house which had traditionally been the strongest hockey house over the last few years - St. Paul's. True to form, they played the better hockey, emerging victorious in a tight battle. A well-organised and competitive hockey tournament, which saw Willoughby gain a commendable second place. An on-going competition which constantly involves all of the boys is the merit competition. Boys earn merits for outstanding pieces of work and record these merits every week with their Head of Year. This is designed to give a clear indication of which house is working hard in the classroom. I am pleased to report that boys in Willoughby did indeed do their best and held off some strong competition from rivals, Cecil, to win this term's merit trophy. Well done to all the boys in the house because every single member contributed merits to the final total.

The Spring Term is usually remembered as a muddy, windy and freezing cold time of year which bears little resemblance to spring. It is the term of football, chess, table-tennis the infamous Burghley Run and the singing competition. The 2nd XI played some champagne football to win all three of their games, scoring 13 goals and conceding none. Poor Joe Cooke in goal had very little to do but stand and stare! The 1st XI were at times brilliant, but were unable to contend with the pace of Cecil on the break. Nevertheless, second place was a fine achievement.

Willoughby boys thrive on the games field but perhaps lack the mental prowess to compete at the highest level on the chess boards, or the manual dexterity required for table-tennis. Many boys volunteered for these competitions and opportunities were given to non-games players. The boys all tried their best but, alas, victory eluded them.

Frantic practices were hastily arranged in preparation for the forthcoming singing competition. The big day arrived and the boys looked fantastic with all top buttons fastened and shoes polished as they should be. First up was our ensemble which played beautifully and

fully deserved some glowing comments from the adjudicator. Next, we gave a virtuoso performance of 'Cabaret' and a rousing rendition of 'Swing Low.' Results time..."and the winner isWilloughby House!" We had won the set song and later learned that we had come a close second in the own choice category. All in all, a good day's work.

The Burghley run – what an exciting prospect. All boys compete and all boys count towards a final total. All I expected from the boys was that each and every one of them do their best, whether they were future Olympic runners or future couch potatoes. Suffice to say, they made me very proud on the day, running their hearts out and winning in Y7 and Y8 and coming second to a strong St Peter's team in Y9.

And now to the Summer Term, when the grass is always green, the sun is always shining and when the race for the house cup reaches its climax. Cricket, athletics and swimming are the main sports in the summer term and all year groups were involved in some titanic struggles for supremacy. The Y7 and Y8 1st XI cricket team, ably led by Tom Lane, enjoyed early success against arch rivals Cecil with Ryan Cutler and William Joyce batting sensibly and with Tom Pritchard's leg-spin proving lethal. We achieved victory by 8 runs. This pattern was repeated against St. Paul's which turned out to be a high quality game of cricket. The 2nd team also did well winning their games and securing the trophy. Congratulations to all involved in Willoughby House cricket.

Sports Day provides another opportunity for the boys in Lower School to participate in a house competition. It is a wonderful sight to see all of the boys sporting their house colours and competing against one another. There were some marvellous individual performances, too many to document here, but, once again, it was the team spirit of the boys in Willoughby which shone through. 7 of the 9 sprint relays were won and an overall victory was achieved.

Our swimmers also triumphed for the first time in 10 years. Willoughby has never been that strong in the pool, but this year, the boys were determined to do their best. Led by Issac Grimoldby, who was superb, the boys rallied to come first by the very narrowest of margins.

So, another year had come to an end. The boys in Willoughby House had displayed the sort of commitment and determination which make the house system so successful at Stamford School. Almost without exception, they had done their best and had contributed hugely to a very successful year. It was with great sadness that I announced my retirement from Willoughby during the last house meeting of the year. I would like to pay tribute to the hundreds of boys who have proudly worn the red shirt over the last 8 years and I know that the reputation of Willoughby will be safe in the hands of Miss Angove next year. I wish her well. Gents, it has been a real pleasure.

ANP

It was with great delight that I took over as Housemaster of St. Peter's at the start of the autumn term 2005 and I was eager to see the boys in action as soon as possible. The first competition was soon underway in the form of tug-of-war. Regrettably, the boys struggled somewhat and this set the tone for much of the year. This particular event suits the house with the strongest, most athletic boys and if you do well in the tug-of-war then there is a good chance that the rugby, football, athletics, swimming and Burghley run will also go well for you. The Year 8's were the only group to experience success at this early stage in proceedings, beating Cecil and St. Paul's to finish second.

Predictably then, there were few cups to be collected in the final assembly just before Christmas. However, the determination and commitment from the boys could not be faulted, and although the only success on the rugby pitch during the highly competitive Year 7 and 8 event came at 'B' team level against St. Paul's, a number of individuals excelled. Guy Sinker and Josh Manby in particular were outstanding. Both these players stood out due to their pace and strong tackling, and it was pleasing to see results improve slightly in the house 7's in December.

Meanwhile, the boys in Year 9 played to a high standard on the hockey pitch and were a little unlucky to only have one victory (3-0 against Cecil). Henry Bird, Andrew Fox, Josh Green and David O'Shea proved to be the key hockey players. Throughout the Autumn term as well the Year 9 football league was starting to take shape and this was an event that St. Peter's deservedly went onto to win. Led by the skilful and athletic Josh Green, the other members of the triumphant 5 a-side team were Robert Burley, Stephen Marshall, Steven Bryant and Tom Williams.

Nicholas Reiss, Joe Forsyth and Dominic Pini represented the house in the general knowledge competition. Unfortunately, 'speed on the buzzer' was not a strength and so their superb knowledge rarely could be displayed. The term then ended with the traditional visit to the bowling hall in Peterborough. The majority of the house were able to attend and the real highlight was the fact that the highest individual score of the evening did not go to Mr. Stamp. He rather disappointingly had to settle for second behind Daniel West!

The music competition dominates much of the Spring term, with numerous rehearsals which eventually paid dividends. The 'big day' started superbly as the ensemble were simply awesome. Adam Cox, Aidan Coyle, Nicholas Reiss and Daniel West were outstanding. Dominic Pini showed maturity beyond his years on the piano and Conor Baum's voice was stunning. Their performance was followed by everyone together singing the set song and house song (Money, money, money by Abba). Two houses dominated and the prizes were consequently shared between St. Peter's (house song) and Willoughby (set song).

The other event that every member of the house contributes to is the Burghley run and although silverware was hard to come by, a number of individuals did run strongly. Josh Green (5th), Andrew Holland-Jones (10th) and Sam Durrant (14th) in Year 9, James Harrod (8th) in Year 8, and Jack Chisholm (7th) and Oliver Herd (8th) in Year 7 were the top athletes to finish in a yellow shirt.

The Year 7 and 8 football was disappointing as there were a number of talented players (Charles Lang, Josh Manby, Adam Richardson, Richard Sims etc.) and expectations were genuinely high. The A team should have done better than third place, the same position that St. Peter's finished at table tennis. Jamie Ridgeon and Matthew Pennill won many points for the house and hopefully many more over the next couple of years as well.

The Chess was also a very close affair but with few rewards. Sam Bodily and Fred Forrest shone most brightly and there was the most peculiar end to one of Fred's matches whereby he had dominated so much that his opposite man was literally surrounded and the simply could not move. For the match to then be declared a draw seemed somewhat unfair. The Year 9 boys ended the Spring term battling it out on the rugby pitch. For sheer aggression from the likes of Henry Bird and Stephen Marshall, I felt we should have won the cup.

So to the glorious Summer term and it was with enormous personal delight that the cricketers performed so well. The Year 7 + 8 team crushed St. Paul's and Cecil. The bowling was disciplined especially from Toby Finch-Noyes, Adam Richardson and Arjun Maher. However, it was the batting that caught the eye. James Harrod and Jonathan Williams complimented themselves well and were not parted until the final encounter against Willoughby. Indeed, Jonathan was awesome, hitting the

ball with immense power whenever a loose ball came along. Regrettably, Willoughby just managed to sneak home to take the cup.

The Year 9 team though managed to go one better and were the overall victors despite losing the opening game. Robert Burley showed great composure under pressure and Josh Green was a real threat with the ball, but it was Tom Williams that was the real catalyst which led the team to success. Quite simply, he is an astute all-round cricketer who was able to remain positive throughout. Indeed, in the final game St. Peter's required something like 150 from 15 overs to win and together they managed it! Tom's captaincy shone like Mike Brearley's did in 1981 (....boys, ask your dad all about the cricket in the summer of '81).

Rowan Gregg, Oliver Herd, Tim Boughton, Andrew Fox and Dan Moses submitted some wonderful entries for the ACT and should be extremely proud of their individual pieces of work. Similarly the displays from Andrew Holland-Jones and Stephen Marshall in the swimming pool were outstanding. Frankly, it became a bit of a headache trying to sort out the Year 9 team as there were relatively few events for the likes of Aidan Coyle, Dan West and Conor Baum to also show what fine swimmers they are as well.

The athletics and sports day is the final event to mention and I was tremendously proud to see St. Peter's finish second on the day as I felt it really demonstrated how committed and competitive the boys had been throughout the day. Willoughby clearly were the strongest house by a considerable margin (as they had been on a number of occasions throughout the year) but the boys fought well to beat off Cecil and St. Paul's. The Year 9 boys in particular excelled with numerous second places in specific events which enabled them to finish ahead of the rest. The performances from the boys in yellow were superb and those that finished in first place do deserve a special mention – Josh Green (Y9A 1500m), Paul Ng (Y9B 100m), Jack Enwright (Y8B 100m), Guy Sinker (Y7A 100m) and Oliver Herd (Y7B 100m).

Apologises to those that I have omitted from my report as I know you all have supported the house and your peers in your way. I wish the Year 9 every success as they migrate into the Middle School and I was delighted to award the St. Peter's house prize to Nicholas Reiss at the end of the year in recognition of his outstanding contributions which culminated in the most credits (43) over the three years.

GAB

The year began with the arrival of bright eyes and shiny shoes. The first House meeting outlined the activities and competitions of the first term, and also witnessed the presentation of merits badges from the end of 2004-5.

The tug-o'-war competition allowed gauntlets to be thrown at Willoughby's feet. The Y8 competition was first, and the squad pulled – but ultimately slid – in their efforts against both Willoughby and St. Peter's. Against St. Paul's the two pulls were shared. In the Y7 event, spoils were shared again with St. Paul's. The Y9s readied themselves the following week, and the results mirrored the Y7's efforts. Against St. Paul's, a long and tortuous final pull was lost. Overall, Cecil finished a creditable second in the opening competition.

The General Knowledge competition is always exciting. The first round, against St. Paul's, was agonising. Even the unflustered ARW admitted that it was 'too close for comfort'. I cannot recall exactly what happened at the end, but some kind of countback was required. The judgement fell in our favour by 360-350. St. Peter's were defeated 380-180, and, in the final round, Willoughby were trounced 420-280. It was very pleasing to secure an early trophy, and well done to Adam Bradshaw, Michael Patterson, Richard Knowles and Amardeep Bhaker.

Rugby is the major sport of the autumn term, and the matches involve nearly every member of the Y7s and 8s. The first round of matches was against St. Paul's House, and the results were most heartening. The 1st XV won 64-0. The 'Heavies' X won by 42-10, with Derrick Smith running in five tries, and the 'Lights' were victorious by 25-5.

Against St. Peter's, Charlie Kay scored four tries as the team won convincingly 47-0. Derrick Smith equalled his first-match haul of five tries in the 'Heavies' second match and Jack Clarkson joined in the fun with three as the team triumphed 40-20. With Lewis Nettleton and Jacob Leighton each scoring a hat-trick, the 'Lights' ran out 45-10 winners in their scuffle. All this meant that the final round of matches with Willoughby would indeed be finals, as they had won their earlier matches with equal ease. It was a tough afternoon, but Cecil managed to secure the 'Lights' competition. The 'sevens' afternoon is always a kaleidoscope of colour, with nearly everyone active all of the time. The results properly reflected the close competition between the red and green Houses on the rugby field, with Cecil victorious in the top 'A' and 'B' tournaments and Willoughby in the 'C'. It is easy to overlook the work completed in the classrooms, and the fact that the merit competition involves the whole House all of the time. This first term the collective efforts earned us second place, and kept us well in contention.

The annual trip to AMF bowling was enjoyed as ever, and the boys again earned praise from the manager for their sensible and respectful behaviour.

The number of competitions to squeeze into the spring belies the term's brevity. Lists of footballers were collated, and musicians and chess players identified. House meetings developed from choral cacophony into something more 'Cabaret' as the weeks passed. The ensemble players began their rehearsals with NST, and, outside, a small group of footballers scraped 2005 mud from their boots and enjoyed crisp January sun. Preparations for table tennis and the Burghley Run were also in hand.

Singing echoed around LMS, and some was actually quite pleasant. Cecil needed a percussion player to 'keep the beat' for its ensemble, and a nervous Housemaster stepped forward, donned waistcoat, and performed in his first ensemble since 1978.

The adjudicator, Mr. Alec Hone, liked the combination of instruments and the idea of spotlighting each player with a solo. Both Levent Ismail and Luke Higgins had won individual categories during the morning, and they were very much key players together with Anish Dattani and Iain Downer. The singing was also quite impressive, although we did not enjoy the success of last year. 'Cabaret' was praised for its uniformity of sound and tuning, while 'Love Grows...' was described as 'enthusiastic'.

The football began in earnest after the break. Unfortunately, Willoughby had lost one of their key players through injury, and this allowed the 1st XI to capitalise on a weakened defence and to win 4-2. Against St. Peter's, the score could have been more comfortable than 1-0, but smaller goals were in use and the woodwork struck four times. The final match, against St. Peter's, required a draw for overall victory in the competition – and this was achieved. Just.

The 2nd XI lost narrowly to St. Paul's. Morale was boosted with a victory over St. Peter's, and so it was smiles all round that afternoon.

Cecil were the favourites for the table tennis competition, but an injury to Craig Felston affected the chances of the 'B' team. This year's competition was remarkably close. The 'A' team of Norman Law and William Bacon won their matches 28-15, 26-18 and 30-9. The 'B' team squad of Reuben Slater, Iain Downer and Ross Cutteridge enjoyed results of 23-22, 21-21 and 26-22.

The magnificent chess trophy was also being competed for at this time and again provided a re-

markably close finish. Only at final assembly did I announce that St. Paul's were the winners. The Burghley run, as ever, was a splendid occasion. The favourites won the individual races, and that included Cecil's Jake Wilkinson. Other 'top ten' performances were by Norman Law and Reuben Slater in the Y9 race, Patrick Conboy and William Bacon in the Y7 race, and Charlie Kay, Jack Clarkson and Ross Cutteridge in that of Y8.

The Y9 footballers continued their long season with a mixture of personnel and results. When all the sweat had dried, St. Paul's proved victorious as we finished fourth in the 'A' team but a creditable second in the 'B' team.

One other competition in the frenetic second half of term was the Y7 and 8 hockey. To attain one win and one draw in their three matches was an excellent performance.

Academically, members of the House earned over 1,500 merits, and we were second in this competition, once again.

The ACT competition. Some categories, for example the baking, are very popular. However, it was also good to see the amount of work put into projects and the presentation of photography entries. Ultimately, it was due to the efforts of our Y8 boys that Cecil won the overall trophy.

The major sporting activities of the summer are cricket, athletics and swimming; examinations might also have been in the minds of one or two of the boys.

Examination week allowed me to watch and umpire the first two of Cecil's 1st XI matches. Firstly, with strong June sun beating down, it was time to 'play' against Willoughby. Willoughby batted first and progressed steadily to a total of 83 in their sixteen overs. Our own innings was equally steady, but the run rate rose as the overs passed. Joe Harrap came in rather low in the order and hit a quick unbeaten eighteen, but his efforts were just too late and the match was lost by eight runs.

Willoughby's strength in depth led to their 2nd VIII beating us by ten times that amount! In my absence the 1st XI took on St. Paul's and defeated them by seven wickets. Third place was the team's reward for a season of fair endeavour.

In the Y9 competition, two wins and one defeat meant that the overall competition would be decided on run rate. Unfortunately for us, St. Peter's had the superior rate and thus secured the trophy.

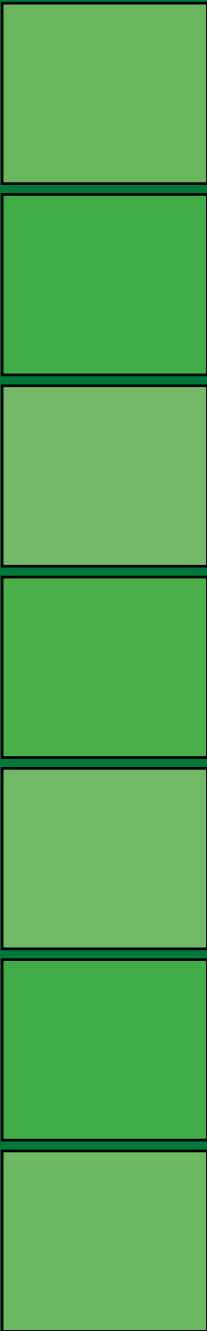
Speech Day morning dawned wet, and the prizewinners had to squeeze together for their photograph in the Hall. A promising number of Cecil boys had earned academic prizes.

Thankfully, the weather had cleared for the athletes – but it was disappointing that some team members were not available, or had been injured very close to sports day. Nonetheless, individual winners for Cecil were Patrick Conboy in Y7; Charlie Kay, Craig Felston (new javelin record), Joseph Harrap and Isaac Wilkinson in Y8; Jake Wilkinson and Freddie Berridge in Y9.

Charlie Kay was successful in the Y8 tri-activity, while Jake Wilkinson was runner-up in Y9; the dreilauf was very interesting. Run during a hot lunchtime, the Y8 and 9 squads each finished second.

The swimming gala took place on the final full day of the school year. Cecil could cheer the following race winners: Joe Randall, Joe Harrap, Calum Storey, Charlie Kay and Freddie Berridge; and, at the end of a very exciting afternoon of competition, the whole event was decided by the relays. Cecil finished third. As consolation, the Y8 team won their year group. Merits were in comparatively short supply this term, but over 700 were earned at an average of 9.9 per boy. Willoughby retained their monopoly of this trophy, and, indeed, as I reviewed the term in final assembly, there was little surprise that they had retained the overall House trophy.

RJBH.



Once again the Autumn Term's Inter-House competitions got under way with the now traditional 'ice-breaker', the tug of war. Three housemasters, myself included, knew that the writing was on the wall as the Willoughby teams lined up, looking just that bit bigger and stronger than the other teams. Our fears were confirmed as the red shirts managed to win all three year group competitions.

The Year Nine hockey team, widely tipped as the favourites for the tournament, represented an excellent opportunity for a trophy and thus began their campaign with high expectations. The first match against St. Peter's was a comfortable win with two goals from Greg Leech and Chris Brice. Cecil got a late goal in the second game but were not able to make up the deficit of two goals by Chris Brice and Rhys Owen and so the final game against Willoughby became an exciting decider for the tournament. The lead given to St. Paul's by Chris Brice's goal was defended in fantastic style by Dan Warren, Matthew Fuller and Sam Young and the eventual 1-0 victory meant that St. Paul's had lived up to their aspirations with some style. Well done to Edward Cameron, Matthew Fuller, Dan Warren, Sam Young, Greg Leech, Rhys Owen, Chris Brice, Freddie Gladwin, Peter Wilson and Tom Helliwell.

The main House matches for Years Seven and Eight are of course focused on rugby in the Autumn Term and each House puts out three teams, the First XV, and two teams of ten. The opening round against Cecil was a sobering reminder of the gulf that existed between our relatively inexperienced and younger first team that comprised rather more year sevens than the opposition this year. Cecil House's strength was consistent throughout the teams and we came away from the encounters empty-handed. The opposition of Willoughby House proved just too strong for us, but we provided them with a tough game in all three matches. Round Three against St. Peter's was to be the decider for third place, the yellow team also having succumbed to both Cecil and Willoughby. A determined performance from St. Paul's brought well-deserved victories for the first and second teams. Special thanks go to Thomas Taylor and Oliver Perkins of year 7 and Dan Griffin and Hayden Young of year 8 for their outstanding contributions throughout the season.

The first half of the Spring term was dominated by preparations for the music competition. The set song, 'Cabaret' was prepared during class music lessons, leaving housemasters with the daunting task of rehearsing the 'own choice' song. I chose 'You'll Never Walk Alone' from the musical 'Carousel' for St. Paul's House, basing my decision on the fact that not only is it a great song but also has very few words to remember! On the day we did not really do ourselves justice, having had to wait on the stage for a long time, but overall the musical outcome was satisfactory and I am pleased to report that St. Paul's were the first ever recipients of Mr. Burns' newly inaugurated award for presentation. The House ensemble this year, as in previous years, was outstanding and special mention must go to its members: Tom Campbell, Max Lyon, Ben Rimmer, Matthew Jeffrey, Simon Taylor, Joseph Craig, Peter Wilson and Chris Brice.

The second half of term was crammed with inter-house competitions. The year seven and eight football got underway with matches against St. Peter's. The A team won 1-0 from a fine goal by Giulio Montaque and the B team earned a draw after a most entertaining game. In the second round the A team narrowly lost to Cecil 1-0. The B team however were on fine form, managing a 2-1 victory. This only left Willoughby to face in round three. The A team game started under difficult circumstances as they faced a determined Willoughby side that was playing downhill and with the wind behind them. Having conceded an unfortunate early goal some outstanding goalkeeping by Justin Bland, ably assisted by Sam Clulow in defence, kept St. Paul's in the game but unfortunately we were not able to find a goal to equalise. The B team, tried several different configurations with various stand-in goal keepers but were not able to resist the Willoughby attack and so ended their campaign with a defeat.

The Burghley Run, a perennial favourite with the boys, was particularly memorable this year for being one of the coldest on record. The Arctic conditions did at least provide a strong incentive for the boys to run as quickly as they could, if only to keep warm! The serious racers were of course oblivious to the conditions and focused on their race and special mention should go to Thomas Taylor, Sam Clulow, Anthony Aslan, Justin Bland, Zac Pywell, Alexander Emerson, Oliver Holland, Hayden Young and Rhys Owen, all of whom came in the top twenty in their respective year groups.

The House chess competition has traditionally been an area of strength for St. Paul's and once again we were able to field a strong squad which included the captain Rhys Owen, Miles Redding, Chris Brice, Brandon Heard, Chris House, Oliver Holland, Michael Dinwoodie, Oliver Perkins and Zac Pywell. Once again the magnificent trophy was returned to its customary position in the St. Paul's trophy cabinet. Thanks and congratulations go to all of the team. Table tennis is a more recent addition to the Spring term calendar and thanks go to the captain Edward Cameron, Miles Redding, Dan Warren and Michael Dinwoodie who represented St. Paul's this year, the B team recording a creditable second place over all. The ever popular year 9 football league was finally concluded in March with St. Paul's winning the B team competition and achieving first place overall on combined points for both teams. The year seven and eight hockey competition rounded off the House events for the Spring term and this year St. Paul's battled hard against difficult opposition from the other Houses but emerged as overall tournament winners. Giulio Montaque (captain), Ben Cave and Peter Burnett deserve a special mention for some excellent play and Adam Wilson had an outstanding afternoon, scoring 9 out of the 11 goals scored by St. Paul's.

The busy summer term got underway with the popular 'ACT' competition and I was very pleased to see so many entries made by St. Paul's boys. It is impossible to mention every individual here but I would like to congratulate Oliver Perkins, Zac Pywell and George Pearton in year 7, Giulio Montaque in year 8 and Edward Cameron James Chin, Rhys Owen, Ben Pile and Miles Redding in year nine. Most of those mentioned had at least one category winning entry or runner-up place and the year nines collectively won their year group competition.

The main House matches of the Summer term are of course the cricket and St. Paul's first opponents this year were St. Peter's. The first team narrowly lost the first match against St. Peter's by just 3 runs after an excellent innings by Dan Griffin. Alex Emerson distinguished himself in the second match against Willoughby by taking 4 wickets but unfortunately the red team proved too strong for us. Strong resistance from the first team captain, Adjwad Jabbar, in the third match against Cecil made for another closely fought game but once again we came away defeated. The second team unfortunately lost all three of their games although only by a narrow margin. Thanks go to the captain Chris Shatford and special mention to Chris House and Ben Cave for their excellent support.

The athletics competitions are traditionally held on the afternoon of speech day and this year after some early rain the fields dried out in time and parents were able to enjoy a picnic on the field whilst supporting their sons in various events. All of year seven took part and special mention goes to Thomas Taylor, Dan Wiggan, Justin Bland and Charles Dickinson for some very strong performances. Thomas Taylor also won the Victor Ludorum for year 7. I am grateful to Dan Griffin, Ben Cave and Giulio Montaque for their leadership of the year 8 athletics team and similarly the excellent team spirit shown by St. Paul's outstanding year 9 athletes, Charles Griffin, who organised the team, Greg Leech, Rhys Owen, Chris Brice and Matthew Fuller. Charles Griffin was Victor Ludorum for year 9 and Greg Leech was a very close second place. Most of the above also represented St. Paul's in the Tri Activity and Dreilauf the following week and my thanks go to them for their effort and commitment.

The swimming sports traditionally round off the Summer term and due to the extremely hot weather this was one occasion when none of the competitors could have regretted volunteering to swim. The year seven medley relay team of Oliver Perkins, Thomas Taylor and Justin Bland broke a 32 year old school record for this event, an outstanding performance that highlighted the strength of year seven, who took first place overall. Thanks go to Sam Clulow, Zac Pywell and Michael Dinwoodie, who also contributed to a fine team effort. In year 8 Dan Griffin, Jack McEntee, Peter Burnett, Joseph Craig and Giulio Montaque represented St. Paul's and the year nines also put on a fine performance, winning the freestyle relay and achieving a creditable second place overall: thanks to Chris Brice, Rhys Owen, Greg Leech, Darren Redding and Samuel Young.

DLe

Another year of competition stretched out before us. Could our triumph of the previous year be repeated? In contemplating the answer, my first reaction was to assess the Upper Sixth. It is they that set the example and the tone for the rest of the House. I must admit that I had my reservations and couldn't even decide upon a Head of House. Against my better judgement I held an election which Matthew Howitt duly won. I've always maintained that a benevolent dictatorship is the best political system. As it turned out our Upper Sixth were magnificent. We had outstanding sportsmen such as David Streit, Jack Eifon-Jones and Tom Lindley but other "characters" such as Josh Holland and Peter Woodcock continued to surprise and delight with their dedication to the cause.

The New Year also brought a change of leadership of our arch rivals, Exeter. The "Schumacher" of House sport, Mr Brewster had departed. No doubting that he had been a worthy foe but just like Alonso. We had inflicted one last defeat before he retired to polish his silverware. His replacement Mr Mills (more of a Damon Hill) brought to the competition his calm, good humoured sense and I felt the competitive madness that had gripped me, slowly receding.

In the autumn the points were fairly evenly distributed apart from in the Music Competition. Radcliffe were simply magnificent in nearly achieving the fabled clean sweep and therefore gaining more House points than one can shake a big stick at. Our Unison came a creditable second. "Can You Hear the People Sing" was performed with such gusto thanks to the support and guidance of Mr Lennie who had led our practices. Our ensemble of Stuart Roche, Cameron Payne and Will Epsom also performed well to finish as runners-up. Highlights of the term included our two victories in the Colts and Senior Rugby Underdogs tournaments which again illustrated our strength in depth. A House will only prosper with the support of stalwarts such as Liam Smith, Alex Jordan, Alex Ingles, Alex Eagles, Stuart Ellis and David Anders.

In the spring term we could seemingly do no wrong. The outstanding performances are too numerous to catalogue but we also had good fortune on our side. You know your luck is in when the term culminates in a seniors' poker victory! There were other notable performances from the seniors. Will Epsom led our squash team to victory whilst Robert Thomas and Johnny Fisher provided an awesome display of debating. However, it was the colts who were developing into a real powerhouse. The stalwarts of Y11 such as Mark Bond, John Hunt, Henry Ker, Scott Jones, Oliver Joy and Darren Wesley were backed up by Y10's outstanding sporting talent. The combination was simply irresistible despite the tenacious efforts of Mr Porteus and Radcliffe. Slowly we hauled them in and overtook them.

In some ways our last place in the Colts swimming was the most memorable performance of the term. We can't swim and for once we had some no-shows. This left Darren Wesley, Stuart Roche, John Hunt, Bobby Johnson and Thomas Crees having to swim the maximum number of events. They knew they were going to lose, but tried their hearts out anyway. In a gallant attempt to cancel the event Darren Wesley drank half the pool! Also noteworthy has been Thomas Crees' support for the House. I can hardly recall an activity in which he did not take part.

Despite a little wobble in the Paarlauf and 3000m, in which Exeter staged a brave comeback, the summer term developed into a triumphant procession.

An unexpectedly close victory in the Senior Athletics put us out of sight. With the Y11 sprinters Dom Bangay and Jack Groutage being backed up by talented Y10 athletes such as Toby Cole and John Murphy, the athletics double was achieved. "The icing on the cake" was supplied by the Y10 cricket 6's victory in which Oli Lindley and Tom Dolby starred.

Our victory lacked the drama of the previous year but was deeply satisfying. Apologies to all members of Ancaster who participated gamely but without a mention. It would have of course been much quicker and easier to list those who made little contribution. But therein lies our strength.

TPJ

Firstly, the bad news: we were placed fourth overall in the Inter-House trophy. Yes, winning is good, but there is nevertheless plenty of positive news to report. Of the 75 house competitions held over the year, we came first or second in 28 of them. Of the 95 boys in the house, all but 12 took part in at least one activity over the year. Given the range of activities now available, no one can claim that there is nothing for them to at least try.

