



2019

METE R



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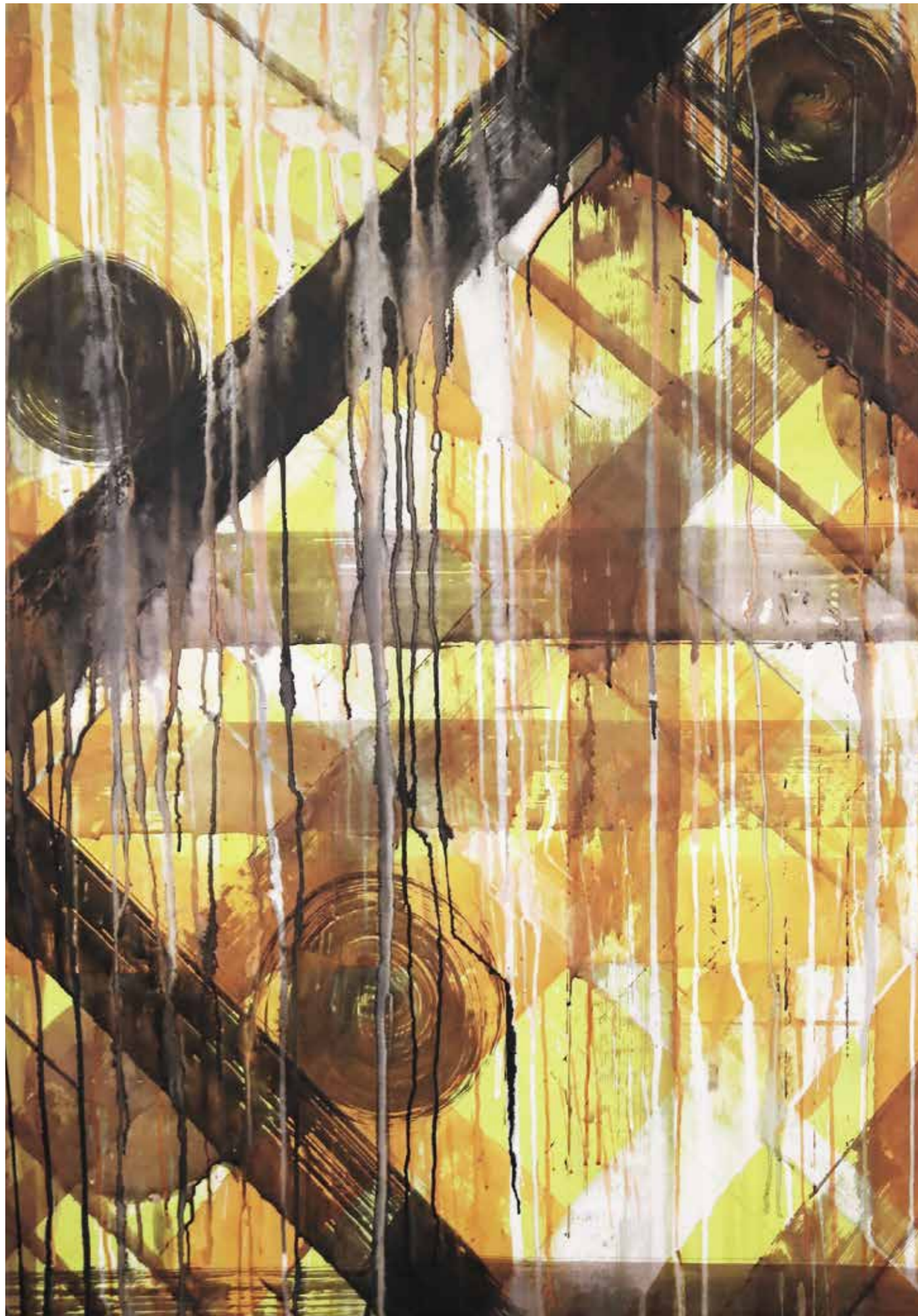
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Artwork by: Stella Gent

An abridged version of the Head Master's address on Speech Day 2019



'It is not fashionable these days for institutions to appear confident but we have many reasons to be confident, despite the year being one full of political, economic and moral question-raising about the role of independent schools. We have the strongest pupil numbers we have ever had. Our academic results in the summer of 2019 topped four successive years. We have had successes in sport and music. And we raised £20,000 for Cancer Research UK at our Festival on the Close.

'A Rugby education is about life itself, about living life to the full. It is about forming personality, about inspiring a true love of learning. About inspiration, passion, excellence, excitement – and fun. The style and language of Rugby, the intellectual challenge, the sense of commitment – all of these are cultivated in our classrooms and in the life of the school.

'We are also a boarding school. Boarding schools don't replace families, they complement them. Exeats, half-terms frequent parental visits, and a steady flow of communication have reduced the impact of separation from home. A flourishing boarding community offers time to practise the violin, perfect the drop kick, research a course work assignment on the Lake District, and – importantly – chat to friends. It goes deeper, too. In the House system – on which Rugby prides itself – you don't feel alone, or lonely. You feel part of a place. A place that nurtures your talents, allows you to learn from those around you, where you feel supported, guided and cherished. Belonging matters enormously, especially in our fast-moving, virtual world.

'Rugby School has helped transform education in the UK and beyond. Whole Person Whole Point has become our mantra. I am proud of that. There are two Latin routes to education: *educare* – to bring up, to train and to teach; and *educere* – to lead and draw out that which lies within. The teachers at Rugby tell me that that *educere* was their reason for joining the school. We must continue to give priority to *educere* if Rugby is to continue to flourish.

'Our quality of education is recognised on the world stage. And our affordability agenda is very much at the forefront. That is why the Arnold Foundation was established 16 years ago, which has had such a positive impact on our School community. We will be investing proceeds from last year's Christie's sale and the growing income from Rugby School Thailand in order to help widen access to the School. If we invest now, and continue to grow our endowments, then we hope our Rugby education will be affordable for the children of the students sitting in the TSR today.'

Peter Green
Head Master

'Our quality of education is recognised on the world stage'

SERVICE & PUBLIC BENEFIT

The Arnold Foundation

Once more there was plenty to celebrate in the achievements of our Arnold Foundation students. All our leavers achieved university places and will be heading off to Cambridge, Bath, Bristol, Manchester, Newcastle, Nottingham, Oxford Brookes or Surrey, some after a GAP year. Subjects to be studied range from Astrophysics through Natural Sciences, Computer Science, Civil Engineering, to English, Economics, Marketing, Philosophy and Property. Furthermore, three of our nine leavers received Leaving exhibitions.

Arnold Foundation students are again well represented on the Levee body; three of their number will be wearing blue jackets this year, with all of these serving to enhance pastoral care within the School. There are an added three who have been appointed to the new peer listening group, highlighting the significant empathetic skills of our AF students.

Our younger students are beginning to hone their leadership skills, and I can report that the numbers of AF students in D

block on the post, GCSE Silver Duke of Edinburgh expedition were the best ever. A good number also applied for funding to help them take part in various residential trips; the History trip to Berlin and Krakow, the Geography trip to Iceland, the Edinburgh Fringe Festival, to mention but a few.

We are delighted to be welcoming seven new AF students into the School this September, including some from new geographical locations and through new partnerships: Hope Opportunity Trust in the North West, Ysgol Dewi Sant, St David's, not to mention old friends such as Ark Walworth Academy (who have sent us a Sixth Form Art Scholar) and IntoUniversity. We continue to be hugely proud of the young people who come to Rugby through the Arnold Foundation, and of what they achieve both when they are with us and in life beyond Rugby. We are committed to the future life and growth of the Arnold Foundation.

CAO



Community Action

The School has enjoyed another very busy period serving the local community. Over the course of the year, our sixth form pupils and teachers have committed some 10,000 hours to working in local primary schools, care homes and charity shops as well as private residences of local elderly people.

On top of the usual range of engagement with agencies in town, we have renewed ties with Avon Park School, a local co-educational, specialist day school providing special needs education for pupils between the ages of five and 16. We have welcomed some of the pupils from this school to participate in activities such as Fives and Dodgeball. So successful has this association been that there are plans to develop our relationship with Avon Park School in the new academic year.

Another new venture was launched in November, this time working with an elderly figure who will be well known to many ORs. The association Blind Veterans approached us to ask if we could supply a couple of pupils to help Bryan Richards, ex Housemaster of Cotton House, and Swansea and Wales rugby union player. Bryan wished to pen his memoirs for the benefit of his grandchildren; however, he is severely hampered by weak eyesight. Over the course of several months Bryan dictated his life-story to three members

of the sixth form, Florrie Barshall, Freddie Anderson and Rachel Stevens, who wrote down his anecdotes and memories. The resulting document, *The Life of Bryan*, came to the attention of the local media including the *Nuneaton Telegraph* and the *Rugby Observer*.* Subsequently, in July, one of the pupil authors, Florrie Barshall, was interviewed on radio by BBC Coventry & Warwickshire.

While this kind of high profile media coverage is nice for the School, there is a great deal of unheralded commitment shown by our boys and girls whose weekly involvement at agencies in town helps to improve the lives of many of our neighbours. Particular mention should be made of the contribution made by Iona Craig who, for the last two years, has been a stalwart at the local Riding for the Disabled association in Cawston. Living locally, Iona has consistently visited the centre to offer her time and help during the school holidays and I know that they will miss her patience, humour and dedication to the cause of assisting others.

A major highlight of the year, First Schools Day at the beginning of March, saw the arrival of 235 Year 4 pupils from seven local primary schools, two of which had never sent pupils to us before. Each visitor seemed to have had a fantastic time judging by the levels of noise as they all set off for the final activity of the day: the Fun Run along the length of the 1st XV rugby pitch. The two Social Service

teas which we hosted at the end of the Advent Term and in May brought to the School our local elderly members of the community. We were lucky with the weather on both days and the usual mix of music, quiz and bingo was well received by our cheerful and spirited visitors.

In reviewing the provision of service to the community that the School offers on a Wednesday afternoon each week, it has been decided to develop closer ties with several other primary schools in the community. In the summer term, therefore, we hosted a tea for local head teachers some of whom had not experienced weekly visits from our students. Once we had explained to them what the programme of First Schools Mentoring and First Schools Teaching comprises, we were delighted to receive requests from the heads to enroll on to the scheme. Thus, from September, more than 100 of our D Block pupils will now be actively engaged in mentoring local youngsters alongside the usual numbers of LXX boys and girls. We are very excited at the prospect of increasing our footprint in the town's primary schools and look forward to fostering positive relationships with the pupils in those schools that are new to the programme.

*<https://rugbyobserver.co.uk/news/rugby-school-pupils-write-memoirs-for-blind-former-housemaster>

Community Action Drama – A New Initiative for 2019

Community, as a word, has lots of different meanings in Rugby. There's the obvious geographical Rugby town community as a whole. The Wednesday community action programme at Rugby aims to bridge this gap and give back.

It's hard to ignore the privilege in which we all live in at School. I'm not meaning solely financial privilege, rather the opportunities we are given, the contacts we can establish, the teaching we receive and the atmosphere in which we go about our daily lives, so much of which we take for granted. I'm not suggesting by any means that life is perfect all the time at Rugby – it's stressful, it's hard work and it can be exhausting, anybody could tell you that. But let's take a step back and look at the bigger picture, something we so often fail to do in our Rugby School bubble. We are incredibly lucky, but I didn't quite realise the extent of our privilege until I set up a new Community Action activity in my LXX year and was faced with some incredibly harsh realities sitting right on our doorstep.

My Wednesday afternoon CA activity mid D Block had been CCF, which I was planning to carry on until a nasty netball injury rendered it impossible for me to continue into my last two years. As emails from Mr Naylor were flying into my inbox about the next year's CA choices, I noticed a 'gap in the market' if you will. From all the options available, there wasn't one to teach drama to kids.

I didn't question my decision to go immediately to Dr Coker and Mr Naylor and present the idea. Both jumped straight on board with it and so the process began. We started off by highlighting a group of around ten students who we knew would be able to confidently lead drama workshops; the drama scholars were perfect candidates, all having previous workshop experience (both leading and taking part). We mapped out some ideas for workshops and games and I wrote schedules for the leaders each week. Now all we needed were some kids for the workshops we'd planned. We'd sent a proposal for the programme to around five schools in the area a few weeks in advance and one at least was really keen to get started. And so it began.

The kids, having barely been taught any drama games or drama for that matter, loved the sessions and got into them surprisingly quickly. We were soon starting the sessions with a sea of 20 kids jumping up and down, all individually asking to play their favourite game. We needed supersonic hearing or subtitles a lot of the time to decipher what exactly was being said. Splat and Buzzy-bees were fan favourites but Wink murder and Penguins also often made the session plans. But there was one moment which has really stuck with me, which encapsulates perfectly what I mean by not fully understanding our level of privilege. I don't mean to dampen the tone of the article - CA drama after all is about having fun, messing about and being silly - but for me this moment was really important.

Having two groups on rotation means we get to know the kids really well. One week, I noticed a boy whom I hadn't seen before in either of the groups. As a couple of the other leaders were starting a game of Splat, I went to say hello. He didn't say a word and was clutching at his clothes. He looked terrified. I crouched down to talk to him and looked over my shoulder

at the ongoing game as more and more kids were sent out when they splatted the wrong person or sent a stray splat flying around the circle. As these games do, it was becoming louder and louder with the splats becoming more and more determined and this little boy was becoming more petrified by the second. A teacher from his school came over to me and told me that she would sit with him so I could focus on helping out with the other kids who by now were getting ready for a game of Penguins after the winner of Splat had finally been decided. As the kids grabbed a chair each and set up the floor for the game, one of the more confident boys in the group came up to me:

'He's new,' he said, talking about the boy I'd just been sat with. 'He won't have liked the noises in that game. The country he's just come from has guns and killing... and he saw it... you know.... Happen.'

I felt sick. I have never felt more ignorant than I did in that moment. I had unknowingly subjected this little boy to past trauma that no eight-year-old should ever have to experience. Even now, I still think about what that little boy must have seen. As a Politics student, I know full well the severity of the conflict in Syria, the extremity of human loss, suffering and displacement. But at the end of my lessons and preps I close

my textbooks and I get on with my day, often without a second thought. And all of a sudden, I'm confronted with an eight-year-old who is shaking with fear because he is terrified of the gun noises in our drama workshop. I honestly can't describe how much of a reality check that is.

I suppose the silver lining to that story is that now he is safe. Now he is in a school with other kids his age, integrated, fed and he can sleep at night - considerably more than he could less than a year ago.

I would like to think that my Community Action programme this year has made a powerful statement – that it doesn't take a lot to give back, that what we take for granted at Rugby is counted as a luxury by those not so far away, that our co-curricular opportunities at Rugby are something to be incredibly proud of. My aim when I set up this initiative in September 2018 was to make a difference to kids in the local area. With the upcoming expansion of this activity, I'm starting to see this become more and more of a reality. More schools now want us to deliver our activities to them and more Rugby students have signed up to run the workshops because they want to get involved.

I want to finish by saying a massive thank you to everyone who has made the first year of this new initiative so enjoyable: all the drama scholars who would bear with me when things got fraught and continue to support me in leading this initiative; those members of staff who guided me through this process and aided me logistically; but most of all the kids from the schools whose energy and enthusiasm for the workshops have made the activity's continuation in the coming years something I am incredibly excited about.

Georgie Jones (G)



Artwork by: Anna Perutz

CCF

2018-19 has been another busy year for Rugby CCF. We began in September by taking the whole contingent to Wretham Camp near Thetford in Norfolk, where the senior cadets immediately headed out into the dark for the weekend while E Block undertook a variety of training evolutions in camp and on the area. Nissen huts and army food are always a bit of a shock after the delights of en-suite rooms and kippers for breakfast (in Sheriff at least!), but they soldiered on admirably, with the Corps of Drums displaying their new-found enthusiasm for 'Mud Cabin' at every opportunity and E Block throwing themselves at the obstacle course with admirable abandon. March's exercise was carried out with similar enthusiasm at our regular haunt, Yardley Chase training area, where the seniors completed a series of challenging exercises with a team from the Royal Marines while E Block were introduced to survival techniques in the woods. Our field kitchen was also fired up in an old ammunition bunker, and after getting to grips with the burners by providing bacon sandwiches to our visiting instructors, the E Block chefs turned out two excellent curries with which to refuel the contingent at the end of a long wet day.

Remembrance Sunday this year was, as might be expected, a rather larger occasion than usual, being the centenary of the armistice in 1918. After a series of commemorative events in the preceding week, including film and music recitals and an exhibition of original items from the war in the Memorial Chapel, the contingent paraded in silence on the Porridge, lining the route as our many visitors arrived. The Chapel itself was full

to bursting, with extra benches placed in the aisles, but that did not detract from the solemn reflective atmosphere, reinforced by the fact that each member of the congregation was given a small postcard-sized photo of an Old Rugbeian casualty of the war as they arrived. As chapel began, the colours were slow-marched up the aisle behind our piper, Mr Jasper, and placed on their stand before the altar.

Many familiar elements of the School's remembrance service were included, such as the lusty congregational singing of the *Libera Me* from Fauré's Requiem, but a highlight was surely the two minutes' silence. As the assembled congregation of 1,000 pupils, staff and visitors stood to remember the 687 members of our community who died in the Great War, thousands of red paper poppy petals (made by Lt Welch) fluttered gently down on to the colours, released from the hatch in the tower ceiling by Lt Belding and two cadet NCOs. It was an extraordinarily moving and memorable moment. As the service came to a close with the National Anthem, the Corps of Drums and Pipe Band struck up in New Quad, before a lunch was held in OBS for CCF staff and serving and retired military ORs. We were delighted to welcome, amongst many others, the Mayor of Rugby, Tom Mahoney, and Capt Chris Wreford-Brown DSO RN, an old boy of Sheriff who commanded the nuclear submarine HMS Conqueror in the Falklands War. Finally, as the sun went down on the first century since the end of the war, the wreaths that had been placed on the altar in Chapel earlier in the day were laid at the war memorial outside the Macready Theatre

as two members of F Block played the bugle call for sunset. I hope that we can claim to have remembered our former cadets and staff in a way that was both significant and appropriate.

Throughout the year we have been hugely encouraged by the fantastic support of many of our sponsor units. Capt Faupel and CSgt Nunn of D Company, 4PARA, have been a regular fixture on Wednesday afternoons and have been instrumental in developing a fantastic unit identity within the Para Section, now heading into its third year. CSgt Sanderson of the Royal Marines Youth Team, Sgt Brown of the 11 Sigs & West Mids Brigade Cadet Training Team and Sgt Taylor of the RAF have also all provided regular and vital support, without which we simply couldn't achieve a fraction of what we do. It has also been great to re-establish links with the Royal Regiment of Fusiliers, our longest-standing sponsor unit, in the form of Capt Jack Dutney, their new Regimental Adjutant, who has visited us twice this year and with whom we look forward to working closely. Soon after Christmas we were sad to lose Flt Lt Jane Higgins who has led the RAF Section to many successes over many years, but as she heads to Cornwall to work with the Forces charity Turn to Starboard, our sadness at seeing her go is rather tinged with jealousy of her new home on the Cornish coast. No doubt she will be a fantastic addition to their team as Events Manager. As Contingent Commander I must also thank all of the



CCF staff for their great efforts over the past year. It perhaps often goes unnoticed that the CCF does ask a lot of its staff, both on Wednesday afternoons and on exercise, and though we try to repay those efforts in the form of dinners their dedication is hugely appreciated. This year we have been delighted to have a newly commissioned officer, 2Lt Joyce, as well as Mr Welch's promotion to Lieutenant, my own to Major, and the arrival of 2Lt Brandwood from Prior Park, under whose leadership the Corps of Drums has gone from strength to strength. I'm also extremely pleased that Miss Hettie Burrows will be commissioned in the new academic year. As ever the greatest of thanks must be offered to our School Staff Instructor, SSgt Jeff Howe, whose tenacity, ingenuity and administrative skill are really what keeps the contingent afloat. It is due to the efforts of these and the rest of the CCF staff that the cadets can enjoy such a varied and exciting programme of training each year.

This year's Annual Inspection was a hugely successful day, though overshadowed by rain clouds and clashing with a GCSE French exam that took away many of our D Block NCOs. After several weeks of indifferent rehearsals the contingent pulled itself together in time to put on an excellent display for Cdre The Hon Michael Cochrane OBE RN, formerly Commodore of the Portsmouth Flotilla and, indeed, my last commanding officer in the Royal Navy before I began teaching. After a reception in the Armoury the contingent marched on to The Close to be inspected by Cdre Cochrane, Cdr Philip Sparke RN

(a Town House father) and Maj Niall Hall, Regimental Adjutant of the Irish Guards and an old boy of Sheriff. All sections gave an excellent account of themselves and marched past to 'British Grenadiers' and 'God Bless the Prince of Wales'. The traditional deployment of 'Men of Harlech' has been quashed as, though it was satisfying to hear members of the School whistling it around The Close, that was perhaps a sign that the drummers needed some new tunes. After a display of cadet activities that was somewhat curtailed by the rain, Cdre Cochrane presented prizes in OBS, including the contingent Sword of Honour to CSgt Bart Hobson (SH) and the Honourable Artillery Company Sword to Sgt Thea Edwards (D), as well as the newly reinstated Cutcliffe-Hyne Cup for Military Efficiency, given in memory of Lt Charles Cutcliffe-Hyne, killed in 1916, which was presented to Cpl Peter Semenov (K). A new prize was also presented to the best member of the Parachute Regiment Section by Maj Sean Phillips, Company Commander of D Coy, 4PARA. The full list of prizewinners is below.

It has been a terrific honour to serve as Contingent Commander of one of the largest and very oldest contingents in the country, and to see first-hand just what the CCF can offer to Rugby pupils in contrast to the rest of the School. I inherited a unit in excellent shape from Maj Maguire and hope to pass it on in similar health, in both cases under the incomparable ministrations of SSgt Howe. The CCF pushes individuals beyond their perceived limits and encourages them to develop leadership and self-reliance in a practical way that I

am quite certain no other school activity can. I valued my own years as a cadet very much and, though most do not go on to a military career as I did, I do hope that all of our former cadets appreciate their time with us as they head on to university and beyond.

Floreat Rugbeia!

DJM (Contingent Commander)

CCF Prizes 2019

Rugby School Sword of Honour – CSgt Bart Hobson (SH)
Honourable Artillery Company Sword – Sgt Thea Edwards (D)
Lt Cdr Beattie VC Prize for Leadership – CSgt Bart Hobson (SH)
Cutcliffe-Hyne Cup for Military Efficiency – Cpl Peter Semenov (K)
Parachute Regiment Section Trophy – LCpl Maelon Buckland (T)
Drummer's Sword – DMaj James Gowen (T)
Rugby Rifle Corps Challenge Cup – Cdt James Day (T)
David Ray Trophy – Corps of Drums

Best Junior Cadets

Royal Marines Section – Cdt Tom Jenkins (W)
Corps of Drums – Cdt Vicky Yu (G)
Fusiliers Section – Cdt Max Fisher (T)
Para Regt Section – Cdt Meg Wells (S)
RAF Section – Cdt Josh Neville (K)



Debating

The Senior Inter-House Debating Final, Sheriff and Cotton vs. Griffin and Whitelaw, played out to a packed Debating Chamber, with 67 staff and students on the benches, on the floor, and in the aisles to hear the motion *This House would ban pornography*.

The debaters drew on data and statistics from many different agencies and countries, as well as from personal experience. Issues at stake included child abuse, people trafficking, sexually transmitted diseases, sexual assault and rape, revenge porn, relationships, definitions, policing, technology and enforcement, and freedom of expression and freedom of speech.

All debaters were highly commended. Olivia Jacklin (G) and Rose Li (G) were unequalled when it came to bringing specific, relevant, data-backed Points of Information to bear against their opponents – though they were much less willing to accept the same level of scrutiny against their own speeches.

Jasper Kraamer (C) and his deadpan partner Omar Pierre-Williams (C) managed to seize the initiative from their somewhat behind-hand competitors to define the terms of the debate, despite being the third House to speak, yet ultimately lost this upper hand as they eventually accepted the same overly narrow definition as every other House (What of Art? What of Literature? What about the whole history of censorship?).

Xavier Christopher (W) brought composure, authority and poise to his speech, at least until diverted by challenging questioning. Charlie Davison's (W) barn-storming closing statement was a suitably flamboyant end to his

endeavours in both the heat and the final, for which he earned himself a Distinction.

Also Distinguished, the winners were the consistently thoughtful, sometimes impassioned, ever-adaptable and quick-thinking Freddie Anderson (Sh) and James Holland (Sh). What was particularly impressive about this team was the way in which it was a team, each member contributing in equal but different ways: Freddie ducked and curved to counter points with nuance while James championed a clear, hard-hitting, forthright style supported by principled logic.

Although Sheriff were judged to have been the best team of the evening, and overall winners of the competition, the motion *This House would ban pornography* was not passed, Ayes: 31, Noes: 35.

Congratulations to all who debated in the heats and the final, and all the audience members who have made these events special by offering their time and attention.

The 2019 Inter-House Junior Debating Final, on the motion *This House believes that CCF should be compulsory at Rugby School and all British schools*, proposed by Griffin and Dean and opposed by Rupert Brooke and Southfield, took place in the Collingwood Debating Chamber on Thursday, 7 March.

This all-girls final had outstanding individual and team performances. The debaters on both sides of the motion focused on whether or not CCF was either accessory or an obstacle to personal and community benefit and growth. The proposition, including Bertil de France (D, DB) focused more on overcoming

personal limits, whereas Stella Spens (RB, DB) drew on the evidence of her own experience, entertaining us with anecdotes of Activities Day (mis) adventures and opinions on the relative merits of shouting at one another while dressed up, which sparked energetic follow-up debate from all teams.

At this stage of the competition it could be predicted that all debaters would be well-prepared for their opening speeches, and all of these were delivered with clarity and verve; Rainbow Hong (D, DB) was particularly strong at this stage. The debaters were also confident in their understanding of the material issues in this topic and were able to listen effectively in order to both offer and respond to pertinent Points of Information. Alice Jackson (G, DB) and Katya Eardley (RB, EB) were most proficient in this element of the competition.

Next, during the floor debate stage, Lucy Wang (S, DB) in particular took control of the debate. While her partner, Jenny Wilson (S, DB), made a particularly convincing closing statement, Jenny was also over time for both her speech and her closing statement, and was therefore penalised.

The debate ended, with the issues of military indoctrination, violence, pacifism, militarised nationalism and child soldiering all somehow un-mentioned. The floor was asked to vote. The motion passed. Distinctions for outstanding performances during the 2019 competition go to Katya Eardley, Rainbow Hong, runners-up Jenny Wilson and Lucy Wang, and the winning team from Griffin, Saskia Fuchs and Alice Jackson.

ANS



Drama Reading Group

Two summers ago, as an aspiring English Literature student, I visited a certain enthusiast (Mr Smith) to discuss my reading for the summer. It was then that I realised just how limited my life's reading had been – only ever having meaningfully explored the precocious and pretentious minds of 20th century Americans – and so the prospect of a wider world was opened to me. "Have you ever thought about reading plays?" he asked me from the brown leather sofa of Michell, and it was then that 'Drama Reading Group' was born. Fellow enthusiasts James Gowen, Honor Douglas, Izzy Hobbs and Stella Cohen made up the committee to scout for keen literature nuts and, following a couple of rather enthusiastic emails, our first meeting was held (with tea and biscuits) in Tudor common room. Our first read was Willy Russell's 1980's classic *Educating Rita*, particularly fitting, we felt, as the narrative surrounded a

literary education and journey rather like our intention to read and open ourselves up to the literary sphere. Rita's initial discerning wit and outspokenness against the pomposities of her English professor soon melded into a love and charm for literature, something which certainly inspired the bubbling conversation we held that evening.

That was back in October 2018. Since then, the 12 or so members of our group have ventured into a variety of other plays - namely *Lemons Lemons Lemons Lemons Lemons* by Sam Steiner, *Low Level Panic* by Clare McIntyre, *X-Stacy* by Margery Forde, *The History Boys* by Alan Bennett and *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* by Tom Stoppard. Being a student-led society, congregation and a lack of pressure were at the heart of our aims, and thus the flux between meetings wasn't startling – on

Ellie Muston (S)

Engineering Education Scheme

EES was a fun and wonderful experience, which gave us the chance to apply the knowledge we learn in our subjects to a real-life problem, in a business situation with Cemex. The project gave us the opportunity to show our creativity and was a test of the challenges an engineer within a company faces regularly in their day-to-day life.

During the production of our prototype we faced many challenges, but as a team we were committed and passionate about

the task. We worked with dedication and efficient and managed to complete our project on time.

The assessment and celebration day was fascinating! We saw over 70 schools and their projects during that day. This was where our hard work really paid off and we were nominated for the innovation and creativity prize.

The EES project not only gave us the chance to improve our skills in

occasion there were only three of us! The meeting and discussion were not the crux - what this group really encouraged was the exposure of our upper school students to a wider world of reading and playwriting. It didn't matter who or what we studied elsewhere: being a member of the Drama Reading Group was a symbol of a common interest and a desire to explore and entertain our literary imaginations, something which we all valued and enjoyed. I hope that this year has been fruitful for the group with its new congregation hopefully having ventured further into the world of playwriting. Whether or not you are a student of English Literature, if you have a passion and enthusiasm for reading I wholeheartedly encourage you to be a part of this fabulous group!

SCM





Duke of Edinburgh Award

Once again, the year saw many members of the School complete their Duke of Edinburgh Award at each of the three levels, demonstrating how important the scheme remains in our community.

Participation in the award scheme focuses the minds of the young people in setting themselves goals to improve and develop existing skills or acquire new skills. Students are always busy at Rugby but at least some of that activity can be channelled into their award. That said we have had a few participants add to their workload by choosing an additional skill or physical activity in an effort to try something new, which is no bad thing.

The Volunteering section continues to challenge students, simply from the point of view of finding the time to do something meaningful that offers service to the community and can be achieved around their hectic School schedule or during the holidays. This year we have seen another great variety of activities including helping out at local cricket clubs, working with the elderly, volunteering with community theatres, and coaching junior sports teams. Reading through the reports from the managers of these activities tells a story of hundreds of hours of dedication and service given by so many of our young people.

Ask anyone who has completed any level of the award what they remember most about it and they will undoubtedly say the expedition. The expedition is where we find our participants can challenge themselves by pushing out of their comfort zone. Teamwork and leadership skills come to the fore and individuals often shine in ways that are completely unexpected.

This year, the Bronze training and practice day took place in March not far from the School campus. Groups were taken out to Grandborough where they worked with members of staff to practise newly developed map and compass skills with groups walking along various footpaths and rights of way south of Rugby. The day also saw all participants battling with a strong breeze to put up tents, cooking a meal in the field and learning about how best to work alongside their teammates to get these jobs done. By the end of the day, with all the necessary training

complete, the boys and girls returned to School ready to tackle their qualifying expedition a couple of months later.

The qualifying expedition for Bronze took place in May on a glorious couple of days in the Cotswolds. One or two of the groups made hard work of their journey on day one, with some quite big unintended detours; nonetheless spirits were high at the campsite overnight and all the groups were able to figure out where they went wrong. The next day saw all the groups complete the expedition with fewer navigational errors but quite a number of sore feet and tired bodies.

Practice expeditions for both Silver and Gold took place at the start of the Easter holidays. The Silver groups squeezed into a couple of minibuses for the journey to the Peak District where the sudden drop in overnight temperatures came as quite a surprise to all. That was not enough to put them off, and all the groups worked hard covering good distances through the Hope Valley, Ladybower and Kinder Scout whilst they consolidated their training in navigation and teamwork. The Gold practices went to Dartmoor where, as well as the walking groups, we had one group taking to their bicycles to tackle a north to south route over the moor. Wild camping and the wilderness of this part of the world provided challenges to all the groups, but not as much as the two inches of snow which covered their tents on the final night of the expedition.

Once the GCSEs were out of the way, the Silver groups took to the hills again, this time to Shropshire and the Long Mynd where they completed their qualifying expedition. After all the hard work of the exams, three days of walking, camping and battling mixed weather conditions might not be everybody's choice, but for those who completed this expedition it is genuinely a highlight of their year from which they returned exhausted but happy.

A small number of Gold participants headed to the Lake District for a challenging but highly rewarding expedition at the start of the summer holidays. Fair weather and magnificent views made for an excellent experience for all involved.

MWG



F Block Enrichment

We have recently redeveloped our F Block enrichment programme to help us broaden and strengthen the academic experience of our students in their first year. The aim is to create enjoyable and challenging opportunities for our F Block to engage with academic learning in a cross-disciplinary and free-ranging manner. In particular we hope to develop our students along the lines of the Rugby Learner Profile. This means helping them become persistently reflective, versatile and resourceful in the face of failure and challenge, capable of deliberately critical and creative thought, as well as confident with collaboration and with taking a step into the unknown.

Over the course of the F Block year, each of our students now engages with three cross-disciplinary enrichment activities, each of which culminates in a full day developing their knowledge and thinking in that area. This might be working on a mission to Mars before heading off for the day to the National Space Centre with the Physics and Chemistry departments; investigating the history of coding and encryption with the History, Mathematics and Computing departments before attempting to resolve the July 1914 crisis and then breaking

out from an escape room; or exploring disease and its spread with the Biology and Geography departments, then heading to London to map the profile of historic diseases in that city. Drawing on these experiences, each F Block student is then required to complete a personal project that they then present to their peers, school staff and members of the Levée in a Project Conference at the start of the Trinity term.

The greatest challenge, however, is the Trinity Term collaborative project in which the F Block are challenged to work together in a team (something they find very tough) to agree upon a project concept, plan and then create it ready for a final conference in the last week of term. The work produced this year has been fantastic, ranging from an investigation and detailed analysis of artificial languages to the creation of a potato cannon, from a range of chemistry experiments to a performance of a contemporary take on the classical story of Helen of Troy - and, my favourite, the construction of a Cold War nuclear bunker themed escape room.

EDS

Drama Enrichment

During the Lent term, I was lucky enough to be involved in the drama enrichment as part of the F Block curriculum. This involved spending a day with actress Joanna Riding, who has won two Olivier awards. We spent the day working on a scene from My Fair Lady, for which Joanna has won an Olivier Award for her role as Eliza Doolittle. She knows the role of Eliza Doolittle so well that she was able to give us an incredible insight into the characters of the leading roles in the play. For example, during the day, I played the part of Henry Higgins and was told to exaggerate my movements on stage to emphasise his mysterious nature. Joanna taught us how to perform differently in bigger and smaller spaces, and gave us tips on how to sound clearer when delivering our lines. She helped us with group work as well as individual performances

and this culminated in a surprisingly professional performance at the end of the session.

The whole group started off quite nervous and introverted, but Joanna brought out our confident side through games and exercises. She told us about how she came to be in this amazing production as well as her life as a professional actress. I particularly loved it when we did the choreography as we started out as a completely shambolic mess and Joanna managed to make us slick and synchronised, really proving how much of a professional she is!

Maisie Cornell (RB)



Modern Languages Enrichment

This year, the Modern Languages Department offered a varied and diverse programme of enrichment. Students were given an introductory insight into 20th-century surrealism in France, followed by a short ride in a fast machine through the world of Italian 'Futurismo'. In the third week, students followed instructions in German to make Oobleck, a non-Newtonian fluid made famous in the Dr Seuss series, using cornflour and water. To finish off the programme, we collaborated with the Confucius Institute at de Montfort University, Leicester, to organise a 'China Day'. Over the course of the day, students learned how to write their name using a calligraphy pen and were given taster sessions in beginners' Mandarin, fan dancing and t'ai chi. The highlight of this trip for me had to be lunch, for which we made a reservation at an authentic local Chinese restaurant. Students were treated to traditional Chinese hotpot, which involves cooking one's own food from scratch in a pot of boiling hot, spicy soup.

Students who had signed up for languages enrichment in Autumn Term 2 had a slightly different experience to round off the programme, because they were taken on a 24-hour whistle-stop tour of Northern France. Having set off at midnight on 11 December, we travelled by coach to Dover and embarked on a ferry to Calais. Once arrived and after having breakfasted in Calais, we took part in a variety of interesting activities, including a croissant-making lesson, and visited a number of sites of local interest, including a WWI cemetery and Europe's largest aquarium. We narrowly avoided getting held up by the marauding bands of protesting gilets jaunes and made it back to Rugby in one piece, albeit somewhat sleep-deprived, the following evening at 9pm.

CMB



Sculpture Enrichment

On Monday, 11 February, a group of F Block students went to the Yorkshire Sculpture Park. The day started off with an early departure from the Queen's Gates to get on a coach to take us there. Upon arrival, we took a group tour around some of the main features of the park. We saw many abstract sculptures from artists including Barbara Hepworth and many more. Halfway through the tour, the F Block were given a block of clay and were challenged to mould certain shapes to fit in with the sculptures surrounding them. This was enriching and will help for those doing GCSE Art, and it built on our skills in clay work and sculpting. We then re-grouped for lunch in the modern café and proceeded to the second part of the day. We went into an inside gallery and saw the many beautiful works that had been made from various pieces of wood. It

was interesting to see what can be created out of such simple materials. Throughout the day, we were challenged to a photo competition to present a summary of the Yorkshire Sculpture Park in a single photo. We examined many sculptures of different animal heads, based on the Chinese New Year. By going on this trip, many of us understood art on a different level and were enriched by seeing how different forms of art can be made from so many different materials. It developed different skills needed for continuing art in the coming years. Overall, this was a very thought-provoking experience and I'm sure that everyone who took part would recommend it.

Daisy Bowling (Tu)



Harry Potter Book Night

On Tuesday, 22 January, the Temple Reading Room celebrated its third Harry Potter evening. Young wizards, witches and even muggles were treated to a full evening of activities and quizzes as yet again the TRR was transformed into the 'Great Hall'. Harry Potter Book Night shares the magic of JK Rowling's well-known stories, introducing future generations of readers to all things Harry Potter. Students had fantastic fun playing Quidditch and enjoying some of the amazing snacks inspired by the scrumptious wizard foods in the books. Congratulations to the winning team from Dean and Griffin.

HKT



Modern Languages Poetry Reading Competition

I recited an extract of prose from *El cementario de los libros olvidados* in Spanish class for the poem competition. It was a challenging piece to learn, mainly because of the beautiful but long descriptive passages. I divided said passages into phrases to remember them more easily. Slowly but carefully, I worked from the top to the bottom. Meanwhile, it was helpful to learn alternately, for example by reading three phrases, then reciting them, then reading them again. This secured my long-term memory. I would then take two phrases at a time before attempting to recite in full. Finally, I checked translations of unknown words and accurate pronunciations. When the class chose me as a winner, I was grateful that my work paid off. However, what present victory meant (participation in the final) also scared me slightly.

Elizabeth Viktorova (D)

On 23 May, some F and E Block students were chosen to be in the Modern Foreign Languages poetry reading competition final. Students recited poems in Spanish, French, German and Italian; overall there was amazing talent throughout the final. I was chosen to represent my class in both Spanish and French. I came first for both overall Spanish and French in the final. I was very happy with this result as I feel it was a great achievement reciting both poems.

My Spanish poem was called *Contigo* by Luis Cernuda. Contigo means 'with me' in Spanish and the poem is about how the world would be different if this person wasn't in it. It questions: "what is life, if you're not with me?" The poem didn't take too long to learn as it was very short. However, to recite it as well as possible, you must understand every line to know the deeper meaning of the poem.

My French poem was *Déjeuner du matin* by Jacques Prévert. It talks about a person going downstairs for breakfast, having a smoke and then leaving the house. However, during the scene, he does not engage with the reader, who could possibly be his partner, and they are having relationship problems. The reader expresses the way they feel and, as the poem goes on, it gets sadder and sadder. I recited this poem with a partner; it wasn't too hard to memorise as there weren't as many lines.

To memorise and express a poem as well as possible, I would say you need to know it off by heart a week before the competition so that you can practise saying it even better. You can also practise with a friend, as they can give you feedback on how to improve. I would advise others, if they are reciting any poem, to be relaxed and natural and to enjoy their poem.

Cherry Chung (S)

Novel Writing Competition

Over the summer, some of Rugby's most passionate creative writers took on a challenge set by the English department: to craft the first ten pages of a novel. However, there was a catch to this already difficult task—the narrator of the novel needed to be "unreliable". Whilst this may seem an easy ask, creating an unreliable narrator is much more complex than it may seem upon a first effort. Nevertheless, the seven finalists managed to produce extremely commendable attempts at such a delicate undertaking. These finalists were: Celeste Allen (LXX), Olivia Scarozza (LXX), Daniel Richardson (E Block), Emily Tsang (D Block), Georgie Jewson (D Block), Lucy Wang (D Block) and Mariella Satow (E Block).

The prize for the winner of the competition was a £50 Amazon voucher, and, more importantly, the savvy advice of one of the UK's most influential literary agents, Antony Harwood. Luckily, Mr Harwood was kind enough to provide feedback, not only for the winner of the competition, but for all the finalists. His notes were both constructive and complimentary for each entry and made taking part in the competition incredibly worthwhile. Now, each competitor has had their work read by a professional literary agent whose clients include the Booker Prize-winning Alan Hollinghurst!

These finalists were rewarded with a lovely evening in the School's Armoury on 5 November, where tutors and teachers

gathered with the students to celebrate their hard work. Here, Mr Harwood addressed each finalist, offering feedback on the wide range of pieces presented to him. Finalists, whilst grasping glasses of sparkling elderflower and munching on pigs in blankets, anxiously awaited to hear what everyone had been waiting for... Entries ranged from mystery to fantasy, but Mariella Satow (Tu) took first prize for her engaging piece which explored "a collection of memories from a daughter about her recently deceased father. As the story continues, the daughter realises her father perhaps is not what he seems". Joint runner-up went to Celeste Allen (RB) and Olivia Scarozza (B), though Mr Harwood emphasised that every entry was of a fantastic standard.

The prize-giving was followed by a lovely meal at Pizza Express for all of the finalists with Mr Eyre-Maunsell and Mr Harwood. Here, the beginnings of the novels were discussed, as well as people's favourite books, which was inevitable at a table filled with avid bibliophiles. This made for a perfect end to the Novel Writing Competition; we are all enthusiastic to see where each unreliable narrator will lead our stories as we continue to work on them with the help of Mr Harwood's constructive criticism.

Olivia Scarozza (B)

Poetry by Heart Competition

The final of this year's Poetry by Heart competition was held shortly after Remembrance Sunday in The Old Armoury: a lovely building hidden behind the Macready Theatre. This year's choices were made from an eclectic but limited selection of war poetry to commemorate one hundred years since the end of World War I.

Each of the 24 finalists was amongst the best in their class and came from right across the School. The event started at 5pm but some of us arrived early to get our bearings and do some last-minute practice. When everyone was there the noise fell away and we were silent, waiting for things to begin. The three judges introduced themselves and explained how the event would run. We first took the stage, one by one, to give our name and the title of our poem before taking our seats to await the start of the competition.

I went last in the junior category, reading *There will come soft rains* by Sara Teasdale, a small poem that conveys the soldiers' missing sense of purpose. It was chilling to think that I was reciting a poem in the very room from which, boys, just like us, would have gone off to war, excited to fight for their country but soon to lose all sense of purpose, worn down by its horrors.

One by one, we took to the floor and performed our poems. The judges seemed impressed, and not only by our ability to recite poetry by heart. Many of the participants also put a great deal of drama in to their performance. I felt I was particularly lacking in this respect and was firmly put to shame by excellent performances from James Gowen (T) and Cherry Chung (S). Each contained a great deal of passion and managed to connect the audience with the subject matter – the horror and despair of war.

The judges were given a very tough decision - it was anyone's game. However, after a long while discussing with her fellow judges, the senior judge, Joe Scanlon (current head of English at Bilton Grange) took to the stage herself to announce the winners of the junior and senior competitions: Samuel Branston (junior) and Harriet Sylvester (senior). Despite some exquisite performances from many people, these were the two who really took to it in every way possible. Harriet and Samuel performed *The Counter-Attack* by Siegfried Sassoon and *Song of the Mud* by Mary Borden respectively. They performed with great emotion and with no hesitation despite very long poems. Well-deserved winners they were.

Monty Bantoft (T)

Poetry With Punch

On Thursday, 4 October, we welcomed Matt Windle: 'Poetry With Punch' to celebrate National Poetry Day in style. Matt, the Poet with Punch, is Birmingham's Poet Laureate 2016-2018. He has performed spoken word/slam poetry since 2007. As a poet and professional boxer, Matt delivers workshops, performances and poetry-boxercise to schools, libraries, foster homes, young offenders, residential care homes and various

other establishments, whilst fighting at a national level as a super flyweight boxer. F and E Block were enthralled by an evening of rap, poetry and plenty of boxing talk, followed by a full morning of poetry workshops.

HKT

Push Cart Race

Incredibly, this event is still running (unlike some of the carts). Started in 1997 as just a bit of fun, the annual pushcart race has become a regular, much talked about fixture in the calendar. Houses are responsible for the building and racing, albeit in a sanitised time-trial guise, of a cart that can carry a driver and passenger around three or four laps of the famous Close.

2018 saw a bumper crop of fantastic machines wind their way to the start and, as usual for this event, the weather remained kind. Town were keen to be the giant slayers and had spent much time and money in building a new super machine that they thought could topple the seemingly perennial reign of School House, an element of the event that went all the way to the last lap.

Disappointment in 2017 saw Dean with a new determination and a new cart. Starting early usually does not bode well, but they set an incredible time for their three laps and set a target for the remaining girls' houses to chase.

Bradley, past winners many times, set a hot first lap, so hot in fact that by the end of the second their cart was literally smoking, so

it was not surprising that they failed to complete the race. The real threat to Dean's efforts came late on from Rupert Brooke and then Southfield. This pair finally had to settle for the minor placings with Southfield edging RB by a single second. Who knew timing by phone could be so accurate?

Sheriff, as second seed, also had a fantastic machine to compete with Town and after two laps there were only two seconds between them. Eventually, superior power gave Town the edge in this head-to-head, but would it be enough to topple SH? Unfortunately for them it was not. School House's excessive zeal, Bart's drive and hours of practice laps meant their puny little cart once again flew around The Close. With celebrations deemed too much for the rest of the world to observe, the SH boys were shepherded into their House to do whatever they do with such tumultuous excitement.

Are the current crop of SH boys as keen to keep their push cart monopoly or is it time for the rise of Town or Sheriff?

PAB



GAP YEAR IN JAPAN

Dewar Pilkington Travel Award Report

In the early months of 2019, I had the privilege of spending eight weeks in Japan where I taught English to the students at Waseda Jitsugyo High School and Elementary School in Kokubunji, one of Tokyo's 26 cities. The visit was the result of several months of planning and fundraising. The Dewar Pilkington Charitable Trust's generous travel grant allowed me to take full advantage of this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity and to gain the education and experience that I did.

Waseda School campus is spacious and surprisingly quiet considering it is only half an hour from the hustle and bustle of Shinjuku, Tokyo's busiest city. However, with almost 2,000 students across the Elementary, Junior and Senior Schools, it is a lively community. Whilst the school enjoys an impressive academic track record, emphasis is also placed on co-curricular activities; the school has strong teams in baseball, rugby, tennis and basketball amongst others, in addition to a thriving choir and orchestra.



First day on the job – Vice-Principal Hishiyama and myself



Mr Kubo and I during our final class with Ko-San, my favourite class to teach



The ever-smiling Ms Takemori

English, alongside Japanese and Maths, forms the core of the curriculum at Waseda; students can expect at least one English lesson every day. Every week, students take lessons in speaking, listening, reading, writing and grammar. With no prior classroom teaching experience, I was given the position of English Native Assistant, which was daunting considering the fact that classrooms in Japan are double the size of those I had grown up in: roughly 40 students make up each class. The lessons I assisted with varied widely according to the age and ability of the students. Lessons with students in Junior High tended to be more focused on grammar and comprehension, rather than speaking. In these classes, my role would be to support the English teacher in dictation exercises by reading the texts to the students and helping with grammar and occasionally pronunciation. At times, it was difficult to keep the students engaged and focused during these lessons, as grammar exercises are often repetitive. When I was struggling to motivate the students, however, I could always rely on Mrs Takemori, who would help students apply their new knowledge of grammar to their favourite Disney and 'J-Pop' songs. Outside of the class, students were always keen to discuss their interests in English and American teen culture with me, and they were always keen to know my thoughts on Japanese music and film.

Teaching the Senior High School students was undoubtedly the favourite part of my experience at Waseda, especially those in Ko-San (final year). Unlike other schools in Japan, students at Waseda School do not have to sit public exams as their completion of the school's academic programme is enough to ensure they gain entry to Waseda University, one of the premier universities in Japan. When I arrived, Ko-San had completed their mandatory studies at school, therefore any remaining lessons were voluntary and designed to prepare them for university level English. I had the privilege of working alongside Mr Kubo and Ms Murata with a small group of students who were months away from enrolling in Waseda University's International Liberal Studies programme.

Although I was nervous at first, I quickly acclimatised and became more confident as the weeks progressed. I especially felt that my ability to improvise and communicate with the class improved as the weeks went by. In these sessions, we

'Whilst at times the culture shock of Japan was overwhelming, if I had the opportunity to do it all over again, I would not think twice. Seeing the students' ability in English progress over the weeks was hugely rewarding, and experiencing true Japanese culture for the first time will always be one of my most memorable experiences.'



My final hours in Japan at an izakaya with the English department



focused on developing the students' interviewing and debating techniques. Debates often concerned issues that Japan is currently facing such as its restrictive immigration policy and the resultant lack of racial and cultural diversity. Initially the students found these debates challenging as these issues are considered taboo; Japan, along with the Koreans, is the most racially homogenous country in the world. Despite this,

the students quickly connected with the topics in discussion and engaged with the questions. However, the most heated, most controversial debate was one that the students all felt very strongly about: 'Which is better: Disneyland Tokyo or Disney Sea Tokyo?' The result was an hour-long discussion about the various foods and rides exclusive to each theme park – Mr Kubo and I were baffled by how passionate the students were and by the level of English on display.

Whilst I was only in Japan for two short months, I found it difficult to leave. Throughout the entirety of my trip, the people were so welcoming and generous; I had to pre-purchase excess luggage to bring home all of the gifts I was given. Hours before my departure to the airport, Ms Murata organised a S betsu-kai (farewell party) at a local izakaya (Japanese pub) in Kokubunji – a final testament to the quality of Japanese hospitality. After a few rounds of Kirin, Japan's favourite beer, it was time to say my goodbyes and head to Haneda and start the 24-hour journey home.

I would urge all students to at least consider taking advantage of the opportunity that Waseda offers to Rugby School students. Whilst at times the culture shock of Japan was overwhelming, if I had the opportunity to do it all over again, I would not think twice. Seeing the students' ability in English progress over the weeks was hugely rewarding, and experiencing true Japanese culture for the first time will always be one of my most memorable experiences. I would like to thank my three host families for welcoming me into their homes. I would also like to express my gratitude to the Dewar Pilkington Charitable Trust. I am incredibly grateful to have received a travel award, as it enabled me to experience Japan in a way I would never have imagined before I arrived. I look forward to my next adventures in the land of the rising sun.

George Jackson (OR Sh)

SOCIETIES

Improvisation Society (a.k.a. Drama Club)

What is most exciting about this society is that it is managed, led and formed entirely by students. When students attend this Society, we, as student leaders, are tasked with exploring the boundaries of their imagination and ability to strengthen their improvisation skills. As keen dramatists, we have a keen understanding that improvisation is always useful, in the rehearsal space and, if need be, on stage. What we really love is the community that the Drama Department and this Society creates: the system of hierarchy has always been absent. This really benefits the creative process as each voice is equal in the rehearsal room, and there is always respect for each and every other person. The sharing of ideas and expressive nature that we encourage is solidified through our structure.

Usually, as in many activities, we warm up with a group exercise where everyone has to be alert and ready to think. From there, we consider the levels of imaginative thinking in the room and think of an exercise to enhance and use this mindset as much as possible. While we still push everyone to be as creative as possible, we prefer to do it in a very relaxed manner, allowing Improvisation Society to be a place where pupils can come and take a break from the worries of academics, for example, and simply have a fun time. However, we don't want it to be a distraction, or that people feel obliged to come if it gets in the way of serious work; we care the utmost for the students' mental health. If students do attend, but would rather observe, our range of exercises allows us to adjust to the amount of people. Thanks to the assistance of our Drama Scholars,

this Society has always been brimming with confidence and ability to explore improvisation. We are also fortunate to have members who come consistently, which encourages others as an example is set and shows the best of what we can offer. This loyalty is something we are truly grateful for because it means that we can work with people we already know are capable of thinking of ideas when asked. That is not to say we don't welcome newcomers: any members of the School body are welcome to attend, and we make sure that they are accepted, be it F Block or XX. Like a House, this Society's members have strong bonds with one another, providing a positive and comfortable environment. As two members who started as participants, our commitment has been rewarded with leadership, proving that Improvisation Society is always willing to reward those who show keen interest and commitment. We look forward to choosing successors who have shown these desired qualities. We believe that the skill of improvisation is something that all actors should be equipped with, because, no matter whether they decide to continue on the stage or not, the ability to think quickly under pressure is highly sought-after and here is definitely on offer.

**Honor Douglas (D)
and James Gowen (T)**

Landor Society

Over the course of the year, we have embarked on an extraordinary journey through centuries of literature, guided by the brains of Rugby's bonkers English Department. These weekly sessions have left us supercharged with sensations, ranging from discombobulation to

despair and delight as we tackled works varying from the mind-boggling theory of Lévi-Strauss to the raunchy C16th poetry of Thomas Nashe.

Our exploration extended beyond even the rich fountain of the English literary canon, as we underwent a transformation akin to Gregor's in Kafka's *Metamorphosis*. Hissing with his same insectile frustration, we were forced to confront the problematic nature of language and identity. Mr Smith's session on *Heart of Darkness* plunged us into the wilderness of the Congolese jungle as we came face to face with the beasts of a nihilistic colonial environment. Similarly, Dr Sutcliffe and Mr Naylor led us through the barren landscape of TS Eliot's *The Waste Land*, a work which confronts the meaninglessness of human existence with words and imagery nonetheless pregnant with meaning.

I soon found myself leading a session on Anna Akhmatova's *Requiem*, a deeply moving work in which the Russian poet expresses her grief following the brutal murder of her closest friends and family under an oppressive Stalinist regime and the horrifying news of her son's sentencing to death. Many of my fellow members soon followed with presentations of their own: Thea Edwards gripped us with a haunting extract from Toni Morrison's *Beloved*; Liv Scarozza led us through the gardens of Romantic Hellenism and Florrie Barshall immersed us in a Dadaist dimension.

Nevertheless, this literary adventure, as all journeys must, had to come to a conclusion – but, boy, did it go with a bang! Teachers and students alike celebrated in style with the inaugural Landor Dinner, where wine and fine dining was accompanied by folk ballads,

the verse of the Pearl Poet and accounts of Ezra Pound's eccentricity. Literature once again held us spellbound as these recitals sent laughter spilling from our lips and tears from our eyes.

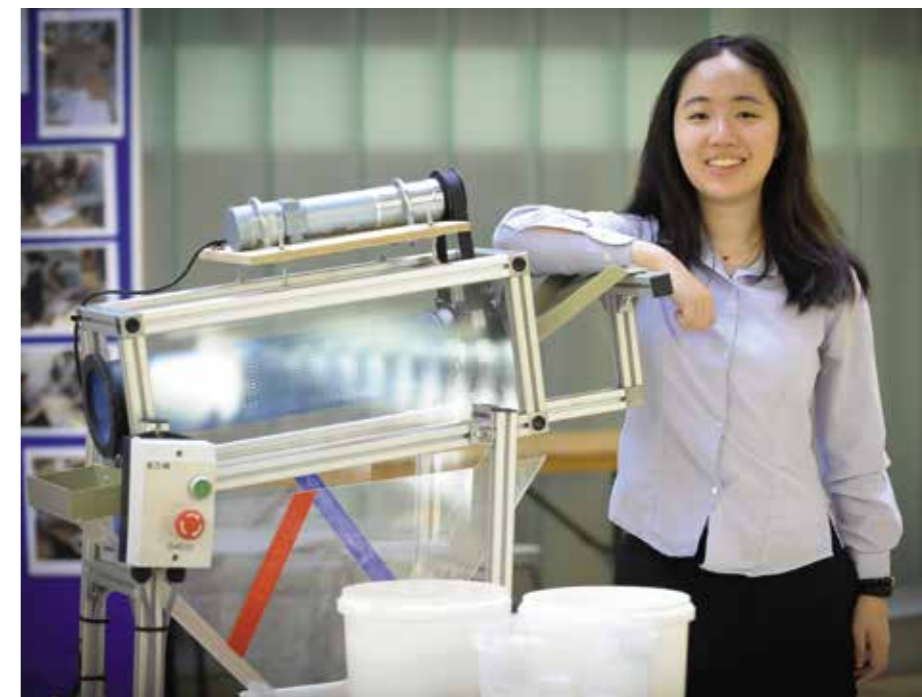
Annabel Barlow (Tu)

Engineering Society

For the first meeting of the year, three of our prospective Engineers in the XX gave a talk about their plans and options for the future. These included the branch of engineering they were planning to study at university, and the careers they may have after university. It was interesting to hear in depth about what each engineering discipline meant to each of our speakers, and what inspired them to want to be an engineer. The XX also talked about Headstart and Smallpiece courses, which are a good way to gain insight into Engineering courses and careers. EDT (Engineering, Design and Technology Trust) delivers over 40,000 STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) experiences each year, for young people aged 9-21 across the UK.

To allow students the opportunity to experience a practical engineering task, one meeting involved a building competition. Using uncooked spaghetti and marshmallows, teams of students were tasked with building the highest self-supporting structure they could. The students thoroughly enjoyed "rising to the challenge" and demonstrated excellent teamwork and creativity. It was interesting to observe how many of the students were aware that the triangle is a fundamental shape employed by structural engineers to provide strength and stability and that they tried to employ this knowledge within their own designs.

In May 2019, the Engineering Society welcomed back Old Rugbyian Olivia D'Souza (OR Bradley). She gave a very interesting and informative overview of her working life as a structural engineer at WSP. She described the process and challenges of successfully managing the upgrade of the rolling stock used on the SW train lines and her most recent project which involves redesigning an airport baggage handling system. She explained the differences between the theory taught during her Engineering degree course and the more practical approaches adopted in the real world. It was valuable to listen to an engineer who has only recently embarked on her professional career as she was able to provide useful and practical tips about the relevance of summer placements and how to get the most from an engineering degree.



The Engineering society also hosted Pete West, an instrumentation engineer at Renault Sport Racing Enstone, who talked about his experiences in motor racing and how engineering is employed in that industry. He reinforced the message about the broad range of great opportunities in engineering and the demand for engineers in many industrial sectors.

LW with Adam Newton (T)

Psychology Society

We were very honoured to have Dr Nick Baylis - consultant wellbeing psychologist, therapist and performance coach - as our speaker to give the Society a great start to the year. Dr Baylis shared with us his work as a psychologist and it was particularly interesting to learn about his work with teenagers in prison, which led to his interest in happiness and wellbeing. He thinks courage is an important factor in a happy life. Then it was Q&A session. He answered every question with great detail and patience and gave good advice to anyone interested in doing Psychology at university: talk to a psychologist and learn about what they do, instead of just reading the course outline.

Next, Ms Celia Flak – a counsellor and member of the British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy - talked about her integrative approach to counselling and the different issues she comes across in her practice. She focussed on the extent of mental health in our society today, the difference between the roles of a counsellor and

a psychologist, and the journey to qualifying as a psychologist or counsellor.

She discussed the issues faced by people with mental health, which include lack of access to treatment and the stigma associated with such illnesses. We learned that the psychologist has a research-based, scientific approach to mental health issues, while the counsellor guides the client to find solutions to their problems. The talk also helped us understand the qualities needed to work successfully in this field, which include patience, empathy, resilience and excellent communication skills.

LW with Becky Ting (Tu)

Medical Society

Dr Sriram, or Sri as he is affectionately called at work, is a local General Practitioner (GP) at Central Surgery in Rugby. Sri started his career as a surgeon. He has worked in India, Seychelles, in the UK in various departments and in a variety of roles. Dr Sri gave us an insight into the varied roles you embark on as a medical student. He told us about his own journey, the challenges he has faced in his career, and his many top tips.

Most medical schools now use the Multi-Mini Interview (MMI) to select medical students. This looks very similar to a speed dating session and has several interview stations and interviewers. In one of the MedSoc meetings we got to experience what it's like to go through such an interview. We realised that there's pressure of time and also that



it requires alertness and agility of mind because you are moving quickly from one topic to another. At one station, role-playing posed the challenge of having to act imaginatively and think on your feet. Medical schools say that the MMI simulates some of the ways that undergraduate medical students are tested, giving selectors an indication of which prospective students would perform well later. This style of interviewing is considered fairer because it's harder to prepare for; and, because you are interviewed by several people, there is likely to be less bias.

The next meeting was about demystifying UCAS. Willow Stobbert (XX Tu) and Jika Nyirenda (XX B) led the session on writing a successful medical personal statement. They handed out examples of personal statements from the people in their year who got interviews, then proceeded to give invaluable tips on the interview process and the application in general. It was extremely useful to have successful applicants sharing their experience of the process, from how to write about your reading to the questions you might be asked in interview. Overall, the evening was very informative and the hopeful medics learned a lot from Willow and Jika's wisdom. In a similar meeting this year, all the current XX medics gave inspiring accounts of the journey to their own successful offers at university this year. The advice involved choosing a medical school, finding and reflecting on work experience and facing the interviews. These sessions were well attended by D Block and LXX prospective medics.

Finally, members of the Society were lucky enough to listen to Old Rugbeian Benjamin Armstrong – a medical student at Leicester University Medical School - talking about his route into studying Medicine. He offered the LXX and D Block potential medics a unique perspective into the application process, a perspective which should be valued in all aspects of life. Benjamin had a long detour before getting into medical school. Following rejection when initially applying to university, he accepted an offer to study Biomedicine. This gave him the opportunity to transfer into Medicine while studying and he applied to medical schools several times before being accepted into Leicester University Medical School. His story was inspiring because it demonstrated how hard work and determination pay off, allowing us to achieve the goals we are most passionate about.