At the other end of the scale, by the end of the Summer Term, 13 boys had earned house colours ties, three Gold awards, 15 Silver and 21 Bronze. I should emphasise that these were awarded on the new system under which only those credits gained in Y10-13 are considered, with the previous carrying over of Y7-9 credits no longer applying.

Although these boys are the leaders, there are many others who are only a few credits behind them and who will, I hope, soon achieve their next level of award.

As always, Brazenose boys were strongly represented in the lists of prize-winners on speech day and on leavers' day. In the Sixth Form, Rob Owen won the art prize, Jonny Marx the Margaret Matthew English prize and Tom Jia the Reed

Further Maths prize. Spencer Lai gained a Duke of Edinburgh Gold Award, James Wilson was awarded school colours for services to boarding, and Spencer Lai and Chris Oliver achieved colours for service to the Sixth Form.

In the Middle School, the Y10 English Language prize went to Oliver Kew and the Physics prize to Daniel Bell. Y11 prizes were won by Liam Cattell (English Language, Spanish, Religious Studies and Physics), Jonathan Yeates (Art), Edwin Williams (Design & Technology), James O'Shea (Physical Education) and Matthew Yeates (a prestigious Sixth Form Scholarship).

Although our success over the year was variable, I must emphasise that I value the contribution of the willing "amateur" just as much as that of the "professional". Especially worthy of praise is the boy who, when asked at the last moment to make up the numbers in a team (yes, this does happen occasionally!), cheerfully agrees to take part and does his best - always a strong test of character, in my opinion.

Over the year there were a large number of individual efforts worthy of mention. To pick out just a few, I recall Ben Slack's, James Wilson's, Chris van Niekerk's and James Burley's efforts in the Triathlon; Will McMillan's and Ben Slack's first places (two each) on Sports Day; Matthew Wyatt's win in the Prose Competition and Jonathan Yeates' in the Photography, with James Ho finishing in second place; Jools Kennedy's excellent submission for the Art Competition, which gained second place; Bradley Hawkins winning the Burghley Colts "B" race; Ben Slack's third position in the seniors "A" race; Spencer Lai, James Allen, Michael O'Shea and Stephen Miskell winning the Y13 shooting, and Jeremy Cunnew, Ben Slack, Jason Wallace, Rob Owen, Michael O'Shea, James Allan, Daniel Abbott and Joe Robinson easing us to overall victory in the Swimming Sports, with the Seniors achieving first place, and the Colts second.

However, while the Inter-House Competition is, in part, about winning, it is much more importantly about taking part, and I would like to thank all the boys in the house who participated this year, whether they were victorious or not. This coming year, my wish is to see every boy taking part in at least one house activity in each of the three terms. We are not there yet, but we are rather closer than many would imagine.

Finally, I would like to thank Robert "Bob" Owen for his untiring efforts as Head of House. He was always ready to lead from the front, and was the first to put his name down for any competition, whether or not the activity concerned was a particular strength of his. Fortunately, most were!

Secondly, thanks go to Cameron Park and Jak Garner for their efforts at both putting together teams, and participating themselves. Finally, I thank all members of staff who helped out with refereeing, umpiring or supervision, both at lunchtimes and after school. Without such willing support from my colleagues, many of the competitions would not take place, and the boys' experience of Stamford School would be rather poorer.

MGS

The house competition of 2005-2006 got off to a fantastic start as we demonstrated our 'pulling power' by winning both the Year 10 and Year 11 tug o'war competition in superb style. Ancaster did their best, but they were no match for the combined strength of the likes of Plant, Spurr and Jones (Year 10) and Hunter, Cutteridge and the mighty Dave 'Angel' Purcell. The Year 12s had a pretty good start too, winning – in thoroughly convincing style – the five-a-side football and basketball competitions.

2005 saw the introduction of a brand new series of competitions for 'the underdogs'. To celebrate the coming of this new era, Exeter smashed their way to victory in the Colts rugby tournament (thanks in no small part to some thrilling play by Moore, Blair and Hughes), an achievement replicated a few weeks later by the seniors. By the end of October we looked on course for yet another run-away victory. Then came the music competition...

With tongues firmly placed in cheeks, Exeter wowed the audience with a sprightly rendition of the Rolf Harris classic, 'Two Little Boys'. We have always tended to offer rock anthems to the unfettered delight of the other houses, and this year was clearly no exception. Unfortunately, the adjudicator fell for the more traditional fare supplied by Radcliffe (Rogers and Hammerstein's 'Oklahoma'). He also quite liked their ensemble and their popular beat-combo, which meant that the blue house managed to snaffle a whopping 37 points. In the space of two days the complexion of the 2005 competition was transformed. However, Exeter were not to go home empty handed, romping to victory with the part song, led magnificently by musical supremo, Tom Baylem.

Despite a few disappointments, our prowess on the rugby field was confirmed when we romped home in the Senior rugby 7s competition – thanks in no small part to the might of Fletcher, Gent and Eiffion-Jones.

The spring term got off to a cracking start with victories for our Year 10s in chess, squash and shooting. Jake Bradshaw's powerful leadership in the latter was of particular note. These successes were followed by a sensational performance from the Year 11 chess team. The Senior squash team also ran a very close second to Ancaster. However, perhaps our most memorable performances of the term came in the swimming competition. The Seniors lifted second place (to Brazenose this time) and the Colts also won in convincing style. Adam Neill really did make it look easy – and his absence is now sorely missed. Our swimming success was almost immediately followed by a clean sweep in the Burghley Run 'A' races (Senior and Colts). In the Colts, special mention should be made of Hunter, Cutteridge and Bownes who took 1, 2 and 3, along with Plant and Wilkinson who came 4th and 5th respectively. Their sterling efforts ensured a runaway victory. In the Seniors, the contributions of Porter (5th), Dawson (9th), Day (10th) and Houston (11th) also ensured success. Unfortunately, this year we were not win the Colts rugby 10s, but the three-way split did at least give us valuable points.

Our successes in the summer term were many and varied, and, as usual, our strengths in track-and-field events shone through, storming to victory in the Paarlauf and the 3000 metres (Seniors and Colts). Unfortunately, we were deprived of victory in both the Colts and Senior athletics, but we ran a very close 2nd place to the reds. .

2005-2006 was not to be our year, but, look out Ancaster: we're coming to get you!

KJM

HOUSE
EXETER



RADCLIFFE HOUSE

The year began with the appointments of Luke Doddington-Boyes as Head of House and the Deputy Heads of House, Bruce Lui (Culture) and Daniel Robottom (Sport). Last year we acquitted ourselves well, and played a large part in ending the Exeter's domination, but, in the end, we only finished third behind Exeter and the new winners Ancaster. Were we to do better this year?

We did not get off to a great start – second and third in the Y11 and Y10 Tug-of-War and a shared victory with Brazenose in the Y10 table tennis was the best we could do in the first cohort of competitions. The introduction of an underdogs rugby competition was an inspired initiative of Mr Jones, and certainly impressed the ISI inspectors who were visiting that week. Unfortunately, Radcliffe colt's underdogs lived up to their label and finished fourth. However, it was most pleasing to see the likes of Cameron Zaifat and Robert Lui on the pitch representing their house with great gusto, if not great skill, and it certainly attracted the crowds. We approached the house music competitions in a disappointing fourth place. Having won the unison and part songs last year, we were feeling positive about our chances and hoped to pick up a bagful of points from the 4 competitions. It started with the Rock Competition – Messrs Rimmer, Bramley, Gallon. S- Mogg and Robottom put on a great show and did enough to impress, or, perhaps hoodwink the judges into awarding them first place. The following day, a near perfect delivery of "There is Nothing Like a Dame", ably conducted by Bruce Lui., secured our victory in the unison song for the second year in a row. This meant only one thing – I would have to buy the sixth form beers at the Radcliffe Christmas Dinner! We also won the ensemble with "The Harlem Shuffle" played by Messrs Ingle, Lewis, Edward and James Graham, and Hammant. How on earth we didn't win the part song with our fabulous rendition of "I Can See Clearly Now" remains a contentious point, although I suspect it would have something to do with Radcliffe not winning all four competitions. It was a glorious day that made one very proud to be a Radcliffian! For the rest of the term, our victories were limited to the Y13 quiz, although second places in Y11 5-a-side and Y12 tug-of-war contributed to our lead of ten points ahead of our nearest rivals Ancaster by the end of term. This was celebrated in traditional style with the Radcliffe Christmas Dinner at the Balti Hut, where we ate curry, listened to the part-song that should have won and drank the beers that I had bought.

The spring term got off to a reasonably promising start with victories in the seniors table tennis and colts badminton. This was followed by first places in seniors badminton and Y10 shooting. Unlike the rugby in the first term, Radcliffe's underdogs hockey players proved a formidable force, winning both the senior and colt's competitions. It was a good term for Radcliffe, and although Ancaster had taken over the lead with a flurry of victories towards the end of the term, we were in contention in second place, only ten points behind, but 30 points ahead of Exeter!

By the final term it seemed clear that Ancaster were going to win the overall competition – we were their nearest rivals but with athletic events dominating the summer term, we knew we would have limited success. And so it proved to be – only victories in Y11 and Y12 volleyball and the seniors underdogs cricket were forthcoming. However, Ancaster kept Exeter off our heels, not least by winning both seniors and colts athletics, and at the end of the year we finished a very creditable second. My thanks go out to all the members of the house who contributed to the events throughout the year. I would also like to thank my fellow housemasters, Mr Jones, Mr Sawyer and Mr Mills, for another competitive but thoroughly enjoyable year.

NJP



MAX GOFF

KARTING EXTRAORDINAIRE

Stamford School has hosted many motor sport fanatics over the years, but possibly one of the most influential young Schumacas to have graced the school with his presence is the young and rather dashing Maxwell Goff who has achieved so much already in his extremely short career. Having barely started secondary school, Max has gained many esteemed titles and is a highly sought after kart driver on an international scale.

INTERVIEW BY DAN MURPHY

Max has been on the track since the mere age of nine – a birthday present from his dad, karting on the indoor track at Silverstone, swiftly moved on to Max obtaining a karting licence and competing on outdoor tracks – winning no less than all six novice races in his first season – pretty good going when each race has at least twenty competitors. Sticking head, shoulders and torso above the rest, Max soon went on to obtain the title of WTP British Champion, still to this date the medal he is most proud of. Amongst the many trophies and medals from his successes, Max also managed to get his mitts on a fully functional junior kart.

This trustworthy kart went on to achieve great things in the British Championship making Max the competitor with the most podium positions, including several wins. However, there was to be a

turn in fortune at Silverstone Circuit last July, as Max described:

'Another driver hit a cone in this race and was sent spinning across the track. The kart hit me from behind and my kart went up on two wheels before it rolled over.'

Max was unscathed but having to drop out of the race and a damaged kart meant that it was no longer possible to finish the British Championship in first place – Max had to make do with a modest fourth position overall. Not to be put off by such things, Max made it into an England squad of six drivers and battled on to help his country compete in the Inter-Nation Challenge two years in a row. In the second year our hardy young Max achieved fastest lap times to help the team win the highly esteemed competition.

This year Max has been busy

working in the testing department and was hired by Renault in October last year to fly out to Belgium and test a vehicle capable of 140mph. This was a unique experience for a racer of Max's age and special permission from both the Federation of International Automobiles and the Belgian Motor Sports Association was needed before he could begin testing. Another Renault test day in Dijon put Max's wet-weather driving skills to the test but he came away a better driver after just a day's professional coaching.

In the racing world Max has become somewhat of a celebrity, appearing in many karting magazines as well as the Telegraph and of course, now the Stamfordian. He has also appeared on TV many times including on 'Stars of Tomorrow' and the Internations, as well as appearing alongside the presenter Katy Lamb, where



he coached her to race against her co-presenter at Buckmore Park, one of the top karting tracks in the country.

Max has now moved out of Mini Max and has been testing chassis and engines for Jica for the remainder of last season. He has recently finished the winter series in Italy, where the last of four stages was held. This is not the last that Max will see of Italy either, as he has been recruited for the Italian works team, which means competing all over Europe on a regular basis. Sponsoring him along the way will be Tony Karts - only the world's largest manufacturer of karts.

This dedicated young chap undoubtedly has a promising future but only down to his commitment to the sport and making some sacrifices...

'Karting takes up a lot of my time - I don't get to see school friends much, but having said that I have met lots of new friends in the karting business. It affects school quite a lot as well as we are now either testing or racing at least seventy days in Italy and other places in the world, just last season, which means a lot of travelling and missing school.'

Here at Stamfordian HQ we wish Max the best of luck with the future and we can guarantee that he will appear on the glossy pages of future

editions of the magazine as we follow him up through his career. With so much ground covered at such an early stage of his career, only great things can be expected from Max Goff - truly a star of the future.

MAX'S future holds great promise but it is very difficult to fund such a career. If you represent or have links with a company interested in sponsorship, please contact the school, as Max is still looking for sponsorship and is grateful of any help.





RACING WITH ROWLAND

It has been a busy and productive year for Stamford School's young rally driver Nick Rowland, who was one of the main features in last year's issue of The Stamfordian. Nick has competed in too many events this season to list on these humble pages, but some of the highlights from his season include becoming the youngest ever driver to finish on an F1000 tarmac podium, winning the 2006 Forest Beginners Championship, being titled the 2006 tarmac beginners champion and being awarded Driver of the Day at the Twyford Woods Rally. As with any competitor in any sport, the season has had its ups and downs – at the rainy Woodpecker Rally in Ludlow, Nick was forced to take the initiative when not only did his windscreen wipers break, making it impossible to see through the windscreen, but the intercom between him and his co-driver shut down, and Nick had to navigate his way through the pouring rain with his head out of the window – it is Nick's strength of mind, will-power and determination to succeed that has got him through these perilous times and he looks set to start 2007 as a fierce competitor. The car that Nick built himself was never expected to be perfect and problems with the suspension, gearbox and engine have meant that the

season has had a few setbacks. But Nick has showed that he does not need the perfect car to get results and in the Loughborough District Championship he battled for an overall third position despite having the least powerful car in the competition.

Nick has been pleased with the progress this year, finishing third in his class and sixth overall in the championship, in which he was the youngest entrant and competing against 24 other drivers. He has been training hard for the season that lies ahead, with personal tutoring from the British Rally Champion, David Higgins, and is hoping to get ahead of the game from the start. The season ahead looks to be very promising, with the full support of his sponsors Tattoo City and Don Paddy's Wine Bar of Uppingham – he will be representing the Sweep Motorsport F1000 team, who will once again be providing all the maintenance of the car. Looking further into the future, Nick hopes to enter into the International British Rally Championship next year, finishing with a round of the World Championship in Wales. As Nick elevates to the dizzying heights of international competition, we can only wish him the best of luck with his career in rallying... good luck Nick.

FOR MORE INFO, GO TO WWW.NICKROWLAND.CO.UK



ALEC HOUSTON

Polo – a sport not for the feint-hearted, or indeed those who do not ride horses. Enter Alec Houston and his band of merry horse riding, ball hitting young men, who this time last year started up Stamford School's first ever polo side. The team consists of Captain Alec Houston, his two faithful allies Jack Day and Ross Porter, the dark horse James Goodwin from the lower sixth and also two other fierce competitors who seemed to make the team despite attending Uppingham Community College – a somewhat unusual feature of a school side but one which, Alec assures me, is completely legal and completely within the regulations of the fine English sport. With four internationals in the side, things went completely to plan, with the team thrashing Oakham, Rugby and Loughborough easily, despite horse injuries holding them back. The side also faced two men's teams, quite easily beating Rutland men's team 7-0, but only beating Rugby old school with a golden goal after a 5-5 draw at full time. The squad was very successful in their first season, having won 100% of their matches and they are looking to compete in the national Schools Tournament in this coming season. Well-done chaps!

Despite this being a new direction for Stamford School, this was not unfamiliar territory for our hero Alec, who has now been playing the sport for fourteen years. Alec started playing the traditional horse-backed-ball-thwacking sport at the mere age of 3 and started his polo career playing for Cottesmore junior side. Impressed with Alec's stick skills, this young chaperoo was recruited by a scout to nothing less than the England under 12s squad where he represented the country on several occasions. But the polo playing did not stop there for champion Alec as he later went on to join England's under 14s, not only to play but to captain the side in his second year for the squad. A further two years of captaining the under 16s and Alec was ready to go international. However, the dream ended here as an opportunity to play for England's under 21s was narrowly missed. A great loss for the country, and yet, like the silver lining on a dark cloud, the start of a blooming success story for our humble school.

As a complete polo neophyte, I asked Captain Alec to describe to me the goings on of this mythical sport, which previously I had thought of simply as a musing for royal folk and otherwise as non-existent as a dodo: "How very dare you!" he exclaimed, "the sport is very much alive, with hundreds of thousands of budding young polo players out there", was the response that I got.

"Yes, but how does one go about playing this bizarre sport?" I asked.

"The basic idea is very similar to football apart from the pitch is roughly six times bigger, we ride on horses and we hit a small ball with sticks into goals eight feet across. It's about as simple as that really – there are rules to avoid horses colliding and several penalty spots but it's very much the same. It is a full on contact sport which is extremely demanding – riding a horse for such a long time can be very tiring."

The success of the school side last season certainly bodes well for the future and we can only wish the team the best of luck in bringing down Stamford's arch polo enemy Cheltenham College in the Schools Tournament later this year. So good luck to you boys. Ta-rah and toodle-pip!



RUGBY AHEAD

Even before I joined Stamford School, playing in the school's rugby first team was a dream for me. Seeing the strongest, fastest, hairiest, most skilled and most massive players in the school battle it out on main-fields was something for a young, optimistic year seven, such as I was, to aspire to. Unfortunately, I never seemed to live up to these dreams of speed, strength, skill and hairiness and have modestly settled for the school's humble third team. However dreams were not quashed for many of my school companions who have deservedly made their way into the 1st XV these last two years and I'm sure it is a great honour for them to represent the school in such a way. But two additions to the first team this year have got something more to be proud about, as Jeremy Cunnew and Guy Michels have both joined the team from the ranks of year eleven. These two players are regular first teamers without having even entered the realms of the Sixthform, and playing for the school's 1st XV is not the biggest fish that have been fried between them either. With rumours of rugby at an international level, I decided it was time for a Stamfordian interview...

SO, STRAIGHT TO THE POINT, WHAT TEAMS HAVE YOU TWO PLAYED FOR?

GUY: Well I started playing for Upminster in Essex and then I moved to Stamford town. At U15 level I got selected for the Notts, Lincs and Derby team (NLD) and at U16 I started playing for Midlands.

JEREMY: I started playing for a team in Singapore called the Centaurs and then moved to England where I played for Stamford, where we both met. I've played for Lincolnshire since year eight and this year I was team captain for NLD. I'm now training in the NLD under 17's development squad.

WHEN DID YOU DECIDE IT WAS TIME TO TAKE RUGBY TO ANOTHER LEVEL?

GUY: I think we've both really taken each step as it comes really, it would have been hard to plan out what we've achieved from the day we started playing rugby at the age of six.

HOW DOES IT FEEL TO PLAY IN THE FIRST TEAM BEFORE YOU'RE EVEN IN THE SIXTH FORM?

GUY: Yeah, it's been a really good experience and has helped me improve as a player immensely. It helped that my brother Neil was already playing for the 1st XV as I know quite a few of the other players pretty well through him.

JEREMY: It has been a real honour to be picked. It was a great feeling playing with the Sixthformers and wearing the school colours. It helped that Guy was there as well though - it's good to have someone who's from the same year.

ARE EITHER OF YOU PLANNING ON MAKING A CAREER OUT OF RUGBY?

JEREMY: Not at the moment, I need to concentrate on my studies

OF ITS TIME

as the aren't my strongest point, but once I'm at university I'll continue playing rugby and see where it takes me then.

GUY: I wouldn't mind it but I can't put all my hopes into playing rugby as it's a hard way to make living – it's not great pay unless you're right at the top level and then there's always the risk of getting injured.

ARE THERE ANY DISADVANTAGES TO PLAYING SO MUCH RUGBY?

GUY: I don't get much of a social life as lots of weekends get taken up and I can't go out as much as I'd like to. So far I've been all right with school, although missing some days means quite a lot of catching up.

JEREMY: It does affect your social life, and when you do get to go out you can't drink because you've got a match the next day. Training can get boring and is a long way to travel so when you get back you are too tired to do any work.

WHAT INSPIRATIONAL CHARACTERS ARE THERE IN YOUR LIFE?

GUY: Just my family.

JEREMY: Jonah Lomu has always been there.

WHAT ARE YOUR PROUDEST OR MOST MEMORABLE MOMENTS?

JEREMY: Beating Uppingham in the first team and probably scoring the winning try for NLD against South Yorks.

GUY: Yeah, beating Uppingham in the 1st team this year and of course, getting picked for the England U16 training camp.

HOW DOES IT FEEL GUY TO BE TRAINING WITH AN INTERNATIONAL SIDE AND ARE YOU LIKELY TO GET AN ENGLAND CAP ANY TIME SOON?

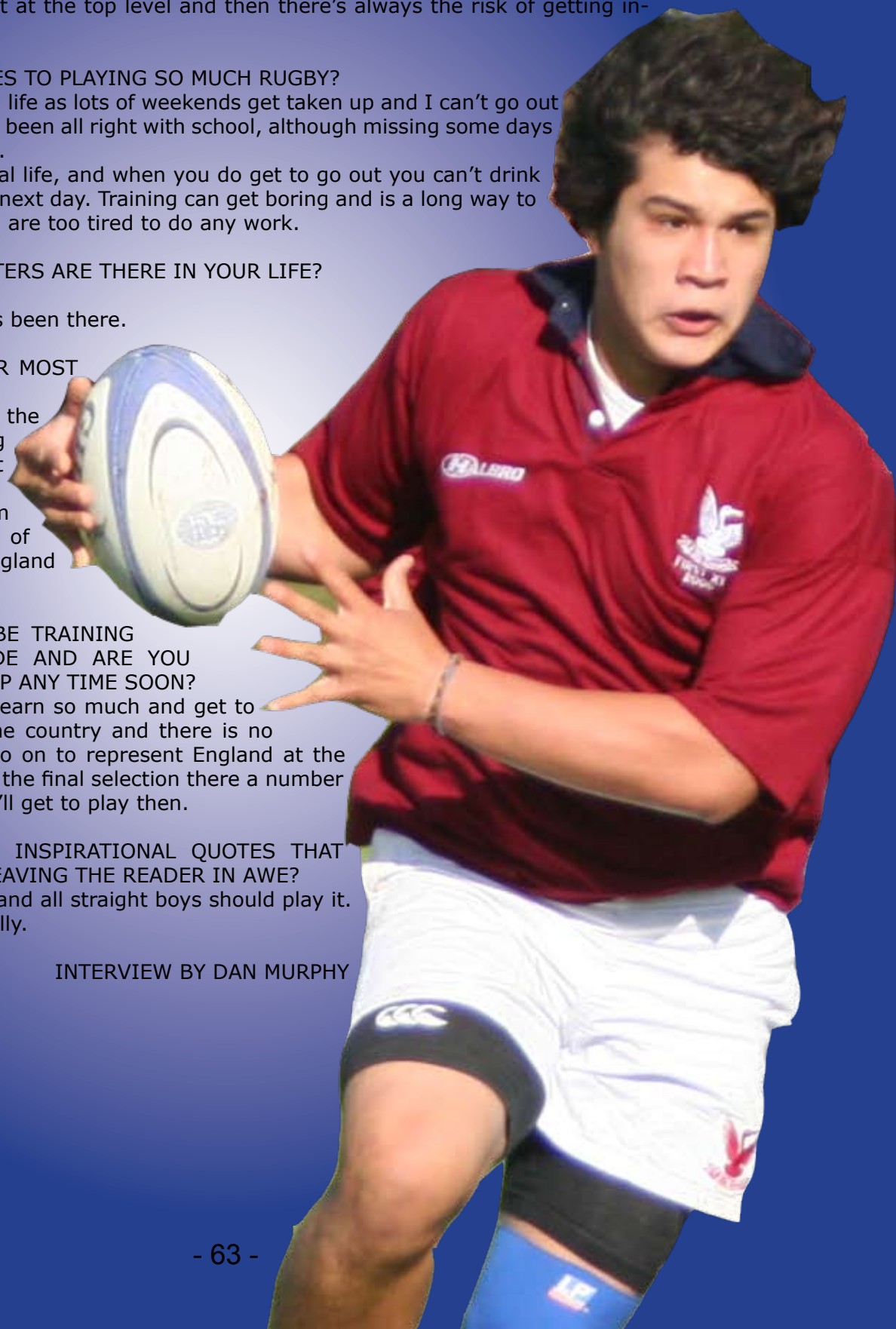
GUY: It's a great experience, I learn so much and get to play with the best players in the country and there is no doubt that some of them will go on to represent England at the highest level. If I get through to the final selection there a number of fixtures in April so hopefully I'll get to play then.

ANY WORDS OF WISDOM OR INSPIRATIONAL QUOTES THAT WOULD END THE INTERVIEW LEAVING THE READER IN AWE?

JEREMY: Rugby is a great sport and all straight boys should play it.

GUY: Nah, can't think of any really.

INTERVIEW BY DAN MURPHY



Matt Smettem



It is not a rare thing for me to sit down over a drink with my mild mannered, good friend Matt, but it escapes me how it has been possible for his karting extraordinary, trophy winning, internationally competing, speed demon alter-ego to never have arisen in conversation before now. For outside this quaint town of Stamford, Matt leads a very exciting life. Talent spotted from a young age and having won the title of Southern

Junior Championship Champion as well as two high profile championships in four years of karting, Matt has now moved

on to the much faster and by all means the more furious world of racing cars.

WHAT MADE YOU CHANGEOVER FROM KARTING TO RACING PROPER MAN CARS?

I felt that I had achieved reasonable success in karting and when I turned eighteen, I decided that it was the right time to step up. With the support and guidance from my family and two loyal sponsors, Martin Howell and Team Dynamics, we decided to make the huge leap to racing cars. It was a pretty difficult crossover due to my restricted budget, and things are becoming a lot more costly very quickly, but the Formula Palmer Audi Team were impressed that I had adapted so well as I was right on the pace in my first test.

TELL US A LITTLE ABOUT THE SORT OF CARS YOU ARE GOING TO RACE.

Formula Palmer Audi cars are single-seater racecars, can go from 0-60mph in 2.8 seconds, and are quite capable of reaching over 160mph, so are a little different to your standard road car and the karts I

was racing before.

WHAT HAVE YOU BEEN UP TO SINCE YOU STARTED DRIVING CARS THEN?

I've been organising karting events in the Middle East and have recently returned from a three-week tour there with a karting team who entered in the 25 hour Red Bull Championship event. I'm also in the painstaking progress of trying to find more sponsorship, so if anyone can help I'd be very grateful.

AND WHEN DO YOU START RACING AGAIN?

I'm starting again in April at the Silverstone circuit. I'll be competing against drivers of the same age but until then I'm only testing, keeping fit at the gym and doing a few karting races to keep in race ready trim. I'll be aiming for the top ten in this season's championship and realistically going for wins in the second half of the season – getting used to the car and the track will take a lot of practice.

IT CAN'T BE BAD RACING AT THIS LEVEL – WHAT ARE THE BEST THINGS ABOUT RACING?

It's brilliant for travelling – I get to see a lot of nice places and, like I said before, the Middle East – it doesn't get much better than Dubai. And it's not all about racing either, I get to meet and deal with a lot of people and learn a lot about PR – I've already been on Sky Sports a few times and will be on ITV, MotorsTV and Sky Sports again later this season.

YOU AND JESS PAULEY, THE HIGH SCHOOL'S HEAD GIRL, ARE THE HIGH-PROFILE COUPLE AT SES



AT THE MOMENT – IS IT HARD BEING AWAY FROM HER AND YOUR FRIENDS SO MUCH OF THE TIME? Ha! Yeah, when I am racing I do miss out on a bit of socialising, but then again I'd much rather be racing around Silverstone at over 100mph than be in Quayholes on a Saturday night, and even if I were racing in F1, I'd still make a lot of time for Jess – she's very important to me. All in all everyone's pretty

supportive and understands that my racing is important to me so it makes things a lot easier when I do go away.

DO YOU HAVE A PLAN FOR THE FUTURE?

It's impossible to predict how things will turn out in this game, I wouldn't like to say where I think I'll end up - next week it could all be over - but if everything goes well

then who knows... All I know at the moment is that I want it badly and that's the most important ingredient to have as a racing driver.

DO YOU HAVE ANY WORDS OF WISDOM OR ADVICE FOR YOUNG ASPIRING RACERS?

Yes. Where there's a will there's a way. Cheesy but true.

INTERVIEW BY DAN MURPHY



German exchange

The Stamford exchange with Ernst-Kalkuhl Gymnasium departed horrible early on Wednesday the 29th March. As usual we were all filled with apprehension, wondering how we would survive 10 days in a country of whose language, no matter how hard Mrs. Fox tried, we only spoke a little.

On arriving in Bonn we were greeted warmly by our host families and left to get a much needed rest. The evening was spent getting to know our families and absorbing a little German culture (in my case it happened to be 'Germany's Next Top Model' - quality TV I'm sure you will agree).

The next day we had our first experience of lessons with our partners which was an English lesson for me. This was followed by a walking tour of Bonn, taking in the fantastic architecture and sights before returning to our families for lunch. That evening we saw a bizarre rendition of the famous Goethe play 'Faust'. A visiting theatre group came to act out a scene from the play in nine different comic interpretations. Although it was all in German it was great fun and a good laugh.