LW with Tilly Rose and Zea Cole (B) and Esther Macharia (D)



Law Society

The first meeting involved an informative talk from Natalie Cooksamy about the realities of a profession in the law. She discussed how she ended up practising subrogation law at one of the leading law firms for this type of law, having initially been a criminal lawyer, a long yet inspiring path. Students learned how much practising the law has changed since the '90s, when she passed the Bar exams. The stereotypes of legal paths for men and women were touched upon in her talk, some of which still exist today. She gave us a reality check on how committed one needs to be in order to work the never-ending hours that a lawyer endures and that in fact being a lawyer is one of the most unpredictable professions. She discussed the necessity of learning the importance of balance - that is, of finding an equilibrium between personal and professional life, especially important for her as a mother.

Sandra Murgatroyd – a principal criminal solicitor – led an interesting discussion session to explain the growing role of solicitors as advocates in the criminal courts. She is now a partner of a criminal law firm in Rugby but she also answered questions about her considerable experience working as a crown prosecutor. This was an informal evening attended by pupils from all year groups and it was great to see all pupils having the confidence to ask challenging questions about the changing role of solicitors.

Next came Steve Wiltshire, a partner at Shoosmiths LLP and law graduate trainee in property law. We were very happy to see him return after delivering his first Society talk a few years ago. The meeting began with a brief introduction

to his profession and quickly went into a profound discussion of the methods of getting into the profession. Emphasis was put on transferable skills and employability, as it is not a requirement to have a Law degree prior to working in the profession. We were also very lucky to have two graduate trainees present to us the two very different career paths they took, providing a clearer insight into how pupils can explore opportunities such as training contracts, legal practice courses and solicitor apprenticeships. The meeting was more of a conversation, involving lots of Q&A, but it was a particularly useful and eye-opening one. The last meeting was a student-led session on Secularism vs Religious Liberties, focusing on the blanket burka ban in France. The key issue was how far the state can control freedom to practise religion without breaching personal liberties. Students were separated into two groups to argue for and against the ban, and were given case studies that supported their argument. Students were very engaged throughout the discussion and were very passionate despite having to argue against their own beliefs. This mimics a kind of mooted setup, inviting students to think like a lawyer and to conduct thorough, well-structured and coherent arguments. Other topics brought into the debate were freedom of expression, how immigration and globalisation may interact with a secular state, and human rights. Overall, it was a very rewarding experience for both groups - and interesting to see students come up with alternative arguments not mentioned on the worksheets.

LW with Rose Li (G)

Science Societies

October saw a brilliant lecture by the Nobel Laureate, Sir Fraser Stoddart, who told us of his boyhood journey from a farm in the Lowlands of Scotland to his eventual award of the Nobel Prize for Chemistry in 2016 in Stockholm. The Head of Science, Mike Thompson, was awarded his PhD in the Stoddart group from Sheffield University in 1992. Sir Fraser was hugely impressed by Rugby School and its students and we were lucky to be the only school in the UK where Fraser has lectured.



Month website, which is the most visited chemistry website from the University of Bristol. We were also fortunate to have the TV presenter Jonathan Hare give a talk on comets; TV news is often mentioning near-earth objects and how they may have started life on earth.

Our new Head of Physics, Richard Parker, ran a hugely successful Girls in Physics day with some of our leading F Block scientists and girls from local schools. There was a real buzz around this event. Our outgoing Head of Physics, Dr Andy Davies, who ran the department for 11 highly successful years, ran two F Block learner days at The Think Tank in Birmingham and the Leicester Space Centre. The school is very lucky to have access behind the scenes at the Space Centre through Dr Davies' extensive network of leading physicists with national reputations.

In February, we had a Chemistry lecture from Ray Dexter (Repton School) who demonstrated reactions beyond the syllabus in his unique style. February also saw the return of Dr Helen Mason (Cambridge University), a leading world expert on sunspots. Helen is at the cutting edge of research and shared new results with a highly attentive and appreciative audience. Some lucky E Blockers saw TV celebrity scientist Brian Cox deliver a talk at the East of England Show grounds in Peterborough, also in February, thanks to a Rugby parent's invitation to Dr Davies.

In March we ran First Schools Day for local pupils. This event has been run successfully for over a decade now, and there are pupils in the School who attended these events when they were in Year 4 at local state primaries. Dr Mike Thompson ran his annual Foxcroft essay competition and our finalist Niharika Paul (Southfield) came third out of more than 30 entries from more than 20 schools with an outstanding essay on 'A world without oil'. The overall winner was Joe Pickles from Lawrence Sheriff School.

In the Trinity term, Dr Miranda Jones ran an E Block trip to the Botanical Gardens in Oxford. The combination of exotic plants, ecology, and wellbeing left all who attended refreshed and with an increased passion for all things biological. Dr Joyce ran another superb field trip to Dale Fort Field Centre on the south-west coast of Wales. (The group photograph of the happy students is on the wall in the Biology Department.) Next year the trip will move to the volcanic island of Tenerife: the new Head of Science Sam Robinson and Dr Joyce have already done the preliminary work in preparation for this exciting new field trip.

Mr White, the outgoing Head of Chemistry, took the LXX to Warwick University for a day in the laboratories. Nick Barker, their Outreach, scientist was impressed by the high level of skills of our students who were already working at the undergraduate level. Two additional lectures in the Trinity term were given by Mr Fisher and Dr Thompson on The Science of Time Travel. Dr Belding, the new Head of Chemistry, gave a double act on The Magic of Chemistry, performing all the fun experiments that you wish your Chemistry teachers had done at school.

Finally, we hosted the 31st Annual Institute of Physics Day, which showcases the Physics Department, the Science Schools and our beautiful buildings. The event has a national reputation and brings together the very best from the Physics world. The opening lecture was given by Dr Rebecca Smethurst (Oxford University), an expert on Black Holes.

MAT

Temple Society

Meetings this year, thanks as ever to Dr Smith, followed custom in inviting students to think outside and between subject disciplines and into some of the weightiest religious and philosophical questions of our time.

Dr Bill Wood of Oriel College Oxford spoke on The Need for Theology in a Secular Society, focussing particularly on British and American religious patterns. As the number of religiously unaffiliated people in the world is declining (only 12.5% of the world's population are not associated with any religion), it was highly important to understand other belief systems in order to comprehend other people's motivations.

Dr Martin Shaw, a mythologist and storyteller, spoke on Small Gods: An Earth that Thinks in Myth. The highlight was the telling of his own African tale of the 'half-girl', who leaves her village, encounters trouble, and then returns whole. He explained that there are three moments embedded in most myths: an idyllic setting with a catalyst for change; followed by challenges and tribulation; ending with the return of something from the journey. We should all discover what metaphorical Temple we serve in, because there are countless deities that represent all kinds of qualities and attributes for us to aspire to.

Professor Terry Eagleton, currently Distinguished Professor of English Literature at Lancaster University, asked

'Was Jesus a Revolutionary?' He examined the politics of the New Testament and wondered if Jesus was a political rebel and therefore executed for crimes against the Roman state. A leader of zealots comparable with today's IRA, Jesus was regularly seen eating with outcasts and celebrating those seen as sinful with behaviours seen as dishonourable. At times, he simply fell in with the wrong crowd; at other times, he was simply a troublemaker who contradicted the Mosaic and traditional view of God and became a revolutionary in the way he broke social and cultural boundaries.

Finally, Thomas de Wesselow, a renaissance scholar and, according to the Sunday Times, 'the thinking man's Dan Brown', spoke about Making Sense of The Shroud of Turin – an object he described as 'the most controversial, mysterious relic in existence'. His research had led him to believe that the Shroud did belong to Jesus, as the wounds align with those described in the Bible and the blood remains on the skull indicate a crown of thorns worn by the victim of crucifixion before being wrapped in the cloth. He refuted all alternative claims, notably that the Shroud was a 14th-century fake: a single carbon dating was not scientifically conclusive. It was therefore intriguing to hear him describe himself an agnostic, having proposed a view of the Shroud that supports the truth of the Resurrection.

Charlotte Hope (B) and Sophie Norton (S)





THE 2019 CAREERS CONVENTION – AN OPPORTUNITY TO INFORM AND INSPIRE

Rugby welcomed 70 speakers including ORs, current and past parents, and those who had no prior connection with the school. Coming from a diverse range of occupations, all kindly shared their inspirational career journeys to help the D Block, LXX and XX in their thoughts about their own futures.



TRIPS

Adventure in Africa

This summer I embarked on a 25-day trip to Namibia, Botswana and Zambia alongside 10 other students. Firstly, we travelled to the Naukluft Mountains to complete a four-day trek. Then, we travelled to the Namib desert where we climbed sand dunes and watched the sunrise and sunset. It was such an amazing view and we all kept on trying to chase the sun in order to get the best view but the sand dunes just kept on going. We then travelled to the Okavango delta where we stayed for two nights. We were not allowed out of our tents at night because of the hippos, elephants and giraffes all wandering around. I have never seen a hippo so close. Next, was the Chobe National Park, where I was in arm's reach of two lions, elephants, leopards, crocodiles and many more. I finally get to say that I walked with lions. After this, we travelled to Bovu Island where we made bricks for a local school. It was incredible being able to see the difference that we made and hanging around with all the school kids was so much fun whether it was playing chess (they won every time) or just simply watching one of their lessons. Last but not least we travelled to Victoria Falls where some of us almost got attacked by baboons. At Victoria Falls, we travelled to the market nearby where we all bought small gifts to remember the amazing trip. This trip was the trip of a lifetime and I would do it all over again if I could. I would definitely recommend this to everyone.

Victoria Perronet Miller (G)

Classics in Italy

The Classics trip to Rome and Pompeii was a very memorable trip for every student. Around 30 students from F Block and E Block met early in the morning, on Sunday, 31 March, at Heathrow airport, preparing themselves for the amazing activities which were to come.

On stepping off the plane, we were given straightaway a brief tour of the treasures which the majestic city of Rome was to offer us over the next few days. On the Monday, we went to the Musei Capitolini, a museum holding wonderful artworks and treasures from the Roman world. This gave us an insight into Roman life and a taste of Roman culture, which we would definitely see more of.

Henry Wheeler (Sh)

Then, we went on to the Colosseum, the activity that everyone recognised as being the most exciting. Upon entering the Colosseum, everyone, including staff who had been many times before, was struck by this immense structure in the middle of Rome. We were given a small tour and an exclusive talk by Mr Day on the goriest parts of the Colosseum. Then, to end our first full day, we made our way to the Palatine Hill and the Roman Forum, a place where true Roman culture could be seen. Then, as we did at the end of every day, we enjoyed the traditional Italian meals of pasta and pizza.

On the second day, we were given time to stroll the streets of ancient Rome visiting monuments such as the Spanish Steps and Pantheon. Then, we unfortunately had to say goodbye to the scenic streets of Rome, and head to an arguably more scenic Sorrento, where we would continue our journey. As we drove into picturesque Sorrento, we were struck by the prominence of Mount Vesuvius in the background of the Bay of Naples. To finish our day, we were treated to an ice cream making masterclass at Gelateria David.

On our penultimate day we were taken to the ruins of Stabiae. We visited an old Roman aristocrat's house and it again gave us an insight into the life of a rich Roman citizen. Then it was Pompeii, which was as much interesting as it was harrowing. We saw what normal Roman life was like, with bread mills, shop fronts, political slogans and even a brothel. However, we were also shown the horror that the people will have faced after the eruption of Mount Vesuvius.

On our final day, we went to Herculaneum, a smaller Roman town which was completely buried by hot mud from the Vesuvius eruption. Here we could see an intact Roman meeting chamber and baths, but again this contrasted with the many bodies lying in the boat sheds below. To finish our trip, we went to the Naples Archaeological Museum, where we were confronted with even more art and writings from the Romans.

The trip was a once in a lifetime experience which gave us some food for thought on the way in which our lives are lived in the 21st century and where that comes from, but also gave us an in, depth understanding of the ways Romans survived, and their means of entertainment.

French in Bordeaux

During half-term, Stella, Izzy, Harriet and I flew to Bordeaux with Miss Piquard for a week. We stayed with different French families and attended morning lessons at the Alliance Française. In the afternoon, we did cultural trips.

In my family, there were four children: Joseph, Gabriel, Marie-Victoire and Pierre. I played games, did origami, watched Louis de Funès films and went to two Catholic masses with them. At mass, there were nuns, and the women had to cover their hair with black lace. I was given a book which explained what the priest was doing. It was an interesting experience, although my knees were sore after kneeling on hard wooden kneelers.

Every day I woke up early, walked to the Alliance Française and tried out different *boulangeries* to buy breakfast. I also tasted some canelés, which were invented in the region to make use of the egg yolks left over from gluing wine labels to bottles using egg whites.

At the language school, the theme for the week was health. In my class, there were people from all over the world, including Brazil, Japan, Germany, Spain and China.

After lessons, we had a guided tour of Bordeaux, we visited St Emilion and a vineyard to do wine tasting, we went to the cinema, we did some cooking, and we visited art galleries. We also went shopping and went to the fairground by the Garonne.

Alice Day (S)



French in Normandy

From 10 to 11 December last year, myself and 13 other F Block students went on a day trip to France with Mr Brown and Miss Piquard. The purpose of the day was to understand more about some aspects of the French way of life and, of course, to speak some French. In practice, the day involved learning how to make French croissants and baguettes as well as a trip to the aquarium. At the Fournil Bakery, we were taught by a male baker how to make the shape of a croissant with dough and how to make the shape of a baguette. He also spoke a lot of French with us, which was great as it allowed us to practise our French one to one with an actual French baker. In Boulogne, we all had lunch at a restaurant - spaghetti Bolognese followed by a rather more traditional Tarte Tatin – a French apple pie. At the aquarium we saw sharks, penguins and obviously a wide variety of fish.

All in all, this trip was both very tiring and hard work but I think it was still a success as it gave all of us the chance to speak and improve our French, and to live and eat in the way that a French person would. I am still surprised at how much we got through in so little time. I enjoyed it and I believe the others with me did as well and I'd be more than happy to do it again some time.

Freddie Sparke (T)

German in Vienna

Over the half-term in February, myself and some other German students went on a trip to Vienna, Austria, with our exchange partners. It was certainly very nerve-wracking to stay in the home of a family you had not previously known at all, but it was even scarier to be in a country where you had to communicate in another language which was not English. However, despite all our doubts, it turned out to be an amazing trip! After a weekend of sightseeing around Vienna's beautiful streets and learning about their history, we went to our exchange partner's school called the Theresianum. During the mornings, we shared their classes and although it proved to be difficult following the conversations of native German-speakers, we found quite soon that we were able to understand more than we initially thought. The Viennese were all brilliant at speaking English, so communication was hardly a problem. Everyone in the school was very welcoming and I really enjoyed my stay with my host family. They were delightful and the food was



amazing there! We, in turn, brought our exchange partners back with us to Rugby, where they stayed for two weeks. They all settled in well, and hopefully enjoyed their stay here as much as we did there! I would definitely recommend going on an exchange trip to other modern foreign language students since it is an incredible experience and definitely improves your listening and speaking for whichever language(s) you learn.

Rose Wang (B)

On the Vienna trip in May I experienced many new and different adventures and learned lots of history that I would never have taken the time to look for. This trip helped me explore and discover information I would not usually be interested in.

On the trip we explored many historical sights around Vienna, like the Stephansdom, the seat of the Archbishop of Vienna. We went on to the roof, which was beautiful as it had three or four different colours in a delicate pattern, not to mention a spectacular view across the city.

There were also sights like the Hundertwasserhaus, a building designed to mimic the forms of nature and which incorporates trees and shrubs into its structure. There was also a museum dedicated to the work of Friedensreich Hundertwasser, where they displayed all his early work and explained how he used to paint using scrap ink, until he was able to earn enough money. He was actually one of the first people to predict global warming, and he planted thousands of seeds a year by his holiday house in New





Zealand. He had many amazing ideas for art and designed intricate buildings that looked beautiful and which could exist in harmony with nature.

There were many other exciting historical sites around Vienna, like the astonishing Belvedere Palace, which is now an art gallery. After Prince Eugene had spent three years creating this architectural masterpiece that was to be his seventh palace, it was given to the Austrian State and turned into a gallery at the end of the 18th century. I really enjoyed seeing Klimt's famous 'Kiss' painting up close.

In Vienna, there is a Spanish Riding School where they train special horses for elite shows. The Lipizzaner horses, originally from Spain, are bred to be able to dance, walk on their hind legs and perform many other amazing tricks. We all loved the horses. There was one brown horse in the stables, as they say it is good luck to keep a brown Lipizzaner.

One of the most fun places (and my personal favourite) is the Prater Theme Park. We went there on the last night of our trip. There were many different rides that I enjoyed, but my favourite was the 90 Metre Drop. There were many normal rollercoasters and a Ferris wheel called the Riesenrad Wien which is the oldest in the world. It was originally made of wood and had to be completely rebuilt after a bomb partly destroyed it in World War II.

The hotel where we were staying was really nice, called the Meininger. It was very convenient as the underground was

a 30-second walk away, so the centre of Vienna was not far. Overall the trip was really fun but at the same time we were learning and expanding our horizons.

Rohan Badial (T)

History in Berlin and Krakow

Every year since 1998, D Block Historians have visited Berlin and Krakow to consolidate their GCSE syllabus that covers Nazi Germany and the Cold War. There are, of course, more enthralling reasons for the trip.

On the Friday before October half-term, around 40 excited pupils set off from School due to get to Berlin late that night. Waking in Berlin, we saw the mixture of beautiful canals, modern architecture and historical buildings, that Berlin is so well known for. Our first visit was to the remnants of the Berlin Wall. We walked down the line which strictly divided a city, families and friends; a line which was marked by two heavily guarded walls filled with deterrents such as mines. We learned about the heroic attempts, by both the West and East, to help East Berliners escape the communist regime despite the danger of opposing the rigidly enforced system. The line where the wall was is now marked by a double row of cobblestones.

We also experienced a shocking tour of a Stasi prison, which imprisoned opponents of the Communist regime during the

Cold War. This made us realise that prison brutality and torture were much more recent and geographically closer than many of us may have thought. The Communists kidnapped these prisoners and their families were never warned. They would often be in the prison for months without knowing why they were there. The guards would force them to sign a form admitting they were guilty. Prisoners were not given the right to a free trial; no one was proved innocent and they all had to, after being convicted, complete their sentence in a "normal" prison. Prison cells were small and prisoners were not allowed any contact with other prisoners. If prisoners tried to exercise, sit down, or sleep in the wrong position they would be punished. An example of punishment was being detained in a round, padded cell, with no light. The prison guards who interrogated and humiliated these so-called criminals were never punished.

As a group, we also visited the Checkpoint Charlie museum where the third checkpoint (Checkpoint Charlie) of the Berlin Wall used to be. Checkpoint Charlie is known for being the place where Communist and American tanks confronted each other directly for the whole of the Cold War. At that point, nuclear war threatened the world; and all watched in terror until, eventually, the Communists and the Americans, through tense communication, withdrew their tanks.

The Memorial to The Murdered Jew in Europe was another site we visited, a place of contemplation, a place of remembrance, a place of warning. On a site covering 19,000 square metres, Peter Eisenman placed 2,711 concrete slabs of different heights. The memorial is on a slight slope and its wave-like form is different wherever you stand. The uneven concrete floor gave us a moment of giddiness or even uncertainty. Its openness and abstractness give you space to confront the topic in your

own personal way. The sheer size of the installation and its lack of a central point of remembrance call into question the conventional concept of a memorial.

After a busy few days in Berlin, we spent a day on a long coach ride to Krakow. After an eventful day, which included breaking down in the middle of Poland with a bus driver who spoke no English and a trip to McDonald's with cashiers who spoke even less English, we arrived in Krakow. We were welcomed on that first night by the beautiful lights in the Main Square. On the first morning, we visited a Jewish quarter which before World War II had a high Jewish population. We then walked the path those Jews took when they were told they had to pack their bags and leave their homes. They were not told anything else. They were led to Jewish ghettos where they would be forced to live in overcrowded, disease-ridden and inhumane conditions, waiting unconsciously for the final solution. Over 20,000 people were living within the ghetto walls, where previously only 3,000 people had lived. Close to the old ghetto, we visited Ghetto Heroes Square, a memorial of 33 empty, brass chairs for all the Polish Jews who suffered.

Auschwitz was chilling. A room full of murdered women's hair. A room full of shoes, some shoes so small that they should have been cute. A room full of named suitcases, named because the inmates were told they'd get them back. I am so glad I have been: it was for me the highlight of the trip and a feeling I'll always remember, possibly because I don't quite know what I was feeling. I would recommend this trip to anyone who wants to learn more about the events which have shaped our world; but more importantly this trip pushes you to challenge why and how it happened, not just what happened.

Hope Stoney (Tu)

Spanish in Madrid

It was late evening and Mrs O'Mahoney, our Spanish-speaking shepherdess, strode ahead of her flock, successfully guiding us through passport control. Or so we thought. Alas! Nikita was nowhere to be seen. With an Italian passport and a Russian name, he was bound to be subjected to some interrogation. We watched distressed from the other side of the border, but one steely look from Mrs O'Mahoney and Nikita passed through without further questions.

Thus, a little shaken yet somewhat victorious, we piled on to the plane and what a wonderful journey it was. Mimi

provided a tuneful backing track, which the whole plane seemed to enjoy, bearing grimaces akin to those of Mrs O and me who had the fortune to be either side of this blonde Beyoncé. Yet perhaps the real climax of the journey was Peter who, despite being told expressly not to forget his passport, managed to leave it on board. No surprises there.

Nonetheless, spirits were still high and we walked with confidence into the arms of our families. I glanced at my watch: the hands were hesitating over the number 7 and my stomach started to grumble in confirmation. How little it knew: we ate the next morning at a quarter past midnight.

'¿Cuándo sueles comer en casa?' they asked me.

'A las siete,' I replied.

The father looked at me with astonishment: one would suppose he thought such a practice to be sheer barbarism.

Nevertheless, this was only the introduction to a country and culture so foreign to me and my fair skin, which somehow managed to burn in its winter sun. Indeed, Mimi remarks: 'The traditional food we enjoyed on the exchange catapulted us straight into the heart of Spanish culture. The foreign cuisine we tasted ranged from churros from a street vendor in Madrid to squid ink rice from the school canteen. A particular favourite of the students was the delicious tapas enjoyed on the last night, a great way to end the trip!'

Not only did the gastronomy have a big part to play in our enchantment of this unseasonably warm country – there was also the electrifying atmosphere of the cultural capital. As Nikita puts it: 'Madrid did not disappoint in providing entertainment. The numerous historical sites, including Toledo and the Plaza Mayor, proved to be thoroughly enjoyable. Madrid has a very well-developed means of public transport which made getting from place to place highly efficient.' Nevertheless, even Nikita maintains that the food was still pretty important: 'The central part of Madrid was the main point of attraction for spending time in a leisurely manner as it is filled with a multitude of the legendary tapas bars.'

Nicole offers us an insight into school life: 'Upon arriving at the school in Madrid, I was most surprised by the fact that it was quite far out from the city centre and tucked away in the outskirts. As my

family lived in the centre, we drove to school in the morning, but the drive was quite scenic as we passed through a rural part of the suburbs. The school itself was split into two parts for the prep school and the high school, but the inside was rather small and condensed into two main classrooms per year. It was a big change from Rugby's campus! The lessons were interesting and the students did not change classrooms: the teachers would move to them. There was also a playground that all years used and the boys played basketball during lunch breaks. Overall, the experience felt strange in comparison to normal school life, but it was enjoyable and intriguing to see the difference in school systems. We were able to study Biology, Maths and French - in Spanish!'

Mimi once said, perhaps following an awkward encounter with squid-ink rice, that 'what happens in Madrid stays in Madrid'. Nonetheless, I beg to differ. I think that even Mimi will agree that what happened on that trip will stay with us all for ever.

Annabel Barlow (Tu)

'I would recommend this trip to anyone who wants to learn more about the events which have shaped our world; but more importantly this trip pushes you to challenge why and how it happened, not just what happened.'



Drama

Actions speak louder than words, so the saying goes. It's certainly true in the Macready Theatre. Rugby School's beloved theatre re-launched as the professional theatre of Rugby in January 2019, announcing that its new programme of world-class touring theatre would be available for free to local state school groups. This is an important development for two reasons. Firstly, because the crisis in arts education in the UK has reached a point where even powerful lobbying groups such as Bacc for the Future and the Creative Industries Federation have failed to influence Government in its decision to effectively remove the arts from the core curriculum in the state sector. Not including creative subjects in the EBacc is resulting in a massive year-on-year drop in numbers taking GCSE Drama and other creative subjects - an issue with massive repercussions for the UK's creative industries, which are currently, it's worth reminding ourselves, worth £1.1bn to the economy. Secondly, because Rugby School is



a leader in the arts and takes its responsibility to inspire its students seriously. By putting those students smack-bang in the middle of a centre of excellence, side by side and shoulder to shoulder with the country's best professional artists, we will continue to nurture some of the world's finest creative talent here at Rugby School. Indeed, while GCSE numbers plummet across the country, our GCSE numbers are rising as students and parents begin to realise the importance of creative thinking and communication skills at a time when we

are peering into the unknown void of the impending fourth industrial revolution. By raising the profile of the theatre within the school, we are raising the ambition of every student actor, dancer, singer, writer, director, public speaker, innovator and potential creative leader in our community. How better to learn how to be more imaginative, more creative, more confident at public speaking than by doing it yourself, not just talking about doing it (or only writing essays about doing it) but by putting yourself on the



spot, in the spotlight, centre stage and by commanding that stage as a platform; by taking your moment to shine.

And we have done it well once again this year.

The Drama Scholars began the year with their annual showcase performance. This year, Dario Fo's irreverent parody on the Mystery Plays *Mistero Buffo*.

The production was bawdy, rude, blasphemous even and, just as it was controversial in its original performance in Italy in 1969, our production also managed to pack a political and satirical punch - even in these modern, open-minded times. From wonderful wailing women (Maggie Baring, Georgi Jones) worshipping a cardboard cut-out Madonna to a drunken devil in a hot-dog costume (Stella Cohen) antagonising an increasingly impatient angel (Lizzy Hobbs), the company embraced the silliness of the play in suitably pantomimic fashion, whilst also managing to press home the play's important commentary about corruption, state brutality, fear and intolerance - all dizzily pertinent issues as relevant today as they were both in the first centuries AD, and the 1960s.



The theatre re-launch event in January saw E Block dancer Rin Teshima perform a stunning solo piece in a programme alongside the School's new visiting professional dance company Motionhouse. The evening was compered by Rugby FM favourite Jason Moss and also featured performances from Bilton School's Emily Browning (now a LXX Drama Scholar in Southfield) as well as Rugby School's Julian Baring (who featured as young Prince Charles in the hit TV series *The Crown* last year), Taighen O'Callaghan (who also last year starred alongside *Peaky Blinders* star Cillian Murphy in the critically acclaimed play *Grief is the Thing with Feathers* at The Barbican, London and later on Broadway during the Easter holiday).

The Macready re-launch event was a fantastic platform to announce our new partnership with Cemex, whose rolling sponsorship deal means that the Macready can now offer up to one third of all tickets to local state school groups to see professional theatre here in Rugby, for free. Details of the Macready's new public programme can be found on our website www.macreadytheatre.co.uk.

Following the success of the theatre's re-launch, we staged an ambitious new production of Molière's classic comedy *The Miser* as the main school play in February. Partly in the original French, the production brought to lurid life Molière's grotesque characters (led by a particularly unsavoury Oscar Farmer) and made modern the play's timely tale of selfishness, avarice and conceit. A review of this production appears separately in this edition of *The Meteor*, but I would like here to thank all of the cast, creatives and crew for working beyond expectations - in English, French and in the gloriously universal language of Slapstick - to create a piece of work that was both monochromatically crisp

and clear and yet at the same time crazy, madcap and wickedly colourful: a giddy combination to pull off, and yet (to pre-echo the famous line from next year's school musical *My Fair Lady*) by George they did it.

We moved swiftly through a number of public performances of student work with GCSE and A-level devised and scripted plays taking the stage throughout March, April and May. Each year these plays never fail to shock, amuse and confound audiences and examiners as we continue to score remarkable top band marks across all year groups with huge numbers of students achieving full marks in these performances.

Then, into the summer, we powered on to our flagship Festival on The Close. This year we rekindled the 450th anniversary model for our festival and once again drew massive crowds to join the School community in a celebration of creativity in all spheres. With over 300 individual workshops across the four days, plus dozens of student performances of the highest calibre capped off by professional comedy, musical theatre, jazz, dance and much



more, this was genuinely, I believe, the best end-of-year in any school in the country. How many schools can say that the cast of Stomp came, spent a day teaching 150 kids from Rugby School and local schools how to stomp and then performed live on stage together in front of over 1,000 people? That's a pretty big boast and one we can say proudly exemplifies the spirit of our festival. Not only, though, is the Festival on The Close an opportunity for students to rub shoulders with professionals in the performing arts, rather this is a broad and open conversation about creative thought and action, bringing science, technology and maths into the same sphere as dance and song. And our partnership with Cancer Research UK meant that creative workshops in scientific research and charity were as central to our programme as acting or creative writing. Despite the odd bit of rain, the performances in our open-air main stage venue on The Close this year still managed to raise the roof with driving rock band riffs, uproarious laughter and heartfelt applause. We also, and it is on this point that I would like to end, raised a remarkable £20,000 for Cancer Research UK.

So art, culture, community and creativity does all that. It brings people together to share experiences, it lifts the spirits and makes us happier and more open-minded; we learn and laugh together. It supports well-being, it makes us more tolerant and generous. Yet nationally, 77,000 fewer children have taken creative GCSEs since Michael Gove's EBacc reform was announced in 2010. Rugby School is acting (and singing and dancing) against this, by doing more, by leading the way, by opening the doors of our theatre to others to share the wonderful, life-affirming, life-enhancing opportunities to play, to watch, laugh, wince and cry at art, live theatre, music and film. Because if we don't act, the arts might die out in this country, and that would leave us all worse off.

TDC





L'Avare or The Miser by Molière

Actor-musician Matthew Sharp reviews this year's Main School Play at the Macready Theatre

'Welcome to the house of fun/Now I've come of age/Welcome to the LION'S DEN!'

Madness' uneasy fun-palace/asylum lyrics ear-wormed their way back into my brain during this unhinged, irreverent, surreally compelling production. Set in a stark, whitewashed world - part padded-cell, laboratory, blank canvas - reminiscent to me of the lunacies of *Marat/Sade* or the madcap machinations of lovers and mechanicals in Peter Brook's iconic 'white Box' *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, the show anatomised the grotesque flaws and foibles of its gallery of rogues with a wicked sense of ridicule and laid them bare for all to see.

Tim Coker's impressive direction and twisted-baroque original music created a discombobulating bedlam backdrop against which many memorable performances flourished. As Harpagon - the eponymous Miser - Oscar Farmer surrendered entirely and unforgettably to the greedy, lecherous unhidden shallows of the protagonist, displaying a strikingly mature capacity for spontaneity, comic

timing and revelling in the repulsive. He really was absorbed and at one with the demands of the role. Remarkable. As the unfortunate object of Harpagon's desires, Marianne, Alice Broadbent summoned admirable poise and persuasive French. Others in the cast - James Gowen's patrician, elegant Anselme, Zea Cole's enigmatic and alluring Frosine and Julian Baring's flamboyant, penniless artist Valère - also delivered their francophone duties with skill and naturalness.



In Harpagon and the play's warped world of contortions and confusions, nothing and no one is safe from suspicion. Élise, Harpagon's daughter and Valère's intended - touchingly portrayed by Pip Crowhurst - must play along with the prospect of marriage to

the old, wealthy Anselme, an idea advocated by avaricious Harpagon and, in a moment of double-speak in order to gain his confidence, supported by her lover, Valère! Young love must endure five acts to discover whether its course runs true.

Other matters of the heart are also in jeopardy. Cléante, Harpagon's son and now rival-in-love to his father for the hand of Marianne - played with breathless, buttoned-up bravura by

Caspar Gleave - is forced to approach the loan shark, Maître Simon, strongly played by Dom Pritchard, for funds to support his marriage prospect. These enquiries only ratchet up the play's simmering paranoia, spinning it onwards towards its absurd climax.

The innate absurdity and incongruity of the play were further enhanced by the Flintstone-like escapades of the wheeler-dealer Trio La Flèche - rendered with cartoonish relish by Archie Cade, Jack Cohane and William Hardman - and the multi-accent-toting Trio Jacques - played, I thought, with a deft Little England-style nod by Georgi Jones, Rosie Pegna and Lucy Powell.

There were many other fine, outrageous and distorted contributions from other cast members, the excellent musicians of Passacaglia and, of course, the dedicated and resourceful Drama Department and Macready Theatre staff. How



fantastic to see adventurous explorations of both canonical theatre and devised work being undertaken with such whole-hearted conviction and chutzpah. It's a very exciting time for theatre in Rugby!



House Plays

Bradley and School Field

This year, Bradley and School Field decided to do their own rendition of the childhood classic *High School Musical*. Despite having merely six weeks to pull off a full-blown musical and having to organise and direct two houses, Liv and I tackled the task with as much gusto as we could muster. The journey was interesting to say the least, and balancing script editing, prop hunting, rehearsal leading, and school work, taught us a lot about late nights and time management. Although the play could be a touch stressful at times, overall it was an enjoyable experience that allowed different year groups in each house to get to know each other better.

Week 1 – the auditions. Excited about starting the casting process, we printed off sign-up sheets and put them up on the respective noticeboards in each house. The Bradley one filled up quickly with people obviously keen to participate in what would surely be one of the best musicals Rugby had ever seen (certainly outshining last year's *Cabaret*). The night of auditions arrived and the Bradley girls did themselves proud, performing some impressive interpretations of 'Breaking Free' for the musical segment of the audition. However, there was a lack of male presence at the auditions, so, after an hour of patiently waiting, we concluded that the entirety of School Field must have suffered from a severe case of amnesia causing them to forget about their chance at a big break in their musical theatre careers. Luckily, after much convincing and blackmailing, we managed to gather a highly skilled and experienced cast, with the help of the SF Representative, Toby Henderson.

Weeks 2,3,4,5 – the rehearsals. Out of the whole process, the rehearsals were by far the most entertaining. On many occasions we thought the girls would have to play the male characters due to a lack of boys at the rehearsals. However, towards the end of rehearsals, we saw a newfound passion arise from the boys, with the play starting to come together and scenes and musical numbers beginning to take shape. A particular mention must go to Orson Salha (SF E Block) and Bea Rose (B D block) playing Troy and Gabriella, who learned some impressive lifts that almost resulted in a hospital visit but were very impressive on opening (and closing) night. Tom Sheldon (SF E block) also

managed to save the day, agreeing to play Ryan a week before performance due to an unforeseen turn of events with the originally cast Ryan. He managed to learn his lines and learn to dance the salsa within a matter of days. Liv and I were extremely proud of the cast at this point.

Week 6 – the opening (and closing) night. Performance night finally came around and the Collingwood stage was set up with all the props including a basketball hoop built by Mr Welch - which I asked him to build 48 hours beforehand! The actors were ready backstage, in incredible costumes put together by our costume manager, Tash (B LXX), and our stage manager Laura (B LXX) telling people not to talk backstage.

The play did not go exactly as Liv and I had envisioned, but there was definitely a comedic value to it, as the vast audience of teachers, parents and students could certainly attest. There were some impressive moments of improvisation by Toby Henderson and Guy Balderstone (both SF LXX). Josh Bebb (also SF LXX) having to improvise his lines after his script was slapped out of his hand from behind his newspaper (a prop of his own devising), causing it to fly across the stage, was definitely a highlight. Other memorable moments were Sharpay and Ryan's musical numbers where Tilly Rose (B LXX) and Tom Sheldon (SF E block) exhibited their salsa moves and beat boxing skills during an original interpretation of Humu Humu Nuku Nuku Apua'a. The F Block from both houses made very good Wildcats and cheerleaders with the girls wearing netball dresses to add a bit of Rugby flair. The rest of the cast were just as fabulous, as Sharpay would say, stepping up with tactful improvisation when needed.

Rugby School Musical may not be going on to the West End anytime soon, but those who saw this one-time show definitely had a unique experience. On behalf of Liv and myself, thank you to the whole cast, Toby Henderson (School Field Representative) and Evie Stuart, who did a brilliant job on tech, keeping up with the script even when people were not saying what was written on it. Finally, good luck to next year's house play directors: may your attempt go as smoothly as ours did.

Zea Cole (B)

Cotton

Well, what can I say? Cotton have only gone and done it again. Famous for its hospitality, friendliness and overall house spirit, Cotton hosted one of the nights of the year for parents and House staff. Food was excellent and the entertainment brilliant. The only downside was how quickly it all went by. With canapés and drinks to begin the evening, the tone was set for the brilliant night to come. The F Block played a big part in this, serving the canapés with grace.

Deputy Head of House, Rufus, kick-started the night with a stunning performance of Fauré's *Berceuse*. Singing in French, Rufus had the whole room captivated - perhaps because most didn't understand the words, but the delivery was beautiful nonetheless. The standard was now set - and high.

Next up was Caspar and expectations were high for one some may think to be the heir to Rufus' musical throne. He performed *Stars* from *Les Misérables*. Now I haven't watched the actual theatre production, but from what I saw, Caspar could probably have been cast. In a performance filled with emotion and purpose, Caspar truly impressed, as he so often does, reminding us all why he is always busy with some sort of musical or dramatic commitment.

Dinner was served at 7:30pm and the kitchen staff, led by Rachel and Liz, certainly deserve to be recognised for the dishes presented on the night. Never praised enough, they once again provided the house with delicious food and incredible dessert. The night wouldn't have been the same without their efforts and they have the boys' gratitude for always working to present wonderful meals day in day out, sometimes, as it was in this case, staying behind after hours to do so.

Emeka Abara and Miles Owen-Thursfield picked up where Caspar had left off. How blessed Cotton is to have such talents in house. The two performed a rendition of Chasing Cars by Snow Patrol and, to be perfectly honest, their own performance was better than the original, Emeka on the piano and singing (talk about multi-tasking), whilst Miles accompanied him on the guitar, the two perfectly in sync.

Next up was Sam Raifu and we love a performance by him. Most will remember his dancing and drum beating (to put

it candidly) during the House Singing Competition. Some may have expected something along those lines once again. However, Sam's performance this time was one with control and repose. Performing *Rain* by Rob Scallon, Sam said at the start that he aimed 'to make us feel the rain' as if we were in it currently. He was successful. Never had I experienced such a performance, but what a pleasure it was. Using an electric guitar, Sam proved to us his wide range of musical talents and his ability to perform across different genres. Dessert was served, lemon tart with berries, honeycomb and vanilla seed ice-cream. What a treat!

Henry Zheng took up the challenge of keeping up the high level of performance that we had so far witnessed. He played *Gigue à l'Angloise* (Telemann) on the piano and was deservedly met with a round of applause at the end.

Now the night was almost over and people were wondering if anything would make it better. Well, only one thing could, a re-run of the House Singing Competition entry, a night when the boys had been robbed of first place. Everyone joined in and it can be said that Cotton may not have won House Singing (unbelievably!) but, they had certainly won the night, one which will be remembered for years to come by both parents and boys. Thanks must be given to Mr Trelinski for hosting, the kitchen staff for the food, Marie and Jasmine for setting up, and the parents and tutors for showing up. Most of all praise must be given to the boys who performed on the night: they were the ones who made it the success it was. Cotton had once again proved its brilliance.

Mahmoud Atta (C)

Griffin

You're entirely bonkers. But I'll tell you a secret...all the best people are! – Lewis Carroll

Bonkers would seem to be an apt description of Griffin's 2019 house play, a take on the Lewis Carroll classic *Alice in Wonderland* entitled 'Alice in Rugbyland'. This original play written and directed by us girls in house was one of the most challenging yet rewarding things I've done at Rugby so far.

The process began similarly, I'm sure, to all other house plays, at the drawing board. We knew we wanted to create something funny, original and relatable. To say exactly where the idea of Alice in Rugbyland came from would be difficult

because I can't wholly remember. Once we had the idea, though, the script writing started. Rachel Stevens and I divided up the scenes from the original plot and got to work reshaping them with Rugby quirks included. Said quirks included the swimming mice now being members of the School swimming team, the Cheshire Cat being a catty teenager and the eccentric and profound Caterpillar an equally profound member of the Sidgwick Society. To say we had fun renaming and reclaiming this play would be an understatement – the process of writing our new script was actually really enjoyable.

With our script finished, our roles created and our cast assigned, it was on to the rehearsal process. We'd given ourselves about four weeks total to create the production, which sounds like quite a long time for a relatively short house play; I soon realised this wasn't the case. The time in rehearsals flew by and before we knew it four weeks was becoming three weeks and then two weeks and then it was the final week of rehearsals and we still hadn't rehearsed some of the scenes. With end of term lethargy kicking in as well, in that final week it was incredibly difficult to maintain the optimism that the process had started with. That said, the crazy nature of the play meant the energy in rehearsals was always high, which helped us drive the process to its finale.

The Friday of the show consisted of a couple of us going over to the Collingwood in the afternoon and putting up some decorations which would hopefully bring the production to life even more. This included a full set up of the Mad Hatter's tea party, confetti and balloons included and beautiful bunches of red and white roses for the Queens' scene. That was my favourite part of the whole process (aside from the final performance obviously) – seeing the vision I had had in my head for almost two months suddenly come to life. When all the girls piled into the hall wearing their costumes, this vision was only to be improved upon. Everybody looked amazing and the eclectic mix of funky patterns and Rugby School uniform/sports kit really was a sight to see.

The show itself went down brilliantly. It was funny and charming whilst thankfully retaining the classic signposts of Carroll's timeless novel. The references to Rugby were also humorously appreciated around the hall, which was a relief. A special mention must go to the catering staff from Griffin and the Collingwood for supplying the girls and the guests with a fabulous meal halfway through the performance, with cakes and bakes included for dessert.

Another massive shout-out has to go to all the girls who were involved in the production. At some point or another, almost every girl in house had a part to play in the making of this production, which just proves how special events like these are. The enthusiasm and humour that so many of the girls brought to the rehearsals was also something that I was incredibly grateful for and something that made my life so much easier.

Georgi Jones (G)

School House

On the evening of Friday, 1 March, the parents, staff and boys of School House descended upon the Macready Theatre to watch the annual (and hotly anticipated) House entertainment. This year it took the usual format of a mash of musical pieces and comic sketches, with plenty of laughs to be had throughout. The event opened with a speech from Head of House, Ollie Branston, introducing the evening. The entertainment began with a witty and charismatic monologue titled 'Welcome to Hell' by Rowan Atkinson with Satan being played by Bart Hobson. We continued with a series of sketches of varying degrees of absurdity, with names ranging from more run-of-the-mill sketches such as 'Computer says No' (performed by Josh Seagon, Imran Abdullayev, Nicholas Ellison and Angus Smith) to 'Buying beer under-aged' (performed by Harry Johnson-Hill, Harry Seagon, Ed Anthony, Sam Finlator and Henry Elmhirst). Although these sketches may have varied greatly in absurdity and theme, the one common factor that persisted through all of them was the level of hilarity, as, although some of the School House boys would not regard themselves as actors, they were certainly able to make the audience laugh. The other aspect of the night was the musical entertainment. As members of the audience, we were able to ascertain from the various performances that the level of musical ability within the House was high and that the variety of instruments played meant that the musical items always seemed fresh and kept the audience's attention. Overall, the night was a resounding success and the School House boys would particularly like to thank Mrs Naylor, Mr Shepherd, Mr Davey and Aadit Shah for their help in bringing the event together.

Jack Cohane (SH)

Tudor

In this year's Lent Term, we had our house entertainment morning in the Collingwood Centre. The morning consisted of a wide variety of performances, including comedy sketches such as the D Block's performance of a Monty Python sketch and the XX performing 'The Duck Song'. There were fantastic music performances,

with Becky Ting performing Bach's 'Prelude from Suite II' on the viola and Maggie Baring singing her own song 'Tee Shirt'. As always, the whole house performed the house song, '9 to 5' by Dolly Parton, and the house choir gave an amazing rendition of Nina Simone's 'Feeling Good'. Shelly Fuxman, Imogen Burgess, Sophie Hughes, Gracie Douglas-Miller, Freya Seex and the whole of the F Block also showed some great singing

and musical talent. The morning was rounded off with a rendition of the *Song and Dance Sisters* performed for us by Clemmie Silverwood and Caitlin Maguire (they had been inspired to do this by a play we went to see as a house in the Advent Term, *White Christmas*) and lastly Mrs Horner's very entertaining rendition of Alexandra Burke's 'Hallelujah'.

Kitty Clive (Tu)

The role of the theatre director – a student's perspective

The role of the director is sometimes overlooked by drama students, but is certainly not as simple as some might think. Actors may go through their whole life not realising what others did for them in order to support their creative journey and shape the final outcome. This moral is applicable to every aspect of a person's life, but there are some people who understand. When it comes to the theatre, the actor is almost always the one remembered first, but it shouldn't necessarily be that way, because although the time, effort and creativity behind the wings/in rehearsals is never truly seen, it remains central to the success of any production. As a student director of two arts festival productions and assistant director in a major school production, I can proudly say that I know the effort taken to put the actors on stage and present a brilliant performance.



The Miser was a thought-provoking production, commenting on our country's current political climate yet delivering its message with comedic and slapstick style. Without wanting to detract from the actors' performances, so many more students and teachers were involved than the audience may have been aware. Speaking from the perspective of an assistant director and an actor, I can say that the two are simply incomparable: as a director, I was not only involved in staging, but also in organising props, with the intricate and over-complicated meal served during the performance being a clear example of something I would simply expect to be done as an actor. However, simply finding a whole, warm chicken is an almost impossible task when scouring the lanes of OSDO (a shopping brand which cannot be named for legal reasons). Nothing like a last-minute shopping spree, especially with the drama department! This ability to

compromise and make decisions on the fly is something I have always admired, and I love the adrenaline which helped when it came to making sure everything went as planned each night. From my perspective, it was (mostly) spot-on, but there are always mistakes that you can never anticipate.

Occasionally, student directing can be difficult, for example in finding the balance between friend and director when working with my peers. I think this relationship becomes slightly easier when the gap of years is increased, but also in turn thanks to the department's ability to make students retain an element of respect for each other without the need for hierarchical structure. With *The Miser*, especially, it was noticeable how all years would treat me equally, as both a friend to talk to and an authoritative figure.

In the past two years of the Arts Festival, I have directed two productions, which

were both a thrill, with both casts becoming a kind of family, an unspoken bond for which I am grateful. My first, *You're Never Too Old*, was a trial of some sorts as I had to find a style of directing which suited me and my cast. Luckily, I had chosen a very capable and talented cast, meaning that all I had to focus on was organising times to rehearse, set design, costume, props, lighting and sound. Simple. While it may seem like a big task, as long as you use time efficiently and are able to motivate your cast, it can be an easy road. As a director, I've always been thankful to have the privilege of working with some of Rugby School's finest actors, and to also have some control over what they do! However, I've never felt that any actor I have worked with, be it in *The Miser* or one of my Festival productions, has ever been incapable of performing without need of direction. These are the actors aspiring directors should employ!

James Gowen (T)



Artwork by: Annabel Hallsworth

The Musical Year at Rugby School 2018-19

Having said farewell in June 2018 to Andrea Brogaard, our exceptional Head of Strings, we welcomed new members of staff to a slightly re-structured Music Department at the start of Advent Term 2018. Simon Ferris, arriving as Assistant Director of Music and Head of Instrumental Studies from the Tiffin schools in London, where he had established the highly successful community-based Thames Youth Orchestra over several years, joined us with a brief to launch a similar project in Rugby. We look forward to seeing the development of Rugby Youth Orchestra and our programme of Chamber Music over the next few years under Simon's leadership. After 19 years of outstanding service as Head of Keyboard, Rob Colley changed his role to peripatetic piano teacher and department accompanist in September 2018, whilst Rebecca Taylor (an outstanding piano accompanist who has been a peripatetic piano teacher since 2012) became Head of Keyboard. The team was further strengthened by the arrival of Tori Brandwood (Academic Music Teacher), Phoebe Pexton (Music GTA) and Molly Sewell (Music Technology GTA).

With the 100th anniversary of the end of the World War I falling shortly after the School returned from Exeat in the Advent Term, on Friday, 9 November, the choir gave a liturgical performance of Fauré's Requiem at St Marie's Church, directed by James Oxley with Richard Tanner at the organ. The commemorations continued at 6am on Remembrance Sunday with Bagpipes on the Close, part of a nationwide tribute. The choir sang music by Brahms and William Denis Browne (an Old Rugbeian who was killed in action during the Gallipoli Campaign in 1915) at the annual Remembrance Sunday Chapel service and, in the evening, a Remembrance Sunday Meditation in words and music took place in the Memorial Chapel, devised by singing teacher Philippa Hyde who was performing alongside 'cellist Oona Lowther, accompanist Richard Tanner, and readers Andy Chessell and Dan Maclean.

The busy choral activity continued that week with the choir singing Choral Evensong together with the choir of Keble College Oxford on 14 November in Keble College Oxford. A chapel, like our own, designed by William Butterfield. Under the direction of

Richard Tanner, Keble College Director of Music, Matthew Martin, and the legendary choral director, Edward Higginbottom (who had been Director of Music at New College Oxford for many years), the combined choirs sang music by Stanford and Parry. Other trips for members of the choir were to Trinity College, Cambridge (15 November), Merton College, Oxford (7 February) and a joint Evensong in Warwick with the choir of St Mary's Church on 10 February.

The Christmas season was a success, with the choir singing at the inaugural Old Rugbeian London Carol Service, held at All Saints Margaret Street (also designed by William Butterfield) on 6 December. Over the next few days the choir sang for a Christmas Mass at St Marie's Church, as well as for the Visitors' Carol Service and the School Carol Service. At the end of the first week of Lent Term *Canzona* (the sopranos and altos of the choir) gave a performance of Benjamin Britten's *Ceremony of Carols* by candlelight in the Memorial Chapel.

In January 2019, the choir was heard on seven programmes of BBC Radio 4's Daily Service in recordings made in Chapel during February 2018. A further session to record material for BBC Daily Service took place on 24 February 2019. On 23rd April, the choir recorded Choral Evensong that will be heard on BBC Radio 3 on 11 December 2019 with music by James Macmillan (in his 60th birthday year), Herbert Howells and Philip Moore. The next morning, they recorded Sunday Worship, which was broadcast on Radio 4 on 28 April, and, in the afternoon, a live broadcast for Radio 3 of music by Healey Willan, Stanford and SS Wesley. To record three substantial programmes for the BBC in two days required extraordinary levels of stamina and professionalism from the singers. Many listeners provided glowing feedback about the contribution of the School to these programmes, not just

in terms of the quality of singing, but also about the standard of reading, the Chaplain's brilliant scripts and Mr Williams's fabulous organ playing. It's unusual for school choirs to feature on BBC Radio 3 Choral Evensong, but we have made three appearances in two years, something that is thought to be unprecedented.

On Ash Wednesday (6 March) the choir performed meditative music in the Memorial Chapel, including Allegri's *Miserere* and a new anthem, *Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord*, written by Rob Colley for the choir and 'cellist Oona Lowther.

On 6 October, School House and Southfield won The House Sing Off! The event, with its country and western theme, provided a Rugby School debut for new Head of Modern Languages, Mr Brown, as a folk fiddle player within a superb band. Meanwhile, on 1 December, Town and Dean won the Beavan House Singing. The general standard of singing at both competitions was higher than ever. The quality of solo singing was exceptional at the Song Prize on 20 January, with 28 solo performers singing

for adjudicator, David Lowe, the vocal coach to the choir of St John's College, Cambridge. David returned to coach singers in repertoire by Monteverdi and Schütz in June 2019 and, during the year, we welcomed two singers of international repute to work with students at Beavan Society, our conservatoire-style vocal performance class: baritone Peter Harvey visited on 31 January, whilst Basso Profundo Glenn Miller visited on 7 February. 25 students took part in the music theatre singing competition on 2 March, adjudicated by John Stalker, a highly-acclaimed producer of touring shows.

Simon Ferris's first performance with the Symphony Orchestra was an informal presentation on 19 November. The



orchestra next appeared in the Winter Concert - held, as in previous years, in aid of Myton hospice - at which they played selections from Tchaikovsky's *Nutcracker Suite* and Leroy Anderson's *Sleigh Ride*. Also at the Winter Concert, the Concert Band played John Williams's *Hymn to the Fallen* from *Saving Private Ryan* and a selection from *Mamma Mia*, whilst the Jazz Orchestra's contribution included *The Christmas Song* and *A Cappella Fridays* sang arrangements of *Santa Baby* and *All I want for Christmas*. We also welcomed Royal Birmingham Conservatoire Brass Band, which gave accomplished performances of *Triumphant Rhapsody* by Gilbert Vinter and Edward Gregson's *Of Distant Memories*. On 10 March the Symphony Orchestra gave a successful performance of English music, playing George Butterworth's *A Shropshire Lad* and Malcolm Arnold's *English Dances Sets I and II*.

The Brass & Woodwind Concert on 10 February provided an opportunity for chamber ensembles to present material that they had been working on recently to a packed audience. This included the Clarinet ensemble, Saxophone ensemble, Flute ensemble, Brass academy and Orchestral winds.

The year saw a raising of the profile of the organ, with an increase in the number of students to 11, compared with four a year earlier. On 5 February we welcomed Daniel Moulton, Head of Organ Studies at the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire, to lead an organ masterclass for our students as well as students from Bilton Grange School. Libby Burgess was the adjudicator for the Organ and Piano Competitions on 7 March, with 39 piano students of all levels and seven organ students taking part. A collaboration with the organ department at Royal Birmingham Conservatoire has begun and, as part of that, we held a joint masterclass in our Chapel given by the virtuoso American organist, Nathan Laube on 19 March. On 3 May an hour-long organ recital in Chapel by nine students yielded a varied programme, including a second performance, by Bart Hobson, of *Jesu, der du meine Seele*, an organ piece written to mark the 450th anniversary of the School in 2017 by Alexander Campkin.

Achievements by pianists throughout the year were impressive, with Maru Ando winning the Musician of the Year competition for her performance of Debussy's *Dr Gradus ad Parnassum*. The entire second half of the concerto concert on March 28 was given over to pianists, who performed movements by Rachmaninoff, Shostakovich and Grieg. Piano students also featured prominently in concerts at St Andrew's Church throughout the year, and pianists of all ability levels have enjoyed being nurtured towards grade exams by Head of Keyboard, Rebecca Taylor, who introduced performance classes so that they could try out pieces to each other on the run-up to their exams.

Andy Davey has brought dynamic leadership and fresh ideas to a newly shaped 'Contemporary Music' section and it was particularly good to see the emergence of The Rugby Jazz Collective

of small jazz ensembles. These groups were showcased, alongside the Jazz Orchestra and a professional staff jazz ensemble, the Bill Coleman Quartet, on 23 March at a spectacular Jazz Dinner in Collingwood Hall. On 8 March the Jazz Orchestra visited The Elms prep school in Malvern to take part in a Jazz Evening which included Big Bands from four invited schools. Our band more than held our own and the Head of Music at The Elms wrote: "Your programme was great and your players outstanding – thank you for getting the evening off to such an astonishing start and really setting the pace for the whole event."



with informal performances by a range of our musicians in a convivial setting. Social Services Music on Wednesday afternoons continues to provide students with the opportunity to share their music making in local care homes, churches and primary schools. The programme concluded on 8 May with the usual tea party, at which musicians entertained 30+ elderly folk from the local community.

One of the greatest musical challenges that a student can set for themselves whilst being at school is giving an entire solo recital. We enjoyed two stunning solo recitals towards the end of the summer term. Rose Wang gave a piano recital in the New Music Room on Sunday 9 June, featuring music by Chopin, Frank Bridge, Gershwin, Moeran and her teacher, Rob Colley. Oona Lowther gave a 'cello recital, accompanied by her piano teacher, Rebecca Taylor, at St Andrew's Church on Tuesday, 11 June, featuring music by Shostakovich, Bach, Mendelssohn, Fauré and Popper.

Oona also opened the seventh annual Concerto Concert on 28 March. This has become a popular showcase at which our most able musicians aspire to perform. In 2019 the following students gave outstanding performances alongside the professional orchestra, Bliss Sinfonia, conducted by Richard Tanner:

- Oona Lowther (cello) – Polonaise de Concert, by Popper
- Shelly Fuxman (voice) – 'Adieu notre

The Rock & Pop Competition, held on 2nd February, and organised by Steph Sanders (Head of Rock and Pop) involved more than 50 students (eight vocal soloists, the Rock Choir and nine bands), performing to a packed Macready Theatre. Students and parents were also treated to performances from a professional band, Twilight Groove, and the adjudicator was Tony Platt.

There were many opportunities for individuals to perform throughout the year. Regular Chamber Concerts, Coffee Concerts in NMR, Parents' Concerts, Blue Note, and Lunchtime Concerts at St Andrew's Church have continued, offering students a wide range of performance opportunities at all levels. A new venture was the introduction of break-time coffee concerts held at Café CV22, an opportunity to further broaden our outreach to the local community



- petite table' from Massenet's *Manon* and 'Habañera' from Bizet's *Carmen*
- Ellie van Laar & Vicky Yu (flutes) – Concerto for two flutes, by Cimarosa
- Theo Matthews (Tuba) – Tuba Concerto (first movement), by Gregson
- Jemma Starling (Piano) – Piano Concerto No. 2 (1st movement), by Rachmaninoff
- Yammi Yip (Piano) – Piano Concerto No. 2 (2nd movement), by Shostakovich
- Maru Ando (Piano) – Piano Concerto (3rd movement), by Grieg

The Musician of the Year competition, held on 28 April, included 31 solo performances that had been selected following high levels of participation in the instrumental competition, keyboard competition and various singing competitions throughout the year. Simon Toyne, the adjudicator, awarded prizes to Gabriel Stoney (Intermediate), Tom Sheldon (Grades 6-8) and Maru Ando (Grade 8+).

On 17 May the Music Scholars were treated to a wonderful presentation by Imogen Hancock, a rising star on the British trumpet scene. In the form of a Q&A chaired by Simon Ferris, she explained how she has successfully built a career which sees her in demand as both a soloist and freelance orchestral musician. This was followed by the Music Scholars' Dinner, at which Director of Rugby, Mike Bayly, spoke of

the way that he appreciates the level of skill and dedication that is required to be a successful musician, drawing on parallels with sport; he encouraged the scholars to enjoy the journey that they are on.

The musical content at the Festival on the Close was as ambitious and wide-ranging as ever. On Monday 24 June, the lunchtime concert took the form of a piano extravaganza at which the talented Mr Rob Colley played a selection of his own compositions and was joined by piano students from Rugby School and Bilton Grange, performing piano classics from Chopin to Debussy and Gershwin. The headline act that evening was the National Youth Jazz Orchestra, with whom our own jazz students had worked in a masterclass earlier in the day. On Tuesday, the music GTA, Phoebe Pexton, presented a programme, *Phoebe & Friends*, in which she wowed the audience with her own spectacular flute

playing – notably Dutilleux's Sonatine. She was joined by fellow singers in Stanford's *Bluebird* and an excerpt from Mozart's *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*. The concert concluded with a hilarious rendition of Victoria Wood's *Things Would Never have Worked*, for which Phoebe duetted with Music Technology GTA, Molly Sewell. Later that afternoon, the popular West End to Broadway showcase included 18 excerpts from a wide variety of shows from *My Fair Lady* to *Hamilton*, performed by the School's finest musicians and actors. A large audience gathered in the TSR on Wednesday lunchtime to listen to Rugby School Symphony Orchestra performing Debussy's *Petite Suite*, under the direction of Mark Smith, and the Flex Band playing arrangements of *Pirates of the Caribbean* and *The Simpsons* under the direction of Ian Foster. On Thursday, some of the School's most accomplished singers and guitarists had the opportunity to work with some of the UK's leading period performance musicians,



preparing for *Monteverdi's Flying Circus*, a stunning concert, curated by James Oxley, incorporating music by Monteverdi, Vasquez, Dowland, Schütz and Capirola. In complete contrast, and simultaneously, Mrs Sanders worked with 33 student rock musicians on an impressive Rock and Pop project at which bands and soloists performed at two events on the outdoor Cemex Performance Arena. Later that night, a student band supported the Adele tribute headline act, Hometown Glory with Natalie Black, in spectacular fashion.

The Festival also included a wide range of musical workshops, both for our own students and for those from other local schools. These included: Thom Kirkpatrick – 21st Century One Man Band, Ceilidh, Morris Dancing, Hands on Brass, Pipes and Drums, Ukuleles, STOMP and a Big Sing for over 700 Primary School children under the leadership of former members of Voces8. It was certainly a festival packed full of varied musical opportunities for all, ending another exciting year of music making. My thanks go to all who have contributed as performers, teachers and, perhaps most importantly, as audience members.

The 2018/19 academic year was full of many outstanding achievements. Of note was a larger than usual cohort of singers reaching Grade 8 in ABRSM and Trinity exams, many with distinctions. Best wishes go to a particularly fine and committed group of musicians who left Rugby at the end of June, amongst whom Oona Lowther has been awarded a scholarship to study cello at Royal Academy of Music, Rufus Pawsey has been awarded a choral scholarship to sing in the choir of Truro Cathedral for 2019-20, and Jemma Starling – who continues to play piano in the National Youth Orchestra – heads to Cambridge where she will read Music at Girton College.

For those of us who remain in Rugby, there's much to look forward to in the year ahead. Not least, the launch of Rugby Youth Orchestra and *Music in Education* (a new outreach programme to primary schools), the re-founding of Choral Society, the restoration of the Chapel Organ and the introduction of a programme of arts events, *All In Rugby*. I look forward to reporting on all of this, and much more, in a year's time.