On Friday we visited Cologne, which involved a horrendous walk to the top of the stunning Gothic cathedral, made all the more tricky by the 'large' person in front of me, blocking the whole staircase and moving very, very slowly. Then we visited the chocolate museum, always the favourite of the trip. The chocolate fountain provided a particularly enjoyable experience, as we were given a free sample of chocolate and we found ourselves going back more than once. Then after stocking up on bags full of chocolate we left for the modern art museum. That evening we were taken out to a large party which showed that the Germans know how to throw an excellent party.

The weekend was spent with our host families. Some went to see the annual Bonn marathon, and were given free T-shirts. My partner and I met up with a few friends to go bowling. It was a great laugh; especially as my bowling was dreadful enough to keep most people amused all evening.

On the Monday we left for Rudesheim; a scenic town on the banks of the Rhine. En route we had a tour of the Marksburg castle, the oldest Rhineland castle still intact, with its fantastic views over the Rhine valley. Once in Rudesheim a chairlift ride made a welcome



change from last year's arduous trek up the mountain to visit the Germania memorial which celebrates the first unification of Germany in 1871. That evening we were officially welcomed to the school with another party in the school's cellar bar and a Power Point presentation of the German's visit to Stamford.

On Tuesday we caught the tram to Bonn to visit the fascinating 'Haus der Geschichte', a modern history museum all about twentieth century Germany. In the evening several of us met up with our partners to go and sample Bonn's diverse nightlife followed by an hour long walk home as we missed the final tram.

On Wednesday we visited Trier, an ancient Roman town which was the centre of the northern Roman Empire. We visited its huge amphitheatre and the famous 'Porta Negra' or black gate. However, what made this trip really worthwhile were the fantastic ice creams in the cosy 'Eiscafé'. That evening our partners took us to the Haribo factory where we stocked up on bags of Haribo at bargain prices. That was a most enjoyable trip indeed!

On our final day we made a lengthy and baking hot climb to the top of the Drachenfels hill with its ruined castle and some spectacular views over Bonn, Cologne and the river Rhine. Then it was back to the school for the traditional football match. We managed to hold them to 2-2 at half time, aided by some spectacular defending by our resident right-back Mr. Knowles but it all fell apart in the second half (aided unfortunately by some goals from my partner) to a final score of 5-2 in favour of the Germans.

Then finally after a sad goodbye to some memorable new friends (not least the dancing man with the crazy hat) we departed for home. Thanks to our excellent group I had just spent some of the best ten days of my life.

Henry Ker

Having participated in the German Exchange twice in Years 10 and 11, I decided in Year 12 to opt for a work experience placement instead. There were four of us working in such diverse places as bookshops, a printing company and my own placement in a state prosecutor's office. The day came for me to be introduced to my new boss and my first impressions of the legal practice were a little unusual; sliding bullet-proof glass doors and an airport style metal detector made me think that this law firm was indeed something special. The introductory conversation from the



head of the law firm only added to the uniqueness of this place and a tour around the offices and cellar made me feel as if I were in the middle of a film set. I am legally bound not to reveal any further information. So it was with some trepidation that I began my first full day. After not having been shot at during the morning my confidence rose, though I was still struggling with the German "legalese". I was given case files to read through and to find out what the alleged criminals should be charged with. All in all it was a fascinating insight into the workings of the German justice system. However, I was denied access to some case files as they were so sensitive that I would have to be placed under the German witness protection scheme. As attractive as starting again as Hans Schmidt of Baden Baden is, I thought I'd rather return home to Stamford.

On my final day I travelled with my mentor to the Bonn central court where I witnessed several trials and was even mistaken for a German lawyer, which I suppose is quite flattering. All in all it was a fantastic experience and one that I would recommend to any budding linguist. I am indebted to Mrs. Fox, Herr Bewerunge and Herr Breuers for their help in organising my placement.

A. Jones



russia

exchange

At 4:30 in the morning, on Wednesday 14th December 2005, once again another Russian exchange party met at the hall car park all ready for our trip to Moscow Russia. There were 12, not including Miss. Legard, Mr. Haynes and Miss. Lesser, of us to begin with, however one man named Mark Robins, dropped out as he was ill. So, there were 11. We set off for Heathrow Airport in a school minibus with Mr. Bentley as our driver.

We made it to Heathrow and boarded the flight with no problems. Four hours later we landed in Moscow Domodedovo, the airport, and got on a coach to the Russian school in Khimki, the district in which we were staying. The teachers paired us up with our exchange partners and we all parted ways to meet the rest of our partner's family.

The next day, we met everyone just outside Red Square at about 12:00, everyone got a chance to talk about the previous night, and talk about all the presents they were given... so we were all ready to see Lenin...and after being deprived of our cameras

and phones, we went to see one of Russia's main attractions. We walk down underground with soldiers watching our every move. After that we moved about 100 metres down Red Square to see St. Basil's Cathedral, the wonderfully coloured and famous cathedral. Afterward we went to a café for a lovely oriental lunch, or you could have had pork to be boring. Then we walked down the road to see what I think the exchange has seen a few times, "Boyars Romanovs Chamber", a museum. I don't think the year 9 boys really learnt a lot from this museum, but it was the thoroughly enjoying museum about the life of the "Boyars" in Middle Age Russia. Exciting stuff! In the evening the teachers went to an opera called "Ruslan & Ludmila" which they told me it was extremely moving material. I don't know whether they actually understood the opera, most people have trouble understanding English opera let alone Russian. However the students just went back with their partners and I'm sure had a lovely time.

The Friday, the 16th December, was an absolutely brilliant day. We went to visit The Kremlin in the



morning. Possibly, the best part of the trip. Well for me anyway. The Kremlin is the place where Russia government is situated. With our guide, Nelly, we first went to the tsar cannon, a huge cannon that was never actually used. We also saw tsar bell. It is a massive bell weighing over 100 tons, which has a hole in the side, which was created in a great fire. We saw the cathedral of the assumption afterwards. Dedicated to Mary Mother of Christ. Next we went on to the Diamond Fund. This is where the old crown jewels of the Russian tsars are kept. Also it holds many other ruby, sapphires, emeralds, and yes you guessed it, diamonds. After that we had lunch and went to the famous university of Moscow. It is one of the Stalin towers and we had a tour of it, conducted by two of the students there. Next we went to one of the famous Russian circuses. I think many of us found this rather disgusting as animals like bear and cats were used. But the majority found this very amusing.

The next day was a family day. But in the afternoon the whole group went to see a ballet in the new Bolshoy Theatre. The majority of the English boys didn't understand what was really happening but we still found it quite enjoyable.

The following day was also family time. Everyone did something fun. Two boys even were taken flying together. In the evening, we were taken on a bus tour of Moscow night. "The Lights Of Moscow" it was called. None of us I think would have guessed how beautiful Moscow was under the cover of darkness. Following that we went to the museum of Moscow's lampposts. I think I say for everyone on the exchange, even the Russians, that this was the most unsatisfying part of the exchange. I would be surprised if Miss Legard did it again.

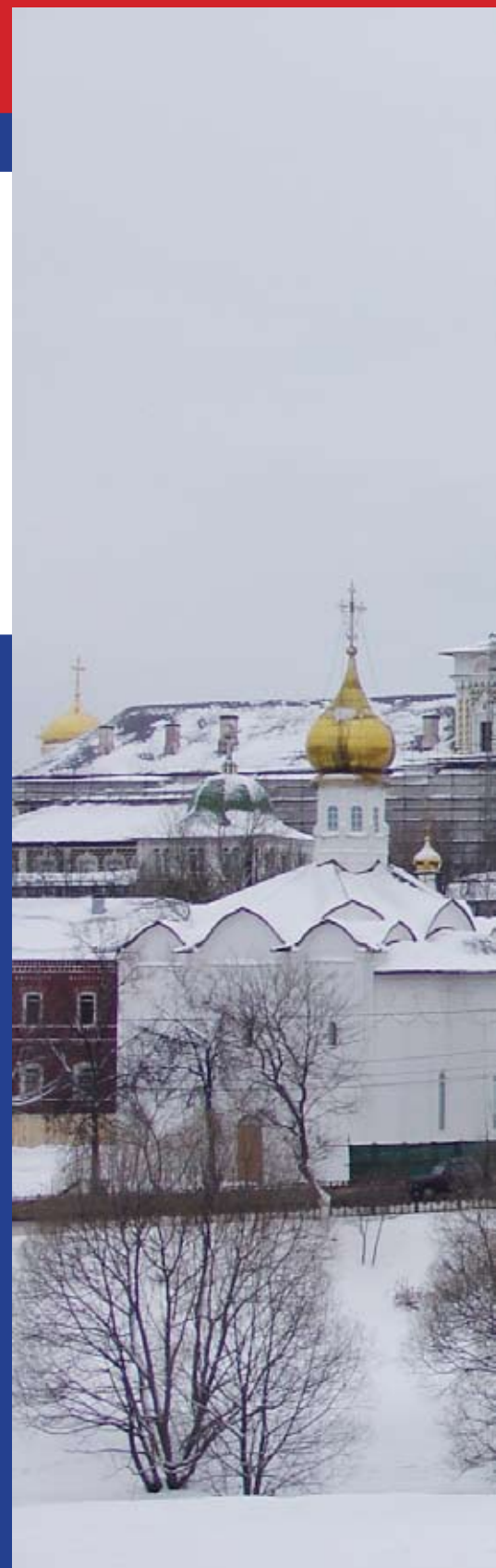
On the 19th December, we travelled into the countryside of Russia to see one of the most important sites of the Russian Orthodox Church, the monastery of Sergiev Posad. This is an enormous area with many churches and chapels. You can imagine how beautiful this was as Russian church are built with huge coloured or gold domes. We entered the main church of the vicinity which is decorated with 2 large blue domes and one gold dome in-between them. The group got a chance to light a candle a place it at the altar of this church.

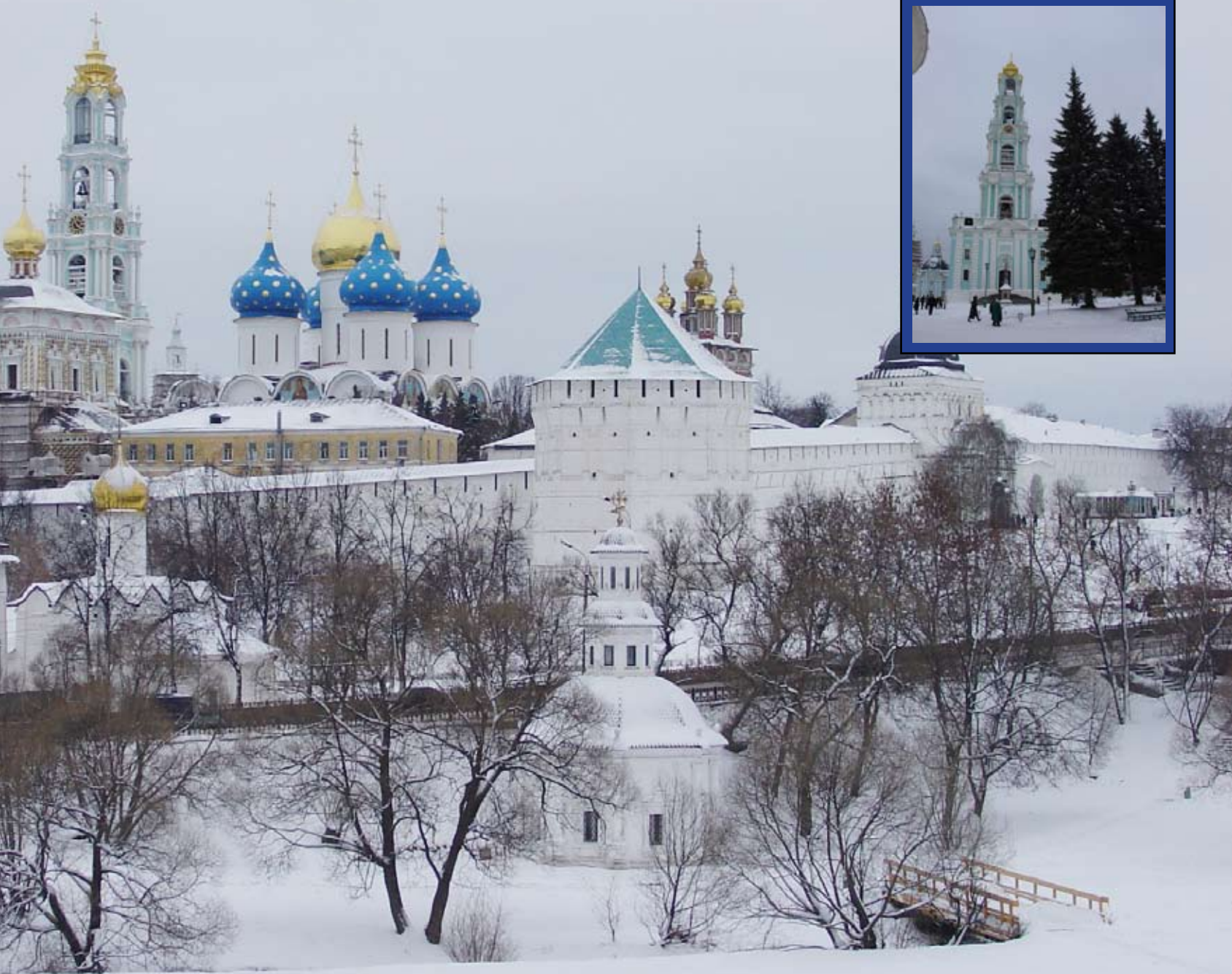
On the Tuesday, we all went to visit the Russians' school. Actually we went to two schools as two of the Russians came

from a different school. First off, we entered the main exchange school, took our coats off and went into the staff room until told to go elsewhere. We all went to their lessons. I went to a German lesson with Julian Adams and Andrew Fowler. Surprisingly, their language lessons are conducted entirely in the language they are learning, unlike us. That's quite amazing! Julian was actually asked to speak a bit of German, which he conjured up from his days in Yr8. Also their teacher had a few conversations with Miss Lesser, we had absolutely no idea what they were talking about just like all the other times on the trip. Afterwards we all met outside and walked to the other school for a very well put together play, which the school does every year especially for the exchange. There were two scenes from Romeo and Juliet, in English! One of the boys in the exchange, Russian, was Romeo. The younger years of the school performed excellent comedy sketches also in English. It was very funny!

On the final day, we all went to Poklonnaya Hill, a war memorial and museum. However we were only there for about an hour. It snowed heavily the few days before, so the traffic was horrendous. Poklonnaya Hill is a memorial to victory of Russia in The Great Patriotic War. There was an obelisk over 100 metres high. It had a statue of the Ancient Greek Goddess of victory, Nike. We went into the museum but we only saw the dioramas. We ate lunch in the restaurant there, Na Poklannoy. And after that we meant to see the open-air expedition of Russian military machines. However we had no time. We had to leave after lunch to get back in time to see the Cathedral Of Christ The Saviour. We made it to see the Cathedral Of Christ The Saviour. I think we were all stunned and amazed at just how huge and beautiful it was. The cathedral was actually knocked down during the soviet period and was rebuilt after the soviets were voted out. The present building is actually bigger than the original. The church has gold domes and inside the walls are covered in gold, marble and bronze. There is actually a church inside the cathedral where only the priests are allowed to go. Well after the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour, everyone went home to their apartments or house, packed and got ready for the following morning.

So the following morning, we all met each other at Khimki bus station to leave Russia. The Russian came with us to the airport. When we got there we had to wait about 2 hours, which I think was enough time to say goodbye. After we checked in we said our final goodbyes and went up the escalators looking over our shoulders waving goodbyes and saying "see you in six months". There were no real problems boarding and checking in. Apart from some hand luggage Miss Legard didn't get tagged, she had to go back to check in and queue again and get them cleared. Also I don't think the students liked the fact we had to take off our shoes at the security. So we boarded the plane and went back home to sunny old England all ready, packed with presents, for Christmas.







spanish exchange

On the 15th of February 2006 a party of 16 pupils from Stamford School arrived early in the morning at Stamford High School to be whisked off to A Coruña to stay there for a week. As soon as we landed after two hours on the plane we met our new families for the week. At first, it was quite tense meeting these people for the first time and with our Spanish being limited not much was said. The Spanish people quickly showed us their somewhat educated English talents and new beautiful friendships were born.

On the first night we were taken to a square where a political riot broke out around us. Hundreds of people blew hard on their whistles and became somewhat violent towards anyone who dared to cross them. It was certainly something to remember on our first day and set the tone for the rest of the trip.

The week was a tough extensive trek with many trips organised for the pupils. We visited many places including a fantastic trip to the planetarium and a great museum that gave us a journey through the human body. It was top notch! With the school day finishing at the brilliant hour of lunch we had the rest of the days and all of the nights to hit the bars and discotecas. I must say it was rather good having all this freedom and living in the centre of a huge town. Along with the smooth came the rough in the form of the hundreds of gypsies that strolled the streets at night. They were apparently dangerous and hated the English and thus most of



the time we had to pretend to be Spanish. Thankfully we had Oliver Joy's partner, the streetwise Jaime, on our side.

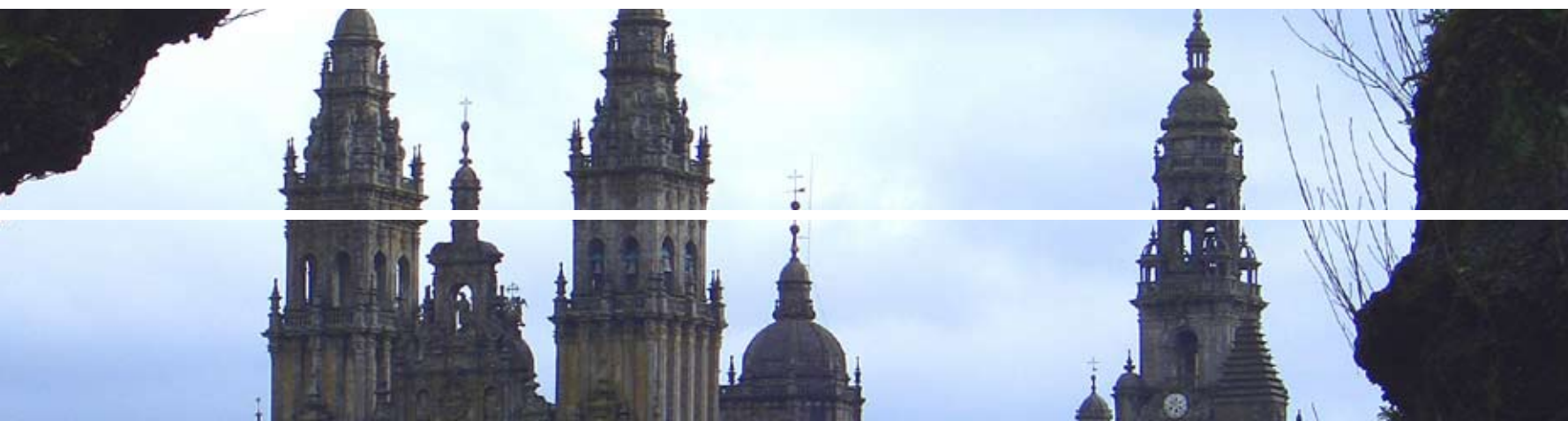
The most hitting thing about the trip to Spain was the interesting cuisine that they forced down us. There was many a time where we sat down with our partners and tucked into a great meal at Burger King. Along side this; there were a lot of good old Spanish omelettes that were cooked for us. It was magnificent!

The biggest culture shock was the eating times. We ate at

summer.

After such a successful first leg of the exchange, there were high hopes for the second half; with everyone anxious to meet up again with their newfound Spanish amigos.

The long travel time told its tale as 16 sleepy Spaniards pulled into Stamford High School.



eight in the morning for breakfast, then at two and then at 11 at night. It was horrible on the stomach leaving us feeling hungry all the time and, with the long days and nights, totally exhausted.

In conclusion, this part of the trip was a brilliant experience full of highs. I'm sure we would all love to go back in the

My partner in particular was very tired, and could only manage a few sleepy responses of 'si' and 'no' before he fell asleep. In spite of several partners becoming ill during the week as they were still feeling the effect of their pneumonia and so the prospect of being thrown about by Nemesis quite frankly scared them.

The social side of English life was wholly enthralling for them. They found not being allowed to go into bars and pubs and drink very strange, reassuring us that in Spain you could do so from fifteen. As a result, we decided to host them for several evenings, and they enjoyed life on the 'Stamford Endowed Schools Party Circuit' thoroughly. The Spanish found English cuisine strange; in that they thought that we never ate English food, after being taken out to first a Mexican restaurant, then later in the week for pizza!

On the whole, the exchange was a hugely positive experience, during which we made new friends, improved our all-too-limited Spanish skills, and evaded death at the hands of rabid Spaniards several times. Thanks must go to Mr. Clift for organising the trip so well and Mrs. Pike for worrying about us all week. We can wholeheartedly recommend this trip to anyone studying Spanish for Year 11.



french

exchange





Pendant les vacances de Paques, les étudiants de Stamford School et Stamford High School sont partis pour Nemours, en France, pour l'échange Française. Après avoir traversé la Manche, nous sommes arrivés au collège Saint Marie à Nemours. Puis, nous avons eu quelque chose à manger et à boire et nous sommes partis pour les maisons de nos familles.

Mardi

Mardi, nous sommes allés à Paris. Nous avons visité des musées, le Sacre Cœur et vu l'Arc de Triomphe. Nous avons bien aimé ça !

Mercredi

Mercredi, nous sommes allés à notre destination favorite : Disneyland Paris. Nous sommes allés en groupes, et avons visité toutes les attractions célèbres, comme Space Mountain et Les Pirates des Caraïbes. Dan a acheté un chapeau bizarre avec les oreilles de Eeyore.

Jeudi

Jeudi, nous avons visités Paris une deuxième fois. Cette fois, nous avons vu Les Champs Elysées, la Tour Eiffel et nous avons fait une promenade en bateau sur la Seine.

Vendredi

Vendredi, nous avons fait un circuit de Nemours. Nous avons répondu aux questions, qui étaient très difficile! Nous avons aussi pris des cours dans le collège de Nemours.

Le Week-end

Le week-end, nous avons passé du temps avec notre famille. J'ai joué au foot et j'ai grimpé des arbres dans le bois où il y avait beaucoup d'activités.

Lundi

Lundi, nous sommes retournés en Angleterre en car. Après avoir dit 'au revoir' à notre famille, nous avons fait le long voyage de retour à Stamford.

En général, c'était une expérience inoubliable et fantastique !



Norway exchange

The Norwegians had visited us the week after half term in October and by the time February half term came it was our turn to go to Norway. We flew to Norway from Stanstead airport and arrived in Oslo in the evening. Then our hosts took us to their houses just to get settled in for the first evening and to meet their families. All the houses looked like ski chalets with steep sloping roofs and wood panelling and there was a covering of about 3 feet of snow on everything. I was staying with Eirik, who had a really nice house but it was a long way from the school.

Of course the next day the first thing we did was have a huge snowball fight before going into school but the Norwegian students looked puzzled because they have snow all the time so it is not as much fun to them as it is to us. That morning we had a tour round the school and helped out in some English lessons and had a talk about the history of Norway from the headmistress. That night we went to the middle of Oslo to test out the Olympic bobsleigh run. We all looked really cool having to wear helmets although we all thought by the end that they were necessary. The amount of bruises was incredible.

The next day we went sledging again but just across the road from the school where there was a huge hill. Making jumps for toboggans is really painful by the way.

That evening we went into Drammen to go bowling as a group. We had a really good laugh especially at Caroline's fantastic bowling technique. We then went back to Sam's hosts house to play silly games and generally socialise.

The next day was our big visit to Kongsberg to go skiing or snowboarding for the day. In most resorts you have to get a lift to where most the skiing starts but here you could park at the bottom of the slope and ski straight to your car



at the end of the day. There was only one person out of the ten English pupils who had not skied before and that was Rob Farmer. For his first day skiing he was actually very good, he just pointed his skis down the hill and went but never mastered turning! Freddie was of course showing off but there were many good skiers in our group. Sian, Tessa and Sam have all done a lot of skiing and kept Freddie under control. I was the only English snowboarder but Eivan and Nicklas both boarded with me for the day. We broke into two groups for most of the day but everyone had a great time.

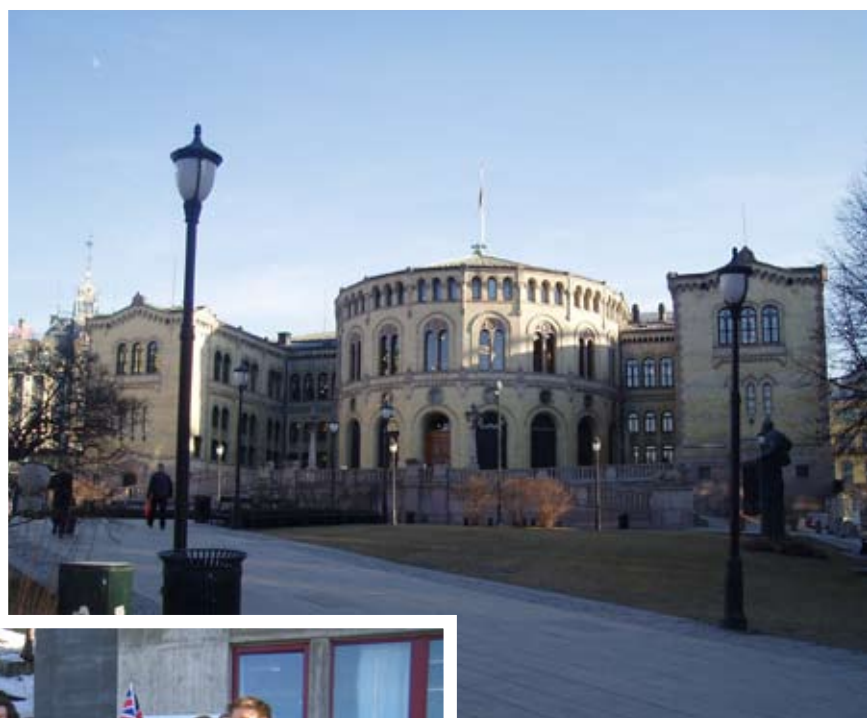
The day had finally come for our big presentation to the Norwegian families and teachers. When the Norwegians came to us they rein acted plays and important parts of their history along with traditional songs. Therefore the girls decided to put on some rugby kit and explain rugby and the boys to cross dress and sing spice girls. Clare gave us a soliloquy of Shakespeare which was interesting to all the Norwegians and then we joined together at the end and sang 'lord of the dance' and a Beatles medley, which went down very well.

The following day we went to Oslo. We visited the Olympic ski jump, which I think is the most ridiculous sport on earth after looking at the jump from the top! You could see the whole of Oslo from the top of it but it

did shake in the wind a bit. We visited a park where there many famous statues so we had to some posing next to them which Jonny and Laura both really enjoyed. After that we went to the Nobel Museum, which we all thought would be boring but was actually very good. We then had the opportunity to go shopping but we did not do much because Oslo is the most expensive city in the world. After meeting up with our Norwegians in the middle of Oslo, we went outdoor ice-skating which was really good fun. I kept on getting pushed over my Eirik and Eivan who both played for ice hockey teams and the snowball fights moved to new level as well. Exhausted, we went out for a meal and then went round Oslo until returning home early the next morning.

We left our friends later that day to visit Norway's air traffic control centre and yes it was about as boring as it sounds even being underground in an old nuclear bunker. We were all sad leaving Oslo that evening and we all agreed to go back to visit our hosts at some point in the near future not only to go skiing but to have a great time with them all again.

Robert Owen



Ski Trip

Austria 2006

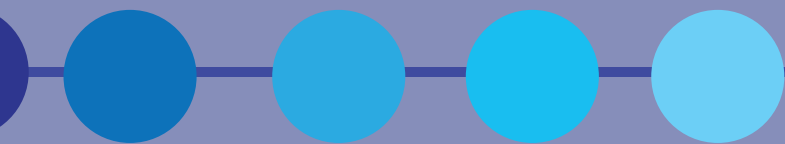
An intrepid band of skiers and snowboarders arrived at Stamford School bright and early on Saturday 18th Feb at 11:00 a.m, kitted out and ready for the 24-hour coach journey ahead. Split into two coaches, we all departed for Austria waving goodbye to our families for a week. From the look on our parents' faces, they were looking forward to week of peace and quiet! The journey was, as always, longer and uncomfortable than we remembered, despite a number of mediocre films!

Arriving in the picturesque town of Golling, we split into two hotels – years 11 to 13 in the Goldener Traube and year 10 in the Goldener Ochs). The town was beautiful and historic, with many shops, restaurants and bars for us to explore (it's a shame they always seemed to be closed when we were around!) As soon as we'd settled in to the hotel, it was time to climb aboard the bus again to collect skis, boots and snowboards for the week ahead.

Flachau, the ski resort was a 25-minute drive away. The weather was ideal for skiing, sunny and bright with the snow on the slopes looking perfect. Everyone was excited and ready for skiing the next day, despite the tiredness! That evening, there was a briefing, at which we met Thierry, the ski rep and an instructor. After this, many of the group decided to stay in the hotel, unpack and sleep, while a few of us chose to explore Golling's nightlife, which took all of 10 minutes!









The next day the action began. The snowboarders were split into two groups, beginners and advanced, and the skiers into 7 groups, depending on experience. Everyone had a brilliant first day, with the exception of Lottie, who managed to break her wrist on the second run of the morning! Kaz followed suit later on in the week, also breaking his wrist during snowboarding. The evening activity was swimming, which was quite unpopular to say the least, with only 10 of the group taking part! The others were spectators enjoying a drink whilst watching the swimmers in the pool. On our return to the hotel, many enjoyed migrating back to the bars discovered on the first night. Our favourite was one that had a podium dance floor above the bar...which numerous exhibitionists took the opportunity to try out!