RJT



Student Fashion Show

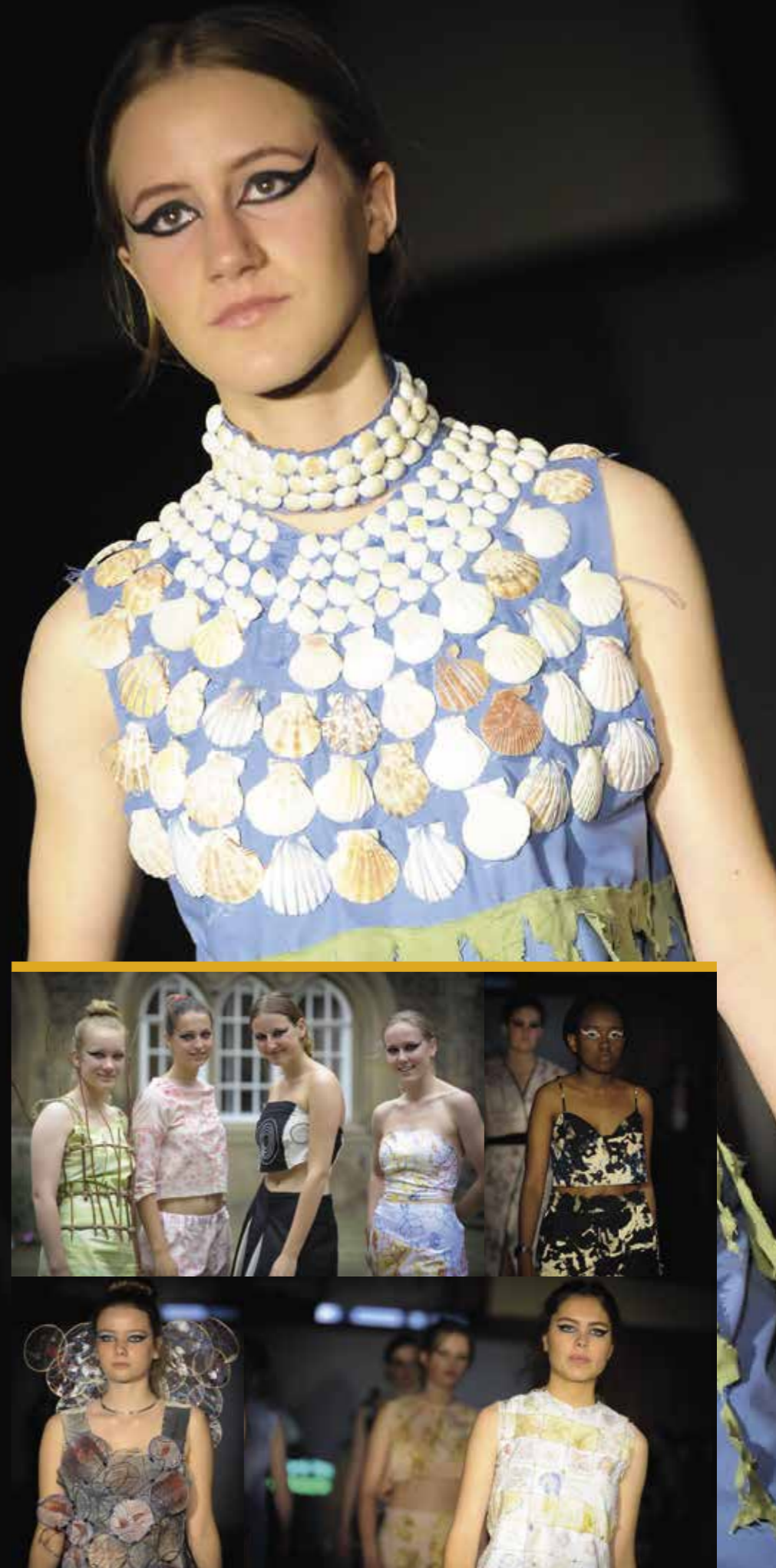
On Wednesday, 26 June, in the midst of the jam-packed Festival on the Close, the Textiles Department put on the annual student fashion show. The deadline had been looming over the LXX students during the final weeks of term, rapidly stitching, cutting and measuring a variety of garments to be worn in the celebrated show.

On the day of the fashion show, last-minute sewing and pinning was still to be done, whilst the mass of student models flooded the Art Department, awaiting their assigned outfits. The show was held in the OBS, the oak-panelled hall providing the perfect grandeur for the much-anticipated event. A long catwalk was assembled down the centre of the room, with a board at the back, displaying each designer's name as their garment was displayed. Nerves were high among the models during the morning's rehearsals, make-up and wardrobe alterations. However, by lunchtime, everything seemed to have fallen into place and the team headed back to House for a final break before the big event.

The models returned to the darkened OBS, a spotlight illuminating the catwalk and leaving the surrounding room in darkness. Dramatic make-up perfected, and outfits pinned, the gaggle of nervous models assembled in the back room as the expectant audience began to fill the rows of chairs. A Spotify playlist, entitled "fashion show," which had been carefully created just for this event, was playing from an industrial-sized speaker at the back of the room. The selection of music had been cautiously put together to set the pace of the models' walking, with songs such as Acceptable in the 80s, and a remix of Duran Duran's Girls on Film.

As the music started, Cate Minards bravely introduced the show, and the first model was ushered on to the stage by her peers. First, the LXX's work, nine outfits, displayed one by one and then as one collective group. The XX's work came next, with 12 outfits in total. The two year groups' work was then displayed in one big group as the audience enthusiastically applauded. Much to their embarrassment, the LXX textiles students were then asked to walk down the catwalk themselves and take a bow, which they did, reluctantly. Overall, the 2019 fashion show was a great success and both the models and the designers came away feeling immensely proud of all they had achieved ... and relieved that it was all over.

Natasha Tailby-Faulkes (B)



Edinburgh Fringe 2019 - 21 Futures by Olly Hawes, Square Pegs Young Actors' Ensemble

In 2019 a group of 21 pupils volunteered to be the second cohort of students to not only go and perform an original play in the Edinburgh Fringe but to also have the chance to watch some of the most exciting theatre available to us. The show ran eight performances at the beginning of August and it was a rollercoaster of an experience and an absolute triumph.

The Square Pegs theatre company - a group of young drama enthusiasts from D Block to XX - embarked on a mission to create from scratch a brand-new play with the help and guidance of professional theatre maker, Olly Hawes. Throughout the academic year we took part in a series of workshops in a process of ideation allowing us to get a grasp of

our style of character, to discover what was important to us and to understand what we wanted to achieve.

The play itself can be described as angst-ridden, self-mocking and dripping with sarcasm. It aimed to leave the audience with a bitter taste in their mouths, to point the finger at young and old, to confront our failures and the consequences that our choices have. We understood that the wildly satirical and unconventional style of the play would receive a mixed bag of opinions, but, whilst some reviewers were slightly lukewarm at the style of writing, we still went on to achieve two 4* reviews from the *British Theatre Guide* and the *Student newspaper*.

To come to a venue such as the Pleasance Theatre - one of the biggest venues at the Edinburgh Fringe - and to be programmed alongside such amazing professional actors is an experience that for some is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity and a huge risk. The challenge to attract and to entertain audiences makes you vulnerable in a way that many of the cast were not used to. No longer protected by families, friends and HMs in school theatre, we were drawn into a world where we were going to be critiqued, praised and drubbed all at the same time with complete honesty.

Some short and snappy, some more developed and thought-provoking, the reviews gave us an increased energy in

our performances to strive to bring out our best work. There was an element of added risk - something that is quite foreign to us in school theatre. The sometimes brutally critical opinion of reviewers displayed that on a stage such as the Pleasance there is nowhere to hide. Every performance was a mission to make it better than the last and to show absolute resilience of character.

So the Edinburgh Fringe experience was one not to forget and filled with risks and challenges. However, without risk there isn't any reward and nothing worth doing comes easy. We were lucky enough to cash out at the fringe this year with great reviews, great audiences and great shows to watch in between. The

company learned a lot about resilience and determination and it's safe to say that every member of the cast would be proud that they were part of the fringe.

Square Pegs Company: Celeste Allen, Maggie Baring, Archie Cade, Ella Carew, Jack Cohane, Stella Cohen, Milo Coker, Zea Cole, Honor Douglas, Oscar Farmer, Shelly Fuxman, James Gowen, William Hardman, Isobel Hobbs, Zoë Mackie, Keza Nganga, Lucy Powell, Anna Sloan, Max Taylor, Ingrid Thame, Lucy Venters.

Directed by Simone Hancox. Music by Tim Coker. Technical Support: Kyle Arrowsmith

Keza Nganga (RB)



'Every performance was a mission to make it better than the last and to show absolute resilience of character.'

Creative Writing

Creative Writing Roundup

This past year has been another great one for Rugby's fast-growing group of creative writers. We hit the ground running last September with XX writer Sophie Norton being shortlisted for the Foyle Young Poet of the Year competition, which needless to say is an incredibly prestigious achievement. Ms Scott-Martin, our poet/teacher in residence, was very proud. This was followed by a reading in Chapel, where many of Rugby's home-grown poets were given their first chance to showcase some work in front of the whole School, another impressive display.

Next came Arvon, a creative writing retreat to Shropshire with 16 selected students being taught by the brilliant Caroline Bird and Mark Illis. Here, daily workshops, group cooking and copious coffee breaks culminated in some of the best (and weirdest) writing our young writers had ever produced, which everyone was given the chance to share in a reading at the end of the week. An anthology was also produced by a student-led editing team to compile everyone's best writing.

In Lent Term, we were lucky enough to welcome poet Rachel Long for National Women's Day, who delivered writing workshops for selected students on the theme of dreams, before reading some of her own poetry to a larger crowd. Both the workshops and the reading were thoroughly enjoyed, so much so that Rachel Long has become something of a celebrity for anyone involved in creative writing in the School.

A new addition to the creative writing calendar was Stanza, proposed by Freddie Anderson, an informal evening where Sixth Form poets, teachers and guest poets read out their newest creative endeavours in an informal and friendly setting. Although initially drawn by the promise of hot chocolate and donuts, the event was incredibly popular among those who attended and is now a favourite among the Rugby Writers.

Recently, Sixth Form writers have also been involved in delivering workshops to primary schools in and around Rugby. This has been an exciting experience for everyone and a good opportunity to share the joy of writing with younger

children, all of whom were very excited and engaged.

This is without mentioning Rugby School's annual creative writing anthology, Rabbit Hole, which is in its third year now, showcasing the work of both teachers and students as well as the many creative writing competitions which students have been involved in, including the legendary National Poetry Day competitions, an annual event which produced over 300 haikus this year.

So, all in all, a busy year for writing at Rugby, with, undoubtedly, even more to come. Of course, thanks must go to Ms Scott-Martin, the unofficial Head of Creative Writing at Rugby, whose weekly workshops and constant encouragement are the cornerstone of its success. Congratulations are also in order, as Ms Scott-Martin is now a published poet herself, meaning it is not only Rugby School who gets to enjoy reading and listening to her brilliant poetry.

Thea Edwards (D)



Artwork by: Olivia Cockburn

Monkey

Thank you, Monkey, for sitting
On my bed. Monkey staring at me with his
Half smile and glass eyes.

The king of the apes with a thin smile of
Black thread wishing he could reach out his
Monkey Velcro hand to mine and hold it.

The stiff bristles stroke my skin
Letting me know Monkey's there. Monkey's
Large ears ready to listen and its dishwasher safe label

Prepared to soak up any tears. Monkey's
Elongated limbs taking a break from climbing trees
To wrap themselves around my neck.

Zea Cole (B LXX)

Avoidance

Men who climb up the chimney
to play hide and seek
With their wives.

Men who climb up the chimney
To brush their bad breath away.

Men who climb up the chimney
to stare at a book in peace.

Men who climb up the chimney
As the in-laws make their opening speech
And inspect the dust on the vase.

Men who climb up the chimney
So the children don't see them
When they swear at their stubbed toe.

Men who climb up the chimney
To interrogate a fat-bellied man
Who refuses the front door and
Comes with the fulfilment of dreams
As an apology.

Men who climb up the chimney
To taste blood.

Men who climb up the chimney
To make up for lost time and to
Explore their own mouth.

Men who climb up the chimney
To cast their throbbing tongue aside
And cleanse themselves.

Men who climb up the chimney
As a result of banishment
To talk to the pigeons through
The means of mime.

Men who reach the rooftops
Forget what they miss.

James Gowen (T LXX)

Mrs Armstrong

That small dot pricked the sky,
leaving a tail of thick grey smoke,
crawling his way towards the ball of rock while
millions of pairs of eyes attached to the glowing box.
He spoke, "That's one small step for a man, one giant leap for
mankind" and
his voice echoed across the planet.

It's been hours now.
People are starting to lose interest
whilst I'm here standing on Earth
still staring up and up, waiting for his return.

The moon glows brighter tonight.
It is Earth's midnight sun.

Even though he may have the limelight,
He and I still shine bright.

David Bennett (Sh FB)

Self-Portrait with Dead Man

My mother hates him.
I bring him to Christmas and she loses it screaming,
'Will you just put him down!'
'Put him down?' I say,
'Well I'd love to but he (being slightly needy)
happens to like the human contact.'
I wish I could put him down
I don't know what he did in his 'alive' days,
but he's a pretty portly fellow,
leaving me with the back of a much older woman.

Another argument along the lines of,
'I'm not setting a bloody place for him at dinner.'
I point his face (bloated and mottled) towards her and,
appealing to her empathy for a lost soul ask,
'How can you say no to this?'
'Quite easily.'

I set him down next to me anyway,
But he can't hold his weight and slumps forward
into the Shepherd's Pie.
My mother screams and my father carries him out
And puts him in the neighbour's garden.

The neighbours are very good about it
And have put him up indefinitely.
I am allowed to visit on Fridays, Feast Days, Birthdays,
And Wednesdays.

During these visits I have been illicitly taking body parts
And reconstructing him in my room. (Don't tell Dad.)
The neighbours comment that he's decomposing nicely
And I agree with a knowing glance at my bedroom window.

Not long now.

Thea Edwards (D LXX)

Earth

Earth: a glass ball filled with artificial junk.
Dust caresses the lifeless figurines and their eyes begin to stir.
They balance along the filaments of bulbs, their feet turn rosy as they envelope around the wire.
Every time a whistle blows, they cling onto the merry-go-round inside.
They take daily trips to the playground with the snotty sleeved children and the slides that smell of dried corn.
In daytime, they stand on black dots for registration and clap when their name is called.
At night, they sweep stars across the moon whilst eating orange segments.
They catch dripping oil from engines to quench their headaches from the baby crying in the back seat.
When you sleep, they crawl over your lips and dab your teeth with sugar-free gum.
They play stepping stones with pennies on the street, leaving rusty footprints.
They tiptoe through dollhouses, and eat biscuit crumbs off tiny porcelain plates.
At midnight, you'll see them nibble the rim of Santa's mince pie and rinse their hands in brandy.
They cup tears in their palms and lower them gently into the sink.
When you aren't looking, they turn your shoelaces into bridges and clamber into the holes of your Converse.
They get trapped in raindrops and tap the glass hoping you'll let them in.
They scoop colour in pots from your eyes to fill the cracks in rainbows.
They sleep in your tear ducts and after a cold day, they hide in your dimples.
When the dust settles, they become statues in a world of artificial junk.

Isabelle Norton (S EB)



Assemblage and Carousel - 'Cycle of Life'. Artwork by: Marc ????

The City has no walls

The City has no walls yet we are surrounded by fear.
We hang CDs from cedar trees to scare off birds.
The lifts always break when they go above the third floor. Lifts haven't been invented yet.
Bodies are stored four blocks down from the hospital. They can be rented. The hospital burned down in 1961. I work there on Fridays.
The evening news plays from neon panels in the clouds.
Oxygen is sold in bottles, if we need it. The only thing not sold in bottles nowadays is water.
In summer, barrels of liquid fall from the sky. We are told to duck.
The traffic lights change with the weather. In winter, people are always late.
Everyone tries to drive away, and all the roads loop round and back. On maps, the city looks like a rollercoaster.
The cartographer shot himself last autumn. In commemoration, we now shoot every tenth person. The population is always increasing.
There is one singular note that hums through the electricity lines on volatile guitar strings.
It leaves us all on the verge of tears, in time for the morning milkman.
Buildings are limited to bungalows on the east side, so everyone can watch the sunrise.
People rent the bodies, so that they have someone to sit with.

Annabel Mitchell (S LXX)



Artwork by: Riya Jain

Melania

You have a more important role,
yet you were never my husband before, Mr President.
My voice can't be heard but you seem to make up for it.
I have an opinion, you know?
You're their President anyway, not mine.

Your wigs and tanning lotion get more one-on-one time than I do
but I really don't care.
The miles I walk for you for an inch of your love.
I've given up.
Don't hold my hand. I don't want it.

Have you not realised that rain doesn't hurt?
Like war or the caging of immigrants.
I'm not an object. I stand for my kind.
Categorising women into: hot or not.
You can't own a woman and I can't stand you.

You hold me up, but no support,
just your prize. A trophy of what success?
They break me. The cameras. The lights, shining orange
reflecting off my thick, large framed shades.
Give it a rest, you don't know the whole story.

Melania Knavs -
I guess I'm not her anymore.
She left when I met you.
Faded into the night,
because you knew I was star struck,
played every move you could. I fell.
But you never quite caught me -

Matilda Fry (S FB)

Everything and she isn't

A lamb in spring, a duck and pecks the bread 'yum, yum, yum',
a teddy bear, smells like home and dead. Delicate, greedy,
dead - everything she is and isn't, was and wasn't, shall be and
shouldn't. Soft and smells like fabric conditioner. Lavender. Green
garden in spring, green tea in summer, green mould in the sink,
rubber gloves on and scrub. When you don't love you don't
breathe, when the tea is cold 'put the kettle on Fred'.
Last night I saw a ladybird, spotted and spotty. I tucked it in, put
water by its side and said, 'good night' and 'sweet dreams'. Then
I crushed it. Fed it to the birds. I met a cow in summer, quite real.
Soft hair and warm tongue. I said to him 'I'll always love you, let
no harm come to you'. I ate steak that night.
Not twice I thought.
Everything I am she isn't but loves still the same. The flower of
her womb my friends, sharing beds like little kids and hug dog.
Make some brownies what a lovely idea. Reassuring and put on a
coat, let's get in the car, time to go to Tesco.

The milk was half-priced.

Freddie Anderson (Sh LXX)

Sirens

The soft sound of the slapping waves
Soothing sailors, moving closer
Headed for us, ships pass
Every sunrise as they savour the
Light of the sunset

Sailors catch sight of the salty islands
Approaching every second,
Soaring across the swell,
Drawn in by our sweet looks
silvery songs persuading them to visit

As we weave our hair
it tempts them
to stopover and see
what sits on the slabs of rock
by the sandy black beach.

Secluded from the outside world
This is all they have
Solitary, this can make them a bit senseless
On their ship, that is torn apart,
Shattered.

Their flesh, too soft
Easy to split
clotted red pours out,
Hearts are my favourite
Because I am eating their love
But they were always

Hypnotised, as you are.

Charlotte Ison (B FB)

Digging

Frost painted the ground a misted white, the winter chill stealing all vibrancy from the world. The trees were unnaturally still in the sleepy rays of early morning light. Wind still rustled at what leaves remained on the branches, but that was all, the trees didn't whisper. The only movement came from behind a small bush at the edge of the treeline, where a russet tail twitched slowly back and forth. The fox was bone-thin with black paws, as though dipped in paint, and small enough it could still be a cub. It was slinking back into the forest, paws tapping lightly over the frozen ground after another night of unsuccessful hunting.

As the small fox skirted through the undergrowth, it saw something curious and the paint-dipped paws froze. A man, tall and dark, was digging a hole. His breath made a cloud in the morning air, but already sweat rolled down his forehead. The fox stared, hesitant to carry on past the man, when its hungry nose found something. Dropping low, one paw sliding ahead of another, the dark snout drew close behind the man. It twitched, and the fox's eyes found their prize. Something square and soft, with meat inside. The fox was now so low its empty stomach touched the ground. It was focused solely on its prize. Its cold belly could already feel the food inside, and drool slipped from the side of its mouth. The fox crouched, ready to pounce, and – 'Oi!' A stone flew past the fox's eyes, startling it, causing the poor creature to leap back behind a bush, the sandwich left behind. 'Dumb fox,' muttered the man, resting on his shovel. The fox didn't give up on its prize however, and several times crept closer only to be chased away. After a while, with the man still digging and the fox still hungry, it stepped out from behind the bush and sat openly, watching. By now the sun had risen and the ground was beginning to soften, making it much easier for the shovel to bite into the earth, and the sounds of a waking woodland made the man pause. He looked at the fox, and the fox looked back. Shrugging, the man picked up the sandwich and, still looking at the fox, bit into it. Something almost accusatory passed over the fox's face, its amber eyes seeming human for a moment, and it turned to leave.

'Wait!' Even the man didn't know why he said it, it just slipped out of his mouth. The fox stopped, and was rewarded with the patter of some chicken thrown at its feet. Almost before the man could process this action, the fox had gulped down the food. When both man and fox were finished, the man returned to his work, and the fox to his watching.

It became a routine, over the next few days, for the fox to find the man in the early hours, digging the same hole. The man would talk to the fox and the fox would patiently listen, in exchange for scraps of food. Both baffled the other, but fell into

an easy pattern. So it concerned the man when, one drizzling morning, the fox didn't turn up. At first he shrugged it off, a wild animal is by its own nature changeable, he reasoned... But still his eyes kept flickering to the place the fox usually sat, and despite the easy give in the wet earth, he found himself packing up early that morning.

On his way home, to a little house just through the woods, he heard a whine. Instinctively he knew. The man left his shovel on the path and foraged through the wet trees towards the sound. Within minutes he came across his fox, and at first he couldn't understand why it was whining. Then he saw it – the paint-dipped foot caught in cold metal teeth. He started towards the fox and it growled. Slowly, the man reached into his pocket, took out the scraps he'd saved for the fox, and threw them on the grass in front of the fox. Then, as the fox was distracted, he reached towards to the trap and tugged. The animal stiffened. The man tried again, pulling the trap open, until finally he felt a sharp release. As the teeth came out of the fox's leg it squealed in pain and quickly sprung away without even looking at the man, who simply shook his head and went back to his shovel with a bittersweet tang in his mouth.

The next morning the man arrived at his spot, and he half wondered if the fox would still come. He didn't wait for long though, as a russet snout soon poked its way through the frozen bushes and limped over to the man, sitting only a metre or so away from him. Again, those amber eyes looked so disconcertingly human to him. The man smiled at the little fox, and went back to his digging. He was engrossed in his task, happily babbling to the fox, and so he didn't even notice when another sound joined that of his shovel biting into the ground; the scrabbling of two paint-dipped paws, digging alongside him. The fox was scraping away dirt, leaning heavily on its uninjured side, and upon seeing this, the man felt something warm twinge inside himself, in spite of the heavy chill in the air. The only watcher of this curious sight, a tiny fox and a tall man working side-by-side to dig a hole, was a plump robin, waking as the morning light stole over the trees.

Soon the day had fully woken and the earth had softened somewhat. Here, they paused, and the two workers shared a sandwich between them before returning to their task. 'You know, a fox'd-' the man stopped as his shovel hit something hard. The fox stopped too, and looked quizzically up at the man.

'I found it,' was all he said.

Rachel Stevens (G XX)

To my baby

"It is justice, not charity, that is wanting in the world."
– Mary Wollstonecraft

Sweet girl,
Don't give too much,
for people don't always
keep their promises, but love them
anyway.

Alice Broadbent (St LXX)

Cinquain

Rugby
Never liked it.
I'm not weak, I'm just smart.
I've not got concussion yet -
You have.

Aneel Stevens (K FB)



Artwork by: Hannah Swaby



RUGBY FOOTBALL

XV

P18 W14 D1 L3

The 2018 rugby season saw the XV take on a fast-paced and high-tempo style of rugby, aiming to play at speed across the field. Coaches Mr Bayly and Mr Pointon were keen to see the game played at rapid pace and the boys delivered this throughout the season. Captained by Arun Mehta, the XV were ready to take on a challenging season.

After a successful tour to Australia in the summer, the boys' first challenge was against St Paul's, and a combination of first, second and third team players managed to take an overall victory to kick off the season. The XV then managed to get considerable wins under their belt against King's Macclesfield (32-8) and Bedford School (43-17) - a strong first few wins to the season. Mick McKibbin showed considerable skill on the wing, scoring a hat-trick including a chip and chase try, but unfortunately paid the price with a dislocated shoulder, putting him out for the rest of the season. The XV saw more of a challenge in their fixture vs Oakham, with Rugby dominating the first half of the game. Oakham returned strongly in the second half scoring 20 points; however, the XV managed to hold off a strong Oakham attack with countless try-saving tackles and emerged victorious 33-20 at the final whistle. Rugby drew Bloxham School in the first round of the NatWest U18 Schools Cup. The Bloxham side came out strong, although the XV were able to contain Bloxham's threat, only allowing

the opposition hard-fought tries through 'pick and go' moves. Rugby fought for the win, progressing through to the next round by 23-19.

The Uppingham derby quickly became a heated game between the two sides. The scrum was a very strong contest and special mention must go to the forwards, especially the front row of Arun Mehta, Angus Smith and Rob Hardwick. Despite a high penalty count, the XV were able to sit back in the second half and play our brand of rugby - scoring fast tries in the corners and playing into space - leading to a 27-12 win. A highlight of the season was the Cheltenham game. Rugby travelled away and, despite a strong contest, the boys in black were able to take a 21-point lead. An all-round performance took Cheltenham off their feet as the backs were able to run swift plays around their defence. The XV were heard described as the "mini All-Blacks" and were able to take back the Acton Trophy for winning 29-8.

The second round of the NatWest Schools Cup was a big Midlands clash against Northampton School for Boys. After going down early in the game from missed tackles in centre field, Rugby were able to make a huge comeback and finally put 44 points on NSB, progressing into the next round of the cup. Another massive game for the XV was the challenge they faced at home from an impressive Bromsgrove side in one of the biggest and toughest games in the season. A memorable run from end to end from Ben Muncaster and Theodore Rodney, followed by a break away try from Peter Coulbourne saw the XV take a 20-12 win, leading the side into half-term unbeaten.

The second half of the season saw three more comprehensive wins in succession, against Stowe, St Edward's Oxford and The Perse. In this third round of the NatWest Cup, The Perse were unable to get any points on the scoreboard in the 54-0 victory for Rugby. After these consecutive dominant performances, the XV met their first downfall against an aggressive Stamford side. Despite a somewhat comfortable 21-7 lead at half time, Rugby were not able to capitalise on this or play in the style we advocate. This led to the first defeat of the season 21-32.

The disappointing loss away at Stamford was put behind us for our long trip to Norwich School for the fourth round of the NatWest Schools Cup. Once again getting points early in the game, the XV went into the lead at half time - 21-7. The Norwich side returned strongly, sending the XV two points behind in the last minutes of the game. Hard graft and drive from the forward pack allowed Jack Hughes to bravely attempt a penalty kick from 45m out; the kick sailed through and saw the XV progress into the Quarterfinals of the Cup competition. Another victory against Oundle gave many new faces an opportunity to follow-up for the XV; call-ups were given to many of the strong 2nd XV players. A comfortable 33-11 win showed the depth in the Bigside One squad this season.

The quarter-finals of the Cup were the toughest challenge yet for the XV. The fixture was away at Warwick in horrendous weather conditions and with a big Warwick crowd. The game was tight until the very end; the XV showed incredible heart and pride, leaving everything on the pitch. Unfortunately, it was a case of too little too late for a second half comeback. Although the XV won the second half, the NatWest Cup dream ended with a 20-29 loss.

The side's fatigue started to show at this late stage in the season. An immense Clifton side managed to put the third loss of the season on Rugby. Although it wasn't what the side wanted, towards the end of the season the XV were excited for a chance to finally prove their worth against the Guest XV against Mount St. Mary's College. The School turned out in full force to support the XV and a final push from the side saw a great end to the season, with brilliant individual performances and more importantly, a positive team effort. The XV ended with a 29-19 win in an eventful and enjoyable end to the season.

Playing 18 games and only losing three is a real achievement, not to mention the successful run in the NatWest Schools Cup. The XV were delighted to end on an 80%-win ratio against some of the strongest sides the school has competed with, totalling 571 points for. It was a memorable season that the players will remember for a long time to come.

Miles Shaw (XV Secretary) (SF)

2nd XV

P13 W11 D0 L2

Winning 84.62% of the matches (a 4.06% better win ratio than the XV), the 2018 2nd XV season must be heralded as one of Rugby's finest since William Webb Ellis did what he did. En route to finishing as England's ninth best 2nd XV, the attacking flair was of a level never previously witnessed by the devout fans of Pontines. The team ran up a + 286 points difference through the term with great credit going to the trusted boot of fullback William Gardener, who amassed 137 points, including the most individual tries of the campaign by any player.

After a strong performance against St Paul's in pre-season, where we were 22-7 victors, the 'home-grown XV' were keen to

maintain their winning start. The opening fixture of the season illustrated the attacking mind-set the team were going to play with throughout the season. A 50-0 hammering of King's Macclesfield laid the platform for a hugely successful season. A further four matches were won on the bounce, including 34-0 vs Bedford, 52-0 vs Uppingham and a thrilling 12-8 vs Oakham. The 2nds tasted their first defeat of the season in their seventh game against Bromsgrove, losing a tight and well-contested match 22-17. However, the first defeat of the season was not to dampen our spirits: the 2nds were eager to bounce back and bounce back we did. The following weekend saw Teddies succumb to a 55-5 pounding in little over one half.

Following an eventful first half of term the 2nd XV were really beginning to gel in all aspects of the game. Captain Ed Anthony's forwards found chemistry with Hugh Ogle's back line and demonstrated exactly how a team can work together beautifully. Stowe were conquered 47-5 and there was a nail-biting 18-15 victory against Stamford, with William Gardener kicking a last-minute penalty to win the match. Such was our domestic reputation that Japan's finest in the form of Kokoku HS Osaka fancied their chances against us. The 2nd XV on their international debut did the country proud, winning 26-15 on the Close. Oundle were brushed aside 29-7 in the penultimate fixture. The team saw only their second defeat of the season in their final fixture, losing 21-5 to an undefeated and very strong Clifton side.

Great thanks must be given to Dr Hampton and Mr Powell, who accompanied the side with coaching of the highest order and 'first-class' banter. Captain Ed Anthony led the team from the front both on and off the pitch and Ross Warwood as Vice-Captain entertained us throughout with his inspirational team talks. The 2nd XV email will be sorely missed but the future looks strong for the other half on Bigside one.

Hugh Ogle (M)

3rd XV

P11 W10 D0 L1

This was an exceptional season for the 3rd XV who, other than a defeat away in the first match against Bedford who had already played two fixtures, swept all before them. Their points difference was 309 and could easily have been more than 400, but for curtailed matches and use of the 4ths as replacements against weaker teams (though the 4th team players then stepped up to the plate and acquitted themselves admirably). The team was strong upfront with Captain Tom Myers to the fore, combining well with Cosmo Bellamy and Ollie Green in the front row; even when Green was ill late in the season, Harry Darby stepped up and did a great job. The second row of Ollie Branston and Adam Newton (Most improved) were complementary, the former a lineout man who added strong carrying to his armoury later in the season, the latter a hard-carrying, tackling forward who did the hard work. The back row was outstanding, with Hugh Falconer (Most valuable) exceptional in every game. As Seni Fagbemi played his way back to fitness he became a big influence, while James Biles and Husnain Choudhary were the hard-tackling flankers at No 6. Any back line in which Max Bruneau, Archie Cade and Norman Ye are not the quickest players is going to make hay and with the play making of Freddie Clayton and Ben Harris they duly did. Alex Parker was absolutely solid at full back and ran from defence beautifully. Perhaps the moment of the season was the final try when Seyi Khalidson got the ball in his own 22m and slalomed across the field covering a 100 or more metres to score under the posts with not a single opposition player laying a hand on him. Congratulations to all

of the boys for their efforts, particularly Myers and Harris, who have been exceptional leaders and examples to the others. Thanks also to my co-coaches BJW, AELT and SPR who have been instrumental in making it work.

4th XV

P7 W5 D0 L2

This was a fine season for the 4th XV, with several big wins over traditionally strong opponents. The willingness of the team to attack space and to keep the ball alive brought strong results and entertaining contests. Tough fixtures away at Bedford (26-14) and Oakham (32-17) yielded hard-fought victories, before drubbings of Uppingham (59-5) and Bromsgrove (48-5) at 'fortress' Springhill 5. A tight game in the wet against Stowe brought a narrow defeat (7-15), before a depleted side was well beaten by an exceptional Stamford (0-43). A resounding 50-0 victory against Oundle was an excellent and well-deserved way to finish the season. The side was ably led by Husnain Choudhary and, after his promotion to the 3rd XV, Kit Fothergill. Harri Ogilvie's mazy running and tenacious defence won him Player of the Season, while Duc Nguyen's effort and commitment bagged him the Most Improved Player award. Thanks go to BJW for his inventive warm-ups and to BJR for his relentlessly efficient management of 'Bigside 2'.

AELT

U16A

P11 W8 D0 L3

The U16A side had a fantastic season, under the guidance of both Mr Ghosh and Mr Trelinski whose expertise helped the side achieve their best and most entertaining season as an age group. This superb term was kick-started on the pre-season tour to Northern Ireland where the team, after a few brutal games and training sessions, developed a strong culture which they took with them into the challenging season ahead.

With the first game came a major test, a home fixture against a strong Kings Macclesfield team who had given our boys problems in past encounters. However, the tables turned this year as a Kofi Cripps-inspired Rugby came out with a dominating performance resulting in a 33-10 victory to start off the season. It was superb to start the season on that note and with this our majestic free-flowing rugby was established. On to the next where the side got their first taste of rugby on the Close after a magnificent, moving speech from the Head Master the evening prior. The boys seemed to be galvanised further into protecting our home patch. So much so that perhaps the emotions of playing on such an iconic pitch created a dream start where two minutes Oscar Phillips had already dotted down. The side never seemed to look back, running away 29-12 winners on a special day for many of the boys.

With a special schoolboy full back performance, the Flying Scotsman (Harry McNee) showed his devastating speed and constantly left the Bedford defence baffled, finishing this off by scoring what can only be described as a marvellous piece of individual brilliance on a kick return. Next, our fierce rivals Oakham arrived full of confidence, eager to turn us over on our turf. The bitter encounter provided a wonderful display of rugby where again we proved to have too much quality for our opponents, leaving them chasing shadows for vast periods of play, and coming away with a resounding 31-5 victory in which

our playmakers were allowed to perform their best thanks to strong work from a Mr Trelinski-organised pack. The boys went into leave-out unbeaten and full of high hopes for the remainder of the season.

BJR

Our first away game was a comfortable 48-5 win over Uppingham, despite a rather average performance. They certainly realised that they would be required to step it up next week as Cheltenham came to town. With the boys desperate to once again earn victory on The Close, it was clear that this would be extremely tough - and it had to be done from behind as Cheltenham took an early lead. But endless passages of gritty defence from our boys ended as a quick tap from a penalty provided the spark we needed. We left it late before sealing the game, taking our chances brilliantly with both penalty kicks at goal and wonderful tries from Phillips and McNee to close out a magnificent 70 minutes of top-class rugby.

Our next fixture away at Bromsgrove put an end to our longest winning streak as a crushing 53-14 loss to a very solid outfit came unexpectedly, although the score line didn't necessarily reflect the game and we were suffering from numerous injuries. Bromsgrove were just far better than us on the day. Unfortunately, this game will be remembered for the wrong reasons and it was clear both sides let their emotions get the better of them on many occasions. In spite of this the boys managed to walk off knowing that, though second best on the day, team culture and togetherness had got them through a demanding away fixture. Teddies away, the most anticipated game of the season, was next up and everyone in the camp understood that this was the one that would define our season. With the mass support of our travelling fans, we managed to snatch victory from the jaws of defeat. Conquering St Edward's away for the second time in as many attempts meant that we left for our two-week break on a good note.

We returned from half-term full of optimism, understanding that a strong end to the second half of term could perhaps rank us up there with the top teams in the nation, but we suffered a frustrating defeat at the hands of Stowe, who punished us for our poor play in the second half. It was a major blow for the side who knew they were more than capable of beating sides of that standard. With the new week came a new challenge, a visiting Stamford side, who in early exchanges got the better of us. However, in the championship minutes just building up to half time, and just after the half, our structure and 10-12 axis of Seagon and Vaughan provided too much for Stamford to handle; they conceded a series of well-built tries and never recovered. Two of these came from our standout fly half that day, Harry Seagon, who made a couple of dashing breaks to help us achieve a win in our last home game. This meant that the side was undefeated at home, which was a remarkable achievement showing how far we had progressed in such a short space of time.

On to our final two games and an emotional day away at Oundle for one of our dear coaches who was treated to a feisty well-earned victory on a bog of a pitch where despite a somewhat poor display from our boys we showed the heart until the final whistle to come away 12-7 winners. Finally we paid a visit to Clifton College where we came up against an opposition who had blown away all competition so far that term. After a long and tedious coach journey, the side started in a poor manner letting Clifton run rings around our defence, which had been so solid all season. Being 30 points down at the half in our final game together was by no means the way we wanted to sign out. Our second half performance was one of sheer passion, despite being up against such terrible conditions and such a strong opposition, we refused to give up and

pressed hard in a desperate attempt to put something on the scoreboard. Unfortunately it wasn't to be, and we ended our fantastic season with a 43-0 loss away in Bristol.

Our final act as a team was the awards evening held in Cotton House where hooker William Salveson deservedly took home Most Improved. New addition Kofi Cripps managed to get his hands on Players' Player, with fellow School Field back row Fergus Rathbone winning Coaches' Player.

It was fantastic to finish our Lower School rugby careers with such a prosperous season. I have enjoyed every passing moment I spent with the team along the way.

Will Vaughan (SH)

U16B

P10 W5 D0 L5

The U16B had a successful season with development across the team, both collectively and individually. The team developed their game understanding and produced increasingly organised and attacking performances. The season was characterised by their competitiveness and hard work. The season started well and despite a few disjointed performances, the side battled to some impressive results thanks to determination and desire. They lost narrowly to a strong Bedford side, despite some individual brilliance from Harry Seagon (SH) - with his try from his own 22 one of the best to grace the prestigious turf of Pontines. The side battled hard in a win against Oakham before running in some well-worked team scores away at Uppingham. A bruising win against Cheltenham tested the mettle of the boys and demonstrated their defensive resilience. An encounter against a very strong Bromsgrove side may have led to defeat but showed a team that was willing to battle and keep playing to the final whistle. Such character was rewarded with the most complete attacking performance against St Edwards to round out a strong half-term. Injuries and a small squad began to hit in the second half of term as some tough fixtures led to defeats, despite some good performances. The 29-0 win against Stamford was the standout performance of the latter half of the season, with Mr Shaw exclaiming that it was "like watching the Barbarians". The boys of the U16B came a long way across the season and improved immeasurably. A number of players stood out in particular. Maelon Buckland (T) was awarded Player of the Season for his consistent excellence, leading the line in attack and defence. Tinius Mosvold (Sh) impressed throughout the season with his determination in the tackle and Harry Seagon brought flair in attack. Many players here will go on to produce excellent things in the senior teams in the future.

NJ1

U15A

P15 W12 D0 L3

The U15A team enjoyed a very successful season, displaying high levels of skill but more importantly high levels of commitment and bravery. Defence was strong throughout and the team relished the contact area; first-up tackles were made consistently and there were no areas of weakness. Results included only three narrow defeats and six marvellous cup wins, including a spectacular late win against Warwick under the lights of Broadstreet, and a remarkable away win at Kirkham Grammar School to book our place in the National semi-final. Sadly, there was no Twickenham final for the boys, but a narrow defeat at Allianz Park represents the very best performance in

the National Cup competition ever. The final regular match of the season against Clifton was also a fine winning performance and saw the culmination of an excellent term's progress.

It is worth including, in this exceptional year, a player's perspective on the cup run from Harry Hess. 'The National Cup began away at Hinckley Academy and John Cleveland Sixth Form, where we managed to secure a comfortable win, scoring 35 points to 5. This was a great result with which to start the Cup as it gave us confidence and determination to win the next match, which was only two weeks away. During that period, we trained hard and focused on backs moves, as this is where we were consistently scoring our tries, and also our roles at the breakdown, such as clearing the man at the ruck and also rolling on the ground after we have made contact. The next game arrived, away at Bishop Vesey's Grammar School. Although we had picked up a few injuries from earlier on in the season, we showed great resilience and managed to narrowly win the game against a very strong side. We were privileged to play our next game on the Wasps training ground against Warwick School. This was a real test for the team as Warwick were considered to be stiff opposition and have a strong pedigree in this competition. The scores were extremely close throughout the whole game until Lochie Bruneau broke the line in the last play to seal the win.

'With the last game of our pool approaching, we knew we had to train extremely hard if we wanted to reach the quarter-final. With our first fixture of the cup being played home against Bromsgrove, we were fortunate to have our debut game on The Close. Having already lost to them earlier in the season, we knew we had to put in an incredible performance, especially in the mauling area of the game, as this is where we conceded a few tries. The Cup match was once again a close affair and after conceding a crucial try, we bounced back with Luke Heseltine throwing a great dummy, breaking through the Bromsgrove defence and allowing him to score underneath the posts, giving us the lead and making us victorious.

'The quarter-final was a three-hour journey away in the North of England where we played Kirkham Grammar School. As we



arrived, the pitches were covered in snow with a layer of ice underneath. These conditions restricted us from playing our usual free-flowing game as the slippery surfaces made it hard for us to catch and pass the ball and even run with it. We put in our maximum effort and were able to raise our standard against a physical opposition. With their whole school supporting their team, it made for a febrile atmosphere. We used their negativity to motivate us and scored three tries, one from our captain, Fred Thame, and a brace from Kenzie Morgan. Our defence was unbreakable throughout the game and we managed to hold the lead until the final whistle, which moved us forward to the semi-final.

'After a long wait and tough training sessions, we were prepared to face Northampton School for Boys at the Saracens home ground, Allianz Park. The stadium had an unbelievable atmosphere with one of the stands containing E and F Block supporters. Running out of the tunnel and on to the pitch, we

could feel the forceful wind and we knew that we could not let them use this to their advantage. With an experienced fly half on the opposition, we found it hard to contain his style of play and, unfortunately, they used the wind to their advantage much more than we did. With an unfortunate disallowed try from Ben Ellis we found ourselves conceding 21 points without scoring. This was a tough game and NSB showed true character to emerge victorious, despite a much better second half performance from Rugby. With a disappointing loss, we were still justly proud of how far we had come and how much resilience was shown throughout the entire Cup. Overall, it was a memorable campaign and one that every player will remember for the rest of their lives. We hope that in a few years' time we can go even further than the semi-final.'

The great strength of the side was undoubtedly focused around the centres. Kenzie Morgan was strong, skilful and asked questions of every defence. George Whitelaw was equally

physical and, although more upright, seemed to exploit any weak tackling in the opposition. The side was captained by Fred Thame, who had a marvellous season, intelligently turning teams with his kicking and always a reliable and accurate link at 9. Two diminutive boys, Max Malloy and Dom Ritchie, forced their way into the side with fearless jackalling and a tireless work rate. In total, 31 boys played in the A team which was in part down to injury but also to the emergence of much improved players. Xavier Aouane was a good example of a boy who had so many good games in the Bs that his inclusion became inevitable. The forwards were relatively small but, with great heart and a positive approach to training, they were rarely outclassed. Particular mention goes to Jimmy Hill, Cecil Scopes, Ted Pryke and Charlie Jacklin. The back three took shape with Sholto Harris-Stuart, Ollie Orme-Smith and Freddie Fowler, and Will Pond filled in nicely for Lochie Bruneau late in the season.

For cup games, F Blockers David Bennet and then Dara Falope and Ryan Sweeting added considerable talent to the side and gave them a more rounded approach. The future for the senior teams over the next few years looks very promising and a year group that provides huge depth is likely to be at the forefront. My thanks go to FHA as ever for his marvellous support; he was often busy with his unbeaten B team but his input with the backs was a vital part of their success.

TMW

U15B

P11 W10 D1 L0

By any standards, this was a very successful season. Not only did the squad go the entire term unbeaten, but when it is factored in more than 30 boys played for the U15 A XV during the season and many of the B team also played in the Nat West qualifying matches, which saw Rugby get to the National 2019 semi-final at the Allianz stadium, it shows just how impressively this year group of boys performed throughout the Advent term and, in some cases, the Lent term as well.

The pre-season training helped galvanise the squad and the season started well with four successive and impressive victories over King's Macclesfield, Bedford, Oakham and Uppingham, indicating the potential that the team possessed for the remainder of the term.

The pack, many of whom played for the A team as the term progressed, often dominated their opposition both in set pieces and in the 'loose'. The front three of Jacob Murray, Ben Fossick and Xavier Aouane were an intimidating trio and a force to be reckoned with, particularly in the latter stages of the season. When the handling ability of Onochie Nwagbogu and Tom Jenkins in the second row were added to the equation, the front five laid the foundation for a solid unit. In addition, the team were fortunate to have an abundance of talented flankers, notably Luca Cinquini-Steel, Raphe Shelton, Ted Pryke and, on occasions, Tristan Guy, who demonstrated his versatility by playing at both 7 and centre during the term. The team was well captained by Will Davidson at number 8 and he could always be relied upon to lead from the front.

Further successive victories after leave-out against Cheltenham, Bromsgrove, and St Edward's Oxford maintained not only an unbeaten season but a growing self-belief in their ability as a team. The back line of Will Shingles at 9, Orson Salha at fly half and a varying combination of Xander Lees-Jones, Dino Gallone and Tristan Guy at centre often saw us scoring from all over the pitch, often from within our own 22-metre line. A growing confidence in their own individual ability, coupled with some excellent defence and tackling from Will Barton at full back, and the frequent try-

scoring ability of Max Tannett, Adam Kenworthy-Fahy, Ethan La Porta and Taisei Suzuki on the wings, saw many of the boys promoted to the A team at various stages of the season.

The tightest match of the season came against a strong Stowe side. A slow start, coupled with some poor handling, let Stowe seize the advantage early on, but a strong and concerted effort from the team just before half time got us back into the match. A 'see-saw' second half saw both teams take the lead and then relinquish it. Despite some excellent running from Rugby in the final ten minutes, a strong Stowe defence in their own 22, saw the game end a 19-19 draw. Valuable lessons had been learned from the game, particularly when to run with the ball and when to kick for position! With three games remaining, the possibility of an unbeaten season was still alive as were squad places for the NatWest competition final games before the Christmas break.

Two successive victories against Stamford (36-12) and Oundle (55-0) left the team with a long trip and one final match against Clifton. The long coach trip and difficult conditions saw us start particularly slowly; a number of poor decisions and handling errors meant that only an unconverted try from the captain Will Davidson separated the teams at half time. The second half saw us lose our composure and confidence and, had it not been for some excellent defence, we could have thrown it away in the final 20 minutes. Two disallowed tries did little to calm their nerves, but some excellent tacking particularly from Luca Cinquini-Steel and Raphe Shelton, coupled with the composure of Will Shingles at scrum half, saw us finally home with a 5-0 victory and an unbeaten season in the process.

In conclusion, the boys thoroughly deserved their success during the term and it is to their credit that the majority of them got to play for and retain their squad place in the A team, not only during the Advent term, but also during the Lent term, as the A team squad progressed through to the semi-finals at the Allianz stadium in March. Their ability to train well, and put into practice the skills they had acquired during their training sessions, whilst conducting themselves exceptionally well during all matches, did them great credit.

I have no doubt that the boys who represented the U15B team will continue to make excellent progress in their rugby football in the coming years, and that many of them will be representing the XV in the years to come.

FHA

'Their ability to train well, and put into practice the skills they had acquired during their training sessions, whilst conducting themselves exceptionally well during all matches, did them great credit.'



U15C

P10 W5 D0 L5

A tough season for the boys had a difficult start at Bedford where concrete-hard pitches saw off many of our starting line out (some for the remainder of the season). To add insult to injuries, the score was a heavy loss. The next three matches allowed the talent in the squad to show and there were easy victories against Oakham, Uppingham and Cheltenham. Following these were more excellent performances that showed the free-flowing running style that had been cultivated over two seasons, but very strong opposition overcame us at Bromsgrove, Teddies and Stowe. Further injuries taking key players out for the season did not help our cause. Nevertheless, winning ways returned against Stamford and Oundle and the expansive nature of our attacking play led to excellent score lines. A final match at a blustery Clifton College was not helped by a long and tricky coach journey. A loss in this final match was compounded by two serious injuries in the last seconds of the game. This included our stand-out player of the season Dom Pritchard. Other players worthy of special mention are Dickon Collins and Julian Heap.

PAB

U15D

P3 W2 D0 L1 (Cancelled 4)

After the success of last season, which had seen the team win all seven of its fixtures at U14, it was perhaps inevitable that many of the players would be called upon by the teams above this year, and so it proved. Those boys took their opportunities at the higher levels most commendably. That the D squad was still able to maintain its pleasing rate of development, and to fulfil a challenging set of fixtures so well, reflected credit upon the boys. Several fixtures were cancelled at late notice by the opposition, but the players themselves maintained an admirably philosophical

attitude. The opening fixture vs Bedford was lost 7-44, but excellent wins followed, firstly against Bromsgrove, defeated 39-0, and against Oundle, 60-3. Eathan O'Connor was lauded at the end-of-term presentation as the Most Improved Player, while Ed Delville-Jones led the team with distinction and was named the Most Valuable Player. The hope is that these players will continue to enjoy the game and to improve further in future years, perhaps even on Bigside.

TJD

U14A

P10 W7 D0 L3

This powerful group of players, led ably by the man-mountain David Bennet, produced some brutally effective rugby throughout the season to come away with seven wins from ten matches. The season got off to a bright start with a 29-10 win against Bedford School. A tough fixture against Oakham taught us some valuable lessons in defence as we got too narrow and let them get around the outside too easily. However, lessons learned, the team bounced back with four straight wins against Uppingham, Cheltenham, Bromsgrove and St Edward's. The team started to develop their own brand of rugby. A powerful set piece from the front row of David Bennet, Freddie Sparke and Freddie Cade, direct hard running from Archie Das Gupta, James Forsberg and Johnny McLaughlin, and good support lines from Kit Marlow, Will Gimlet, and Jack Fletcher-Stables, saw us get on the front foot and create space for the outside backs. Sam Walker (Most Improved Player) was able to get them going and the midfield of Ryan Sweeting and Will Parker was able to release the speed of Dara Falope, David Leng, Freddie Webb and Aiden Jaggard.

The Cheltenham match particularly sticks in the memory for Dara Falope's wonder try in the last minute. A jinking run through heavy traffic saw him go the length of the pitch to score under

the posts to secure a 24-21 win. A tough loss against Stowe away was followed by a remarkable performance against Stamford where, after going two tries down inside ten minutes, the team turned it around to come back and win 26-19. Ryan Sweeting's contribution in attack and defence was magnificent. A slightly below par performance against Oundle followed but this made the team all the more determined to put things right for the final match of the season against Clifton. Fired up, the team smashed into them and were over the whitewash with a typically powerful carry from David Bennet (Player of the Season) inside two minutes. The tone was set, and try after try followed in the most complete performance the team had put together all season. The final score of 52-5 says it all. A great way to finish!

MF

U14B

P10 W7 D0 L3

The U14B team had a super season, scoring a total of 208 points and conceding just 101. The squad trained with enthusiasm, were keen to learn and improve, and this built a great team spirit. The early wins were often achieved by excellent handling in midfield releasing the fast wingers – David Leng and Joshua Osei-Agyemang. However, as these boys were called up to the A team, the boys had to adapt and play with more variety for the rest of the season. A particular highlight was the match against Bromsgrove where it could have gone either way but we won with a final play try, demonstrating the grit of the team. With seven wins from seven, the team was high on confidence but met some outstanding opposition in the last three matches, in which they had to show great character in the tight games, two of which could have gone either way. It has been a pleasure to work with these boys and I am sure many will be pushing for an A team place in 2020. Good luck to all!

GCEJ

ESD

U14C

P11 W10 D0 L1

The U14C team had a superb season. Given that many in the squad had played little or no rugby previously, their progress was fantastic to observe. At their best, their offence was reminiscent of a rampant Fijian side: moving the ball quickly to space, offloading in the tackle or popping off the floor with accuracy, Flyn Lowther, Henry Lowin, Jack Paybody and John Zhou all proving masters of these arts. The footwork evident in attack was also spectacular at times. Tom Deng was like a ghost (you just couldn't touch him), while Olaolu Eleso proved too quick for his opponents in every game he played. Brett Kichodan's step back inside became legendary, as did Shreyan Sodha's in and out in the midfield. In defence the team went from strength to strength in terms of both its organisation and individual tackling technique. The defensive performance in the first half against Oundle laid a marker for just how good the side could be in that department, with ferocious tackling keeping Oundle off our line and preventing them scoring a single point in spite of their dominant possession. Across the season, however, thunderous tackling from Taighen O'Callaghan, Karan Kantaria, Bede Teeton, Scott Thompson and Simba Song kept us ahead in games that might otherwise have gone against us. The victories against Stowe and Stamford stand out in that regard. A final area of great strength was in the power and determination of our attack with the ball. Running in support and carrying the ball in space made the C team dangerous from all areas of the pitch. Our powerful front five, including Lewis Webb, Felix Clarke, George Sheldon, Jack Turner and Will O'Donnell, led

U14D

P9 W6 D0 L3

The U14D team had a wonderful debut season – improving drastically in all areas of the game. A parent summarised this transformation very articulately in an email at the close of the term:

"I would just like to congratulate you for taking a team of boys who mostly did not like to tackle or be tackled, could not pass the ball, were often out of position and did not seem to have a clue about set play, into the one I saw on Saturday. Most of the passes were actually to other players, not just wildly thrown back. Tackles were mostly made but, just as importantly, tackles were taken properly and the ball was usually recycled. The decision-making of the team was also outstanding compared to their counterparts and I think that was the difference."

Above all else, they were a group of very enthusiastic and coachable boys who will do well in seasons to come.

AMB



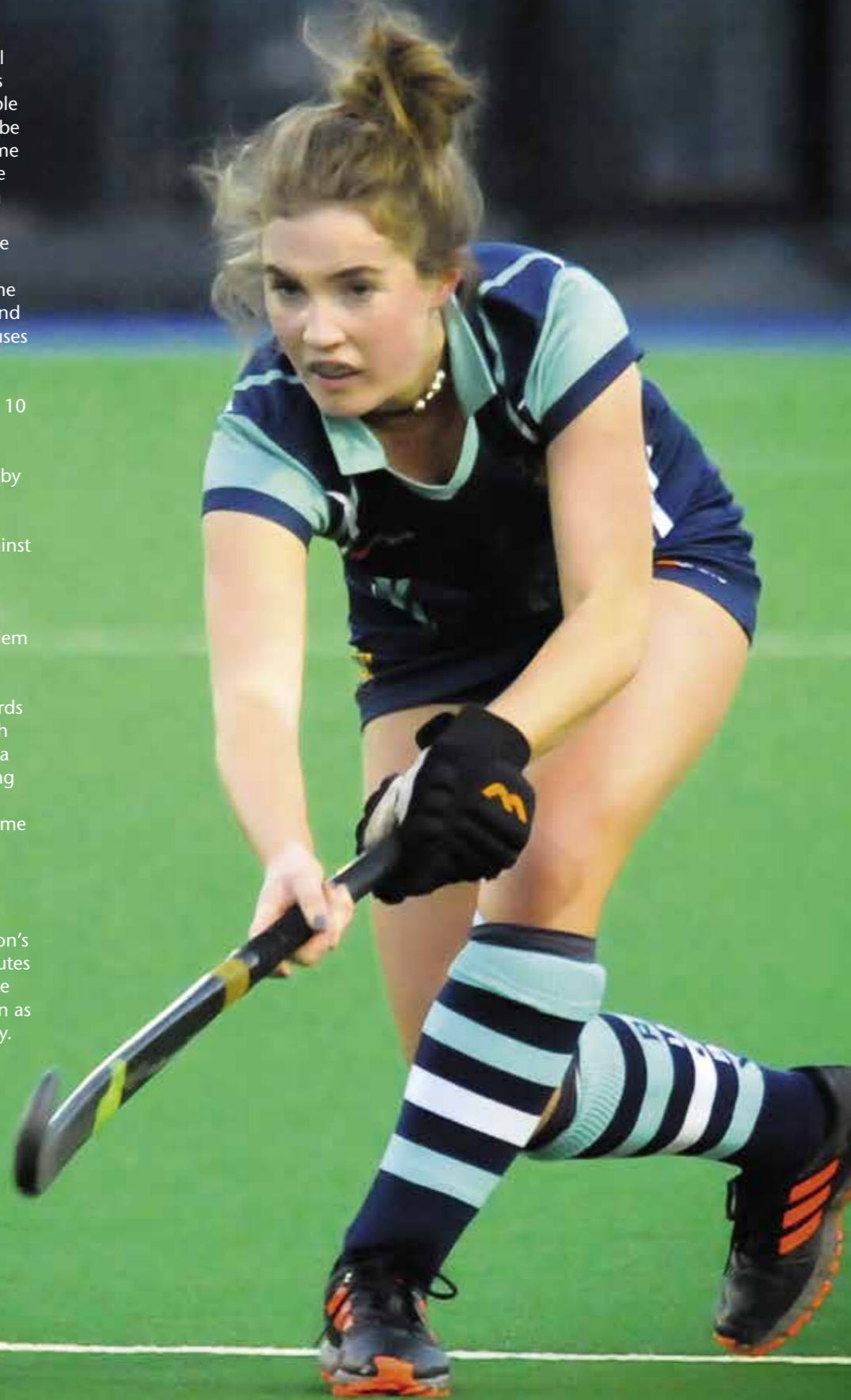
GIRLS' HOCKEY

XI P21 W14 D0 L7

As the stats suggest, this was a successful season for the XI and one which the girls can be immensely proud of. After a couple of early season defeats, there needed to be a period of self-reflection and the outcome was that the girls learned the importance of being more accountable for their own individual performances. The talent was there from the start but, with every game that followed, the self-belief grew and, crucially, a culture developed amongst the squad where they wanted to be better and not settle for mediocrity or to make excuses for poor play. This change in mind-set facilitated a dramatic change of fortune where, after mid-September, the XI won 10 of their last 12 games before Christmas.

In the Independent Schools League, Rugby finished fourth, recovering from two disappointing early defeats to Trent and Uppingham to win comprehensively against Bromsgrove (5-1), Stowe (7-1), Oakham (6-2) and Oundle (3-0). Last year's team struggled at times to put the ball in the back of the net, but that was not a problem for this year's team as they amassed an impressive 77 goals in the 18 matches played, despite being without key forwards Gigi Woodward and Liv Hackney through injury for most of the season. Captain Jika Nyirenda led the way with an outstanding 32 goals while Freya Harrison chipped in with a more than useful 19, including some fantastic reverse stick shots and delicate short corner deflections. In the League, the performance of the season actually came in their last game: a 3-2 defeat to National Champions, Repton, with Repton's winning goal coming with only five minutes remaining. Not many school teams in the country (if any) would have given Repton as tough a game as the girls did on that day.

In cup competitions, after losing to a strong Bedford Girls side in the second round of the England Hockey National Cup, the girls were extra motivated to have a cup run in the Independent School Cup and it was in this competition that they were



involved in their most dramatic games. The second round 2-1 win over Haileybury was courtesy of the goal of the season (a top corner backhand winner from Freya Harrison) while the third round win over Cheadle Hulme was courtesy of penalty shuffles as the game had finished 3-3 after normal and extra time. In both these games, goalkeeper Amelia Bahl made crucial contributions and showed what a talented keeper she is. In the Lent term the Cup run continued until a 4-3 defeat to Kingston Grammar in the semi-finals where, having come from 4-1 down to 4-3 and cheered on by a vociferous home crowd, numerous chances were created but it was not to be. This meant a trip to Lee Valley in Olympic Park for another nail-biting 4-3 defeat in the third/fourth playoff, this time to Millfield. In playing the likes of Kingston, Repton and Millfield this year, this group of girls tested themselves against the very best players from all over the country and were more than a match for all of them.

Other highlights included, for the second successive year, playing in front of a crowd of over 250 pupils, parents and staff at the 'Friday Night Lights' floodlit league game, this time versus Bromsgrove. This year the F Block U14A girls were ball girls and they were inspired by a fantastic 5-1 Rugby win with Jika scoring a hat trick. The celebrations of the F Block girls on the sideline after Jika's first goal and their delight in being invited to match tea with their XI role models showed that this year's team were starting to set standards for the rest of the School to follow. The game will also be remembered for Freya Chichester's two goals; the first was a short corner deflection which led to Freya skipping back to the half way line in delight, the second was a brilliant volley into the roof of the net showing that all that girls' cricket last summer had paid off! The crowd were back in even bigger numbers for the Annual 'Guest Match' against Reigate Grammar, one of the top hockey schools in the South of England. After going 1-0 down, the girls showed their character to bounce back and win 3-1 with two goals from Liv Hackney to finish the term on a high.

At the End of Season Awards Night, the Player of the Season this year went to Jika Nyirenda, who also led the team as Captain. Jika has inspired her peers and the younger girls in the school through her performances on the pitch, whether that be in training or in games and, importantly, the modest, unassuming way she carries herself off the pitch. After playing for England in the Schools Games in September, she went on to make her debut for Beeston Ladies 1st team in the Premier League while scoring 32 goals for the School team and simultaneously applying for Medicine at university. Jika is a special hockey player and a special person and we are so grateful for all that she has done for Rugby School hockey. Most Improved Player went to Lissie Bridges-Webb, a Lower XX who made the big jump from U16A team hockey, playing nearly every minute in the key position of central midfield. Vice-captain and Clubman of the Year, Izzie Bower, was the rock at the heart of the defence, who was such a calming influence on the team. The partnership at centre back, of last year's Player of the Season, Rosie Stranack, with Izzie, was amongst the very best on the circuit and was the foundation for the success of the team this year.

Special mention also goes to Harriet Fagan who, despite spending large parts of each game falling over or knocking opponents over, was another outstanding individual in this talented team. Harriet moved into a midfield role after three weeks of the season, which coincided with the team going on their run of 10 wins in 12 games as she was at the heart of all the best attacking play, whether assisting goals from open play with her powerful skilful driving runs or scoring/assisting goals from her key role at the top of the D on short corners. Harriet was one of 10 XX girls who represented the XI this season. Many like Kiki Budden, Bethan Robinson and Izzy Simmonds

were in the 2nds last year but became key members of the XI this year while Izzi Gardiner, Freya Chichester and Freya Harrison became established XI players, all in the forward line. These girls all showed the rest of School the hard work and dedication it takes to get into the flagship team but also raised the bar for future XI players to try and reach.