During each day, the skiing and snowboarding followed the same format but by the end of the week some groups had merged, and individuals were moved up or down, depending on their competence! A number of groups opted to explore neighbouring slopes, which included Wagrain and Flachau-Winkell. The snowboarders in particular appreciated this, as they could show off their skills in the skate parks on these slopes, especially Rich and Bobby, the two boarding instructors. The piste conditions continued to be no less than superb!

The evening events, which included a quiz, bowling and a disco, occurred each night to keep everyone amused. The bowling was a little less developed than the high-tech ten-pin bowling we enjoy in the UK! The ball tended to bounce if it wasn't placed just right and a few leapt from lane to lane. Without doubt, the most popular night was the disco evening. The older ones enjoyed a glass of wine or beer, the younger ones a soft drink, whilst showing off their moves to others in the resort. All had a good time, and many tried all they could not to leave!

The final night was the presentation evening, where each snowboarder and skier received an award for prowess or effort, whichever was appropriate. After, everyone (excluding the walking wounded) hit the town again to enjoy one last night. The final hurdle was trying to get all year 10s back to Stamford wearing their seatbelt!

All in all, the Senior Ski Trip 2006 to Wagrain was a success, with a few 'trivial' hiccups amongst the entertaining and comical moments. I'm sure I speak for all involved when I say a huge thank you to all the staff, who organised the trip for us. A first class time was had by all.

By Laura Crees L6TH

Geography

Cévennes, South of France

At the end of our Y10 GCSE Geography course, two coaches of 60 students and 6 staff from Stamford School and Stamford High School travelled to the Cévennes National Park in the south of France.

The journey began in the early evening leaving Stamford and by 11pm we had reached Calais. After a smooth crossing we were in France and slowly heading towards our destination. Eventually, after 22 hours we reached the 'Eagle's Nest' the field centre that was to be our home for the week. Once settled in, we departed on a walk in the wonderfully warm late afternoon sunshine. In the evening we had our first taste of the local food and after team building exercises we settled down in our dorms.

Our first full day began bright and early at 7am. After refreshing showers and breakfast, we were briefed in the classrooms about our day in the field. Today was to be investigating how the characteristics of a river change downstream. We packed the kit and headed off to the source of the river. The blistering heat was too tempting for a few, who ended up having a paddle! We spent a couple of hours working in the evening writing up our findings and explaining our results. We then had some free time to enjoy games of volleyball, Jenga or just sit and chat.

Day 2 was another early start as we headed to the Mediterranean. Once we arrived, we had some time on the beach and a refreshing swim. We then headed into the town for the task of surveying some local people as we investigated tourist pressures in this seaside resort. Needless to say our French skills were put to the test! On the way back we visited the Pont Du Gard, an impressive Roman aqueduct where we





had our picnic dinner.

The day we had been waiting for finally arrived. We travelled down into the Tarn Gorge, where we spent 2 very enjoyable hours travelling down the gorge in rafts. This was great fun as each raft tried to beat the others to the finish. The water provided much refreshment on yet another extremely hot and sunny day. We also visited St. Enemie a beautiful town that has become a 'honeypot' settlement due to so many people

visiting.

Thursday saw a later start. After breakfast we set off to the market town of Florac. We spent some time browsing through the many stalls, enjoying a drink at one of the many cafés and studying the types of retail provision. On our return to the field centre we were set group presentation tasks where we had to review an aspect of the work covered during the week and present it to everybody else. As it was the final evening we ate at 'The Enchanted Trout' restaurant and finished with a disco back at the field centre.

After packing, we departed at 10am for the long journey home. On the way back we stopped at the Vulcania science park where there were interesting interactive displays about volcanic eruptions; it was an excellent way to break up the journey. In the middle of the night we caught the ferry back from Calais and eventually arrived back in Stamford at 8am. Cévennes seemed like a very long way off.

It was a thoroughly interesting and enjoyable trip; it will live on in the memories of many of the students. Our thanks go to all the staff that accompanied us on this trip.

Cameron Payne and William Pickering





Lincoln History Trip

On the 27th June 2006 year 7 went on a trip to see the cathedral and Lincoln castle and museum.

My group was first to go into the museum and look at many items. The first room was small but effective; it included old police equipment and uniforms, many medals from wars and models of train's, tanks and models of the finest industries. Then we rapidly moved on to an olden day classroom. We were asked to write down the difference in that classroom to a modern one. There were many, such as they didn't have a white board only a black (chalk) board and the only posters were times table ones and they weren't colourful just black, this was the way children learnt their times tables. The room I thought was the most interesting was the Blacksmith; because there were so many tools to look at.

In the war parts of the museum were many guns, clothes and armour, this section was good to compare things from those days to now. All the armour was metal or you would have worn none, but today we have things like bullet proof vests. Then we moved on to the vehicle section where there were trains, steam rollers, cars, cannons and a big tank that was used in world war I..

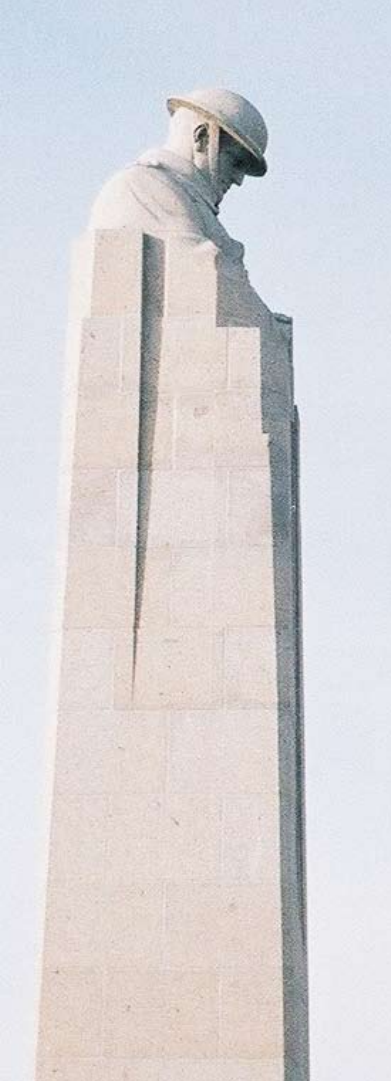
After a long but fun walk around the museum we were all ready to walk down the street to the Cathedral. As we went through the arches to enter the cathedral area I was amazed at how big the cathedral was. As Mr Wilkes showed us the outside of the cathedral you could see all the pictures on the wall carved out of stone and these pictures showed sort of stories like people going to heaven and hell. Moving on to the inside was the best part because your first word must be "wow!" It is very beautiful and it stretches for what seems like ages into the distance. As we looked around we had our own guide book to refer to and Mr Wilkes again to tell us many facts and stories. One thing that I thought was good was the story that he told us about the Lincolnshire Imp and how the city was named because of it. Also we were able to see where part of the DaVinci Code was filmed.

After lunch we got the chance to have a look around the prison and just looking gave you the feeling you were really there to stay! After the prisons we went and looked at the original copy of the Magna Carta this was a great privilege to be able to see something so valuable. In this room it was ever so dark and only a green colour light could be seen, this was because the Magna Carta would fade in the main light.

Finally we moved on to the Castle. We started at the observatory tower and to get there we had to walk up a massive steep flight of stairs and that only took us to the wall of the Castle. On the wall we talked in a group about how hard it would be to attack as there was such a steep hill. Then we moved on to the best part which was the tower. At the top of the tower it wasn't very big but it was ever so high, even though we were really really high we still weren't as high as the cathedral, so imagine how high the cathedral is. Coming down was fun because it was so steep it felt as if you were falling. After doing a day's worth of exercise going up and down those steps it was time to go to the gift shop and have a rest!

We couldn't sit around all day because we had to go on the town walk but at this point we were 20 minutes behind everyone else so we had to rush to the town. When we got there we went down this long hill which you were forced to jog down as it was so steep.

I would like to thank all the members of staff who took us on the trip and made it such a great day out!!!!!!!



Battlefields Trip



This trip, to the battlefields of World War I, was undoubtedly the highlight of my Stamford School career so far. Organised by the History Department, it was the largest ever academic trip in the long history of Stamford School. It took place during the first week of the Easter Holiday, and was a thoroughly enjoyable experience.

The trip began at the somewhat sleepy time of 12.30 am on Monday April 3rd 2006. Despite the absurdly early start, very few boys were (judging by the noise) asleep. A feeling of excitement and anticipation was buzzing around the coach, and after the health insurance cards had been collected, it was time for both coaches to hit the road to Dover.

Only a brief stop at a service station for a toilet break and a drink interrupted the journey, and we arrived at Dover Ferry Port just before six in the morning! By this time, we really were starting to feel tired, and after a quick driver change, it was time to sail, and therefore time for a Full English breakfast!

After a smooth ferry crossing, the sun began to rise over our destination, Calais.

The drive from France into Belgium was fairly short, and was an excellent time to catch up on some lost sleep.

Our first stop was at Messines Ridge on the Ypres (or "Wipers" as some boys liked to call it) salient, during which we admired the first monument, and were set our first challenge. This was to run a soldier's journey from the bottom of the Ridge to the top, before Mr. Wilkes could reach the summit. None of us succeeded in beating the determined R.S teacher, although this may have been down to his rather generous head start! Needless to say, that woke us all up a little, and we were all fairly relieved to sit down again on our now very familiar coach.

Our second stop of the day was to be the first of many cemeteries, Tyne Cot Cemetery. This was a very moving visit, as it is the largest British military cemetery in the world. It contains nearly 12,000 graves, and the names of nearly 35,000 of the missing. The Belgian weather only dampened our spirits further, as we were hit by a torrential downpour. The dry, warm coach was a very welcoming place indeed after this visit, although it did help us to understand the sacrifice and duty of the thousands of young British soldiers who gave their lives.

Our Wellingtons or walking boots got their first usage of the trip at the Sanctuary Wood Museum, where there was the opportunity

to run around in reconstructed trenches and shell holes, as well as to see some fairly graphic 3D slides inside the museum. The realism of these trenches, which included some pitch black tunnels, was extremely exciting, and it was a chance for us to burn off some of the little energy we still had left. Although they were reconstructed, the trenches were in the same place as genuine wartime ones from the early twentieth century. This meant that we were treading almost exactly in the footsteps of hundreds of soldiers from ninety years ago.

Our final stops of the day were at Poelkapelle, and Langemark Cemetery. Although these were two quick stops, the impact was just as great. Langemark is a German cemetery; German gravestones are made of shining black marble, lying on the floor, a complete contrast to the vertical, white marble British and French headstones. This cemetery had a rather eerie sense to it, as it was so startlingly contrasting with the others we had visited that day.

We then moved on to our hotel for the next four days, the Hotel Munchenoff near Ypres. The accommodation was basic, but very comfortable. We were all allocated rooms, and scuttled off to investigate before dinner. In the evenings, the hotel had a lot to offer. It had a bowling alley, table football, pinball, two arcade machines and a bar. It was an extremely pleasant environment, filled with entertainment and, generally, a lot of competitiveness.



Our second day was spent at the Somme, although the other coach was visiting our location for Day Three. An early breakfast was followed by a fairly substantial drive into France, during which a film was shown on the coach. Thiepval, our first stop of the day, was the most spectacular monument I saw on the trip. Spectacular, but immensely saddening. For on this gigantic grey memorial are the names of no less than 73,412 men who died on the Somme, and who have no known grave. Behind the memorial are the graves of hundreds more of the French and British men who gave their lives on the Somme in 1916-17.

Next to Newfoundland Park, one of the best preserved trench memorials on the Western Front. The Caribou at the top of the hill provided a magnificent view across the Park, to both the German and British Front Lines. Lunch at Delville Wood was preceded by a trip through the trees themselves, and a look at the sole remaining tree from WWI. The museum there was a quick stop, and we advanced to the shop, where students could buy any number of things, from bags of WWI shrapnel to actual French army helmets. It was the first opportunity to splash some cash on souvenirs!

Our final visit of Day 2 was to the truly awesome Lochnagar Crater, or as the French signs imaginatively named, "La Grande Mine"!

The crater measures 300 feet across, and 90 feet deep. A prime chance to take some spectacular photo's

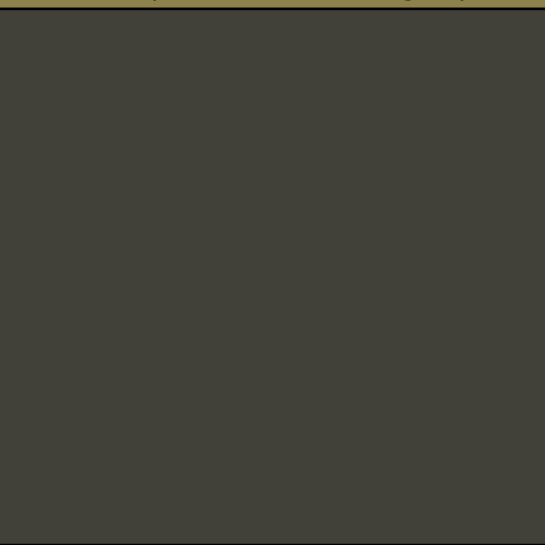


was not passed by many, as we all walked carefully to the edge with cameras at the ready. Another film was shown on the way back to the hotel, and later there was the first chance to witness the teachers battling it out for bowling supremacy at the hotel's bowling alley.

Wednesday was eagerly awaited after the reaction of the Coach B students the night before, and it didn't disappoint.

The first stop was Vimy Ridge, where in 1917, the Canadians bravely held off the advancing German attack. As a result of their heroic effort, France gave the land to Canada. There were some brilliantly reconstructed trenches, and a chance to see just how close the German Front Line was to the Canadian Front Line. Unfortunately, the magnificent Canadian Monument there is undergoing major reconstruction work, so we could only see pictures of it, although the vast enormity of it was evident by the height of the surrounding building sheds. Notre Dame de Lorette and Souchez were our next stop, and these provided a real insight into the French war experience. The site contains almost 40,000 French burials, and a visit to the museum was a more pleasant experience than the emotion of having 40,000 men very close to you! After the museum, we moved on to the slides on the other side of the museum, and took in some pretty horrific images of the war. So we needed to unwind a little from those terrifying pictures, and what better way to do that than digging around in mud, looking for genuine WWI artefacts? The wellies and walking boots were on again, and we all went digging. For the lucky ones (and I'm pleased to say that includes me!), it was a very rewarding time indeed. Buying artefacts is all very well, but actually finding them yourself gives an intense feeling of satisfaction.

The evening provided a more sombre feel, though. The Last Post Ceremony at the Menin Gate in Ypres has been running every single night since 1927 with the exception of the Second World War years. The gate itself contains almost 55,000 names of the men who died between 1914 and 15th August 1917. It was an incomparable and moving experience, and our spirits were only lifted by a visit to the local chocolate shop for



some Belgian Chocolate shopping. All in all, a very good, if quite emotional night. We returned to the hotel for an hour or so of packing and leisure time, before going to bed for the last time on the trip.

Thursday only had two visits before returning home. The first was for a group photo at the St. Julien monument, and then the final stop at the "In Flanders Fields" Museum. This contained films detailing the horrific nature of trench warfare, as well as biographies of people who fought in WWI.

And so the only thing left was the long drive home. At Calais however, we were allowed just over an hour to shop at the Cité Europe mall, the largest in Europe.

The crossing was another smooth one, and the fish and chips on the ferry were well worth queuing for.

After four eventful days in Belgium, France, and also technically South Africa and Canada, we arrived back home with loud shouting from everyone on the coach at 8.30 pm on Thursday 6th April. The emotional rollercoaster ride was over!

My personal highlights, although extremely hard to choose, would have to be the Notre Dame de Lorette stop, where we got to find our very own WWI artefacts, and the incredibly emotional visit to the Last Post Ceremony in Ypres.



It was a superbly organised trip, and a thoroughly enjoyable one.

I would like to thank on behalf of the boys; the eleven members of staff accompanying us, the staff at the Munchenhoff Hotel for their hospitality, the staff at all the sites we visited, and last but by no means least, the coach drivers, who endured four days of their life with a bunch of rowdy teenagers! Thank you very much!

I would very strongly recommend the trip to all who are going into Year 9 next year. It is a really excellent opportunity which should be taken immediately. It is a hands on way to enjoy studying the First World War (as well as a great chance to watch the teachers fail at bowling), and well worth all the hours spent on a coach!

Berlin Trip

Its 2am on Monday 10th July 2006. 22 Stamfordian historians and their suitcases are piled into two minibuses, speeding along the road to Stansted. Oh yes, this is the history trip extraordinaire 2006 to Berlin. Mission number 1 on arrival at the airport - dump bags at Mr. Brown's feet and find coffee. 4am is no one's favourite time of day, especially when you have two hours to kill in a dead airport full of closed shops and sleeping people sprawled out everywhere...

Early mornings, crowded trains and heavy suitcases on escalators tackled, we finally arrived at our youth hostel in the centre of Berlin, just about ready for four days of sight seeing in the city. After a quick turnaround, we headed out to our first destination - the Checkpoint Charlie Museum. Here, we learned about the different ways in which people managed to cross the Berlin Wall. I bet you never thought it possible to use two hollowed out surfboards to get across a wall, but apparently it's possible should you ever need to try it.

Following the visit to Checkpoint Charlie, our tired legs had just enough energy left to take us on a walking tour of Berlin. This tour led us to the Brandenburg Gate, the Reichstag, the Soviet War Memorial...no wait, on a 'scenic detour' to the Soviet War Memorial (Mr. Brown: 'I'm sure it was here last year!') and also to Hitler's bunker, so by the end of the day, although tired, we had been given a good impression of the city of Berlin as a whole (except for the nightlife, which had to be tested each night as well).

Day 2 took us on a very different visit. After an early start, we headed to the station again to catch a train out of the centre of Berlin to Sachsenhausen Concentration Camp. If I'm honest, I can't really put



what we saw into words. I don't think any of us knew what to expect from this visit, nor could anything have prepared us for how harrowing what we saw and learned would be - this is one of those visits where it's really hard to be aware of the scale of what happened without seeing it for real. Although the sights were disturbing, I found this visit somehow helped me gain some form of understanding of the sheer barbarity but also sadness of what went on in Nazi Germany something that will stick with me.

The next day of our trip led us on a slightly more light-hearted visit to the Olympic Stadium, which was created by the Nazis and was a major part of their propaganda campaign. We got some good views of the Olympic complex from the tower there, and then we went up the Berlin TV tower, where we could see the whole city. After a quick visit to Subway for lunch (yes, very German), we visited the Stasi museum. This was really interesting but quite strange - the secret police in East Germany held records on millions of their own people and had spies all over the country. Some people still don't know if there was a record on them...

Getting up at 7 on the last day was slightly painful and packing suitcases with 8 people in a room proved interesting too, but we were soon ready to say goodbye to our room before lugging our stuff downstairs and heading off for a final day of sightseeing. Our first stop was the German Resistance museum. Having seen the horror of what the Nazis were doing in Germany, it was difficult to understand how they weren't stopped, until visiting this museum. This showed just how hard it was for the minimal numbers of people who fought against the Nazis to build up enough power to have any effect against the regime. Following this, we had a boat tour of Berlin, and then headed to our final cultural destination of the Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial Church for reflection time (before going on a non-cultural shopping trip, which was useful for getting rid of all the money that was weighing us down).

When you think about the fact that we were only in Berlin for four days, we managed to see a great deal. This trip is a really good opportunity for anyone with an interest in modern history - the range of things we saw meant that there was something to interest everyone, so get your name down!



RUGBY

History will record that the 2005-06 season was one of the most successful seasons if not the most successful season on record. The addition of Haileybury and St Albans further strengthened the fixture list and more boys donned the maroon than in the previous season. On the back of South Africa the 1st XV lead the way for the school with every A team in the school enjoying a winning season. Many players went on to gain representative honours and all enjoyed their rugby. Highlights included the 13A and 15A season, the 4thXV win over Uppingham and the 13C win over Oakham. There must be a huge thank you to the groundstaff, the catering staff, the many referees that help and most of all the army of teachers who give up their time to coach the sides. With two overseas tours on the horizon, next year already looks like another adventurous and interesting season for Stamford School.



1st XV

The crowd roared as 'Le Carnage' secured the final try of the season and the final win to finish one of the best seasons of recent times - this is how the season ended but many months of work went towards the season that will no doubt live as one of the boys finest memories of school.

It began the previous summer as touch rugby skills sessions began the preparations for a tour to South Africa. The tour turned out to be another success with 4 wins out of 6 games and a fantastic final match made it evident this team could be something a bit special.

So to the domestic season and an uncharacteristically wet start at Felsted School. In this game the team was dogged by unforced errors but showed much promise and looked dangerous in the backs. Tom 'Dave' Lindley scored a carbon copy of one of his tour tries and helped the side on to a 10 point victory. Unfortunately Phil Streit was injured in an off the ball incident and would have to sit on the touchline for the next game.

Bedford Modern were first to enter Fortress Mainfields and a large crowd gathered eager to see what this first XV had to offer. A hard fought game began and again more errors from both backs and forwards meant we didn't take our chances but Chisholm's boot kept us in the frame. After much build up it was Eifion-Jones who clinched the vital try to put us out of sight of Bedford and secured a narrow winning margin. Laurent Ross also moved up to fill in at nine for the injured Streit and proved he was more than capable of playing first XV rugby and remained in the side for the rest of the season.

Wellingborough were next, and another sunny day at home meant some exciting rugby and a 38-0 victory with Chisholm scoring twice with some searing pace on the wing. Man of the match though went to the almighty 'Big' Allan who put in some crunching tackles and opened up his try account also.

The first Tuesday game of the season was to be a disaster. A strong Oundle side, playing at home, produced some clever back play to put their winger over in the corner, but Stamford kept themselves in the game through Chisholm's boot and a classic solo effort from Fletcher that was to later be awarded try-of-the-season. The side led by ten points to eight with less than ten minutes to go, but a lack of concentration resulted in a

very kickable penalty in the Stamford 22. It sailed over, leaving the scoreboard showing 11-10 to Oundle. In spite of the side's best efforts in the dying minutes, it was to stay that way. A painful one-point loss to the old local rivals.

Haileybury were next to the 'Fortress' and with no past knowledge of the team, as they were a new fixture for this season, we did not know what to expect. A team nearly twice the size of us, who were later featured in Rugby World Magazine as 'Team of the Month', and previously unbeaten, were to be our opposition. The changing-room build up was easy and a reminder of the Oundle game left the boys hungry for a victory. Our best game of the season was about to begin.

Due to a colour clash, the white South Africa Tour kit was to be worn – a strip which we had never lost in. The game was a massively physical contest, with Lindley being hit with a big tackle early on. But this would not intimidate this Stamford side. The forwards, led by Vice-captain Rimmer were superb, and in the first twenty minutes rucked a significantly bigger pack off the field. Again, a dominating performance by Eifion-Jones saw him stealing loose ball at vital times. The two tries came from the centres with the pick of them by Will McMillan, who collected the ball from Streit after a sniping run from the base of the scrum and used some excellent footwork to leave the Haileybury fullback in his wake. More penalties for Chisholm were enough to secure a 16-11 victory and the luck of the white shirts continued.

The win took its toll and we had to manage without our vital playmakers Lindley and McMillan for the local Derby against Uppingham. This was truly a game to forget after slight complacency crept into our minds in the knowledge that Uppingham had been thrashed by Haileybury a few weeks before. Weak tackling let them in for a try and more weak attacking play meant this was enough for the visitors to take the spoils. In spite of a large open-day crowd and sustained pressure late in the second half, Stamford failed to deliver with the game ending in a thoroughly regrettable 8-3 loss.

Just as the Oundle loss had put fire in the bellies of the side and led them to an outstanding performance against Haileybury, the Stamford boys travelled to St Albans School, another new fixture, the following Saturday, determined to make amends. It showed. In spite of an early try for the opposition as a result of a charged-down clearance kick, the Stamford heads didn't drop, and for the remainder of the game, flowing rugby from forwards and backs alike ensued. Tries from Joe Allen and Luke Cripps were both the result of keeping the ball alive through excellent offloading by several players – truly fantastic to watch. James Allan again threw the stereotype of tight-five rugby out of the window and added two tries to his growing tally. A further try from Fletcher and a man-of-the-match performance from Will McMillan also contributed to a deserved 29-11 victory over a previously unbeaten side.

The second Tuesday game of the season saw another narrow victory against a strong Rugby School side. Strong defence from both sides meant few opportunities for either side. Cripps was as ever extremely effective



in the second row and his takes of the restarts were unmatched. Chisholm slotted 3 penalties and we began to pull away, but Rugby stayed in sight. Once again it was Eifion-Jones who secured the vital try and a slender four point win.

Next, the team travelled to Bedford School and produced a very competent display. A well-worked driving maul from the forwards was too strong for Bedford and Holyoake secured the first points of the day. Steven Mills was putting in some perfectly executed touch finders and this coupled with good tactical kicking from Lindley meant that Bedford were pinned back. Some flair in the backs meant McMillan went over for two well taken tries and Laurent Ross in perhaps the finest ten minutes of his rugby career unceremoniously dumped a Bedford player on his back before scoring himself. A 37-17 victory was thoroughly deserved.

The following Saturday saw Nottingham High School make the trip to Mainfields. Crunching tackles came in the midfield from the centres McMillan and Fletcher, tries came from Lindley, Streit and Mills, and the forwards dominated the lineout under the command of blind-side flanker Rimmer. The now unstoppable set move for attacking lineouts, 'Horse-Horse', proved its worth yet again as the rolling maul gifted another try to prop James Allan, and so securing a fifth win on the trot for the 1st XV.

Gresham's loss of their match shirts meant they borrowed some of our away kit, this confused our hooker Plumb but after much explanation from 'Cambridge Rimmer' it all became clear to him and he was more than happy to take to the field. Another sloppy performance meant missed chances. Prop Adam Jones who had joined a few games prior had a superb game and scrummaged his opposite man off the park. Our other prop Allan somehow again added to his ever increasing try count.

And so to perhaps the biggest game of the season at Oakham. Both sides entered the game with a formidable record and Oakham appeared worried as they attempted to disrupt our pre-match preparations and sent us to the other side of town to get changed. The game began at a very fast pace and Stamford controlled the home team, pinning them back in their half. But it was not to be our day, and Chisholm was not having much luck as two penalties sailed agonisingly wide and he had a try disallowed after a well worked move from the backs. Again, Oakham were let off the hook as a high tackle on Lindley only metres from the line went unpunished. Frustration then crept into Stamford play and errors started throwing possession away. Oakham got two break-away tries and went into the break with a healthy lead. The second half brought more bad luck as Eifion-Jones, who had been on fire all game, had to leave the pitch with concussion. His replacement Dawson seemed equally as on fire though and was frequently knocking the opposition players back. More composure saw us creep back into the game and a set lineout move put Plumb over in the corner, but it was too little too late.

The final game of the season was against Loughborough GS at home. The dressing room was in a frenzy as the majority of the team were about to play their last ever school rugby game - for the first time there really was no tomorrow. The game was only ever going to go one way and Chisholm outpaced three Loughborough players to touch down first. Then Vice-Captain Rimmer was on hand to stylishly run in his first try of the season. The second half saw some more exciting play from forwards and backs alike. Number eight Joe Allen, who had progressed into the Midlands U18 squad during the season, was in typically robust form as the pack continued to dominate. Lindley spotted a hole to put Fletcher under the posts and as he described it 'a massive release of power' saw Plumb drive several players back to touch down. To finish the season we return to where I began - 'Le carnage'. The move the players had worked on all year saw the backs begin a rolling maul that stunned the opposition leaving them powerless to alter its course for the tryline. A 36-5 victory was the perfect way to finish the season.

So that was the season and I must thank the efforts of all the players, Mr Hodgson and most of all Mr Laventure. I think all players will look back at this season and think about what could have been with the three games we lost but we have much to be proud about and have produced a season to remember. All that is left to say is to wish the First XV of 2006 the best of luck - Stamford School rugby is truly on the way up.

P15 W7 L8

A thrilling tour of South Africa proved a tough starting point for a long and difficult season. Our results on tour were slightly disappointing; we lost four close matches and drew the final game. However, the 2nd XV returned to Stamford a more disciplined, organised and much improved team.

Our season record did not truly reflect the ability or commitment of the 2nd XV last year. Of the 8 losses, 5 were by 3 points or less in what can only be described as a life shortening season for the coach and loyal spectators.

Two weeks after half term, we had lost 8 out of 12. The last three matches had been heart breakers and I could sense real despondency amongst the boys. The way we fought back from this low point speaks volumes about the character, determination and commitment of all the players involved.

The three performances at the end of the season were by far the best, with crushing victories against Greshams, Oakham and Loughborough. It took time, but in these three matches the team really performed superbly and showed how far they had progressed since the start of the season.

The try of the season came at the beginning of the second half against visitors from a far, Greshams. Already leading the game, we ambushed the Greshams' team with a frenzied attack early in the second half so as to put the result in no doubt. With consistent and effective recycling of the ball coupled with some barbaric running, we were able to create nine or ten phases of play from which we varied our channels of attack. This caused disarray in the Greshams' defence which allowed for a fantastic score in the corner exploiting the space we had created through constant pressure close to the breakdown. It was a fantastic and memorable try in which every member of the team was involved. The first 50 minutes of this match exhibited our best rugby of the season.