Next year the team will look for leadership to the likes of Lissie Bridges-Webb, Emma Allan, Liv Hackney, Gigi Woodward, Amelia Bahl, Hazel Fraser and Alice Jackson, who was the only D Block in the XI squad this year. Rosanna Brockbank also played a few games for the XI after excelling in the 2nds. I know that the team is in good hands.

This season showed what can be achieved when you combine talent with motivation, camaraderie and teamwork and I thank the girls for being so coachable. The improvement they made from the Singapore/Australia tour in the summer to the final game of the season against Millfield was meteoric and so enjoyable to be a part of. A huge thank you to Nick Tester for his support as Assistant Coach. His tactical knowledge, his understanding of sports psychology, his own winning mentality and his regular anecdotes, were all crucial to the team's success. A big thankyou also to Mr Ling for his support with indoor hockey and with the video analysis the girls were able to utilise this year, and to Mr Dhanda for his outstanding umpiring. Finally thanks to Mr Atlay, Miss Bullock and Mr Neal for their support behind the scenes with S&C and Physiotherapy. The girls are very lucky to have such a talented staff team supporting them.

JMS

2nd XI P17 W14 D2 L1

The 2nd XI girls had a fantastic season. Their only loss was in the regional finals of the Tier 4 National tournament, against Moreton Hall 1st XI, in a tournament which the girls won. Indeed, the girls are both county and regional champions in this competition. In regular fixtures, the girls remained unbeaten. A total of 74 goals for and only 7 against shows the dominance of the side. In the regular regional league, the girls won the league with a total 28 points. From a coach's perspective, the most exciting aspect was how much progress the girls made over the season. They played fast-flowing passing hockey, but were also prepared to get stuck in when necessary, most notably in the 0-0 draw with a free-scoring Repton team in the final match of the season.

Every girl in the squad improved over the course of the season. Eliza Rosselli deserves special mention for her superb commitment and skill both in training and in matches. Lucy Venters put in a Player of the Match performance against Repton. Georgie Nisbet was top goal scorer. However, the Most Improved Player award went to Ingrid Thame. There were a number of candidates for Player of the Season. Angharad Wylie was consistently excellent on the right wing and Sarah Bibby was the rock on which the defence was built. However, for her unwavering commitment, her ability to control the game as well as her leadership throughout the season, Issy Turner, the captain, was the coaches' Player of the Season. To those in the XX who are leaving – thank you for all of your contributions to Rugby School hockey and please keep playing hockey. To the LXX, I look forward to watching you challenging for places in the 1st XI next season. Well done, girls!

PKB

3rd XI P9 W7 D1 L1

This term the 3rd XI had an excellent season. They were unbeaten in all league matches. Indeed they only lost one match, away to Oundle, and they were able to settle the score on the return victory with a resounding 3-1 win! This sums up this team of girls, who play with great determination and energy as well as having very strong hockey skills. They were also great fun to coach, training with intensity but always with a smile on their faces. They were ably captained by Alice Rees, who found her position in the centre of the pitch as it gave her the freedom to roam as well as to put in the all-important last-ditch tackles. Behind her was Lilian Mossaheb who was awarded the Most Improved Player. Lilian was rock-solid in defence and throughout the term ensured her place in the 3rd team with her tackling ability and determination. Izzy Baker was awarded Player of the Season and we just count ourselves lucky that she was only poached on occasion by the 2nd XI. Her energy in midfield and her passing ability made a real difference to the team and helped to ensure such a successful season. With so many LXX in the team the future looks bright for next year when Miss Burrows and I hope very much to coach them again.

KH/HVAB

4th XI P9 W9 D0 L0

This season the 4th XI girls hockey team scored an incredible 54 goals. The defence, consisting of Emma Wheatland, Millie Pryke and Hope Davies, were almost flawless in their roles, conceding just four goals all season. Top goal scorer was Thea Edwards, who scored 19 of the 54 total. The highlight of the season was the unimaginable 10-0 won against Repton away. It was a special moment to beat this strong opposition on their turf. The coaches' Player of the Season went to Thea Edwards and Most Improved to Alice Day.

LEM

5th XI P8 W5 D1 L2

The 5th team had a successful season, playing some 3rd, 4th and 5th teams from other schools. They won most of their games, including one against a 3rd team. Great energy, enthusiasm and commitment was shown by each player, but the Most Improved Player award was given to Zea Cole. The Most Valuable Player award was very difficult to decide, but was awarded to Jess Daniel for making such a positive impact in various different positions.

KW

U16A P12 W3 D2 L7

Mr Dhanda and I would agree that the scores of this year's U16A team season were not representative of the way we played. Although the majority of the results show losses, the scorelines don't reflect the run of the games. In fact, until the last game of the season, the fact that all of our defeats were by only one goal tells a story of a far more even season than the statistics show. What impressed me, Mr Dhanda, and the parents, was the major improvement that the team made during the course of the season. After a long summer break and a less than successful season the previous year, we returned to Rugby with low fitness

levels and even lower expectations. Credit must go to Mr Dhanda for believing in us and his unstinting encouragement, helped by a few curt emails reminding us that we have training.

We all agreed at the start of the season that our main weakness was getting the ball in the back of the net and this very much showed in the 0-0 draw against Dean Close to start the season, where we dominated but were unable to score. We went on to a 2-3 defeat by Trent in which we fought back from conceding two early goals, but then beat St Edward's Oxford 4-1. Two more narrow losses, 1-2 and 0-1 to Uppingham and Bromsgrove showed a great deal of progress by the team and just before half-term we beat Northampton High 3-1 in the second round of the England Hockey Cup, which was a real turning point.

Our breakthrough came after half-term, when we really began to gel as a team. A narrow and frustrating loss against Stowe (0-1) acted as a catalyst for major improvements, helped too by a change in strategy and new-found trust in each other. By moving the ball around more and passing it into space, we had far more successful breakthroughs than previously. We played twice against Oakham in the space of a week, losing 0-1 in the league and 1-2 in the third round of the cup - two games which we could easily have won if we had put our chances away. This gave the team a reinvigorated confidence as we realised we really weren't as bad as we thought. Had the season been longer or this change come earlier, I have no doubt that the results would have begun to reflect this. Our final match was a fitting end to the season, beating Oundle 2-1, playing with confidence, comfort, and respect for the ball. Big thanks to Mr Dhanda, and here's to next year!

Honor Richards (RB)

U16B P9 W7 D0 L2

Our season was an overall success, with a great team atmosphere, coaching and morale. This was very impressive, especially against some tough opposition including Repton and Oundle. Our victories didn't come easy following a disappointing start to the season that resulted in losses against both Uppingham and Shrewsbury. As a team, however, we realised that this was not good enough, and with excellent coaching from Mrs Bernstein, supporting us through every match and training session, we came back stronger than ever to finish unbeaten from that point. This is to say we were a strong team, both on and off the pitch, making our time together as a team thoroughly enjoyable, and something to be remembered.

Bibi Parker (D)

U15A P12 W1 D2 L9

The U15As developed fantastically over the course of this season and showed at times that they had the ability to play some excellent hockey. The season highlights were a dominant 3-0 victory against Bloxham and a hard-fought 2-2 draw against a strong Trent side. These were not anomalous results either, as almost across the board the team improved upon their results against teams they played last year. There have also been some outstanding individual performances, highlighted by the fact that Jemima Barlow, Harriet Anthony, Gracie Douglas Miller, Eliza Bruce-Jones and Claudia Harrison were all involved with

the U16A sides either indoors, outdoors or both in some cases. A mention must also go to Nafisa Atta who began the season with the U15As before being selected for the U16As.

She was replaced by Charlotte Mayhew who had an outstanding season and displayed fantastic development game on game.

The future for this side is bright and their enthusiasm and team spirit were exceptional to see. The next step is to carry the enthusiasm, dedication and determination that is apparent on match days into every training session, for both indoor and outdoor hockey; then this side will continue to develop at a fantastic rate.

JBL

U15B P11 W4 D3 L4

The U15Bs had a strong start to the season with closely fought draws against Dean Close and St Edward's and wins against Uppingham and Trent College. Despite the impressive start, the team's focus and toughness on the pitch dipped, resulting in a few losses partway through the season. With some inspirational and enthusiastic coaching by Mrs Skene, the team gradually developed a 'warriors' mentality (rather than being worriers) and the additions to the squad in the second half of term certainly made a difference. The last month of the season saw a much improved and resilient side with pleasing wins against Oakham and Repton.

The Most Valuable Player of the season was Mimi Merritt and the squad regularly recognised her as being the stand-out performer in each match. The Most Improved Player of the season was Willa de Jonge who demonstrated that she was a versatile player - giving 100% in whatever position she was put.

U14A P16 W3 L10 D3

This season has had its ups and downs and we have definitely made a lot of memories together. We managed to reach the regional finals for the first time in three years for F Block girls. We had a lot of very challenging matches but everyone kept their heads high and kept going even when it was hard.

EAR

U15C P8 W5 D1 L2

This was a great season for the mighty U15C team. Particular mention must go to Izzy Colbourne and her team of defence who continued to save the day and conceded only four goals over the whole season. Congratulations also must go to Player of the Season and top goal scorer, Jasmine Macintosh. The girls played with energy and drive in every game and will hopefully look forward to another great term of hockey next year.

JH

U15D P6 W2 D2 L2

The U15D squad started the season with 23 girls and ended up with 16 due to promotions and injuries. Always a good sign when I can promote players to the Cs! The rest of the players became a very settled squad who did make progress and played well together - especially in matches. The Player of the Season was Kaede Sugano and Most Improved Player was awarded to Elizabeth Viktorova. Congratulations to them! I hope many continue to play hockey next season.

MEB

U14B P11 W4 D3 L4

First and foremost, this group of U14B hockey girls were an absolute pleasure to coach. They all wanted to improve their game from the very first training session and were certainly successful in doing so. Strangely, though, results were the reverse of what you would expect: the final three games saw three



Octavia Steiger (B)

losses. Prior to that, there was only a single loss in the first eight games, with big-margin victories against Dean Close, Trent and Bromsgrove. The performance of the season was a 4-3 comeback victory (having been 3-1 down) against a Stowe team that was clearly fielding A team players. This saw the U14Bs at their very best, playing eyes-up hockey at pace and with perseverance. Keira Masefield in goal proved an excellent shot stopper, whilst Lucy Taylor and Bella Nimmo proved tough competitors in defence, alongside the competitive spirit of Balerki Puplampu and the reliability of Lottie Winter. Although we didn't want to lose Lucy from the Bs, we were all very proud when she got selected for the As for the final few games of the season. Bella Wade (who was named Player of the Season), Jade Fossick (who won the award for Most Improved Player) and Ciara Hogan were the most dynamic players, constantly threatening opposition defenders and opposing midfielders. Georgie Hunt, Scarlett Mitchell, Sofia Cumming and Livi Williams all showed glimpses of excellent potential with Hettie Chapman providing moments of real skill in midfield. Daisy Anderson was a constant threat in front of goal and she should certainly be looking for A team honours in the future. All in all, the future of girls' hockey at Rugby School is in very safe hands with these B team players who have such positive enthusiasm and potential.

SF

U14C P9 W3 L4 D2

The U14C girls had a tricky start to the season with a 0-4 loss at home against a strong Uppingham side, but the following week St Edward's School Oxford came to play and were seen off in a 9-0 drubbing. Living on the adrenaline from such a magnificent victory, the girls were ready for Uppingham to return the following week and succeeded in narrowing the gap, only losing

0-2 this time. The next three games were all a little more evenly matched, after which the girls suffered defeats at the hands of Oakham and Oundle. The girls never failed to demonstrate huge amounts of enthusiasm and humour when it came to game time and developed a fine team spirit. The support from the bench at every game was so vocal that it often felt that the team was playing in front of the whole School. It was an absolute bonus and delight to end the season on a high, defeating Repton 6-0 in a great display of passing, tackling and high-energy U14C hockey.

MWG

U14D P7 W0 D0 L7

The U14D had a challenging and rewarding journey this season. For some, it was their first time picking up a hockey stick, but every single member of the team progressed across the season gaining new skills and working as a team. After our first match against Oundle, in which we lost 11-0, the girls could have felt somewhat deflated. Not so the U14Ds, who continued to hold their heads high in this match and beyond with a gritty determination to keep improving. We may not have won a match this season, but when goals were scored, elation ensued. The Most Valued Player award went to Grace Dessent who quickly found her feet as a forward. Our Most Improved Player went to Lily Smyth whose skill grew with her increasing self-confidence as the season progressed. Our informal "players' player" was jointly awarded to Bea Barker and Ginny Edwards, two key team motivators. I wish I could name every player here; this team showed a whole lot of heart and were defined by their cheery disposition and unerring resilience.

SLH



BOYS' HOCKEY

XI P15 W11 D0 L4

76 goals were scored by the XI in just 15 games at an average of over five goals per game. The fact that 41 went in at the other end meant anyone who watched this side were in for a treat as this was a team of entertainers, well led for the second year in a row by captain Noah Martle and vice-captain Arun Mehta.

With a talented XX joined by last year's U16 National Finalists, hopes were high for a good season and the boys did not disappoint. The indoor season before Christmas laid the foundations with the squad narrowly missing out on National Finals after a last-second defeat to Oakham in the Regional semi-finals. The outdoor season took a while to get going and a 6-5 defeat to Stamford early on was the wakeup call the boys needed. Suddenly the work rate and desire of the squad started to match their individual talents, and the results were 5-2 league victories over both Repton and Trent, 4-2 away wins over Uppingham and a first ever 'Friday Night Lights' 5-3 win over Oundle to finish the season. In the National Cup a great run was ended by a strong Charterhouse team in the quarter-finals. The win against Repton will go down as the highlight of the season, with clinical short corners, devastating counter-attacks and a man of the match performance in goal by Conor Tobin.

At the end of season awards, Player of the Season went to Noah Martle. Noah chipped in with a useful 11 goals and was the player the boys looked to, with his powerful runs from midfield to unlock a defence. As an exceptional indoor hockey player, he was vital defensively too. Noah also won Clubman of the Year for

his immense services to Rugby School hockey as he completed his third year in the XI. Most Improved Player went to Wilf De La Hey, a forward turned central midfielder who could run all day and was capable of moments of individual flair. Top goalscorer went to Ollie Mourant who scored an incredible 33 goals in just 15 games. Ollie was particularly ruthless when it came to one-on-one situations and the exciting thing is that as a LXX he can get even better. A special mention also to Hugh Ogle who was a regular supply line for Ollie and whose link-up play up front was a key reason why the team scored so many goals.

We said goodbye at the end of the season to nine members of the XX, many of whom contribute in a whole variety of sports for the School and are talented all-rounders. In defence, Ross Warwood and Marcus Richards were quick, tenacious defenders who would always put their body on the line for the team, while Will Gardener was a classy, composed, distributing full back who never looked flustered. Arun Mehta, fresh from a season captaining the XV, was a brilliant leader from the back, and, after spending lots of extra time on his drag flicking, he was rewarded with a couple of vital goals at the end of the season. Hugh Falconer was a more than useful versatility player and was unlucky not to play more games. In forward areas Hugh Ogle was exceptional, scoring a number of outstanding individual goals plus assisting numerous others. Freddie Whitelaw, after missing a year with injury, added pace and unpredictability to a very talented forward line. A special thank you to the leadership group of Martle, Mehta and De La Hey for setting the standards this year for what is expected of an XI hockey player.

Next year the team will rely on many of the current LXX, many of whom gained valuable experience in the XI this season fresh off the back of reaching the National Finals last year. Conor Tobin was a very reliable shot stopper, Dan Hatton and Harry Darby

improved their 1v1 defending and composure in defence, while Charlie Bruce Jones was the unsung hero of the team, putting in a lot of work on and off the ball in midfield areas. At times this year Beno Wiltshire was unplayable down the right hand side with his strength and 3D skills, while Ollie Mourant's goalscoring was invaluable. Josh Montfort Bebb chipped in with ten goals and should look to better that next year. Ed Whittley missed the whole season through injury so will be desperate to be involved next year, while debuts were also given to three members of the D Block- Lucas Marshall, Harry Seagon and Harry McNee- showing there is plenty of strength in depth.

Finally a thank you to Mr Tester who assisted me with the coaching on match days, to Mr Ling (Sports GTA) for all his work on extra 1-2-1 sessions for the boys throughout the year and to Mr Dhanda for his usual impeccable umpiring. Thanks to Mr Poynton and Mr Atlay, the boys are also now becoming aware of the importance of video analysis and GPS trackers in enhancing performance. The bar has been raised by this XI squad showing what can be achieved with hard work and commitment and, with the support of such talented, experienced staff, Rugby School hockey is in good hands.

JMS

2nd XI

P15 W7 D2 L6

The boys had a good season, winning more games than they lost and finishing with a positive goal difference of 13. They finished in fifth place in the Saturday league. They also competed very well against a number of 1st XI teams to reach the semi-finals of the regional Tier 4 tournament. The highlight of the season was the 6-0 win over Trent, although the comeback against Bedford, to win 3-2 was another fine result. All of the boys improved their hockey over the course of the season and Mr Thomson and I enjoyed working with them. The team blended the experience of the XX with the energy of the LXX to great effect. The top goal scorer was Alex Parker, just beating Sam Stoddart by one goal. For the end of season awards, we could have picked any number of players. The team's Player of the Season was Doug Ralston. With regard to most improved player, Alex Robinson deserves praise for moving from right half to centre back and becoming a key member of the back four who performed so well all season. However, for his development from a utility player to be used from the bench to becoming our top striker and goal scorer, Alex Parker was the 2nd XI's Most Improved Player. It was also a tough call when deciding upon the coaches' Most Valuable Player award. Sam McCaughan was the model of consistency in midfield and showed great awareness and ability to choose the right option. Angus Smith led the team from the front and his commitment was second to none. However, the person who held the team together and worked tirelessly, both in attack and defence, as well as playing to a consistently high standard, and hence the Most Valuable Player, was Hugh Falconer.

PAB

U16A

P12 W4 D1 L7

"It's not whether you get knocked down; it's whether you get up."
Vince Lombardi

I've been thinking a lot lately about comfort zones; about the concept of whether it is better to win and be in your comfort zone, or to be pushed out of your comfort zone, and be happy with the

uncomfortable, nervy, and sometimes unhappy feeling of being tested in what one does. Whether it be in academia, where one's internal questioning about being brave enough to read that book that you don't quite understand in the first place, or in music or theatre where you take that first step on to the stage to perform, in front of peers and others, a piece of art that seriously tests you, the feeling inside doesn't change. Nerves, worry, anxiety come into play. Do I play safe? Do I give up or pick myself up and face the challenge? So it is the same for sport, and the U16 hockey team found this 2019 season difficult at times and regularly faced adversity, and with it the jump from the comfort zone, and better and better throughout the season.

Certainly, there were several successes throughout the season. Indeed, the start of the season, beating Oakham School, was delightful to watch, and the team had taken shape already. A spine of Archie Jackson (Sh), Paddy Powell Capper (K) and Harry McNee (C) was looking strong, and the skills of Will Jackson (SF) was supporting this structure well. Undoubtedly, the first two of these players being out through injury later on in the season tested the depth of the squad. However, the positives kept coming, with training getting better and better. A draw with St Edward's Oxford followed the Oakham result, and the defensive line of Max Shippey (Sh), Lucas Marshall (T) and Will Salveson (K) was really starting to click. Lucas, in particular, got better and better throughout the season, realising that it was acceptable to develop his aerial passes and make mistakes by playing in different positions. This was another highlight of the season: players being able to step out of their comfort zones in switching positions – something that will stand them in good stead for the future of their hockey playing.

A 10-0 win against Bablake, with U15 support from Kenzie Morgan (Sh), Fred Thame (SF) and Eddie King (T) (the latter then playing for the entire season up an age group) gave more confidence, before a three game losing streak against Repton, Bromsgrove and Dean Close brought the team down to earth. This was a period of trying to use objective data to quantify development and performance, rather than using result. GPS trackers showed the level of effort went up, particularly in the Repton game, and it was intriguing to see how one player in the opposition dominated the game so much. Level of effort was calculated, both in the number of short sprints and in the distance travelled in the match. This, again, challenged the squad. The idea of work rate, and, indeed, what hard work feels like on the pitch, was reaffirmed by these statistics - elements, again, which I hope they will take into their future schooling and onwards in life.

There were several players who potentially surprised themselves throughout the season. Harry Seagon (SH) was mercurial in the forward line, with his skills causing frequent problems for the opposition. Oscar Phillips (M) and Alex Watson (SF) held the ball up with a strong powerbase, and Tinius Mosvold (Sh), Ollie Chapman (SF) and Ali Brown (T) all started to push themselves to recycle the ball in a better way, trying to increase the number of passes made between team mates. Will Dudley (SF) became crucial to our resistance against strong sides, and he learned how to develop his resilience throughout the season. Indeed, his drive to push himself, playing for the XI in the indoor season, meant that he has now put himself at the core of Rugby School hockey for coming seasons.

It would have been easy to allow the season to slide after the three aforementioned games, but again the players learned to push themselves out of the norm, and the 3-2 victory against Trent College was symptomatic of their new-found resilience. Vince Lombardi's quotation above was key to the thinking of the players in this period and the influence of Archie Jackson, in particular, who supported from the sideline (due to injury) was crucial in this. He never strayed from being a positive driving influence for

his peers, and, indeed, for the School, and his leadership skills developed throughout the season. This leadership sometimes took him out of his comfort zone, but he more than coped with this and I am grateful for his support throughout the year.

The matches we were playing were now much closer, and the statistics much more satisfying, and McNee, Marshall and Seagon even pushed themselves further out of their zones by making first appearances for the XI. I look forward to charting their development over the next two years. All should feel a sense of pride at having done this, but it is even more important that they continually think about how they can push themselves further out of their "norms" to now become key players at School first team level.

A final win of the season against Oundle School capped off a season in which many more questions were answered than remained. How does one tackle problems in order to turn them into challenges? How can I help my teammates to enable them to have more skills and confidence in order to face some of these challenges? How can I objectively enable myself to become better in what I want to do? The U16 season answered many of these, but also, I hope, enabled the players in this team to understand better how important it is to take themselves out of their comfort zones in order to address some of the above. The next two years in the XI or 2nd XI will hopefully keep progressing these concepts. There will be many times where they will fall down, but hopefully Lombardi's advice will stand them in good stead for the challenges (not problems) ahead.

NT

U16B

P8 W5 D0 L3

Following on the back of two unbeaten seasons for the boys at U14 and U15 level, it was always going to be a tall order for the U16Bs to make it a hat-trick, particularly with some key players receiving a well-deserved call-up for the A team. In the end, a rather heavy loss to Stamford ended the winning streak but, by any measure, this was still a very successful season with the U16Bs finishing second in the league. Indeed, the fact that the boys have lost only three matches in three years is testament to their skill level as well as their hard work. Whilst they prefer an emphasis on fun in training sessions, they are very business-like in matches and their work-rate and attitude were exemplary throughout. This contributed to some impressive victories, not least putting ten goals past Bromsgrove. Most Improved Player this season went to George Taylor who became a rock in defence and the Most Valuable Player went to captain Harry Chapman, whose endless energy and skill in midfield were vital to the success of the season. As a whole, the boys were great fun to work with and we really hope to see them carry on representing the School in the senior teams.

KH



U15A

P11 W7 D1 L3

This season gave a greatly beneficial insight into the potential of this U15A side and showed the fantastic depth that the squad has to offer. The season began with a tour to San Sebastian where the boys faced some brilliantly talented Spanish and French players. The tour acted as an opportunity for the boys to learn a new structure, a new press and further develop their individual skills, as well as continuing to develop the strong 'team first' mentality that had already begun to form the previous season. Having returned from sunny San Sebastian, the boys were thrown into the foul weather and sand-based pitches of England, a far cry from the sunshine and water-based pitches of Spain. However, the performances of the team continued to be impressive. A comfortable 2-0 cup victory against RGS High Wycombe in our first official game of the season was a testament to the professionalism of the players, who from the first whistle to the last dominated possession, territory and the flow of the game. The team, led by captain Fred Thame and ably assisted by vice-captains Kenzie Morgan and George Whitelaw, continued to work hard in training and continued to develop into a hockey team that would be tough to beat. The selection of Eddie King to be a regular in the U16As was a credit to his ability. In his absence, Orson Salha, Max Townsend and Thomas Hortop had a brilliant opportunity to become key players in the side, an opportunity which they did not miss.

The truly outstanding performances within the team came from opposite ends of the pitch, as our goalkeeper Dino Gallone managed to win Goalkeeper of the Season due to his heroic efforts in-between the posts and forward Ethan La Porta won the U15As Player of the Season. Gallone's performances this year often saved the side from needing to score 12 goals to win a fixture, a feat that never looked out of reach with La Porta on the pitch, who managed to score outrageous goal after outrageous goal all through the season.

The record of seven comfortable victories, one tough draw and three losses (in which the team only lost by one or two goals) was a fantastic achievement when we take into consideration how many players also competed in the impressive cup run the U15A XV enjoyed. Lochie Bruneau, Sholto Harris-Stuart, Luke Heseltine, Kenzie Morgan, Will Pond, Ted Pryke, Fred Thame and George Whitelaw were all key members in both teams and their dedication was fantastic to see. This was a season that all the players in the team can be proud of and I look forward to hearing about their future successes.

JBL

U15B

P10 W6 D2 L2

Although the mighty U15B went through some tough and trying times, they managed to have an excellent season. In most matches we had at least two players on loan to the U16B, some players moved up to the As and we had a few more injuries than in the past. Playing for the As and U16B was a fantastic experience for the individual players but meant the players changed weekly, causing a lack of continuity and game flow. Having said that, it was fantastic to see the players grow in all aspects through the season. Not only did their skills level increase but their understanding of the game and teamwork improved from the start of the season. They also grew as young men, understanding the value of hard work and teamwork as well as displaying courage and good sportsmanship. Most of all, they had fun and enjoyed themselves.

The strength of the team was their defence. However, at times we struggled to convert this excellent defence into pressure by allowing the opposition too many turnovers in our own half. When we were able to get the ball to the forwards, they were able to convert these opportunities into goals. Our most memorable game was against Trent away, where we managed to turn a 3-0 deficit into an amazing 4-3 win. It was an outstanding come-back and certainly the match of the season.

Ollie Orme-Smith and Freddie Fowler were our most prolific goal scorers, scoring four goals each in six games. Lucas Killick and Albert Sitwell scored three goals each in eight and six games respectively.

A big thank you to Katy for her coaching and umpiring of the boys. She had a great rapport with the boys and they thoroughly enjoyed her sessions and playing for the team.

MAB

U15C

P9 W3 D2 L4

The U15Cs saw a season of two halves this year. The beginning of the year saw some tough fixtures and some narrow losses, leaving them without a point after three games. However, after showing true grit and determination in training, the boys began to see results on the field. The turning point of the season was travelling to Malvern College, playing the U15As and coming away with an impressive 0-0 draw. Thereafter, the team went on to show impressive performances against the likes of Dean Close and Oundle, winning 5-0 and 3-1 respectively. Picking a Player of Season was no easy task but the most notable was goalkeeper Julian Baring, who went eight weeks without conceding a goal. Most Improved Player was awarded to George Sale, a player who remained calm under pressure and was solid in defence.

BNW

U15D

P5 W5 D0 L0

It is tempting to say simply that the results speak for themselves: an exemplary record, which included two victories against C teams, namely Oakham and Stowe. This was an excellent term from an enthusiastic set of young players, captained commendably by Ed Delville-Jones. Isaac Simmons-Alexander was outstanding in goal, but he also had a sure defence in front of him, courtesy of Alex Milner, Julian Heap, Josh Nevill and Ben Ellis. In midfield Sam Chalmers, Tobias Branston and Mathieu Farren were up and down the pitch energetically while up front Ben Fossick could be relied upon to fire the bullets loaded for him by Felix Jameson-Evans, Taisei Suzuki, Jonty Smith and Angus Hill-Trevor. I thank Mr Parker for his assured umpiring and I thank the boys for their fervent pursuit of excellence, showing themselves to be the best players that they could be. I encourage them all to pursue their hockey further in future years.

TJD

U14A

P10 W3 D3 L4

As a new team the U14As got off to a slow start while they got to know each other and found their positional strengths. After the three starting games were lost, they came out strong against St

Edward's – a win that gave them confidence to carry on playing well. After a loss against Repton, a strong team, they worked hard in training to produce no further losses in the last five games of the season, drawing three and winning two. The highlight of the season was the final game vs Oundle where they went out against a tough opposition and came away with a win. As the season ended, they learned how each other played, showing great promise for a good season next year.

Henry Woodward (T)

U14B

P10 W5 D3 L2

Only three boys represented the U14B hockey team in all fixtures this season, a reflection on a year group who worked hard on the games. Four players deservedly moved up from the C team with seven members of the B squad getting game time in the As. There was some fine hockey played in many of the matches, with particularly strong performances in the victories against Repton, Teddies and Trent. Max Milner was extremely reliable in goal (I cannot recall a single goal in which he was at fault), with David Bennett and James Forsberg combining for the majority of the season as an effective defensive duo. Henry Henderson, Sam Branston and Shreyan Sodha rotated well in attack and defence in the half-back positions. Watch out too for Ryan Sweeting as a future top hockey player. Jack Fletcher-Stables, Barnaby Johnson-Hill and William Gimlette combined skill, nous and stamina in midfield with Gabriel Stoney, and the trio of Sam Veasey, Walker and Green were highly effective up front. Veasey's nine goals contributed significantly to his Player of the Season award, with Johnson-Hill taking the Most Improved Player trophy. All the boys who represented the U14B team were a pleasure to coach and selecting next season's U15A team is, in a very positive way, going to prove a tough task.

SF/RJ

U14C

P8 W6 D1 L1

A great season for the U14Cs saw them nearly go undefeated, but for an early season loss against Bromsgrove. A hat trick from Johnny McLaughlan in the first game against Oakham meant a promotion upwards for him and in spite of the majority of the possession and pressure against Bromsgrove we couldn't get the ball in the net. Nevertheless, after Freddie Cade moved up from defence to attack we found a solution. Combining well with Felix Macintosh, the pair contributed brilliantly to a 20-goal haul. In defence, Lewis Webb made some brilliant saves and Jacob Hull, Archie Ramsbottom, Charlie Cosby, Toby Hughes and Matthew Wilson ensured we only conceded four goals all season. There was huge energy in the midfield too as Ryan Sweeting, Stan Utting, Flynn Lowther and Miles Owen Thursfield enabled us to dominate possession throughout the season. There is a lot of talent in this group and I imagine a number will find their way into higher teams next season.