The highlight of the season was definitely our away win at Oakham. Our notoriously strong neighbours could not cope with our powerful pack, slick handling backs and frightening team defence. Mark Mcleod scored a terrific try in the second half showing real pace and agility to return a kick for a score under the posts. Stephen Miskell scored a try and kicked superbly, as he did all year. With a Rob Owen try, the game was beyond the grasp of a grovelling Oakham side.

To see the team performing in a way that we had all been working towards for over four months was truly rewarding, some of the rugby was quite breathtaking. The penny had finally dropped. The boys had learned what is required to win a rugby match and win convincingly.

35 players represented the 2nd XV in 2005. Everyone who played has had a positive impact on the team and I feel privileged to have been able to pick a team from such a talented group of individuals. Michael Gent captained the side superbly all season and lead by example with some outstanding performances. I wish the leavers all the best for their future in rugby, and hope to see the others in the 1st XV next year.

Awards

Most Improved: Tom Hammond
Player of the season: Michael Gent (Capt)

DGC

4th XV

The 4th XV rides again. After a break of several seasons, the mighty 4th XV were resurrected due to popular demand. The squad involved were truly a diverse bunch of young men - Austin Young from the USA and Ilja Iljina from Finland gave our team an international flavour, whilst the motely crew of beat up party animals and studious, scholarly types completed the melting pot. With great vigour and determination, the fourths squad was wittled into a team to face the mighty Haileybury at home. Upper Drift has not witnessed a contest like this for some time - a rather inexperienced set of forwards put in a colossal effort with Alasdair Watson, Michael Chin, Calum Steele and Ilja putting in the muscle. Behind the forwards, our secret weapon, an excellent back line, who truth be told should with a little more willpower and application be playing third or second team rugby, Kris Taylor Rush, Adam Humphreys, Hugh Devas, Josh Cuevas and Andrew Carter provided guile and cunning with the ball in hand. Amazingly with two minutes to go, we were leading 12 - 5 thanks to a brilliant mispass by Adam Humphreys, Hugh Devas ghosted in for a try, claimed by

Mr Burns as the best try he'd seen all season (credit goes to Backs coach Will Clough). However, the 2nd half had been virtual one way traffic, tackling like demons and kicking the ball as far towards the College was a great tactic for a team lacking match fitness, however the referee was tiring of being asked "how long ref?". The inevitable happened, a stronger, fitter Haileybury side managed to breach our defences and a converted try saw the match tied. A fantastic effort from our side, and their tenacious effort was to set the tone for the rest of the season.

The next match saw Uppingham visiting the hallowed turf of Upper Drift. To the strains of "this is our house", the team were extremely pumped up for this big derby match. We started very brightly, we had some amazing team spirit, the backs were full of pomp and inventiveness and Adam Humphrey was pulling the strings behind the pack. After a period of sustained pressure the ball came down the line, Toby Simpson from 10 yards out bashed his opposite number and the full back to score in the corner! Unfortunately Hugh Devas couldn't convert, but we held the lead until half time. Uppingham, as expected, came back strongly in the second half and after numerous phases, our tiring side leaked two tries much to the delight of the travelling parental support on the touchline! Surely, our fitness levels weren't going to throw away another victory? However, the fourths are made of stern stuff and again with lungs bursting and no quarter asked or given they came thundering back. In the dying minutes, this time it was our opponents asking for time. Toby Simpson again received the ball on the wing, with a step, a shimmy and searing pace he scored a brilliant individual try in the corner, Hugh Devas calmly stepped up and slotted a magnificent conversion straight through the posts for a stunning 12 – 10 victory!.

The previous two matches had taken their toll and with several injuries we were visited by Rugby school. Rugby's fourths were a large and lean outfit, their superior fitness told very quickly and despite a valiant effort, nothing seemed to work for our team. We battled throughout the match, but disappointingly lost heavily 34 – 0.

Our first away fixture, was away at Bedford Modern. Unfortunately injuries and transport problems resulted in only 14 players travelling to the fixture. This therefore required a super human effort from our depleted team, I was not let down by any of the travelling players, who gave their all. Bedford kindly loaned us a player, who was undoubtedly the man of the match, as he gave everything and thwarted Bedford time and time again with a great display of tackling. In adversity we appeared galvanised and played Barbarians style flowing rugby. In the early exchanges we were by far the better team, however at half time we were 5-0 down. In previous matches we had wilted and relied on replacements, here there could be no back up and no reprieve from the sidelines. We attacked the Bedford line solidly through the second half with a tremendous display typified by Calum "Howlin' Mad" Steele. Unfortunately the line couldn't be breached and a length-of-the-field break away try saw the gap widen to 10-0. Still we refused to give up and came storming back. After constant pressure, the match was killed off in the last minute with a further try. A 17-0 defeat was the closest game I have seen. Disappointingly, we lost - but the team spirit and commitment was exemplary and I was immensely proud of their efforts.

The final match of the season was away at Oakham. Injuries were healed and a full strength side visited the cauldron of fortress Oakham. This was a particular grudge match for Ross Porter and Alex Houston, who both studied their GCSE's at Oakham. Both sides wanted to end the season with a victory, it was going to be a blood and thunder encounter – literally. Stamford took the lead early on, with Andrew 'Dan' Carter dropping a goal (against his coaches advice - OK, I was proved wrong), tackles flying in from both sides and the ball literally zinging from end to end. The game hinged on discipline - Oakham showed little and so ended the match with 13 players. However, the damage had already been done with Hugh Devas scoring the only try of the match. A bad tempered encounter was won 8-0.

The team had put in a huge amount of effort this season, they had showed great character and resilience throughout the season, bouncing back from poor performances and coming back to win matches when behind. To beat Uppingham and Oakham were great results and I thank all the young men who turned out for the side. I thoroughly enjoyed losing my voice on the touchline and was almost as exhausted as them at the end of every match, I look forward to next season with great anticipation!

Mr R Brewster

U16A

Our opening fixture was at a windswept Felstead school. We did not know what to expect here as we had never played them before, but our basics were rusty and we ended up drawing 5-5 a game we should have won. However the game did perhaps produce the try of the season scored by Josh Cutteridge.

The following weekend saw us return to Bedford Modern, last year this team had beaten us after a long night at a CCF camp, but we were determined to reverse the result this year. We proved to be far stronger than them in the forwards and we gave one of our best performances of the season. Ker and O'Shea worked very well in the line outs and were expertly picked out by hooker Darran Wesley. This culminated in tries from O'Shea and Fowler and an excellent individual try from Captain Dave 'Angel' who outran their whole backline from the halfway line to score under the posts. The score ended 22-7.

Our first home game of the season came against Wellingborough; we had not been beaten at "Fort Stamford" for a year and a half so we would not give up the fight easily. However, Wellingborough's good backline play and many Stamford mistakes led to a disappointing result with Wellingborough winning 17-10.

On the 27th of September the crowds of Mainfields 1 saw history made by the Stamford Under 16A team. Oundle, our biggest rivals, arrived at Stamford wanting to continue our bad run of form. However, we had different ideas. After an extra incentive of champagne if we won was made by Mr Mitchell, we took to the field. The pack were simply awesome in this game - the scrummaging was solid and we found ourselves driving the Oundle pack backwards on many occasions, this was thanks to powerful rucking from Bond, Bownes and Neill. The game was extremely tight but 'horse horse' ball was the difference between the two teams with a try from Bownes scoring his first ever Stamford try. Furthermore, after some great interlinking play between the backs and forwards another try was scored by Cutteridge in the corner. Then in the second half an excellent break from Felgate, well supported by Fowler resulted in the forth try. The final try was scored by Darran Wesley out running the fullback from a chip kick by Stuart Roche to score. Stamford won 22-15 and it was a very proud moment for all the team.

The following weekend we travelled to Haileybury and played in the driving rain - this performance was not great but in the end we won comfortably 22-5, with tries coming from Felgate, Bangay and two for McEntee. The backs played well in this match with Edwards and Felgate interchanging well with the slippery ball. Perhaps the highlight of the match was a kick by Dan Smeeth that went from our 22 backwards to our 5 metre line! Uppingham was our second derby game of the season and a very poor game in terms of our performance. However this was not helped by some interesting incidents on the field of play. There were moments of brilliance from the backs, especially Bangay, Roche and Garner, and notable performances from Mark Bond and Adam Neill in the forwards. We were both disappointed and angry by the end of the game which had finished 36-5 to Uppingham.

The following Saturday we travelled to St Albans. This was our poorest display of the season and we lost 7-5 to a lacklustre St Albans XV. A failure to use the ball when we had possession resulted in breakaway tries from the St Albans backs.

In our next game we graced the hallowed turf of Rugby School and played on the pitch where this great game was invented. To win on this turf would make victory even sweeter. Again we were pumped up for this game and the team's belief in each other was shining through. Straight from kick-off we pulverised the Rugby forwards and another excellent Josh Cutteridge try was the result of an exquisite 'swing ball'. Other tries in the second half came from Felgate and McEntee, both as a result of the driving line out and a call devised by Mr Laventure and Mr Mitchell. An excellent 15-11 win to finish a disappointing first half of the season off. We had played 8, won 4, lost 3 and drawn 1 and a strong second half was needed.

The first game back was a monumental role reversal from the previous season - Bedford School had beaten us 60-5 last year, but in the return fixture we outfoxed the Bedfordians in all departments. The backs were brilliant in this match with Roche, Garner, Edwards, Felgate, Fowler, Bangay and Hawkins all making significant contributions. In the forwards, Captain Purcell played very well, scoring twice alongside Fowler who scored in the second half to set up a 19-3 victory.

Nottingham High School were our next opponents. This was a relatively easy win for us but again our performance was not good. 8 ball was again effective resulting in two tries for Purcell and a try for Henry Ker, with the last try coming from Dominic Bangay after a clever and smooth backs move orchestrated by Felgate. Further points came from the boot of Sam Edwards, with a conversion and a penalty, and with the final score being 25-7 to Stamford.

Our longest away trip of the season came at Greshams. On a very muddy pitch handling was poor but the forwards had a solid enough game with consistent performances from Neill, Bond and O'Shea. In the backs Garner and Edwards both had very good games, with Sam scoring a dazzling solo try. The other try came



U16B

from second row Liam McEntee and the conversion from Jak Garner, with the end result being 12-7 to Stamford.

In the penultimate game of the season came a very big disappointment - our final Derby game of the season came against Oakham School. This was a very tight game throughout but the Oakham pack was very strong and a couple of their backs were very effective, resulting in Oakham winning 12-5. Strong Stamford performances came from David Purcell, Darran Wesley and the try scorer Josh Cutteridge.

Our final game together as a team came against Loughborough Grammar School. It was a shame that Captain David Purcell was not present due to illness but stand in captain Jak Garner coped well. This was a strong defensive performance from Stamford, with the team defending for most of the second half. However, Tom Bownes scored twice and another try added by Dominic Bangay in the first half gave us a big enough cushion to win 19-7.

This season was one of the most enjoyable seasons we have had, our relationships as a side have grown since year 8 and this culminated in a fantastic display against the likes of Oundle and Rugby. I must personally thank David for his fantastic leadership of the side in the last three years; his attitude and commitment to the team have been exemplary. Furthermore Mr Mitchell has been a pivotal figure in the success of the team this year and the record speaks for itself: played 13, won 8, lost 4 and drawn 1.

By Liam McEntee

Mr Jones was at the helm of a fiery bunch of lively teenage characters for the 05/06 rugby season. He inherited a squad of mixed nationalities from Mr Barton and set about welding them into a metal like form. As it happened, graphite was the end product: hard, light and occasionally brittle.

The U16B squad consisted of a few homegrown talents in the form of Adam Hunter and Dan Smeeth. However, a cultured squad was made up of a Sikh, two Welshmen, an Irishman, some Americans, many Eastern Europeans, two Portuguese and a fair few swamp-donkeys from the Fens. A stir was caused at Bedford when the coach accused Mr Jones of being a cheat by including Ben Wilkinson at scrum half with the 'obvious advantage of having webbed hands'.

Despite the language barriers, Mr Jones' motivational skills gave us inspiration for the first two fixtures of the season. Jack Turner gave a rare appearance in the opening game against Felsted and starred, scoring a hat full of tries. Our winning streak continued at Bedford Modern where Edwin "The Wizard" Williams helped guide us to victory once more. His quadruple sidestep when racing down the wing was said to be one of the highlights of the season. "He was like that person from River Dance," commented Will Evans in an elated changing room after the match.

A try by Rob "Crazy Horse" Cole in the opening seconds at Uppingham left Mr Jones licking his lips at the prospect of a legendary victory. Under immense pressure from the magical and illusive figure that is Tim Allan, the ball was dropped and Rob scooted under the posts for an easy try. After our 65-5 defeat, Rob and Tim were found together in tears, both expressing their disbelief at such a thumping.

Despite inspirational running by Joel Shipp, an inspired try by Jonny Yeates and brutal tackling from captain Dan Smeeth, we slumped to a defeat at St Albans. Although the next couple of games were won with good work from the likes David West and Bobby Johnson, these victories could not make up for our defeat in the last game of the season. Harry Farnsworth, who had served Stamford School flawlessly and always with a smile on his face for eleven or so years, was captain for his last game in maroon. Harry had always been a consistent player, more often than not being one of the stand out performers. As a result, we all put in a fine effort at Loughborough but ended up losing 21-38 in an exciting game.

As you can see, apart from winning over half of our games we also had a really good time combining a relaxed yet determined attitude with a great standard of rugby. As well as thanking such players as Harry, Nate and Joe Hanback, who left us at the end of the season, we should thank all of our regular players and those who filled in for us when we were short. And of course Mr Jones, who was a brilliant coach who combined knowledge of the game with a terrific sense of humour.

Dan Smeeth

U15A

We met for pre-season training a few days before term started and I realised I had a very committed team and considerable ability throughout the team.

The clear aim of the season was to go unbeaten.

We started with Felsted at home and produced a good, disciplined performance winning 38 – 0. With excellent performances from Guy Michels and Tom Plant the captain.

Bedford Modern were a difficult team to beat. Although we looked far better their defence and our lack of precision made for a very close game. Guy Michels scored two tries with Toby Cole and Vincent Spurr adding one each - a very competitive game.

Kings Peterborough were our next opponents and were always going to be weak so with a few 'B' team players we won 43 – 0 without too much trouble.

Wellingbough were next on the list and having to start with a few players short due to failing to train at the Thursday practice led to a very close game that we won 24 – 23. Some important lessons were learnt but tries from Michels, Toby Cole, and two from Jeremy Cunnew were enough for a victory. However a lack of discipline was creeping in to the team mainly in the form of complaining about the referee's decisions.

Oundle arrived with many injuries and having just finished a three day camp, were very weak. We won 59 – 0.

Haileybury, our next opponents and a new fixture saw the lack of discipline really affect the team's moral. Problems at half back put us under great pressure and we lost 14 – 7, smashing our hopes for an unbeaten season..

We travelled to Uppingham next and played the worst game of the term. Our mental preparation was poor (we beat them the year before) and our discipline was even worse. We lost 38 – 24.

St Albans, another new fixture, saw a very competitive match in which we played better than the previous week but still had too many thoughts on the referee's performance and not enough on our own. We lost 32 – 10.

After three successive defeats we travelled to Rugby School with a slightly weakened team but played with the right attitude and although it took a while to gain the upper hand, good performance from Elliot Whittingham enabled us to win 32 – 15.

Bedford School (who won the Daily Mail Cup and were unbeaten) were our next opponents. The positive attitude that now filled the team produced one of the best performances of the term. Being without Toby Cole, our No 8, weakened both our attack and defence. However, a great team performance led to a very competitive game in which, apart from a 10 minute spell in the second half when we conceded two tries, we drew. A very encouraging performance.

We travelled to Nottingham High School in a very buoyant mood and really determined to win - which we did 41 – 0 in an extremely disciplined performance, and against a side that did not expect to be beaten. Greshams and Loughborough were beaten 52 – 5 and 41 – 15 away from home in solid performances of good committed and intelligent rugby.

Oakhams were through to the final of the Daily Mail Vase trophy at Twickenham which gave us extra incentive to play well, and we did. The team were very determined not to concede a point and showed real discipline. Our penalty count was very low enabling us to win 27 – 0.

This was a very satisfying and enjoyable term from my point of view as a coach. At training all team members were always attentive, keen, and desperate to learn and improve. The behaviour on the long coach journeys was excellent and the boys were a pleasure to be with. Much of the credit needs to go to the captain who led the team on and off the field in exemplary fashion.

Team Members

Matthew Outen, James Griffin, Matthew Jones, Charles Wilson, John Murphy, Tom Plant(Captain), Michael Fairbairn, Toby Cole, William Thompson, Vincent Spurr, Elliott Whittingham, Guy Michels, Jonathan Stoddart, Jonathan Bull, Jacob Bradshaw, and Ton Dowdell. Congratulations to all on an excellent term's rugby.
D.F.W.

U15B

A large number of boys, 28 in total, represented the school during the season. All worked tremendously hard during training and demonstrated a willingness to push themselves to the limit in the matches.

In the forwards the loose play of Max Physick, Tom Ladds and Nathan Pape was outstanding - they were very determined and made many fine tackles as well as launching a number of attacks from broken play. They were excellently supported by Andrew Forsyth, Dawson Bannister, Harry Coups, Tom Winspear and Joe Robinson. However, our best ball winner was the hooker Ben Chew - any loose ball on the floor and Ben was never far away. Our scrum was usually based around this group but a number of others contributed much to the season either as substitutes, or replacements when one or more was injured. Due to the combative and competitive nature of the boys we certainly had our share of battered bodies during the term.

The most unusual injury I can recall in over thirty years of watching schoolboy rugby resulted from Jacob Bradshaw 'taking out' a spectators people carrier when chasing a high ball. I ought to say that it was positioned some six metres off the pitch when the clash took place.

The team and the backs were captained by Alex Turner, a strong running centre and another very determined player who suffered from more than his share of injuries. He was well supported by the half backs Oliver Lindley and Tom Dolby with Bradley Felston at inside centre. The full backs and wings were Jacob Bradshaw, James Allen, Grant Wallwork and Ed Beardshaw.

The season started well with a comfortable win against Felsted. All members of the team played well and eight tries were scored; Harry Coups led the way with two. The Bedford Modern game was a different story all together. The forwards lost Harry Coups and Tom Ladds and were outplayed; the backs found themselves under considerable pressure and could not get the ball across the gain line.

The next match was similar to the first one and Andrew Forsyth led the way against Wellingborough with 3 tries. The boys then had an excellent match against Oundle - both sets of players had just returned from weekends away and lacked any real penetration, but they were well matched and Max Physick had a fine game and rescued the team with a second half try.

There followed four very tough matches where the opposition proved much too strong but in all of the games the boys gave everything in their efforts to restrict their opponents scoring. More than this they worked hard in training in an effort to improve their performance in subsequent games.

The season finished with four close matches, two good wins at Notts High and Greshams followed by two well-contested games in which the boys deserved closer scores than appear on the result sheet.

A number of boys were primarily C team players but deserve to be mentioned for the great job that they did when called upon to travel away, often at short notice; these were Tom Crowley, James Drain, Iain Bamber and Michael Smyth.

Although it was not hugely successful the season was a very enjoyable one. The boys were a pleasure to work with and I thank them all for their hard work in training both outdoors and the gym sessions in the second half of term. I am very grateful to Mr.Pike for all his help with our sessions on Wednesdays and to Tom Galvin who ran many of the Thursday night sessions, the boys listened well and their play certainly benefited from the drills.

MRB

U14A

The season started in the snow and wind in Cambridge with a visit to the Perse School. Stamford looked after the ball in contact and mounted attack after attack. Cold conditions made handling difficult and it was unforced errors that kept The Perse in the game. Eventually good driving play from Slater, Brown and Berridge brought the backs space and time, which they took advantage of to go 5 points up. At the start of the second half a mistake led to a break away try for the opposition and things were a little tense until the visitors regrouped and ran in a winner 5 minutes before time.

Stowe School in more winter rain proved a very stern test of our defence. Against considerably larger opposition, Stamford produced wave after wave of attack only to be frustrated by poor handling. Two interception tries gave Stowe a lead they would never give up, and although great work from Owen and Fuller produced points, a loss followed. A lesson learned the hard way.

The following week saw an outstanding display against local rivals, Oundle, as the forwards set a solid

platform from which the backs, led by Downer, Leetch and Jones were able to penetrate and get over the gain line. Stamford threw everything at Oundle and despite going into the last 10 minutes in the lead, they were wobbling. Great commitment pulled through much to the relief of the home support.

A week later and the English weather meant we had a weekend off! The holiday was followed by unfortunate injuries and two very tough encounters with Spalding GS and Nottingham High School. Two losses but new talents were unearthed in Ben Welch and Tom Helliwell.

On a glorious Sunday, RGS Newcastle appeared on the scene for their annual weekend trip. This was a great game in many respects, and although Stamford finished on the losing side, their defence and contesting of the breakdown proved that lessons were being learned and the team were moving forward.

A cold and miserable day provided the backdrop for a disappointing day at Loughborough. Stamford managed to produce their worst display of the season and decided that it should quickly be forgotten!

Showing great tenacity at training the side then reeled off three straight victories against The Leys and completed a double over both The Perse and Oundle School. The forwards were winning more ball, led by the outstanding Sam Cole, and the backs, aided by the introduction of Charlie Kay, were learning how to use it. These games served as proof that although a small side, matched against a similar sized opposition they were developing the skills and strategies to be successful.

The final game of the season produced some very good rugby but ended in a loss against an Uppingham outfit who simply had too much pace and power. Although the season finished with a loss, the team had made great strides both as a group and as individuals. They are going to experience some tough times ahead against bigger opposition but should remember that they will catch those teams up eventually, and when they do, their skills will come to the fore.

Awards were presented to Sam Cole, Freddie Berridge, Alex Jones and Mat Fuller. The team were a pleasure to coach and never let the school down

Squad; Berridge, Payne, Harriman-Hardy, Welch, Brown, Redding, Helliwell, Slater, Griffin, Fuller, Owen, Leetch, Downer, Powell, Hounslow, Kay, Wilkinson

U14B

Played 11, won 2, lost 9. This may not have seemed the greatest of seasons but the three narrow losses could have been the other way round and there was a greatly noticeable improvement from game to

game (e.g. 43 points better against Oundle) - I would say that the U15's pre-season training was a success.

Our disappointing record did not stop the team from playing thrilling rugby and enjoying it, enthusiastically turning up for training and matches with a great team spirit.

The season got off to a strong, hopeful start, with a large victory over the Purse in a snowstorm, with Tim Anders and Norman Law being jointly named Man Of The Match, whilst George Hariman-Hard, hat-trick scorer, was quickly and quietly promoted to the 'A' team. Unfortunately losses followed to Stowe (we never woke up from the stunning scenery), Oundle (two early chances missed but we kept going and nearly scored at the end), Deacon's (beaten by two exceptional players) and Nottingham (one of the best teams Mr. Hodgson has seen).

After the half-term break, with the weather improving, the team improved. We faced R.G.S. Newcastle a touring side to who we lost 17-14. Next up Oundle, on who we were determined to tighten the margins of loss and after a game that we dominated, two late tries meant we went down 12-0. The Leys came next, a game that we thought playing the way that we were, we might win. Unfortunately the worst team performance of the year saw the Leys squeeze past 12-7. After morale sapping loss we were to play Loughborough. In the rather cold second half of the season a close game unfolded, the score-line ruined by a late breakaway try, against the run of play, when pushing for the win.

Our next game was the return match against the Purse, which had been rearranged, due to a frozen pitch. Unfortunately we were not at our best again, but we scraped through 14-10. The last game of the season, with a new look side, saw us narrowly lose on conversions, 19-15 to Uppingham in an attractive game to watch. The Player Of The Year was Tom Williams despite dropping down from the 'A' team part way through the year, for his enthusiasm and commitment. The champagne moment was in the game against the Leys, when Josh Green slotted the conversion between the posts, in a strong wind, 5 metres in from touch.

It has been a great pleasure and honour to captain the side and I would like to thank the team for

playing hard, Mr. Laventure for coaching the forwards and especially to Mr. Hodgson for being the patient, skilful coach of the team.

Peter Wilson

My thanks to Peter for his captaincy and for writing this report. As always, my thanks to the players for their commitment. I hope that they enjoyed their season. My thanks to the referees who allow these games to happen and my final thanks to the parents for their support.

JPH

U13A

This was a fantastic season for the U13A team. The players trained incredibly hard throughout the season and were able to put their new skills into practice on match days.

An early season encounter saw the visit of Bedford Modern. The boys were keen to avenge last season's defeat and started the game well. Modern were physically stronger, but there is no substitute for raw pace at this level. Hounslow and Kay proved too quick for their opposite centres and a hard fought victory was secured, 26-17. King's Peterborough, Loughborough and Wellingborough also succumbed to superior handling and aggressive, running rugby. The game plan was clear right from the start of the term. Win quick ruck ball from the forwards, and punch holes through the centre with strong close support from the fit and mobile back row. This proved most effective with a



plethora of tries scored in this manner in the first half of term. Tom Mitchell formed a clear link with Issac Wilkinson, who was able to get his two talented centres, James Hounslow and Charlie Kay running from depth.

Oakham is a big fixture for the boys and they prepared thoroughly for the match during the preceding week. The U13As struck as soon as the whistle blew, winning quick ball and using it to devastating effect. Nathan Graham, a recent recruit from the B team, had a great game, showing genuine pace in attack and bone-crunching tackling in defence. Beating Oakham by 30 points was particularly sweet for a certain old boy of the school!

Further convincing performances followed against Witham Hall and Princethorpe College, where the U13As scored 100 points and conceded just 17. The season was shaping up nicely. An inaugural away trip against St Albans was the last game before half-term. St Albans were an unknown quantity but, judging by the confidence of their master in charge who informed me that they were unbeaten in 2 years, they would be a difficult side to face. The game proved to be the unquestionable highlight of the season. Both teams traded some vicious blows and were drawing 19-19 at half-time. Mr Pike gave an animated and passionate half-time talk which focused very much on not allowing the opposition to cross our try line. Would Stamford have the bottle to rise to the challenge in the second half?

Of course they would! The second half witnessed a defensive display of epic proportions with Cutteridge, Mitchell, Graham, Hounslow and Andrew all impressing with their fierce tackling. Neither side was willing to let the other gain the upper hand and it stayed at 19-19 until the last 5 minutes of the game. Some creative back play gave Ross Cutteridge an ideal opportunity to draw the St Alban's full-back and put in Nathan Graham for the winning try of the game. However, Ross went himself and was tackled short of the line much to the frustration of the team. It didn't do Mr Pike's blood pressure any good either! It seemed fitting then that Mr



Cutteridge should make amends for this error by heroically scoring 2 minutes later. 26-19 and the final whistle couldn't come soon enough. There was still time, however, for St Alban's to mount one last attack and still time for Nathan Graham to make one last match saving tackle. What a fantastic game of rugby, and one that the players will remember for many years to come.

The second half of the season is always much tougher than the first. There are no easy games and there are certainly some big fixtures against much larger schools. Bishop's Stortford, Bedford and Greshams were the games the U13s targeted at the beginning of the season and they all proved to be significant, defining matches.

Stortford is always a tough one. The boys are well drilled, competitive and big. This year was no exception. The game itself was uncompromising with some big hits and direct running. Stamford scored first through Cutteridge, but the opposition replied with a converted try to make the score 5-7 at half time. Stamford started the second half strongly and, with excellent ball retention, managed to win a penalty in front of the posts. Craig Felston duly knocked it over and Stamford were in the lead 8-7. It stayed that way for much of the remainder of the match but Stortford's size proved too much and their no. 8 bustled his way over for the winning try. The dream of an unbeaten season was over – for this season at least.

The game against Bedford was a similar story. They were strong in every position, but particularly out wide. Their superior pace had an immediate impact on the match, which was effectively over by half-time. However, it was pleasing to see Stamford improve as the game went on and the boys played some of the best rugby of the season to give the score some respectability. 27-12.

Stamford proved too strong for a weak side from Nottingham High School, scoring 9 unanswered tries with 5 conversions, but would the U13As be able to overcome Greshams, the final game of the targeted trinity? I had never seen the boys so determined in the warm up, and as soon as the whistle blew they played the sort of rugby that I knew they were capable of. Their pace, power and commitment was very impressive and Greshams had no answer for it. The outcome? A 43-5 victory to Stamford.

The final game of the season saw a confident U13A team play host to Loughborough for the second time in the season. Again, Stamford's pace and power proved too much and a comfortable 47-0 win followed.

Played 15. Won 13. Lost 2. This was a fantastic set of players, who trained hard throughout the season, love their rugby and, rather like me, love to win. It was also a genuine team which has remained largely unchanged for the whole season. I wish them well in their rugby playing careers and will watch them with great interest as they progress through the school. Thanks are due to the captain Tom Mitchell, the pack leader Ross Cutteridge, but most of all to the players who made 2005 such a memorable season. Well done!

ANP

South Africa



The build up to South Africa 2005 started early in the year with many fundraising initiatives. These involved the tour party making trips to school events such as parents evenings and sports days to sell tour programmes, wristbands and mugs. A couple of very profitable days were spent bag packing in Morrisons. Much hard work was put in here but a special mention must go to Adam Rimmer who was the master of fundraising with his 'unique' sale pitches to many an unsuspecting member of the public. The training began with Monday after school circuit training sessions, which soon awoke the tour squad to the hard work that was needed to make the tour a success. These sessions saw players who did not know each other well starting to bond and as the sessions went on a tour spirit started to become apparent. Extra touch rugby sessions on Fridays also let the guys improve their skills and fitness. This continued months before the tour and a final two-day training camp a couple of days before departure left the guys raring to go.

After a worrying couple of days the South African Airways strikes ended and day one started as planned with the 12-hour flight to Cape Town. Upon landing table mountain was the first thing we noticed and the final realisation that after the

months of hard work we were finally on tour. The first night let everyone begin to experience the hospitality and friendliness of the people we were going to meet.

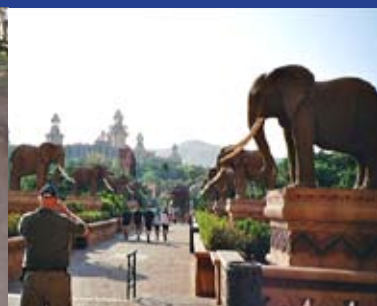
Our first billet was in the small town of Picketberg about two hours outside of Cape Town. Picketberg lay in a large flat area surrounded by mountains, where we stayed with an Afrikaans school. Our first game the next day was one to be remembered where the pitch stood on a plateau with an impressive mountain range on one side and the rest of the valley on the other side. The talk of a big schoolboy rugby following in South Africa lived up to its reputation - a big crowd and the pre match performance from a cheer-leading squad was an eye opener. Both the first and second XV's lost close encounters with some rusty performances but much was learnt from our first taste of South African rugby.

We returned back to Cape Town for the next two days and after a day of relaxation and shopping we took a trip to the Township of Langa. This was a poverty stricken area which was something we had not seen up close before. The reaction of the children to our ar-



rival was surreal as they gathered around us and wanted to walk with us and sit on our shoulders. An experience none of us will ever forget I am sure. The first team played against the Township team and recorded their first win with a gutsy performance against a very fast team that never gave up. That afternoon a trip to the Newlands Stadium gave us the opportunity to watch some of the best rugby in the world as South Africa played New Zealand in a Tri-Nations game and we saw again, first hand, the passionate support shown by the South Africans.

The following morning we left for our next destination and after a stop at a winery in Stellenbosh, where we were taught how to properly taste wine, we arrived at the whale-watching town of Hermanus. A fantastic view over the sea awaited us at Hermanus and whales would come very close so we could see them from our hotel rooms. Our second training ses-



sion was carried out on the beach and playing a game of touch where the waves crashed in and out provided one of the funniest moments on tour as Philip Dawson powered through a gap in the defence and was then destroyed by the next wave.

Day nine saw us whale watching, well some of us, as the choppy seas left almost half the tour squad with their face in a bag for the duration of the trip (or four bags if you're Neil Michels). The next coach journey was to Bredasdorp, where we met our next billets. A trip to Cape Agulhas, the most southern point of Africa, where the Indian Ocean meets the Atlantic was our relaxation before the third game on tour. The seconds lost 10 - 0 to a well drilled side but showed signs of improvement again. The firsts played some exciting rugby and recorded their second win on tour winning 33-17.

Knysna was next on the list and after stopping at Mossel Baai we went on a tour of the picturesque harbour, which much to the tour party's relief was not such a choppy ride. A trip inland through some of the best scenery in the world led to a wildlife centre with tigers and crocodiles amongst other creatures and the chance to stroke cheetahs. The ostrich farm followed and some of the most amusing moments on tour as Tom Hammond, Matthew Plumb and Adam Rimmer rode the birds, and held on for dear life! Unfortunately for Rimmer though, his grip was too weak, causing him to fall and land unceremoniously in a



pile of Ostrich excrement. Shame!

Next stop Outdshoorn, a very big and successful rugby nursery. The fourth game on tour was unfortunately another loss for the seconds but signs of improvement were clear to see. The firsts however pulled out a blinding performance against a much bigger side. This was a game where the forwards played out of their skins and well worked tries, a big defence and a lot of heart secured a 14-11 win. After a very physical game the Congo adventure cave tour was next and the team were forced to push themselves through such obstacles as the 'Devils Chimney' and the 'postbox', which unfortunately for some of the props (Jonny Pearce and Tom Holyoake) could not accommodate their size.

The journey to Port Elizabeth was a long one and stops at popular surfing beaches of Plettenburg and Jeffrey's Bay resulted in some very chilly swimming. A short stay here

meant a visit to a game park to see elephants and some relaxation time before moving to East London to meet our next billets and the fifth game. On the match day we went to the school's assembly in the morning, which was far too early as school started at 7.30am there. A training session followed and relaxation at the final beach on tour. The matches were to see a poor performance from the seconds result in another loss which was followed by an equally as poor first half from the firsts. However the Stamford determination was clear to all and the team battled back to take the lead 5 minutes from time, only to have it cruelly taken away in the final minutes as the guys lost concentration. The defeat was gutting for everyone and much was learnt from this game.

A nerve-racking morning was awaiting the older guys on the tour as AS results came in before we set foot on the plane to Johan-



nesburg. Needless to say it was a quiet morning. Upon landing we moved straight on to Springs to meet our final Billets and had another quick training session, as at this late stage of the tour the tiredness was evident.

More relaxation and a trip to the Gold Reef City theme park was next before the final game on tour, and many members of the tour hiring small bicycles decided to race them down a steep street in the park - more hours of amusement. The Apartheid Museum was a big eye opener and let us all understand a little better the massive changes that have happened in South Africa over the last 20 years.

site of the 1995 rugby world cup final - to see a provincial game, and shopping in the Sandton city was a fitting end to the rugby side of the tour.

Sun City was eagerly awaited on Day 21 and after a couple of hours on the bus we checked into our hotel. The next three days was a brilliant end to tour where the guys did many activities including waterskiing, jet skiing, driving speed-boats, golf and going down a 2km Zip Line at 95mph, to name just a few. Trips through the Pilansberg game reserve also let us see some of the fantastic wildlife, and lions, rhino, buffalo, giraffe and hippos were all spotted. The final night cumulated



The final game on tour was then the next concern, and what a way to finish the tour it was. An inspired performance by the second's, meant they led for most of the game only to have Spring Boys High School equalise in the final minutes. The performance however showed how much the tour had brought the side on. The First XV game was a big spectacle and a huge crowd and marching band performance created a very special atmosphere for the players. The singing of the national anthems before kick off was something very special. Determined to finish the tour on a high the first's produced a mammoth performance to win 22-8. Job done!!

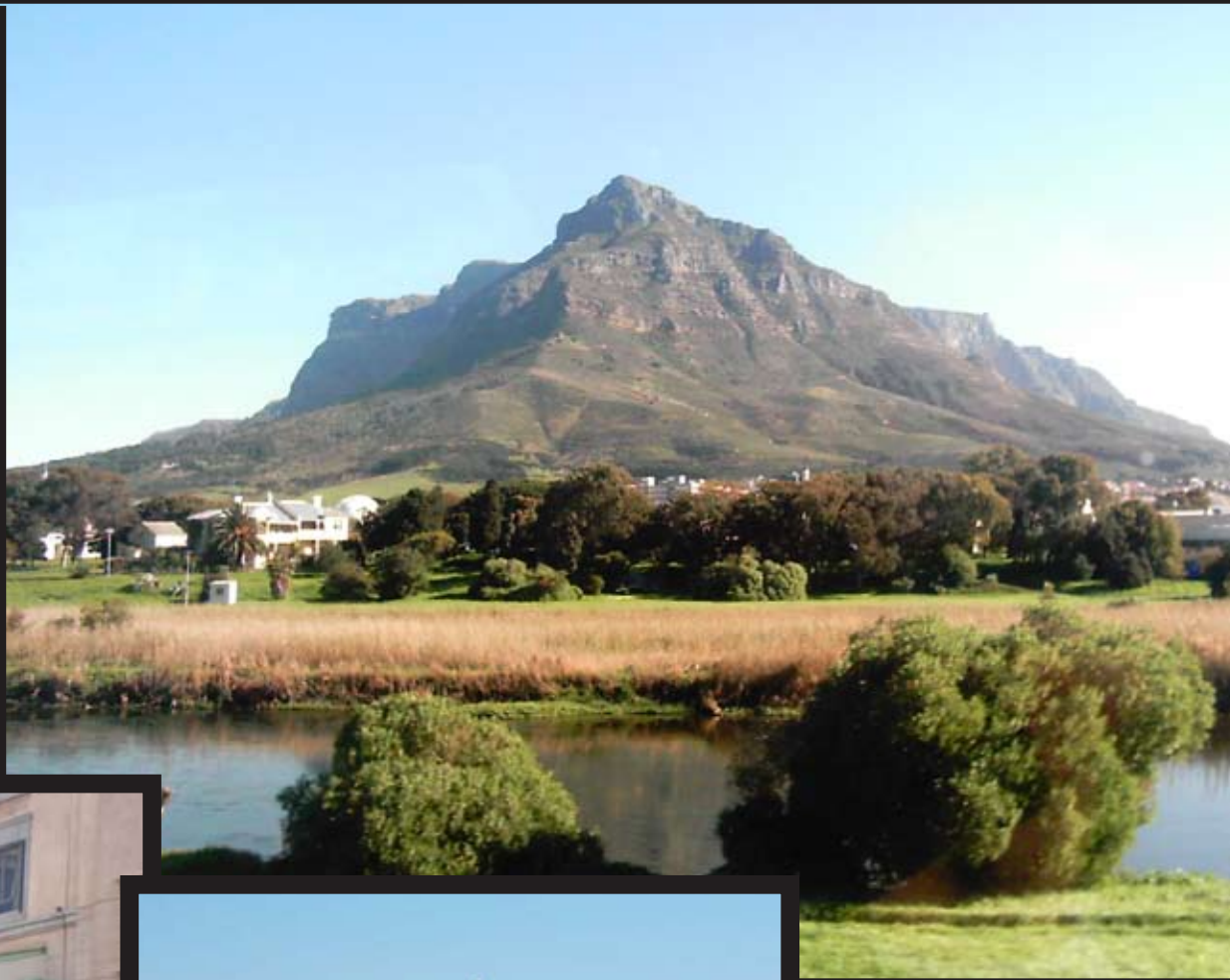
in the 'serious' awards and then the 'not so serious' awards and an enjoyable rest of the evening.

A fantastic experience with a fantastic group of people in one of the most diverse and interesting countries in the world sums up the South Africa Tour 2005 and it will be remembered by everyone involved for the rest of their lives. An enormous thank you must go to all who made it possible; Lennie, Hodgson, Colley, Brewster, Stamp and most of all Mr Laventure.

Chris Fletcher (Tour Captain)

Our penultimate day with our billets saw us visiting Ellis Park - the







Cross Country

Junior Team

In recent years the junior cross country team has become firmly established as our most successful team, and this year was no exception. The year 7 & 8 team won the Fenland League emphatically for the 2nd year running, beating over 15 local schools in all 3 fixtures and winning by a huge margin of 104 points. The team was led from the front ably by our talented captain, Tristan Roper-Caldbeck and regular excellent individual performances were provided by Tom Mitchell in year 8 and in year 7 Louis Grimoldby & Patrick Conboy were our top performers.

In the Fenland relays competition against the same schools the year 7 & 8 team finished 3rd after leading the competition until the very last leg. This was an excellent performance given that most of the year 8 runners were unable to compete and the team was mainly made up of year 7 runners. Captain Tristan Roper-Caldbeck handed on to Jack Chisholm, Alex Blackmore, Louis Grimoldby and Patrick Conboy who all ran superbly.

In year 9 & 10 we also won the Fenland league in similarly emphatic style with 89 points clear of our nearest rivals and our B team finishing 4th. Captain Tom Plant collected the winners trophy with medals for excellent individual performances awarded to Jake Wilkinson & Rhys Owen in year 9 as well as Tom Plant, Toby Cole & Cameron Payne in year 10.

In the relays competition our A team won the event clearly and our B team finished 3rd. Again there were superb performances posted by all of the above as well as Josh Green, Sam Cole, Freddie Gladwin & Jonathan Stoddart.

This year, for the first time in several years, both our junior teams made it through to the semi-finals of the English Schools Cup in Derby by winning their regional groups. To reach this stage of a national competition is most impressive and had it been possible to field full teams on this occasion even more could have been achieved, but it was not to be and we were outclassed on the day despite some courageous performances.

In the South Kesteven District Championships our teams won all three age-groups and no fewer than 12 athletes were selected to compete for the District in the Lincolnshire Championships.

Special congratulation must go also to Jake Wilkinson and Daniel Robottom who both took silver medals at the county championships and then qualified to compete for Lincolnshire in the English Schools Championships. They were both racing against the very best runners in the country and Jake finished 144th in his race and Daniel 149th in his, both against fields of more than 300. It must be said that these were excellent achievements.

Colts and Senior teams

The highlight of this year's spring racing season was hosting our own fixture in Burghley Park for the first time in some years. This was one of two matches we took part in from the new East Midlands Independent Schools league. Daniel Robottom ensured the home team finished with pride by blazing to a new course record of 23:40 with his nearest rival over 2 minutes back. Jack Day proved to be an excellent addition to the senior team and provided many good performances and when Alex Sims was available to compete, we had the beating of many of our rivals, with the likes of Philip Dawson, Tom Wallington and Toby Simpson providing the backbone of the team. As often has been the case, we never quite managed to put all this together until the last fixture at Oundle, where we secured victory in the relays competition for the third year in succession.

The colts team fared similarly – less than victorious on most occasions, most importantly never last in any match and always competing with determination and with some superb individual performances. Adam Hunter, whose developing talent impressed us all, and Adam Neill could always be relied upon to turn out good performances in year 11 and Jonjo Murphy, Grant Wallwork and Nathan Pape provided some welcome and committed additions to the team in year 10.



Athletics

The season began well with a new junior relays fixture at Oakham school including a number of interesting and unusual races such as a Medley Relay, Dreilauf, 4x200m, 3x300m and 5 x100m. Our year 8 team set the standard, drawing for 1st place with the hosts and winning the Dreilauf and the Medley Relay with star performances from Tom Mitchell, Tristan Roper-Caldbeck and Charlie Kay. The year 7 team came 2nd in their competition and athletes such as Jack Chisholm, Tom Taylor and Louis Grimoldby showed their talent for the first time.

The weather held off for the first time in several years to allow our Colts and Seniors to take part in the fixture at Worksop. Our teams were competing against 6 of the top local

schools and a pattern that was to repeat itself throughout the season was quickly established when the Colts team dominated and took a confident second place on the day. The seniors did well to finish fourth overall. Winning performances were posted by Dan Robottom in the 1500m, Lewis Chisholm in the 100m, Adam Neill in the High Jump & Jonathan Stoddart in the Long Jump.

In the 5 schools match in Corby the Colts team continued their strong form and narrowly missed out on victory overall by just one point. One of the highlights of the day was seeing a new school record set by the colts relay team of Hawkins, Michels, Groutage and Bangay with a new time of 47.50, shaving four 10ths of a second off the previous mark. The Junior team also did well that day by finishing 2nd overall, led by excellent performances from Jake Wilkinson, Chris Brice and Greg Leech. Our seniors finished fourth on this occasion with Slava Malyshevsky and Alex Reeder winning their events in style.

In the third and final fixture involving all age-groups at Rugby, the Colts team finished in an excellent third position against the 8 schools competing - a superb performance against some very tough opposition. The Juniors finished sixth and the Seniors seventh - a pleasing performance considering a number of key athletes were not able to compete. There were a number of impressive performances with wins for Jonathan Stoddart in the Long Jump and Charles Griffin in the Shot. Yet again, the Colts 4 x 100m relay record fell in another impressive display by Messrs. Hawkins, Bangay, Groutage and Michels who lowered the mark to 47.01 seconds - only one hundredth of a second away from the senior school record.

In June a number of boys were selected to compete for the district at the Lincolnshire championships. These were: Greg Leech, Jake Wilkinson, Charlie Kay, Alex Jones, Charles Griffin & Henry Bird in the Juniors. In the Colts Jonathan Stoddart, Dominic Bangay, Bradley Hawkins, Toby Cole, Adam Neill, Ben Wilkinson & David Purcell were also selected. In the seniors: Chris Fletcher, Alex Reeder and Slava Malyshevsky. These

last three along with Charles Griffin performed well enough to gain selection for Lincolnshire in the Anglian Championships. A superb achievement.

The season ended with a number of junior fixtures; the highlight of these being the East Area Prep Schools Championships in Bedford. Jack Chisholm in year 7 was the star of the day setting a new school record in the High Jump of 1.44m and securing selection for the national championships in Birmingham on 2nd July where he later performed superbly to take the bronze medal. Other superb performances came from Tristan-Roper Caldbeck and Louis Grimoldby who both finished third in their events and narrowly missed out on selection. Charlie Kay and James Hounslow both made it through to the final of the sprint events and lowered their personal bests. Craig Felston finished an excellent fourth in the Javelin. His first round throw would have easily won the competition but unfortunately he stepped fractionally over the line and the throw was disallowed. In the annual District Schools Championships our year 8 and year 9 teams retained their titles with the year 10s taking silver and year 7s bronze. Some of the highlights included Jonjo Murphy winning an impressive 400m & 800m double in year 10. In year 9 Charles Griffin again showed his strength by winning 3 events and being awarded the victor ludorum. Nathan Graham established himself as the dominant force of year 8 sprinting and Jack Chisholm and Charlie Dickinson won their events in year 7.

In the final event of the season our year 7, 8 & 9 teams travelled to King Edwards Birmingham and gave Mr. Knowles the pleasure of beating his old school (Warwick school) in convincing style. On this occasion the year 7 team came out on top finishing 2nd with the other two teams 3rd. The crucial statistic being that all 3 teams finished ahead of Warwick school. Tom Taylor, fresh from his new school long jump record of 4.68, dominated this event as well the 100m and Hurdles. Jack Chisholm took advantage of the excellent conditions to raise his own school High Jump record to a staggering 1.51m having strolled to victory in the 400m just seconds earlier. A tremendous performance.

Congratulations to all the boys who competed so well for the school. There are many not mentioned in this report whose contribution and commitment was superb and without whom we would not have achieved anything like as much. It is always a pleasure to see boys making progress in their events whatever their finishing position.

My thanks go more than ever to the wonderful Mrs. Johnstone who leaves us this year for the High School. Her help in organising so many of the details for each fixture and Sports Days has been invaluable and she will be sorely missed. Her enthusiasm for athletics and dynamic support for the team has gone a long way towards its success this year.

RJK

1st XI Hockey



"If you can't put the ball in the back of the net, then you won't win matches", is a cliché often reeled off by football managers. Regrettably, it also applied to the 1st XI for most of the season and culminated in only 4 victories from 15 matches. Indeed, besides the customary wins in the County Cup over Spalding GS and King's Grantham, success was only experienced right at the start of the season against Stowe (3-0) and then at the end of March when St. Albans (3-1) came to visit.

The team deserved better. They played a high standard of hockey and were rarely outplayed. The East Midlands final was contested between Repton and Worksop, two of our strongest fixtures, and the competitive nature of games against these highly

talented schools just demonstrated how close the team was to being a very fine side (matches ended 1-4 and 0-3 against Repton and Worksop respectively). Defeats against Oakham, The Leys, Wisbech GS and the Lincs Poachers were by a single goal on each occasion.

The strength of the team was to be found in the defence and midfield. There was considerable experience at the back, where Philip Streit and Michael Gent in particular were superb throughout. Philip was exceptionally quick, read the game well and even his distribution improved as the term progressed, whereas Michael simply 'stepped in front' of his man time and time again. It sounds a simple method of defence but you have to be decisive and alert the whole time.

Meanwhile, Andrew Beaumont excelled in the difficult left-back position while on the right, Tom Masters, Matthew Fox and Cameron Park shared the play at the back. In goal, Jack Eifion-Jones stepped up from the 3rd team in 2005 and put in a number of outstanding performances. Defensively, the best performance probably was witnessed at Bishop's Stortford, and it was highly spirited effort that kept the score to 0-3.

The middle of the team was strengthened by two new arrivals to the school – Michael Lutterodt and Ben Slack. They are hard working, talented players and gelled well with the agile Josh Holland who was a constant threat on the right. Surprisingly fit and athletic, Ben 'Tuffers' Slack returns in 2007 as captain.

Although scoring goals proved impossible for most of March, it wasn't through lack of effort or the fact that chances were not being created. Indeed, the season began productively and the forward players offered a variety of attacking options. Lewis Chisholm ended the season with 9 goals to his name and whenever he was given the chance he always tried to break the back board. It took a few weeks to work out the best position for William Epsom in the team but he soon established himself as a highly skilful right wing and with some experience now behind him, he will be expected to lead the attack next year. Matthew Plumb and Chris Fletcher were the final members of the squad. Unfortunately, Chris had a number of rugby commitments at weekends which limited his availability somewhat, but his contributions to Stamford School hockey have been immense and he leaves having scored 21 goals in total for the 1st XI.

Finally, Adrian Richardson also deserves a mention. He has umpired the matches yet again and his efforts are greatly appreciated by everyone involved. I hope his mumblings about retirement can be put off for at least one more season!

G.A. Bucknell (Master i/c Hockey)

2nd XI HOCKEY

This was a difficult season for a group of hard working players. The fixture list was particularly strong and we did our best to compete in all matches, but on several occasions we simply could not match the skill and team work provided by our opposition.

Several players attended pre- season training with the first XI and much progress was made with hockey skills and fitness. We competed for a large part of the first game against Stowe, but unfortunately after they scored three quick goals in the second half we went down 4 – 1. We lost narrowly to Repton 3-2 and managed our only win of the season against Wisbech. Thereafter the score lines for the rest of the season were not impressive but we should take some satisfaction in that our team play improved gradually and despite losing games, we proved that we were capable of playing some good hockey.

Spencer Lai captained the side well and solid play from Ashley Stretton and Ben Drake need a mention. The enthusiasm of Alex Houston is commendable, as were the odd moments of brilliance from Will McMillan, Rob Straker and Laurent Ross. We managed to create many goal scoring opportunities but simply could not finish. This needs to be addressed for next year if we are to capitalise on the mid-field creativity.

It was a tough call being beaten week in, week out, but in spite of this the whole squad did improve and remained reasonably cheerful throughout. Hopefully we will have learned a great deal about the game to take forward to next year.

G.M.

3rd XI Hockey

The 3rd XI always shows humility in victory and grace in defeat. Unfortunately, this season, we had to show far more grace than humility but, as always, our matches were played in an excellent spirit and were very much enjoyed by all involved. As usual, we had a large, reliable squad ably marshalled by Adam Rimmer.

Our opening game against Stowe was played on the new astroturf on Kettering Road. We matched the opposition well and had our chances in a very even first half, although Michael Dorr in goal did make a couple of astonishing saves. The pace of the game began to tell though as half time approached and we conceded two goals in two minutes! The first came after a typical 3rd XI melee in the D during which several half clearances were made but finally a telling strike hit the back of the net. No sooner had this happened than we made a hash of a 16 yard hit, lifting the ball dangerously, and from the ensuing free hit Stowe simply blasted the ball into our D and got a fortunate ricochet to score again. The second half saw us make several chances but our finishing and several good saves from their keeper prevented us from getting back into the game. Matt Howitt, Stephen Miskell and Adam Rimmer all had good chances. Robert Murray was outstanding in defence along with Michael Dorr. Our frustration was complete when Stowe scored a third goal late on – Michael Dorr made two great stops but could do little about the third strike as we failed to clear.

We began the next game, at home to Wisbech, only to have the opposition umpire stop it after 5 minutes when he realised that we were the Stamford 3rd XI and that we were playing the Wisbech 2nd XI! He apologised and we continued, but I have to say that we had a fantastic game. We gave away two goals from slickly taken short corners and one from a defensive slip but 'won' the second half 1- 0 with a great strike from Adam Rimmer playing some great hockey and missing numerous chances to put ourselves right back in the game.

Away at Oakham quite how we scored only one goal I don't know. We made numerous excellent chances to score but our finishing was woeful, as was our defending at times (five goals conceded)! Not that all this diminished our enjoyment of a well fought match played in a great spirit.

Against Uppingham at home we were actually winning 2-1 with a minute to go to half time! In the second half all but one of their goals were from short corners which they executed very slickly - another really enjoyable game which we ended up losing 3-6.

We went to Worksop next to play our first game of the season on grass - and a bumpy pitch it was too! In true 3rd XI fashion our frustration with the playing conditions spawned not anger but humour and we battled on, losing 3-1 in the final analysis.

A cancelled match against The Leys followed and then Oundle came to visit. This game will not be remembered for the adverse 6-1 scoreline, but for the blizzard conditions in which a good part of the match was played. We were certainly outplayed but it was also very cold!

The long trip to Bishop's Stortford saw play on grass again and, though the surface was better than at Worksop, grass certainly did not enhance our silky skills and we succumbed to another defeat, 1-3.

As I look back on the season I remember the good humour in which all of the games were played and the commitment of the whole squad to playing open, attacking hockey and having a great time. In terms of the scorelines the season was far from great but with regard to enjoyment it was a vintage one.

KJC



Under 15A Hockey

The term started well with an excellent turnout at pre-season training at the end of the Christmas holiday period. The boys worked hard and demonstrated a willingness to improve their individual as well as their team skills; this approach was evident throughout the term and led to a lot of improvement in the performances.

The first match was against Stowe 'B' XI and the side were immediately into a flowing pattern of play. Jeremy Cunnew and Joe Robinson directed the play in the midfield and the forwards demonstrated good movement with Vincent Spurr and John Murphy leading the way. Spurr, Robinson, Murphy and Ben Chew were the scorers in a 5 – 0 victory.

The team went on to play some excellent hockey and were always competitive. Chris van Niekirk is a brave and talented goalkeeper and Tom Crees had an outstanding season at the centre of the defence. He moved into midfield against Bishop's Stortford and had a superb match helping to defeat one of the stronger teams on the fixture list. Tom Plant, Charles Wilson, Ben Chew & Tom Dolby made up the defensive unit with Alex Turner coming into the squad at the end of the season. One of the strengths of the team was the willingness of the boys to play in different positions when they were substituted.

The team did lose to Repton, Oakham, Uppingham and Oundle; in all of these games the boys were against very good individuals and teams. Importantly all members of the squad worked hard to make life difficult for the opposition and to play to a pattern when Stamford had the ball. The Repton match saw Murphy score 2 goals for a half time lead but the home side really upped the tempo and the loss of Tom Crees proved significant as they ran in 5 goals.

Significantly the boys always bounced back after a defeat and worked hard during the practice sessions; seeking to improve their own play and learn how to overcome the strengths of their opponents. I still value the use of the sports hall for our midweek practices; these were always well attended by 'A' & 'B' team squads and certainly help the coaches to compare improving players and to gauge when they are ready for promotion to the 'A' team.

I am hugely grateful to the midfield trio of Robinson, Cunnew and Alex Hammant. They demonstrated a mature approach and contributed to all aspects of the team's performance both on and off the pitch. As much as any members of the squad they accepted the need to experiment with different positions and to be substituted.

Our two most pleasing performances were against Loughborough; who set off at a great pace, scored a goal and threatened to overrun Stamford. Van Niekirk made some excellent saves and the midfield trio pulled things around with hard work and skilful use of the ball. The strikers came into their own with Elliott Whittingham creating and scoring goals. Murphy and Spurr completed a fine victory. Towards the end of term, following a poor performance against Deacon's another fine match saw us defeat Bishop's Stortford 2 – 0. I have already mentioned Tom Crees playing well in midfield but it was especially pleasing to see Toby Cole get on to the score sheet. He was the most improved player of the season and will surely become a regular scorer in the future; he reads the game very well and is continually striving to improve his skills. Overall it was a very enjoyable and successful season; the practices were well attended, the boys worked hard and they looked to put the training into effect during the matches. All agreed that they learnt a lot and their play improved over the term.

I am also grateful to Mr. Paul Goldbrum for his assistance with training and management of the 'B' team and to Alex Russell for his help at our Wednesday afternoon practices.

MRB

U14A HOCKEY

September is a difficult month as the majority of boys have had little experience of playing the game before. Consequently, the early matches provided plenty of action for the goal keeper, William Farrell, and the boys realised that an enormous amount of improvement was required in order to compete with the local schools. Fortunately, lessons were learnt quickly and there were encouraging draws against Stowe, Oundle, Uppingham and Loughborough GS. The team had to wait an incredibly long time before they experienced victory for the first time, but on 10th December, The Leys were soundly beaten 3-1. A moment to savour!

A solitary victory from nine attempts was disappointing, but by the end of the season a high standard of hockey was being played that should yield much more success in the future. Tim Anders and Rhys Owen started to control games effectively in the mid-field and they were most ably supported by Chris Brice. Up front, Josh Green, Alex Jones, Greg Leech and Dominic Powell scored 7 goals in the last two games of season and although

The Perse proved difficult to contain, the defence (Daniel Warren, Andrew Fox, Mark Palmer, Matthew Fuller and David O'Shea) tightened considerably as time went by. Together, they showed tremendous spirit throughout and they supported each other well during matches.

The U14B team (Berridge, Cole and co.) demonstrated, almost on a weekly basis, how to win hockey matches and I'm sure the A team will wish to emulate this success in 2007. I thank them for all their efforts and wish them every success in the future.

GAB



2006 saw Stamford School put out U13 teams for possibly the first time ever. Certainly, there do not appear to be any records of previous 11 a-side matches during what has been traditionally the 'football term' for members of Year 7 and 8. Although the number of matches played was limited, the results and performances were extremely pleasing. The U13A team were victorious over Loughborough GS, Deacons and St. Albans. Narrow defeats were experienced against Wisbech GS and Oakham, while the U13B team drew with St. Albans and lost to Oakham. The season proved to be an overall success and the fixture list will be expanded for 2007.

The teams consisted of a mixture of boys from both Year 7 and 8. William Joyce was captain of the U13A team and he showed considerable potential for the future. Charlie Kay, Tommy Mitchell, Ross Cutteridge, Joe Harrop, George Sharman, Jake Adams and Guilio Montague joined William for the Lincolnshire 7 a-side competition, where they competed to a very high standard. A crucial draw against a strong Normanby Park team in the group stage enabled the team to face Bourne HC in the semi final. During this encounter, Stamford defended with great determination and caught them on the break with the pace of Charlie Kay proving particularly effective. The 3-0 victory took them into the final to face Lincoln HC. Stamford played their best hockey of the afternoon in the first half and did well to still be in the game at 0-1 at the break. Unfortunately, Lincoln's superior skill came through in the end and they deservedly took the title. However, to finish runners-up in the county was one the best results for a number of years.

It should be noted that much of the success this year has been due to the superb coaching from Mr. Barton. In fact, for many, many years now the boys at Stamford School have learnt an enormous amount in their formative years from him and his efforts have been simply outstanding. This was Mr. Barton's last year of running junior hockey on Friday afternoons after school, but his contributions throughout have been greatly appreciated by all concerned.

GAB

This year the Basketball team had the largest squad, the longest fixture list and the longest pre-season training in the history of Stamford School Basketball. Over 15 players took part in the pre-season training during the autumn term and over 10 players took part during the season in the spring term. It is the first time we have played against Rugby school and this led to a total of 8 games this season, the most for many years.

Basketball

We started our pre-season shortly after the autumn term half term holiday. Over 15 players from Upper Fourth to Upper Sixth were selected to take part in the training session every week. Many of us hadn't played basketball since the last season and it is good to have an opportunity like this to prepare and to improve our skills. It was very pleasing to see everyone training hard and playing hard in these sessions. Our season started on the week we came back from the short Christmas break. With only one training session before the first game, it was very hard to pick the 'Starting five' for our game against Uppingham School. Luckily we had a bit of height in the team with our 6'5" centre Luke Cripps. Our new guard 5'4" Matthew Howitt also played an important role in the season.

If you are a close follower of the NBA you will know the players are the highlights of the game. This is also the same at Stamford School Basketball team. Despite this year's poor results, there are many impressive things that can be said about the team and the players. Our two centres Luke Cripps and Phil Dawson made a massive difference to the team with their height and support in the opposition half. Luke Cripps (vice captain) continued to be the tallest player on the court, but unfortunately suffered from bad health during the second half of the term. He was the most improved player of the season. Phil Dawson stepped into Luke's position in the second half of the term and made a good effort to settle into the game. Our two forwards were Tom Jia and Ben Slack. Tom was our top scorer this season with the best basket of the season and he was also the player of the season. Ben made an impressive debut against Oakham School and I am sure he will take on an important attacking role next season. Anthony Kong played his second season for the team and contributed well in all games.

It was interesting and impressive to see two Fifth formers and an Upper Fourth former playing in a senior sport side. It is very hard for someone below Sixth form to take part in a senior school team, but Michael Poon, Jonathan Chau and Matthew Au have all done extremely well this season. Jonathan is an all rounder on the court who had his debut with Michael in the game against Uppingham School. Matthew played his second season for the team, he is the key player on the court and he is also the players' player for this season. Scott Colley, who was on 'fire' for every game also had a very good season. John Chan, Matthew Howitt and Phil Streit also took part and made a big difference to the team.

Finally, I would like to thank Mr Mitchell for his effort and time. I hope you will have a very good season next year. Every player finished the season a much better player and the ups and downs will live long in our memories.

Spencer Lai

Golf

The school golf team failed to live up to the success of the previous year. In the Quadrangular tournament at Luffenham Heath the team looked strong on paper but apart from Tom Lindley, Andrew Ward and Cameron Park with 32, 30 and 29 points respectively they found the course a tough proposition. The two 'home' teams led the way and Stamford were just pipped into 4th position by Oundle.

The School golf cup was a particular disappointment with only six of twelve entries turning up to play. Joe Regis (year 7) just beat Oliver Lindley; both boys scored 30 points but Joe won on count-back over the last 9 holes, clearly he should have much to offer our golf in the years ahead.

Regrettably Lewis Chisholm this year's golf captain was injured and had to hand the organisation of the team to play the staff and OS over to Jak Garner. The staff just managed to beat the OS with the school finishing in third place. At the end of the match Howard Mulligan (O.S.) was presented with a print of the school chapel and School House from St. Pauls St. This was in recognition of the support that Howard has given to School golf over the 30 years that he has been secretary of Burghley Park Golf Club.

The highlight of the season was the visit of 12 young golfers from America. Ben Slack, Joe Robinson and Dean Cutler represented the school in a combined Oakham, Oundle, Uppingham and Stamford team. Dean did especially well to gain a half, having been 3 down with four to play against a 1 handicap golfer.

MRB

Tennis

The season started with a one day pre-season training session at which I realised that we would have a very young 1st team. Two year 9 boys were pushing for the top spot and two year 11 boys were pushing hard as well. But the Year 13 boys Josh Holland and Jonathan Marx did not give in and held their place all term. Alex Isles performed to an excellent standard with some big serves and Alex Smith, Tim Anders, Adam Hunter, and David Wiggin all got valuable 1st team experience.

Our first match was, as usual, against Uppingham who remain very strong and beat us 7 – 3 at 1st team 9 – 0 at 2nd team, 7- 2 at Under 15 but we won 6 – 3 at Under 14. For most of the players it was a reminder of the standard we had to try to attain.

The Leys School arrived next and with a slight adjustment in the 1st and 2nd teams we played some excellent tennis winning 6 ½ – 2 ½ at 1st team, losing 6 – 3 at 2nd team winning 5 – 4 at Under 15 and winning 9 – 0 at under 14.

Oundle were again very strong, so we played their second team and won 5 – 4 in a very exciting match that could have gone either way. Our 2nds played their 3rds and again we won 5 – 4. Our Under 15 team lost 9 – 0 but our Under 14 team again won 5 – 4 still unbeaten.

We travelled to Notts High School for our next fixture and again our 1st played very well and won 5 – 4. The Under 15's and Under 13's both lost very competitive matches 7 – 2.

The Oakham match was abandoned after the second round due to rain, we would have obviously won all four matches.

The Under 15 and under 14 teams both beat Kimbolton in the last match of the term.

At present tennis looks as if in a few years we could be very strong again with a cluster of good Year 7, 8, 9 and 10 boys and the younger boys in the 1st team.

This was generally a good term with a high level of interest and desire to get involved which can only be good for the future.

DFW

Table Tennis



If a journalist from the local newspaper asked the people of Stamford what they understood by the term 'League Tables', there would be typically varied responses. Education and football would be forefront for most, perhaps, but for the table tennis players of Stamford School, eyes were peeled to the pages of papers and websites to check the positions of the teams.

Recalling the very first fixture against Oakham Tennis Club, and, specifically, the doubles match which we lost 11-13 in the fifth leg, I could say that the title had already been decided. At the end of the season, Tennis Club, ourselves and Oakham School 'B' boasted

identical playing records. The places were decided on games won and lost, and the doubles match proved decisive. We finished second.

Despite the comparative disappointment of the league, the senior team had already earned coverage for its success in the Ketco Cup, the team-handicap trophy which had last been won by the school in 1978. It was a close final, decided by the final game.

The Junior Teams enjoyed their outings on Sundays either side of Christmas, and enjoyed more victories than defeats. Some of the matches were very close, and only a couple of points separated our teams from trophies.

Individually, Norman Law played with greater consistency in Division 2, and finished with an average of 70%; Jonathan Chau played in five matches – giving the older members of the side a breather! – and lost just two of fifteen games. Promotion gained, the spectres of Hotpoint (with the nationally ranked Barham brothers), Bourne (with their nationally ranked veteran) and 'March to the Grave' (Goodacre, Weston et al) will haunt us next season.

At district level, the school was typically successful. At U.13 level, William Bacon was victorious, with Craig Felston runner-up and Tommy Mitchell third. In the U.16 age-group, Norman Law defeated Thomas Dowdell in the final, and Bahle Mhlange finished a creditable fifth.

William, Norman and Thomas travelled to Grantham for the Lincolnshire Schools' Championships and played well. The U.13 competition was particularly strong, and William met some old friends/adversaries who were match hardened. Norman and Thomas finished second and third respectively in their age-group, earning them certificates.

A busy season finished with all senior players winning trophies. It is always pleasing to see the boys receive recognition for their efforts, and, with stiffer opposition promised next season, their standard of playing will no doubt develop positively.



At Easter 2006 a new phase in organised sailing began at SES when three boats became available for SES use, an Enterprise courtesy of Dr Crookell, and a Lark and Flying Fifteen courtesy of Dr Fielden. These boats were duly installed at Rutland Sailing Club on Rutland Water. Pupils from both senior schools then quickly grasped this opportunity for meeting together to improve their general sailing skills and in particular to develop racing competence.

Several outings were arranged in the summer term on both Saturday mornings and Thursday evenings and, motivated by the prospect of two racing fixtures against Uppingham and Oakham, an embryonic racing team began to take shape.

The fixtures duly took place, with contrasting conditions and outcomes. In a virtual flat calm a highly experienced Uppingham team trounced us comprehensively. The following week, however, in far more challenging conditions, team captain Andrew Sampson and Ben Wilkinson gained our first two victories in the 420 class against Oakham. Flushed with success we rounded the year off with a fun day and BBQ on the shores of Rutland Water sub tegmine fagi.

Training resumed in September, and in a recent rematch against Uppingham the SES team came within a whisker of recording their first victory against them – a great result – before ending the season with a “picnic round the lake”.

Finally it is perhaps unfair to single out individuals, but particular mention must be made of the “hard core” of Ben Chew, Isaac Wilkinson, Alice Reid, Nick Williams, Peter Burnett and Fiona Pilgrim, whose commitment and enthusiasm from the beginning have played a major part in ensuring such an enjoyable and successful start.

RF

Sailing

U12A

An enthusiastic squad began training in temperate conditions for early January and expectations for a successful season were high.

The first of our fixtures was away at Oundle, and on an overcast and blustery afternoon we enjoyed a fine victory. Justin Bland, our keeper, was able to preserve the spotless nature of his attire as he was given almost nothing to do except watch some free flowing football which included excellent passing and selfless play. Captain Jack Chisholm got the season off to a great start with a thunderbolt of an unstoppable free-kick. Louis Grimoldby and Ed Large then ran their defence ragged as Louis grabbed a hat-trick. A convincing and encouraging 7-0 win. The next fixture took us to Ranby House, and on a positively spring-like afternoon we hoped for a performance to match the optimism of the weather. This was a good game, but rather puzzling too. Ranby dominated early on and yet after ten minutes we were three goals in front. Matthew Jeffery had bamboozled our hosts with some excellent early play and Jabari Weekes had dealt firmly with their attacking options time and time again. When five in front and dazzling the Ranby faithful with a number of tricks and turns, Patrick Conboy in particular, we took our foot off the gas and played out a rather more solemn second period. A 5-1 victory.

Boston GS then played us host and their defence were indeed in benevolent mood. The game was evenly matched with plenty of chances at both ends, but Louis Grimoldby again looked a class above, scoring three and always presenting a threat. Joe Nolan led the back-line with enthusiasm and no less skill, but the 5-1 scoreline perhaps flattered us a touch.

Home to King's Grantham and Carres GS in our final matches, the boys were going to have to do without their coach's organisation from the sidelines, swapping tactical reassurance for a whistle. The games were rather similar to each other, with the opposition bringing both experience and confidence onto our pitch and teaching us a hard lesson about defensive duty. Despite some encouraging moments we never got our passing game going and the home crowd left disappointed.

This was a skilful and lively team who dealt easily with weaker opposition, but against stronger sides we were unable to match the quality and aggression of their midfield. Nevertheless with a touch more organisation and experience this side holds promise for next year.

MJB

U12B

January brought together a squad of fresh faced enthusiastic players showing some excellent individual skills and with a commitment to improve. The first fixture arrived and the question was whether the players could perform as well as a team.

Oundle requested two 7-a-side games instead of the scheduled 11-a-side match. For the B1 team Harry Becket had an excellent game, controlling midfield with some solid tackling and creating a host of chances for the forwards – it was from this match that he was subsequently selected as captain for the season and he went on to lead the team admirably, setting a good example with his play and sporting attitude. Joe Cooke, Thomas Ball and Harry Major had many chances to score, but the ball seemed destined not to hit the back of the net! Finally the goals came and at 2-0 we seemed to have the match won, but a goal from Oundle suddenly changed the game. Fortunately, Stamford held on with some determined tackling, notably from Aiden Jones, and the game was won. The B2 team had an easier 5-2 victory.

The next match, away at Ranby House, was the first opportunity to see how the squad would adapt to the 11 a side game. On a bright January afternoon the anticipation was high and the pitch was in excellent condition. The game started with some promising football, and a solid defensive performance ensured Stamford was always in control during the game. The highlights of the game were a spectacular long range effort from Angus Youles and a terrific left footed free kick by Jack Milner from 25 metres. Joe Corder and Derrick Smith

provided support and crosses throughout the game. Another highlight for the staff was the pre match tea and cake and the post match refreshments of sandwiches and more cakes - the Stamford coaches attacked the food with almost the same flair and enthusiasm shown by the Stamford boys on the football pitch. It should be noted that one member of staff after demolishing the sandwiches managed to eat a hat-trick of cake slices to complete a devastating performance.

Confidence was high for the home fixture against Kings School, Grantham. At the 11th hour Oliver Keeling came to the rescue of the B team as he was needed in goal to cover for the injured Patrick Simpson. Patrick had played very well in the previous games and was an assured presence as the last line of defence. Unfortunately, Stamford did not play well as a team and Kings were soon controlling the midfield and creating pressure on the Stamford goal. Oliver was kept busy and pulled off a string of superb saves. Despite the half time break Stamford continued to under perform in the second half and only Oliver kept the scores level. In midfield Ben Szuba played well and Sam Middlebrook was industrious and unlucky not to get a break in front of goal. With less than 10 minutes remaining Grantham finally got the goal they deserved and finally beat our Man of the Match, Oliver.

The away fixture at Boston was played on another bright and sunny spring day. The team played much better and worked hard to put right the faults from the previous game. Boston played some entertaining football and had some skilled individuals, as well as combining impressively as a team. Boston always had the upper hand and the score line of 4-0 was well deserved. The team battled hard throughout the game, especially the defence of Zac Pywell, Jonathon Williams and Jordan Clarke, but were beaten by a better team.

The final fixture at home to Carre's Grammar was played at the end of a very wet week. The pitch on Upperdrift was waterlogged - the surface was heavy very much like playing on treacle! The advice to keep the ball on the flanks and the passes short had worked well during training on Friday afternoon but the lessons learned were forgotten overnight! Carre's played simple but effective football constantly putting the Stamford back four under pressure. The goals for Carres came steadily and at half time with the score at 4-0 the advice was to go out and enjoy the second half and attempt to make the score more respectable. The final score of 7-0 was a disappointing end to the season. The boys and their supporters, however, showed the same enjoyment and enthusiasm as they had done at the start of the season. It was a pleasure to work with the boys and watch their commitment and development. I look forward to seeing their progress next season.

U13A

After a successful campaign in year seven, the U13A footballers were eager to begin the new season, and were looking to build on last year's results with even more glory this time around. Unfortunately, our squad resembled that of England's at the 2002 world cup - that is to say, blighted by injury! The most significant of these was to be our inspirational skipper and talismanic defender Nathan Graham, who was set to miss the majority of the season with a knee problem. In his absence, the captain's responsibility lay with fellow centre-back Sam Andrew, whose quiet but determined leadership would prove invaluable as the season progressed.

As per usual, the curtain opened against Oundle. This year was an away match, and despite the dank conditions, some good football was exhibited by the flair players of the team. Indeed, the quick feet of Ryan Cutler proved too much for one defender, whose crunching tackle forced Cutler off the pitch for some treatment, prompting a substitution. Losing Cutler was always going to be a big blow, but substitute Craig Felston proved his worth, putting in a solid performance as we romped to a 7-2 victory. No problems going forward then, but leaking two goals did ask one or two questions of the Graham-less defence.

Ranby House was our next encounter, with the team still feeling a little aggrieved at last year's somewhat undeserved defeat. Once again the match was an even one, with some delicate play in the midfield and solid defensive work. Upfront, the opposition struggled to find an answer to the express pace of Charlie Kay, who caused the goalkeeper to panic on a number of occasions. Sadly though, lightning did indeed strike twice and for the second year in a row when we were left licking our wounds as Ranby were once again victorious in rather fortuitous circumstances.

'Boston Grammar.' Two words that made the coach's blood run cold after we shipped seven goals against this opposition last year! This year would be different with Joe Harrap and Tommy Mitchell bossing the midfield and Adam Richardson and Chris House assuredly patrolling the defence. On the few occasions that the Boston strike-force were able to get a shot away, 'keeper Charlie Lang was on hand to repel their efforts. Indeed, we scored the only goal of the match, and were able to hang on for victory.

King's Grantham are a tough opposition at the best of times. Sadly, our list of injuries and unavailable players didn't help our cause, and we lost this match with our team struggling to gel as a unit.

We were looking forward to the away match against Wellingborough, and were disappointed to discover that the frozen wastelands of Northamptonshire had affected their pitches so adversely that they were deemed unplayable. Perhaps the only member of the squad who was pleased with this news was Ross Cutteridge. He had been in fine defensive form recently, often called into action to head the ball away from danger. No doubt he would have found the prospect of heading a frozen ball on such a cold morning a somewhat unappetizing proposition!

Finally, Carre's Grammar provided a tough encounter, which we escaped from with a draw. Richard Sims and Josh Manby played well, but the result was made possible only by the sublime play of right-back Adam Richardson, unquestionably the man of the match, and a very deserving player of the season.

U13B

The traditional opener away at Ranby House saw your correspondent eating a huge pile of freshly baked scones and drinking gallons of tea in front of a roaring fire in the fine, wood panelled reception hall. Oh yes, and the boys played their first football match, comprehensively dismantling their hosts and emerging 5-1 victors. The pick of the goals being a powerful drive from Haggett- King.

Away at Boston Grammar School it was our turn to receive a footballing lesson. An early onslaught saw us 2-0 down before we had got into our stride. Stamford then pulled a goal back with a fine finish from Spriggs and appeared to be getting a grip of the game but surrendered the initiative by conceding again on the stroke of half time and eventually succumbed to a 4-1 reverse.

Next up were a powerful Carre's GS side and in a thrilling end to end encounter Stamford won 4-3 thanks to a powerful display by Hounslow whose hat-trick from midfield was a highlight of the season. Ellison grabbed the fourth.

The weather now intervened and we were denied the chance to devour Wellingborough as the fixture was called off.

The season drew to a close against King's Grantham and petered out in disappointing fashion as we finished with a second defeat.

My thanks to the boys who turned out. The side never quite realised its potential with the whole often seeming less than the sum of the parts. However, as ever, Stamford played with the right spirit and enjoyed their football.

WCC

Squash

This was not our best year in terms of results but with two year 12 boys at one and two (William Epsom and Matthew Fox) and three year 10 boys at three, four and five (James Millington, Dominic Pollard and Tom Crees) we were never going to be that strong.

We lost most of our school matches to much stronger (physically) players which was frustrating in some ways but encouraging in that we were playing good squash and getting better but lacked the physical prowess to win.

The Peterborough and District League team also struggled with only a handful of wins throughout the season. However there were signs from all players that progress was being made and an understanding of what was required to win so hopefully next season we will be that much more experienced and physically a year older.

Lower down the school promising players in should keep the standards high. Many thanks need to be expressed to Mr Blissett for organising the team and playing so well. Thanks also to Mr I'Anson who played No 1 for most of the season.

DFW

Swimming

Team swimming training began in January as usual and a large number of new y7 swimmers trained on a regular basis. On one day we had a record 28 swimmers working hard on swim fitness ready for the season ahead. Senior swimmers also had sessions on Wednesdays with Mrs Mount and the girls school senior swimmers and the punishing schedules certainly became a talking point!!

On February 13th the annual senior swimming sports took place at the High School indoor pool. Lanes were full for all races again and a big thank-you must go to housemasters for ensuring this.

I thought the number of records being broken would be reduced in 2006 now that the switch of event venue to the High school pool from our outdoor pool is well established. This was not the case and seven new records were created as below;

At the South Kesteven District Gala on February 7th we took, as usual, all age groups. Everybody swam competitively, and Y7 won their section as did the Y10 and Y11.

We went to the STOWE relays again where competition was very strong and we only made one final

We beat Oundle 218 points to 201, Worksop 187-120, Leys 228-218, Oakham 195-185. We struggled at Stowe – seniors beaten by Warwick and Stowe, Juniors and inters were beaten by Loughborough, Stowe and Warwick. The Uppingham gala was unfortunately cancelled.

My thanks to Jason (fish) Wallace who was an outstanding captain and organised the seniors very well. Well done to the whole swimming squad who were a pleasure to work with.

Cricket

A young and inexperienced 1st XI squad entered the 2006 season with high expectations after a busy winter training schedule. The season began with a trip to Oundle before the term had started, in what has proved to be a very tough opening fixture in recent years. Oundle batted first and lost their captain early - caught at the wicket off the bowling of Eifion-Jones. From then on the match was dominated by Oundle who amassed a daunting 235-4 in 55 overs. The only notable performance with the ball was from Sam Edwards who, on his 1st team debut, bowled a splendid spell of medium pace out swing returning with figures of 3-23 off 6 overs.

In reply, Stamford were only able to reach 81 in what can only be described as a baptism of fire for the six players making their primary appearances for the 1st XI. It was quite clear for many of the players that they would have to work extremely hard throughout the season to reach a standard where they would be confident of producing match winning performances at 1st XI level.

A similarly poor performance with the bat against Uppingham saw us dismissed for a mere 89 which the visitors were able to reach at a canter. Oliver Lindley took his debut 1st team wicket in a 3 over spell for 9 runs, showing glimpses of what was to come for the rest season.

Notts High were our next opponents on a fine sunny day in Nottingham. Eifion-Jones inserted the opposition who scored 278-6 off 50 overs on a dry flat wicket. Eifion-Jones (10-1-41-2) bowled tidily supported by Oliver Lindley (10-0-48-1) who again showed his promise.

Our reply was far more encouraging than in previous weeks. Slack (45) and Eifion-Jones (24) put on 51 for the third wicket and Steel (43) with Edwards (28*) combined producing 53 for the ninth. We finished 72 runs short but had scored 207-9 off 50 overs. In scoring 200 runs and batting for the duration off the overs we had achieved two important milestones as a team.

The visit of Bedford Modern the following Saturday saw us batting first having won the toss. Our new found confidence produced a solid batting performance in scoring 220-9 off 45 overs. The total should have been more after we lost our last 5 wicket for a mere 12 runs, with the final over of the innings being a wicket maiden. Scoring over 200 and batting the overs for a second match in a row was a superb achievement - largely thanks to a magnificent 137 run partnership between Bishop (63) and Murray (68) who both displayed some swashbuckling stroke play. With only half the job done, the team appeared to become complacent. Some erratic bowling saw us gift the match to Bedford without really putting up a fight. Having learnt valuable lessons with the bat earlier in the season, this match showed how scoring runs was only half the battle. Oliver Lindley (9-0-41-2) and Dolby (7-3-14-1) were the only bowlers who showed consistency and control showing great maturity for players playing in only their fourth 1st team matches. Bedford reached the target with 3 overs to spare.

The Leys came to Stamford next and on a damp overcast day, captain Eifion-Jones inserted the visitors. A fine opening spell from Eifion-Jones (8-2-27-0) and Felgate (8-2-46-2) saw The Leys under pressure at 27-1 after 10 overs. Slack (7.2-2-17-3) bowled seam for the first time and revealed hidden talents with a fine performance - he took two wickets in succession with the last two balls of his first spell of seven overs before returning to claim a fine hat trick with the first of his eighth over. Oliver Lindley (8-4-15-1) again bowled superbly in support giving very little away. The innings closed when Slack ran out the final Leys batsman with a fine piece of work in the field to send the visitors back to the pavilion having posted a meagre 127 all out. In reply, Slack (73*) complemented his fine bowling and fielding performance with a super innings. Under pressure at 27-2 he guided the team home even when wickets tumbled at the other end. With 97 runs on the board for the loss of the 5th wicket we still had some pressure to absorb but we ran out comfortable winners reaching the target without further damage with 7 overs to spare.

The following day saw us travelling to Wisbech for the annual 20/20 competition. Having narrowly lost the first match to St Joseph's, Ipswich, we knew we had to comprehensively defeat our opposition in our final matches to have any chance of progressing. Fine victories against Wisbech Grammar and Langley School, Norwich, saw

us progress to the next round on average runs per over after St Joseph's lost to the host school.

By this stage of the season we had shown as a team we were capable of winning matches and performing effectively in all aspects of the game. We needed to become more consistent in our approach if we were truly to become an effective team. Could we consistently produce a quality bowling, batting and fielding performance all on the same day repeatedly for the rest of the season?

Gresham's were the visitors on the first Saturday after half term on a fine sunny July day. Stamford won the toss and batted first. Epsom (23) and Lindley (21) made a solid start scoring 45 for the first wicket. Eifion-Jones (49) and Slack (30) continued to build on these foundations with a stand of 74 for the third wicket. Having got ourselves in the strong position of 120-2 with 10 overs to spare, we needed to accelerate the run rate to reach a competitive total of near 200. Unfortunately this did not come and we ended on 171-9 in our 40 overs, 20-30 runs short of our target. Gresham's made a flying start, scoring 62 runs without loss off the first 11 overs. All looked lost before our young spin wizard took hold of the ball to bowl the 12th over. Having been crashed for four on the previous ball, he decided to tempt the Gresham's star opening batsman into another crashing stroke with a full flighted delivery. Indeed, the over confident stroke maker was drawn from his crease and beaten by significant turn to enable keeper Epsom to remove his bails. This moment saw a mini collapse for the away side in which Oli Lindley (8-0-29-3) claimed two further scalps in a fine spell of bowling. His wickets were three of the top four opposition batsmen all of whom have played representative cricket. Wickets from Steel (4-1-15-1) and Felgate (7.4-1-30-1), plus a fine run out from Epsom were not enough to halt the Gresham's charge towards their target of 172. They reached it with 8 balls to spare and 4 wickets in hand.

The following day saw us at home to the reigning champions of the 20/20 competition, Felsted. They batted well and scored 151 off their 20 overs. Stamford were never really in the chase having lost early wickets and being reduced to 52-4 off 11 overs. Felsted ran out easy winners.

Wellingborough were the next opposition to come to Stamford on an overcast but dry day. Wellingborough batted first and scored a very competitive 214 off their 40 overs. Oli Lindley (8-0-33-3) was the pick of the bowlers, again removing three of the top five batsmen after the visitors had got off to a strong start. In reply, Stamford were always behind the run rate with several players making good starts, but then failing to capitalise once they had got themselves in. Wellingborough won the game by 52 runs.

The match against Kimbolton on the following Tuesday is best forgotten. Against a very weak bowling attack, 160 off 40 overs was an embarrassingly low score. Kimbolton made easy work of the target and not even a flurry of wickets at the end from Williams (2-0-9-2) on debut and Steel (2.4-1-9-2) could prevent the inevitable 3 wicket loss. This was a game we should have won and by far our worst performance of the season.

The traditional fixture against the staff took place on a beautiful clear sunny day with a good crowd enjoying the annual boarder's barbecue. Staff won the toss and put the boys into bat. Mhlanga (26) and Epsom (127) made an excellent start scoring 132 for the first wicket. Epsom went on to score a fine century supported by Tom Lindley (31) and captain Eifion-Jones (39). The innings closed on 234-4 off 40 overs.

The Staff reply started dismally when they were reduced to 9-3 after a fine opening spell of bowling from Slack (7-2-21-2) and Felgate (6.3-2-14-2). Pike (44) and overseas player Lee-Thorpe (58) steadied the ship for the staff with a stand of 71 for the fourth wicket. The target was always going to be too much after such a poor start and good spells from Tom Lindley (7-1-24-2) and Edwards (6-1-14-3) saw the Staff dismissed for a mere 135.

Lincs Gents proved to be too strong for the 1st XI the following Monday. Epsom (52) and Mhlanga (48) were the only performers with the bat in a 60 run defeat. Slack (8-3-25-2) and Steel (5-1-17-4) also bowled well.

Overnight rain provided an interesting wicket for the visit of Oakham who won the toss and inserted the home side. A battling innings from Eifion-Jones (20) and an aggressive one from Felgate (55) enabled the home side to limp towards a modest but competitive 137-10 off 40 overs. Despite some fine bowling from Felgate (6-1-24-2) and Dolby (5-1-15-2), Oakham ran out easy winners by five wickets with 8 overs to spare.

The Old Stamfordians provided another stern test and were put in the field on a dry and sunny July morning. The boys started well but were restricted, after a middle order collapse, to 152 all out. In reply the O.S. started solidly reaching 23-0 off 8 overs. The captain decided that even at this early point that it was time for our young spin wizard to enter the game. Oli Lindley proceeded to single handedly demolish the O.S. batting line

up. He bowled a mammoth spell and returned with figures of 18.3-6-49-7 in a truly remarkable performance. However, his efforts were in vain as the opposition were able to scrape home with one wicket to spare.

A narrow loss against Kings Grantham was followed by our visit from the MCC and the season finale. The MCC innings started poorly and they were reduced to 58-5 off 17 overs. As ever, an experienced lower order recovered well to set a target of 203. The boys suffered a similarly poor start and were reduced to 83-5 off 18 overs despite the best efforts of Slack (48) at the top of the order. Oli Lindley (44) was promoted to six in the order and proved he is as useful with the bat as he is with the ball. He was aided by fine innings under pressure from Steel (29) and Murray (33) who put us into a winning position from which Felgate (8*) and Streit (10*) guided us home to a two wicket victory.

It was a remarkable end to a disappointing season in terms of results. However, the experience gained by a very young team was invaluable and should enable us to enter the 2008 season with confidence and high expectations.

DGC

2nd XI

Played 7, Won 5, lost 2.

We did not make the most promising of starts, losing our first game of the season by ten wickets. Perhaps predictably, we were extremely rusty and lost a vital toss on a damp wicket before being bowled out embarrassingly cheaply - mainly as a result of giving the opposition simple catching practice. However, this was to prove to be a side full of character, and the only other defeat they suffered was a narrow loss away at Gresham's. The squad played very well in all of the other games, the most notable victories being those against Notts High and Oakham, both by 8 wickets.

Our best bowler was undoubtedly Jak Garner, who took 13 wickets at an average of 19.2 runs, including 4 for 15 against Notts High and 5 for 8 against Oakham. O'Mara and Holyoake weighed in with 9 wickets apiece; averaging 18.5 and 18.2 respectively. They were ably supported by good spells from Alex Eagles, Edwin Williams and Tom Wallington.

Garner was also close to being the best batsman too, scoring two fifties and averaging 38.8 in 7 innings, but his contributions were outshone by two match winning fifties by James Burley, who finished with a season's average of 53. Perhaps the most spectacular knock, however, was seen when Dan Smeeth was promoted from number 11 to opener to face Gresham's regular first XI fast bowler. Showing no fear, despite the lack of a thigh pad or anything that might be called technique, Dan amassed 66 not out, the highest 2nd XI total of the season, and helped us to set the opposition a challenging target.

The most improved player was Carl Downer, who made the most of his promotion from the 3rds, taking some excellent catches behind the stumps, saving countless byes by leaping down the leg side, and hitting a glorious extra cover drive to win the match against Wellingborough with just two balls to spare.

Finally, a mention should be made of the captain, Tom Holyoake. A reliable and effective all rounder himself, he managed a team of lively and diverse personalities with admirable tact and skill, and deserved to end his Stamford School cricketering career with such an impressive final record.

DL

After five seasons without a 3rd XI, it was great to see the massive interest in senior cricket. The 2005 Ashes win had obviously buoyed up interest, and several budding Kevin Pieterse's (minus daft haircuts) turned up to training.

Unfortunately the season would be disappointingly short, due to the lack of fixtures (several teams cancelled at short notice, unable to put out a side), and bad weather curtailed several matches later in the season.

The first game of the season was played on mainfields against Deacons 1st XI. It was a very early fixture with little time for training and so it was going to be interesting to see how the team performed. Skipper Michael Gent won the toss and put Deacons into bat - a sensible option to see how the wicket performed. Deacons started slowly with their openers pushing singles and building an innings. They looked rusty and could have

pushed the run rate much more quickly – it was something they would rue later in the match. They posted a sound 126 for two off their 25 overs, with special credit to Kris Taylor Rush for his spell of five overs which only let in 13 runs. Kris’ bowling really slowed the Deacons batsmen, who at the time were plundering some wayward bowling. A special mention goes to our guest keeper, Phil Streit, who used the force on several occasions and restricted Mr Extras considerably, and to Tom Bownes who broke a finger in the field by putting his body on the line.

The batting reply started badly with wickets falling early and frequently, exciting the opponents, and making the Rawlpindi Express steam in quicker and quicker! Fortunately Kris Taylor Rush steadied the ship with a rapid 37 and Mike Lutterodt tried to hold the innings together as wickets tumbled at the other end. The excitement mounted.... ten needed off the last over. Overthrows of a no ball! Four runs would be required off the last ball! Watch out parents in the car park for ‘commeth the hour, commeth the man!’ The sweetest six off the middle of the bat (eyes open??) struck a car in the LMS car park to rapturous celebrations. Well done Mike Lutterodt!

The second and final game of the 3rds season, due to failed opponents and very unseasonal weather, was away at Uppingham. In a more lengthy game for the 3rd team, Uppingham were bowled out for 175 off their 35 overs and a strong skipper’s performance from Michael Gent saw him finish his final match for Stamford school (after a lengthy career) on 3 wickets for 15 runs off 7 overs - a great performance! Unfortunately his team mates couldn’t match this and again our batting was limited, relying on several big hitters rather than pushing the singles and building partnerships. However, Jake Alsop (35) and Marc Mcleod (26) did the Pieterston/Flintoff to get us within sight of the total. A late collapse saw us slump to 139 all out.

All members of the squad had a highly enjoyable season, several of the team pushed through into the 2nd XI, notably Carl Downer who demonstrated his versatility by performing well with bat, ball and behind the stumps!

I look forward to pre-season training early in 2007 and hope that our opposition can honour their fixtures for us to have a fulfilling season next year.

Mr R Brewster

U15A

The U15A team had a good season, mixed with both defeats and victories. Overall, the team won a magnificent total of 4 games out of the total 6 played over the course of the season. The U15A played many strong opponents, including Wellingborough, Bedford and Oakham.

The team this year consisted of Tom Crees, James Allen, Tom Dowdell, Oliver Lane, Dawson Bannister, Tom Plant, Cameron Payne, Michael Smyth, Charles Wilson, Tom Winspear, Vince Spurr and the renowned Bahle “hard-hitter” Mhlanga. Each of the players this season played to their best, and in some cases far beyond that borderline and straight into the realm of unnatural skill, with Bahle and James’ brilliant batting, Vince and Tom Plant’s fantastic bowling and of course, James and Charles’ amazing slip catches. Our coach and mentor for this season was Mr Pike, whose excellent umpiring and coaching saw us through many difficult and testing matches.

During the many matches the U15A’s played, several players excelled themselves by reaching amazingly high run totals, and still being in at the end of the game. Here are a few of those ‘golden’ moments....

Stamford. Vs. Deacons	
Bahle Mhlanga	Final run total: 74, not out
Stamford. Vs. Leys	
James Allen	Final run total: 72, not out
Stamford. Vs. Oakham	
Tom Crees	Final run total: 92, caught

Overall, the season ended with Stamford walking away with 4 wins, and only 2 losses. Our success this season is all thanks to the efforts of the team, the massive input from Mr Pike and the many admiring supporters who have been there for every game. Also big thanks to Tim Roberts who helped coach the U15As.

Andrew Bremner (U15A scorer)

P12 W3 D3 L6

The enduring memory of the 2006 season is of bravely chasing huge scores - much chasing of leather was done! The side certainly had potential in the bowling department, but they never really functioned as a unit. Freddie Gladwin looked dangerous in the nets, but in matches he struggled to find his rhythm until the last match of the season against Kimbolton where he bowled beautifully. Tom Williams also had run-up trouble. As a result the opposition were continually getting off to a flyer.

The pattern was established in the first match against Notts High who racked up 248-6. This applied too much pressure on the batting which subsided to 124 all out. Throughout the season Josh Green was the only economical, reliable bowler - Combining accuracy with steep bounce he always posed problems. He it was that figured strongly in our first win against the Deacons, which was a thrilling match. After a difficult start, Tom Williams and Peter Wilson batted sensibly to establish a competitive total. Deacons responded with gusto until Josh ripped out the middle order. At the death Deacons just failed to collect the required six off the last ball. Alex Jones also picked up important wickets. Although he often proved expensive, as legspinners often do, he always looked capable of taking wickets and he definitely has potential.

Tom Williams quickly established himself as the side's most reliable batsman. His calm commonsensical approach could be a model to all schoolboy cricketers. He sticks to the attacking shots that he plays well, hits the bad ball cleanly and stops the good ones - simple really. His fifty against Uppingham, with excellent support from Sam Cole, paved the way for a decent score which we just failed to defend. Sam Cole played one of his typical clean-hitting cameos. He played many important innings for the side, injecting urgency when it was needed. He can certainly hit the ball very hard. That is until I spoiled his natural talent by trying to coach a defence into his game which seemed to ruin him entirely!

Although large totals were often posted against us, the standard of the fielding remained high. Within a good fielding side, Alex Jones and Freddie Berridge set the example, remaining alert and attacking the ball. It is also of credit to the captain Tim Anders that he helped to keep morale high even through some difficult sessions. Tim himself is probably the classiest bat in the side, but unfortunately he rarely got going.

Another win was collected before the final game of the season at Kimbolton. As mentioned, Freddie Gladwin at last found his rhythm and bowled with aggression. Jamie Oakley bowled so well in his first match of the season that one felt aggrieved that he had been hiding in the "B's" all year. On a small ground we still had to chase down 220. However with an excellent fifty from Alex Jones and more runs from the ever-reliable Tom Williams we prevailed comfortably. This was much to the relief of normally dependable Freddie Berridge, who had earlier shelled the easiest hat-trick of dolleys you are ever likely to see. Never mind Freddie, it only cost the side about 150 runs!

Apologies to the rest of the squad who all played there part in an enjoyable season.

Squad: Tim Anders, Henry Wallis, Freddie Gladwin, Jamie Oakley, Peter Wilson, Darren Redding, Freddie Berridge, Robert Burley, Sam Cole, Hugh Ford, Alex Jones, Tom Williams.

TPJ

Some hard work and enthusiasm in winter nets prepared the way for a potentially difficult season in front of us. A squad lacking a little in substance nevertheless took to the challenge of bettering a disappointing season suffered in year 7.

Our season began in rather dismal conditions, on an all-weather surface that was little better at home to Notts High. For the first part of our innings there were encouraging signs, batsmen looked to play straight and we were gradually building a decent total. Unfortunately after one silly run out and the wheels seem to come off. Joe Harrap and James Harrod had led the front line well but poor shot selection led to capitulation and an early tea. Our bowling was steady but unspectacular and the opposition were able to pick off that one (or sometimes two) loose balls an over and secure a comfortable victory.

Our return to "Stadium Springfields" the next week brought joy only to the visitors. Inserted, Bedford Modern racked up an unassailable total, mainly thanks to some beefy hitting, short boundaries and poor catching. It proved to be a sobering lesson on the need to take early chances. In fairness we batted well in response and solid efforts from Ryan Cutler and Joe Harrap backed up by the defensive wall of Robert Salt ensured a draw and encouragement for our next encounter.

At Wisbech, on a wet surface, we batted with good sense against some tight bowling to score a fair total in a reduced overs game. Tom Lane's brisk hitting gave us some genuine hope. Unfortunately, despite a much improved effort in the field, we were unable to defend our lead against some good batting and had to settle for second place in a close contest.

On a hot and dry afternoon in Oundle we allowed the home team to build a large score. Sloppy fielding cost us at least a dozen runs and in on reflection probably the victory too. A spirited chase, led by Tom Lane and Tom Pritchard got us close, but never quite close enough.

A valuable lesson was learned yet again at Oakham under cloudy skies. Having compiled a steady score on the back of Alex Emerson and Tom Lane's partnership we were never quite able to accelerate against some tidy spin bowling. A good opening spell of bowling by Robert Salt threatened to put us in the game, but crucial dropped catches made all the difference as their powerful batting line-up took full advantage of our generosity to smash the ball around, leaving us to rue what should have been.

A bleak and damp day at Kimbolton was soon matched by a miserable performance in the field as we allowed the home side to rack up a large total. The ground fielding was fair enough but a lack of intelligent cricket- in terms of bowling and field placing- for which most bowlers were guilty, took the game away from us. Robert Salt hit a good rhythm and William Joyce displayed his promising leg-spin once again, but we gave away too many easy runs and extras. In reply Tom Pritchard, Tom Lane and William Joyce all displayed ability with the bat, but sadly it was too late to gain anything more than a draw.

On the final Monday of term at last a chance to shine in the sun on the main square in a 20/20 game. It started very badly again with miss-fields, extras, dropped catches, poor backing up all handed Deacons a flying start of 69-1 after just six overs. But then a moment of magic when Tom Pritchard came on. He mixed up flighted spin with the quicker ball. The team responded in the field and woke up. Deacons folded and finally we looked like an A team. In reply our batting was very encouraging (as it had been for most of the season), William Joyce at last getting the runs he had threatened to and Joe Harrap capping a fine all round effort. A victory- and convincing too.

All in all it was a frustrating season, but there was no lack of enthusiasm from this squad for whom the future is bright provided further intelligent cricket is played along the way. The most worrying factor must be the lack of wickets taken- only thirteen wickets captured by the bowlers in the first six games of the term. This must be rectified, and quickly.

MJB July 2006

Notable performances:

Top runs: T Lane
Top wickets: J Harrap, T Pritchard

The squad:

Ryan Cutler, William Joyce, Tom Lane, Robert Salt, James Harrod, Joe Harrop, Tom Pritchard, Alex Emerson, Jack Spriggs, Adam Richardson, Arjun Maher, Ajwad Jabbar, Jack McEntee, Dan Griffin, Luke Smith, Jack Clarkson, Angus Youles.

U13B Cricket – Summer Term 2006

Sadly our fixture list was decimated by inclement weather and shy opposition. Nonetheless, we can boast a 100% record with a convincing win against Deacons which saw Jack Clarkson and Joshua Manby take three wickets each. As our opening pair they also managed to surpass the opposition's total without loss. The squad trained hard and deserved better luck with the weather.

Those in the squad were: Jack Clarkson, Chris House, Richard Sims, Luke Smith, Richard Knowles, Chris Shatford, Edward H-King, Joshua Manby, Robin Virgo, Charlie Lang, George Ellison, Daniel Griffin, Adam Richardson, Jack McEntee.

KJC



CCF

A Message from the Officer Commanding:

This year has seen many changes to CCF, both in its organisation and structure and the training ethos. Whilst the development of Leadership and Military Skills continues to be paramount, occupying 60% of the programme, Adventurous Training, (kayaking, climbing, mountain biking, sailing, dry slope skiing and hiking), fills the remaining 40%. We have introduced a regular programme of weekend Field Training Exercises to complement the well-established visits to Naval and RAF stations, which are increasingly popular amongst all years. The Year 10 Camp at Otterburn was a great success and saw 55 cadets training for, and then completing, an arduous 3-day exercise. Following the exercise the Duke of Edinburgh Silver Expedition group spent the next 3 days exploring the Cheviots, whilst the remainder of the cadets spent the time hiking and skiing.

Overall, it has been a fast moving year where the enthusiasm and commitment of NCOs and Cadets alike has been outstanding in making the CCF successful.

Combat Cadet

Friday 21st April 06, having departed from CCF HQ around midday after sheltering from the unwelcome April showers and cramming in to a fully loaded mini bus we were on route to our first objective, McDonald's, for our last taste of junk food for the next few days.

Our main objective in this however was the military training area of Thetford for the much anticipated 2006 combat cadet competition. Months of training had been put in by the team and the staff in preparation for this, and armed with our new team T-shirts we were in high spirits. On arrival there was not much to do for the team thanks to the fantastic efforts of administration team consisting of Mr Jackson, Sam Vaughn and Tom Wallington. So apart from a few briefings and kit checks we hit the hay in anticipation of the strains of phase 1.

Saturday was not such a relaxed affair, and had half the team known they were to be on their feet for 19hrs I'm certain they wouldn't have bothered getting up! Phase 1 was a blur of 30 min stands consisting of; 2 military scenarios (in which for the first time smoke grenades were at our disposal!), 2 map reading and orienteering stands, a first aid situation, signals practice, military knowledge, an air rifle scenario, a practice assault course run, an observation stand and the one that stood out the most the command tasks.

This threw the team in at the deep end with them being effectively blind. With the task of retrieving a box from a wood behind a minefield, whilst the only means of direction was via a radio link between myself (who could see from a distance) and Doddy (who could not)! The result of our efforts earned us a 9th place position out of 22!

Phase 2 that night was less exiting and more like the blindfolded command task, Night nav.!! Despite a good quick pace and good map

Army Navy RAF



reading we were unfortunately too slow to pick up many points and only came 18th, however this produced an area we could improve on for next year.

Finally after the blessing that was in the form of a sleep in! We were roused to the sounds of other teams leaving for their run, luckily we weren't due to leave for Phase 3 until 1100!! So after a good sleep and clean up we were on the start line again for our 2.5 mile tab in kit!! After a good start and remember we were incredibly tired from the day before, the strain started to show and by the last mile we were all digging deep, however after a near mistake by Chaz with relation to the finish line (thinking it was closer than it was!) we made it in 24 mins, a good time!. Faced with our final challenge of the competition the assault course. There were high hopes for this after the long hours of practice at Grantham. And after carefully considering catapulting ourselves over the course using the trees we set off. We went well and after all completing the leap of faith in to a pool of gunk, (as much to our delight and prediction, Chaz went flat on his face) we finished in a good place.

So after a tiring few days we were glad to set off, but not without attending the final parade with the CO of 49 brigade and a few rounds of Champaign for our efforts we headed back to McDonalds one last time.

The team was; Luke Doddington-Boyes, James Wilson, Chris Oliver, Adam Jones, Phil Dawson, Charlie Wilson, Elliot Wittingham, Stuart Roache and myself. Aided By Major Hankinson, 2Lt. Holdsworth and the administration team mentioned before.

Toby Simpson



Army Contingent

The Army contingent has gone from strength to strength this year, with a huge influx of fine new recruits from year Ten and an ambitious but fun programme of training.

First to the new recruits the CCF experimented with a new kind of induction for this year's year Ten. Whereas previous generations were taken off to the dark, damp Beckingham camp for a training weekend. This year's recruits were treated to an action-packed day at Prince William of Gloucester barracks in Grantham. They were divided up into their platoons and sections and taking in an experience of shooting on the state-of-the-art SAT range. As well as a challenging, but fun assault course under supervision one of the Army's very own highly qualified physical training instructors. Command tasks and drill were also on the programme though I think most enjoyed the command tasks far more, with the opportunity to work in teams to complete set missions.

The older years have taken to their new responsibilities as NCOs well running training and helping new recruits and those in their own years and older to learn more and develop in the CCF. It is already clear that there is a lot of potential for the Army's contribution to this year's Combat Cadet competition. Outside of the normal Friday training sessions there have been regular training for NCOs and others on Saturday mornings where those with an interest in the forces and a desire to get even more out of the CCF can learn more advanced skills and instruction methods.

A highlight of this term was for Army cadets and recruits, as well as the other members of the CCF, without doubt the weekend exercise to the STANTA training ground. Having been put into their platoons and sections the boys and girls were able to experience combat, with blank rounds and set missions. Great fun was had by all and judging by the fact that this exercise was over-subscribed hopefully we will have even more people wanting to go on the next one.

As ever, the RAF section of the CCF has had both an eventful and successful year. Besides the weekly CCF training on Fridays, many cadets have been involved with camps and courses across the country. James Goose, James Wilson, and Henry Edwards enjoyed attending Easter camp at RAF Halton, whilst Ellie Harris and Alex Eagles performed excellently on the prestigious Air Cadet Leadership Course.

9 cadets were awarded their wings after completing Gliding Scholarships at a variety of Volunteer Gliding Schools (VGS). Equally, many more cadets made the most of the opportunity to spend days at 643 VGS at Syerston and go flying in RAF Grob Tutors at RAF Cranwell with 7 Air Experience Flight. Such opportunities are one of the major attractions of the RAF section, and it is clear that this will continue for many years to come.

The RAF section also represented the CCF at a number of parades. The annual Battle of Britain parade in September was particularly well attended, whilst the Remembrance Day parade also saw a large turn out. Such parades not only give cadets a chance to pay their own respects, but allow them to make a contribution to the community, an important part of what we do in the CCF as a whole.

The regional RAF section ground training competition, held annually at RAF Cranwell, was a great success for the CCF this year, as we came a very respectable 3rd place out of 15 local CCFs. Activities included shooting, fitness, RAF knowledge, aircraft recognition, first aid, leadership, and drill, giving cadets the honour to march on the RAF College parade square. Hopefully such success can be furthered in the coming academic year.

The success of the RAF section in the past year has been the result of hard work by all of the officers and cadets, and with much talent beginning to progress in the younger years, the future of the section certainly looks bright.

Tom Wallington







Royal Navy

During the spring of this year the section was very much involved in getting its basic training completed. The recruits, having spent one year following a general course with a strong Army element, now start to learn about the Navy and its traditions. One of the first requirements of the syllabus is to learn Navy drill. This differs from CCF or Army drill and it is essential for all cadets in the section to appreciate the difference, as they will be expected to march as a squad when they visit naval establishments. Other important parts of the introductory syllabus are learning about the role of the Navy, its command structure, its ceremonies and its affiliations. The school is linked with HMS Nottingham and RAF Brampton. The latter is a somewhat curious link, as it is part of the intelligence section, which has RN personnel. In this respect the section has been well served by Lt. Derek Francis and Lt Mike Bailey. The section also receives visits and support from our visiting area instructor, 'The Chief', CPO 'Cozy' Powell.





The section prides itself on being able to get out and about, and once formal training has been completed which allows the cadets to progress from Able Seaman to Leading Seaman and hopefully on to Petty Officer, then we are free to pursue our Adventurous training. Once again the cadets have had time on the water during the autumn and will be dry skiing during the winter months, before resuming their RYA qualifications next year. This year the section has grown significantly being almost 30 strong and amongst the new recruits are some talented sailors. Our Field Day (in June) was taken up with a planned expedition and walk in the Peak District. All the cadets acquitted themselves well, showing their good navigation skills. The two highlights of the year were the Inspections. The annual Inspection saw Captain Fraser RN visit the school and then came the Inspection by General Sir Mike Jackson to mark his retirement and also that of our commanding officer Lt Col Woolf. We wish them both well.

During the summer the section had two cadets going on camps and courses and we have recently heard that PO Philip Dawson, who has been a stalwart of the section since he joined it, passed his Admiralty Interview Board. So congratulations Philip!
CVK





One of the highlights of the summer term was the Lower School's performance of Robert Bolt's 1965 play 'The Thwarting of Baron Bolligrew'. In the beautiful setting of Brazenose garden, a host of talented boys from Years 7 to 9 entertained audiences across two evenings with the swashbuckling story of brave knight, Sir Oblong Fitz-Oblong (Connor Baum) who is dispatched by a powerful Duke (Greg Leech) to save a nearby island from the clutches of the evil Baron Bolligrew (Dominic Pini) and his dangerous yet rather stupid henchman, Squire Blackheart (Oliver Baker). Suffice to say, the villainy of Bolligrew is indeed 'thwarted' by the unlikely hero – played superbly by Connor, one of our most outstanding young actors. His character had to both tame the dark ambitions of the Baron and – hardly a trifling matter – slay a particularly hungry (and talking!) dragon.

These were two very special performances. Not only was 'Bolligrew' one of the first outdoor productions at Stamford School for well over a decade, but it was also very well served by a variety of top-class supporting actors. Sam Farrell gave a wonderful portrayal of Bobblenob, the egg painter, whose ingenuity helped to save the day, whilst his brother, William, played several key roles, including that of the piratical seaman, a performance that would have given Johnny Depp's Captain Jack Sparrow a good run for his money! Josh Green also gave a memorable performance as Magpie and George Belham was in suitably chilling mode as the arch-wizard, Moloch.

No review of this play would be complete without mentioning the magnificent contribution of Mr Holdsworth of the D & T Department who created the dragon – a fantastic creation with eyes that lit up and a throat that really did seem to breathe fire – and special thanks must also go to Christine Bradshaw at Sukies who provided an array of colourful costumes. Sound was in the capable hands of Gary Barlow and Peter Gibbons. Thanks to their hard work and expertise, the audience could hear every word.

The Thwarting of Baron Bolligrew







Donkeys' Years

Theatre goes throughout the Endowed Schools were treated to three evenings of uproarious theatre in late March when nine students took to the boards at the Arts Centre to perform a Michael Frayn farce.

'Donkeys' Years' depicts the story of a group of middle-aged men who meet up for a reunion at their old Oxbridge college. Following a mixture of hilarity, embarrassment, and alcohol, the men get terribly drunk and wax nostalgic over their mis-spent youths. Egos are punctured and skeletons emerge from cupboards as the evening ritual unfolds.

The cast, mainly Sixth Form students, received great praise for their performances. 'Donkeys' Years' proved the final Endowed Schools production for Tom Baylem, who played politician Chris Headingly with his typical precision and energy. Over the course of the evening, Headingly gradually broke down as the farce ensued. With his job as one of the country's leading politicians at stake, Chris was forced to battle the corruption rumours, the ladies and the booze, in order to retain his status. During his time at Stamford, Tom starred in a variety of diverse roles, from musicals through to farces and crime thrillers. His passion for acting has been prevalent in all these roles, and his energy in 'Donkeys' Years' provided a boost for the younger members of the cast.

Alongside Tom starred Tom Wallington, who was thoroughly convincing with his performance of the doctor, David Buckle, a close acquaintance of Headingly. As the door-slamming increased, Tom's lines of "Everybody calm down! All this needs is a bit of calm... and 50 grams of Valium", and "Calm Down! Somebody's going to get hurt in a moment!" seconds before being vigorously struck by the swinging arm of Chris Headingly, evoked a rousing response from the entertained audience.

Few doubted that Robert Thomas would be perfectly cast as the overly camp priest, and few were proved wrong. Indeed, Robert failed to disappoint with his, shall we say, slightly effeminate interpretation of Reverend Sainsbury. On his entrance (a jolly 'Yoo, Hoo' from offstage), someone's cry of "God Almighty" was greeted with a reply of "No, but what a flattering mistake!" The audience erupted; on some nights, they



applauded.

"My God, life!" screams college misfit Kenneth Snell (Dan Smeeth) at the climactic height of the play. The reunion allows Snell to experience all the joys he missed at university, when he was "out in lodgings beyond the station". Soon, the oddball character decides that he has indeed missed out on so much, demanding, "I want a mature studentship!" Dan's performance will be remembered most for his highly convincing broad Welsh accent. It is rumoured that, even to this day, members of the English department request that he reads aloud Dylan Thomas' poetry with the accent intact.

Jonathan Fisher played the role of journalist Norman Tate with what a persona that would be aptly described as 'sleazy and cheesy'. His arrival on stage as the grinning, charismatic sweet-talker proved a highly entertaining moment in the performance, and his cry of 'Mm, I can smell that bacon grilling from here!' at the start of Act Three was, fittingly, amusing and well received by the watching audience.

The only female member of the cast was played by Alice Holtom. Over the course of the evening, the majority of the male characters were seen flirting outrageously with the once audacious, now dignified Lady Driver. Alice impressed many with her performance, and her "Brown Corduroy Trousers" speech will no doubt be remembered. Alice sustained the audience's engagement throughout an entertaining five minute soliloquy with conviction and charisma. Her understudy, Polly Grice, proved a huge boost to cast morale, and was a highly valued member of the team.

The part of the sarcastic, dull civil servant went to Toby Coaker, whose interpretation of Alan Quine was enthusiastically received. Toby's dry humour and deadpan facial expression contributed to his performance as one of the play's funnier characters.

Jonathan Yeates continued his keen involvement with Stamford School drama through the role of Bill Taylor, the youthful college don who, perhaps mistakenly, was left in charge of keeping everything in order over the course of the evening. Unsurprisingly, as the madness complied, Bill was left pulling his hair out as the drunken farce heightened. Daniel Darby was convincing with his performance of Birkett, the college caretaker, whose involvement at the start and end of the play provided cause for comedy.

Great credit must be given to the director, Mr David Lennie. His passion and enthusiasm for the production was a crucial aspect to the show's success, and the cast were genuinely inspired by his direction over a thoroughly enjoyable period of rehearsals. I am of little doubt that Mr Lennie will continue to produce plays of a superb standard over the coming years.





A packed hall enjoyed a dazzling display of talent at the annual autumn concert. Energetic performances by the First Orchestra, the Concert Band and Jazz Band as well as Hot Baroque and the full might of the Choral Society were interlaced with some outstanding solo items.

Mrs Ingrams led the orchestra in a spirited rendition of the march from Wagner's *The Master Singers* and an extract from Schubert's 5th Symphony. The standard of playing was excellent, the tones tuneful and rich.

The Concert Band under the baton of Mr Chandley, and the Jazz Band produced music of different styles but similar high quality. Hot Baroque performed Handel's overture to *Samson* with gusto to the great

Autumn Concert



appreciation of the audience. Many of the same pupils play in more than one ensemble. The demands on them in terms of practice time must be considerable but the results on the night certainly made the audience feel it was worthwhile.

I am sure that many in the audience were struck by the seemingly casual way in which some of the performers regarded their own undoubted talent. Francesca Rycraft-Neill played a beautifully lyrical version of a waltz by Chopin and then walked off stage with hardly a nod of acknowledgement leaving a hugely appreciative audience applauding long after she had gone.

Alex Hammant entertained us with the witty ragtime piece 'House of Elliot' on the bassoon. James Graham on the organ and Edward Graham on trumpet lent variety to the range of pieces on offer. Tom Baylem's performance from Saint-Saens Cello Concerto was full of energy and theatricality. Robert Thomas sang the Handel song which had won him the voice class in the Stamford School Music Competition. Ackie Tam played a movement from a Mozart piano sonata. The level of ability was impressive in all of these and is a tribute not only to the pupils but also to the staff who teach and give time to accompany, direct and support pupils in these performances.

I want to single out one performance above others on the night. Toby Lewis played Debussy's well-loved piano piece 'Clair de Lune'. It is beautifully atmospheric and Toby seemed to capture it to perfection, leaving an audience captivated into silence by the end. Well done!

And finally to the Choral Society who ended an excellent evening by singing two songs by Abba. I have to change hats here as I enjoyed this final item as a performer rather than from the audience. The pleasure of singing in a large choir is hard to equal and I hope the listeners had as much fun from the results as we had in the performance!!

JWD







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