MF

U14D

P8 W4 D0 L4

The U14Ds were ferocious at home, but frequently foiled away. We lacked teeth in front of goal, but my word, we had fight! Anchored in midfield by General William Chen, we had characters all over

the pitch. Freddie Sparke, did, I think, play in every position on the pitch – including keeper one day! Toby Hughes, Sam Smith and Noah Markham provided panache up front, while Benno Stewart, Leo Dakin and Chang Liu were mainstays of the defence, in front of Keeper McMullan. Praan Moodley was always determined to score, John Zou was always determined to tackle, Thomas Austin and Arseny Bolotov were always determined, and Karan Kantaria was a revelation on the wing. Trouncing Uppingham 5-0 was a highlight, but the crowning glory of this team was our final fixture. Away to Oundle, we had lost to them once already and we had never won away from home. Did we bow our heads? No! 2-1 to Rugby. An away victory at last! Deliverance.

MAM/TEM

U14E

P7 W3 D2 L2

What the U14Es may have lacked in experience, they more than made up for in spirit, most evident in their hat-trick of victories over Uppingham (4-0, 4-3, 3-0). There was sterling work from captain Will O'Donnell, with commendable performances from George Sheldon, Most Improved Player goalkeeper Felix Clarke, and Omar Sultanli, Player of the Season and an ever-reliable presence in the midfield. All of the boys tried hard, worked together and, perhaps most importantly, had fun. Well done U14Es!

FBC



NETBALL

1st VII

P15 W6 D1 L8

This was a season of two halves for the 1st VII. The season started with disappointment after missing qualification to the regional netball competition by just one point. Oakham also knocked us out of the ISNC cup in the first round.

This did not deter a fabulous group of athletes from digging deep and training hard. Lulu Tritton (D) and Alysia Nimmo (S) joined a ladies' club to help build their strength and power by playing senior ladies' netball in their spare time. Lucy Venters (RB) and Isabel Addy (St) were selected to play for Wasps U17 academy and performed impressively on court throughout their academy league matches.

The season ended on a high with admirable wins against Wellingborough, Trent, Shrewsbury and Oundle meaning we won six out eight matches in the Lent term.

The team said farewell to captain Izzy Simmonds (St), vice-captain Lulu Tritton (D) and Most Improved Player Alysia Nimmo (S).

DLS

2nd VII

P11 W9 D0 L2

The 2nd VII had a solid season and turned over some impressive opposition, including Shrewsbury, Uppingham, and Stowe. The netball was fluid and fast-paced, and there was some strong mid-court play from Helena Russell, Ingrid Thame, and Coach's Player of the Season, Immy Burgess. The highlight of the season was a significant victory over Bromsgrove, who have a reputation for being very strong at netball, with a score of 22-16. The shooters, Laura Clarke and Molly Molloy, were very impressive, scoring an average of 26 goals per game between them. The girls' fitness, skills and camaraderie grew as the season went on and the penultimate game of the season, during a triangular game vs Sedbergh, resulted in an outstanding 17-23 win for Rugby. Clarke, Burgess, Molloy and Thame were so impressive that they all were asked to play for the 1st VII at various points during the season. Most Improved Player went to Ingrid Thame and Players' Player went to Freya Chichester.

LEM

3rd VII

P11 W9 D1 L1

Winners of 3rd VII Independent Schools Netball League 2019 and undefeated in the league, Rugby School 3rd team remained victorious for the second year on the trot. Coached by Miss Janulewicz and captained by Freya Harrison, the team played flawlessly throughout the season and impressed with their consistent drive to win and improve in every fixture. Most Improved Player was awarded to Amy Stoker, a late arrival to the team who is a full court netball player, able to rise to any position chosen for her. Players' Player was awarded to Tilly Rose for excelling at centre and coaches' player awarded to Jess Daniel for being a superb member of the team and performing the most incredible interceptions

throughout every game! Thank you to all the 3rds yet again for being an amazing team to coach. What a great season it has been!

AKJ

4th VII

P7 W6 D0 L1

Overall, the 4th team had a brilliant season, scoring an impressive 185 goals in total and only losing to Stowe's strong 3rds side. They battled through injury and consistently showed commitment, enthusiasm, perseverance and teamwork, which resulted in some impressive wins, for example 43-10 against Oakham, 31-6 against Repton and 39-12 against Oundle.

AC

5th VII

P10 W10 D0 L0

The 5ths really were a force to be reckoned with, being victorious within all of their ten fixtures. What was even more impressive was the fact that they won each game by a landslide. All in all the 5ths scored 220 goals whilst they only conceded 52. Hope Davies and Ellie Brockbank created a formidable shooting duo! However, each player was crucial to the dynamics of the team and it was a pleasure to see them so harmonious on court whilst always keeping an element of fun at the centre of it all.

HK

U15A

P12 W2 D0 L10

The U15As had a tough start to the season with losses in the National Cup (Round 2) and in the league against Oakham and Bromsgrove. Despite the score-lines, the standard of netball was high and the girls' technical ability certainly improved immensely in the first few weeks of the season. A number of injuries and some poaching of the best players by the senior teams weakened the squad at times in the season, but it did provide a good opportunity for other emerging players to cement their role in the A team squad; I was particularly impressed with how well Millie Turner and Lottie Short settled into the team.

The Players' Player was Harriet Anthony, who was recognised by the whole team as being an outstanding netball player – earning a place in the 1st VII at various times in the season. The Coach's Player was Maddy Burgess, who certainly has the ability and tactical know-how to be a key member of a senior squad next year. The Most Improved Player was Millie Turner, who, having come up to the A team at the start of the season, made a good case to be in the starting VII each week.

EAR

U15B

P9 W3 D0 L6

The U15B team had a rather frustrating season. Throughout the term, the whole team focused on training and had good performances in matches, but often the opposition proved just too strong. Jemima Henderson, Maddie Tailby-Faulkes and Rebecca



Cooper were all accurate shooters, who worked well together in the circle. The centre court players, Katya Eardley, Eliza Bruce-Jones, Heath Rosselli and Gracie Douglas Miller, all contributed well, playing in varied positions throughout the season. Claudia Harrison and Clemmie Trott formed a strong circle defence with Rebecca, who was particularly versatile, regularly playing in defence when not shooting. Despite few wins, it was an enjoyable season, as the team spirit and encouragement for one another was always excellent. The Coaches' Player of the season was Katya Eardley, Players' Player Jemima Henderson and Most Improved Player Rebecca Cooper.

U14A

P12 W3 D0 L9

This season the U14As have grown from strength to strength. They started training in the Advent term, participating in pre-season training once a week. The girls came a respectful fourth place in the county tournament, which is always tough after having only trained together for two months. They lost their third-fourth play-off match against a team they beat later in the season.

The U14A squad had a tough start to the Lent term, playing against Oakham and Bromsgrove in the first two matches, both games resulting in a loss. The team slowly started to build strength and shape with the shooters Lucy Clarke and Indi Hudson becoming very accurate; a total of 228 goals were scored this season, which is a massive achievement. The centre court (made up of Tilly Kember, Ciara Hogan, Livvy Cockburn and Flo Rose) began to form structure in the middle and, working as a team, to transfer the ball from defence to attack, where they were able to feed the shooters well. The defensive team, Leia Gonzalez-Lee and Jendaya Boucher, became a solid unit at

the back and, with discipline, were able to turn the ball over on many occasions.

They had a few misfortunes, losing to Repton, Tudor Hall and St Edward's by three goals or less. However, improvements were showing, and results started to go their way, as they won three out of the last four matches.

In the final week, the team played two back-to-back matches against Sedbergh and Oundle. They started out strong, beating Sedbergh, but energy levels were running low for the second match. Even so, it was a great end to the season, showing potential and growth, with Livvy Cockburn keeping her player close and not losing sight of the game. Jendaya Boucher snatched multiple rebounds and kept delaying Oundle's play, while Ciara Hogan gave nice feeds into the attacking D and carefully slowed the pace down. I am extremely proud of the girls and their commitment to the team, many of whom played up for the U15 team, while a couple gained experience playing with the U16 team.

AC

U14B

P9 W6 D0 L3

The U14B squad was relatively stable throughout the season which meant the girls were able to gel as a team and become more fluid and tenacious in their game play. They started the season well with three wins, particularly pleasing with a win against Oakham in the first match. After a dip mid-season, they had another good run of three wins, the highlight for me as coach being the hard-fought win against King's High School in the penultimate game. Coaches' Player was awarded to Evie Marchant-Lane, the Players' Player to Isabella McNee and Most Improved Player of the season to Daisy Anderson. Congratulations to the entire squad for a successful first netball season at Rugby School.

MEB

U14C

JEO P8 W5 D0 L3

The U14Cs showed strong, steady progress throughout the term. As a team, we were somewhat shooter-heavy at times, so a number of girls showed their flexibility in playing in positions outside their comfort zones. This demonstrated a highly commendable attitude that was evident throughout the term. The girls were also extremely well matched as a team. So much so, that choosing award-winners was not an easy task. In the end, Maisie Cornell gained the Players' Player award, and the Player of the Season went to Livi Williams. Most Improved Player went to Clover de Jonge, who started the term barely knowing what it meant to be offside and ended with much increased precision and strategic placement. Our final game against Oundle was probably the most exciting and nail-biting of the season. The teams were very evenly matched, and Oundle challenged the U14Cs in a way that brought out the best of the girls' netball skills. Drawing in the third quarter, Oundle slightly pulled ahead in the last quarter, winning 30-26. Despite losing our final game, the girls were all in excellent spirits and were exemplary hosts to the opposition. They were a real credit to Rugby School sports.

SLH

BOYS' CRICKET

XI P12 W3 L5 D3 A1

The XI enjoyed a good season, with strong progress in the HMC National T20 competition, hard-fought draws against Clifton and Marlborough and, most encouragingly of all, numerous outstanding performances from young players with two, three and even four years remaining at the School.

The lateness of Easter and inclemency of the weather meant that the first Saturday fixture was also the first outdoor session. A decent fielding display against a notoriously strong St. Edward's batting line-up was not backed up with the bat; a 149-run loss was not the start we had desired.

MCC fixtures always offer excellent cricket and this year was no exception. Jacob Bethell - still in the E Block - bowled with remarkable control to finish with 5-76, including the prized wickets of recent ORs Beard and McCreath, although not until both had played accomplished innings. It was Alex Roberts, however, who picked up the wicket everyone wanted, shattering the stumps with a fine in-swing which neither he nor the staff will ever forget. Chasing 186 and with all three results possible until the denouement, Rugby eventually lost by 16 runs, despite a cultured 52 from Will Gardener.

Rain curtailed an intriguingly poised T20 at Oakham, before a DLS-calculated win in the national competition against Wellingborough, who never recovered from a devastating spell of 4-2-4-3 by George Langran. Openers Archie Gibbs and Hugh Ogle were well on the way to the target when the rain came down. An outstanding 100 from Gibbs, still in



his D Block year, was the highlight of another fixture marred by the weather. Oundle were 58-1 in response to Rugby's 206-7 when the heavens opened once again, leading to a draw. An outstanding display of bowling and fielding immediately after lunch against Cheltenham featured three wickets - all in one over - for Roberts and four for Bethell. The latter then showed his class with the bat in a nail-biting run chase, not only reaching his maiden 100 for the XI, but leading Rugby to a magnificent 5-wicket win in the dying moments of the game. He was supported first by the in-form Gibbs (47), and then by Montfort Bebb (52).

The other performance which could be considered the best of the season came in the next round of the national T20 cup against Bedford, the reigning champions. Rugby set a competitive 154-8, with fine contributions from Ogle (38), Montfort Bebb (30), Bruce-Jones (22) and captain Warwood, who whipped the last two balls of the innings - the only two he faced - to the fine-leg boundary. Freddie Cade, in the F Block and on debut, took two crucial wickets in Bedford's reply before a nerveless final over from Montfort Bebb ensured that Rugby sneaked home by only six runs.

Unfortunately, this success could not be replicated in the next three fixtures. Bedford gained revenge with a comprehensive victory despite Gardener's three wickets. Oakham then brought an end to the T20 cup run at the regional semi-final stage, before the far-travelling Shrewsbury prevailed by six wickets, despite another three wickets for Gardener, 37 from Ogle and an unbeaten 57 from E Block debutant, Eddie King.

The penultimate game of the season was once again the two-day fixture against Clifton. 100* from the unflappable Gibbs and 5-64 for Cade were the highlights of Rugby and Clifton's respective first innings, with both sides declaring. After 66 from Bethell in Rugby's second innings, an eventful Clifton run chase in the last ten overs of the game could not force a result, and the game was indeed drawn.

The Marlborough Match, as ever, was the pinnacle of the season, renewing long-standing friendship and rivalry in the historic fixture. Rugby's 248 featured a fine 107 from Bethell, before the all-rounder took 5-109 from 37 overs in Marlborough's reply of 330. The indefatigable Marcus Richards also kept an immaculate line-and-length to take three wickets. Despite 29 from opener Ethan La Porta, Rugby were briefly in danger of being bowled out cheaply and leaving Marlborough an easy chase. 55 for King, however, coupled with dogged resistance from Richards and Warwood in their final game for the School, saved the game, the handshake coming with Rugby 153-7.

Thanks go to Messrs Powell, Tester and Robinson, to our outstanding team of ground staff, and to an excellent group of boys, for a highly enjoyable season.

AELT

XXII P7 W3 L3 A1

Led by captains Holt (SH) and Hughes (C), the Rugby School XXII were a formidable side throughout the Trinity Term. With eight fixtures scheduled and one lost totally to rain (Uppingham), the squad took the opportunity to impress coaches Bayly and Shepherd early in the season.

The season got underway with a dominant four wicket victory at home against St Edward's, who, batting first, posted 116-4 with

a wicket apiece for Harris, Parker, Holt and Sharkey. The hosts set off on their run chase with a solid knock of 47 from Watson, supported by Bruce-Jones; the runs were scored with an over to spare. Nine boundaries for Watson was the highlight, with the St Edward's first team having to take cover on the XI square.

A rain-affected match against Oakham followed, with Rugby being called on and off for the rain. 15 overs a side was the final count, with Oakham having the better conditions and winning by nine wickets. Rugby were only able to post 86-5 as there was no rhythm to the game, before Oakham notched these off in ten overs, losing only one wicket. The wicket was taken by Harris, with Holt top scoring on 27 after coming in at four. A trip away to Oundle saw Hughes take over from Holt as captain, with Hughes moving himself to open the batting as the side delivered a comfortable 15-run victory. 137 runs were posted by Rugby, with Muncaster top scoring with 37 before being stumped. Again, all bowlers were in the wickets with Harris, Phillips, Sharkey, Holt and Parker all taking one each. Bruce-Jones joined the XI with Sharkey, Collins, Watson, Phillips and Seagon all being called up to play for the U17 cup side after some solid performances for the XXII.

The middle of May saw the XXII undertake the long away trip to Cheltenham. After being put in to bat, the Rugby School XXII posted 165 from their 20 overs with a great knock coming from Phillips as he scored 47. He was ably supported by Muncaster (21) and Harris (19). The bowlers soon got into the opening batsmen of Cheltenham with Seagon, Sharkey, Phillips and Vaughan taking two wickets each.

As the season drew to a close, the players departed for examination leave and both Gardener and Masefield were called up to play cricket from the tennis courts. Cuthbert also made the transition from the Girls' 1st XI to join the XXII. Despite valiant efforts from the side, the XXII went down by five wickets away at Bedford and by 72 runs at home to Shrewsbury.

Other players to have featured over the course of the season include Powell-Capper, Coe and Drabble. Player of the Season was awarded to Jack Hughes.

LDS

3rd XI P3 W2 L0 A1

Due to inclement weather and opposition sides failing to raise a team, only three completed matches were possible this season. In the first game, Rugby overpowered St Edward's, Oxford. We posted a formidable total of 229-8 in 25 overs, thanks largely due to the swashbuckling, buccaneering batting of captain Arun Mehta, who scored 114 runs in double-quick time. Teddies were reduced to 140 in reply with Myers taking 2-7. The following week the team travelled to Oakham where we restricted the opposition to 97-4 in a rain-shortened match of 15 overs a side. Unfortunately, a particularly fierce rain shower put paid to our attempt to chase down the score and we left the field having made 64-3 in seven overs with Dan Hatton stranded on 35 not out. Our last match of the season, against Cheltenham College, resulted in a two-wicket win to us, so, although we did not play many matches, we emerged victorious in those that were completed; we would like to think that the match that was abandoned to the weather would have gone our way too.

AJN/FHA

4th XI P2 W1 L1

The 4th XI played two games. They lost the first away to St Edward's and won the second in the rain at home to Oundle. Captain Xav Christopher scored 37 before running himself out. The team soldiered on and won the match by five wickets with four overs to spare. Pat Grady performed well with both bat and ball. His bowling highlight was three wickets in the first match against a talented St Edward's team. A 50% win ratio with a team made up of mostly of LXX and D Block shows strength and depth within the club. Team spirits remained high throughout the short term.

MAT

U15A P8 W5 L2 A1

This was an exciting year group for Rugby School cricket. Their results this season were impressive but could and, maybe should, have been even better. The two defeats both came against the same opposition, Shrewsbury School. One was an agonising one-wicket defeat in the National U15 Cup where Shrewsbury's last wicket partnership put on 45 to win the game chasing 197. The other was a last-ball defeat in the ordinary block fixture where we missed a caught and bowled and run out chance to tie the game off the last ball. But we made huge strides and wins against Oundle, Teddies, Bedford and Cheltenham were all wins against strong opposition.

The pre-season tour to the UAE was ideal preparation, partly because roles in the batting order could be clearly established from an early stage. Dom Ritchie and Eddie King took on the difficult job of opening the batting and Dom impressed with 65 in the opening game against Teddies while Eddie scored 92 against Rhydal. Their "drop and run" running between the wickets always set the tempo for the rest of the innings. Fred Thame and Luca Cinquini-Steel always looked good without quite getting the results, but Fred saved his best for the cup game against Shrewsbury, top scoring with a class 64. Harry Hess and Max Conway became reliable, powerful middle order players. Their partnership of 101 to win the game against Cheltenham was outstanding. Max finished the season with 197 runs averaging just under 40. Harry averaged over 30 and also chipped in with a useful eight wickets. Opening bowler Tom Hortop is now a genuine all-rounder, hammering 160 runs, including a destructive 59 against Shrewsbury in the final game of the season, where he made batting look incredibly easy until running himself out. Freddie Fowler played some key innings lower down the order, especially the 35 not out to win the game against Bedford, hitting the final ball of the game for four under pressure, while Luke Heseltine made an unconventional but very entertaining 49 not out against Teddies. The batting of the whole team was very consistent and, in times of difficulty, they invariably showed character to reach or set a total, which is a great sign for the future. The 408-5 they amassed off 40 overs against Rhydal Penhros leading to a 367-run win (!) in the cup was, undoubtedly, the pinnacle of their batting exploits.

The standards in field were set by Will Shingles, an outstanding fielder who put his body on the line for the team every game and took some amazing catches. Dom Ritchie was another brilliant fielder and, with Eddie King, the model of consistency, behind the stumps, the bar was raised for the others to follow. With the ball, the standards were set with the new ball nearly every game by Freddie Fowler, who has huge potential as a tall swing and seam bowler. Freddie topped the wickets tally

with 11 wickets at an average of 16. Lochie Bruneau emerged as a very reliable, accurate seam bowler and Shingles, Hortop, Cartwright, Conway and Hess all took valuable wickets at different points of the season. Thame surprised us all, bowling for the first time at Rugby School and taking 2-19 with his off spin against a strong Bedford side.

The aim of any U15A coach is to prepare the boys for senior cricket in the future and it was pleasing that the attitude and performances of the boys (in training as well as matches) attracted the attention of the XI coaches. By the end of the season, King and Fowler had been selected for the XI with King going on to score a couple of 50s. Ethan La Porta and Jacob Bethell were both regulars in the XI throughout the season, showing the strength in depth of this year group, and there is, without a doubt, so much to look forward to in the next three years if these U15 boys continue to work hard and enjoy their cricket. The boys have been a pleasure to coach and I wish them all the best in the bright sporting futures they have.

JMS

U15B P7 W2 L4 A1

The U15Bs had a tough season, only winning two of their seven games, but behind the results were some encouraging performances. As well as the wins against St Edward's and Cheltenham, hard-fought losses against Shrewsbury and Bedford will live long in the memory. Across the season Orson Salha (SF) was the highest scoring batsman with 177 runs; close behind him was Will Barton (M) on 120. Max Molloy (Sh) and Charlie Jacklin (M) could always be counted upon to contribute a crucial 10 to 12 runs in the middle order, which often made the games tight. The bowling across the season was tight with Felix Jameson-Evans (Sh) and Angus Hill-Trevor (SH) leading the charge; both were often called upon to defend low totals and their consistency and accuracy meant opposition batsmen often struggled to put together a decent innings. They were ably supported by the spin, in the form of Max Broad and Matthieu Farren (M). The greatest improvement across the team was in the field where, leading by example, Will Barton demonstrated how to field aggressively. While we did struggle to put a winning total on the board, we got better and better at restricting opposition totals, making for some excellent cricket being played by all.

RG

U14A P9 W0 L8 D1

This was the leanest of lean years for the U14A cricketers, with the team going an entire season without registering a single victory. Unfortunately, at no time during the season did a win look likely, save for a rain-affected draw at home to Oundle. Whilst the side was competitive in three or four fixtures of the season, they were thoroughly outclassed in the remaining encounters. This was a side that never lacked enthusiasm in the field nor indeed did it want for a respectable bowling attack. The batting at its best managed to post a total that made the opposition think, but rarely sweat; at its worst we were way out of our depth. Only twice did the team pass 100 in an innings and on three occasions they were bowled out for less than 60. But there were individual positives and hope for the future, not least in the left-arm spinner, Freddie Cade, who found himself making his debut for the XI in the latter part of the season and

deservedly so. Opening bowlers Sam Walker (a player who has real all-round ability) and William Gimlette never made life easy for opening pairs, whilst Kevin Dong, a newcomer to the game, came on in leaps and bounds from beginner status, bowling with good pace. There were other spin options in leg-spinner Praan Moodley who, with perseverance, could be a very fine bowler indeed, along with Jack Paybody and Miles Owen-Thursfield, who, as promising off-spinners, just need more experience and overs under their belts and knowledge of how to set their fields. Gracie Pigott bowled with accuracy and little luck and again will benefit in the future from more astutely set fields. Despite the forlorn results, however, the team never lacked in enthusiasm and were always willing to listen and learn in training. They can hopefully overcome their lack of cricketing experience and continue to grow as players in future seasons.

SF

U14B P6 W1 L5

Unfortunately the theme of the season was set in the last over of the first match where the 14Bs conceded 14 off the last over against Teddy's to lead us to the first (and certainly not last) loss of the season. The boys had lots of fun hoping that the next team might have similar weaknesses to their own batting line-up, but got no luck until they played another team of similar calibre. They had a solid batting line-up, which just never seemed to work, and a fantastic opening set of bowlers who unfortunately never really made anything happen. A fun, if fruitless, season bar one win on The Close, with all players enjoying the games, as long as it wasn't raining. Overall, the team learned many lessons from their first season of 25-over cricket and saw the slow development of the resistance they will need in the coming years.

Zulf Hoosenally (W)

U14C P6 W0 L6

In terms of the raw scores, the U14C team had a difficult first season. Ending the season winless can have a sapping effect on morale, yet this group of gentlemen coped admirably in the face of that challenge. In fact, they went from strength to strength as the season progressed. Our bowling attack became ever sharper and more reliable, as was reflected in the number of runs given away as extras. A number of players came to the fore having had little bowling experience previously. For example, Alex Milner delivered what may have been the over of the season in the tight match against Cheltenham, producing a maiden against their strongest batsman in the final over of their second innings to make the chase a possibility. At the start of the season, Alex was struggling to pitch the ball on the wicket, so this represented a huge improvement. In the field, we also made great strides: throwing improved in accuracy and power, and catching developed with some fine catches taken in the second half of the season. Most notably, Karan Kantaria took quickly to his new role as wicket keeper and took an absolute stunner against Shrewsbury. As a team, we got into the habit of walking in and were far more alert and positive in the field by the end of the season. With the bat, we also made strides. Most impressive was the running between the wickets. Here George Sheldon led the way: purposeful, alert and clear with his communication, he demonstrated what could be achieved through a higher intensity approach. Following his lead, the team improved its run rate and left far fewer runs out on the field. James McMullan produced the innings of the season

against Cheltenham, scoring 25 runs (not out) off 22 balls to take us within two runs of victory. The early defeat against St Edward's will certainly be one to turn around next year. The team was very well led by Rohan Badail, who set a gentlemanly, welcoming and encouraging tone. It was in this respect that the U14C achieved its greatest success. The players demonstrated a fantastic attitude towards matches and training and were a real pleasure to coach.

ESD

GIRLS' CRICKET

1st XI P5 W2 L3

This was a frustrating season for the XI as fixtures are still difficult to find. We were lucky to retain our fixture against Uppingham and this was a highlight for the girls after they bowled Uppingham out for 67. Harriet Cuthbert (Tu) took three wickets and Alex Brookes (B) took two wickets. The girls were hosted by Marlborough again for our annual match but could not match the excellence of their spin bowler who took five wickets and ended our innings on 62 all out. It was great to welcome Mollie Molloy (St) and Gracie Pigott (B) to the team. We said farewell to our captain of two years, Freya Harrison (B).

DLS

U15 P6 W4 L2

The U15 team showed great promise after a season that saw them increase their fixture list and achieve more wins than losses. Captained by Claudia Harrison (B) they performed well against Uppingham and Stamford, winning both games by 25 runs. They narrowly missed going through to the National Cup round two after beating Bromsgrove but losing to Wellingborough. A super performance in this tournament from Charlotte Ison (B) as wicket keeper and bowler Livvy Cockburn (S) earned them Players of the Season.

DLS





BOYS' SOCCER

1st XI

P10 W6 D1 L3

The 1st XI soccer team began the season with some challenging fixtures as they strived to consolidate a short-passing style of play introduced during the pre-season tour to Porto. Home matches were contested on Polo 1, which was fabulously kept throughout the season despite the best efforts of the weather, which proved, on occasions, to be less than ideal.

It is safe to say that the season started rather slowly with Rugby managing a single draw over the first four competitive fixtures against Wellingborough, Bromsgrove, Loughborough Grammar School and St Edmund's College. However, things were soon to improve after a mediocre first half display away at Oakham. After controlling the ball with his chest, Theo Rodney volleyed an outstanding effort from 25 yards, which flew into the top of the net. Goalkeeper Alexey Rovner ensured the score remained favourable and despite a last-minute goal for Oakham and some reckless challenges, Rugby emerged victorious 2-3. Elements of the performance were discussed and analysed but ultimately the desire to work tirelessly and a renewed competitiveness to win individual battles set the tone for the remainder of the season.

A 2-1 home victory against Oundle ensured momentum continued to gather in preparation for a tricky trip to Bedford. Further grit and determination were shown by the squad, which was epitomised by substitute Mahmoud Atta terrorising the opposition defence, hitting both posts and crossbar before gaining the man of the match award in a 0-1 victory where Angus Robinson scored the winning goal.

The performance and result of the season came at home to Princethorpe, where each team member demonstrated strong technical quality against a very capable opposition. Angus Robinson opened the scoring with a composed finish across the goalkeeper from the left side of the penalty box, before Theo Rodney stamped his influence on the contest with a fine hat trick. The second goal was the result of some excellent team play where the ball made its way from the left side of the pitch through Alexey Rovner to Jack Lee Jones. Jasper Kraamer gained possession in midfield before darting down the right touchline and squaring to Mahmoud Atta who passed forward quickly to Seyi Khalidson. Jasper then received the ball back before squaring to Theo Rodney for a tap in. It was a goal the pre-season coaching staff in Portugal would have been proud of.

The final match of the season was one that would see some of the XX play their last competitive school fixture: emotions were running high. Oscar Holt capped an excellent season with a goal from the penalty spot which helped the team click into gear and Rugby finished the half four goals to the good. Committed performances from Matt Wolfe, Kit Fothergill, Emmanuel Yapobi-Attie and Edward Grieg saw Rugby ease to a 6-0 victory at full time, which was a fitting climax to a long and eventful campaign.

Many thanks go to Mr Rennoldson, Mr Evans and Mr Philips-Hall for their support and encouragement over the course of the season and for instilling an unbreakable team spirit. The departing XX will be missed, especially in terms of their leadership and commitment, but the remaining playing core look forward to next year with great excitement and expectation.

Mahmoud Atta (C)

2nd XI

P9 W4 L2 D3

This was a positive and productive season. A good win/loss ratio, along with several boys being regularly promoted to the XI, meant that a healthy and competitive atmosphere always existed in training sessions. The boys always trained well and, with the focus of a match every week and selection for places always tight, it proved to be an enjoyable term for the staff coaching the squad.

During the course of the season, Paddy Grady (in goal), Oli Branston (centre back), Philip Ndegwa (wing), John Elliott (midfield), Jasper Kraamer, Archie Cade and Jeremy Yu all left the squad to join the XI, which was a reflection of their ability and drive to progress. The squad that formed the basis of the 2nd XI played good quality soccer throughout the term and victories against Bromsgrove, Oakham, Uppingham and Stowe indicated that they could 'soak up the pressure' and then counter-attack very effectively. In Norman Ye and Sam Radford the team had two genuinely skilful and quick players who often caused the opposition plenty of problems.

The cool and calm nature of captain Oli Branston, with Alex Roberts, Will Gower, Daniel Chow and at times Will Chaumet in the back four patrolling effectively, and the midfield combinations of Freddie Clayton, Ugonna Agwgo, Jasper Kraamer, Jeremy Yu, John Elliot and Rory Ferguson, gave us the opportunity to dictate many of the games. Philip Ndegwa and Tom Short's ability to cross the ball with accuracy was often the decisive aspect of close games, and with the varied attacking

combinations of Archie Cade, Norman Ye, Sam Radford and Freddie Clayton up front, we regularly benefited from this type of wide service. Under Mr Shepherd's philosophy of 'positive soccer' and the adoption of attacking wing-back style of play, the vast majority of our goals came from using width effectively. Norman Ye and Sam Radford were often the beneficiaries and helped themselves to a number of goals in this way.

There were some memorable moments. A tight game against Bedford saw us go two goals up, but a careless error just before half time let them back into the game and a 'last gasp' shot-cum-cross was deflected on to the post and into the net, seeing Bedford obtain a lucky couple of points. The effectiveness of Ye and Radford saw them catch a brace each against Uppingham and strong defence from the back four negated Uppingham's attacks so that we deserved the victory. The 1-1 draw against Princethorpe College possibly saw a contender for goal of the season from Jeremy Yu, whose volley hit the top corner from outside the box.

The final game of the season- against Stowe- was a fitting one to conclude the season with a positive and convincing victory. Freddie Clayton scored two, including a well-taken penalty. Jacob Denness, who arrived in the middle of the season, saved a penalty to keep us in the game early on and his last-minute top-corner save to stop the opposition from scoring continued to thwart Stowe's attempts to get back into the game. In a great show of self-confidence, George Forsdyke, in the last two minutes of the game, took himself from defence up into the penalty box and scored the winning goal, marking in a fine way both his final game for the 2nd XI and the season as a whole!

In conclusion, our thanks go to the regular parental support team that was present on the touchline in all weathers for all the team's home and away matches.

LS/TMW/FHA

U16A

P8 W2 D0 L6

The U16As endured a tough season. The campaign started with an unlucky 1-0 defeat to Wellingborough. There were many positives from this game and the team went into the next fixture, against Bromsgrove, filled with confidence; but they were met by a well-drilled and skilful side who exposed the weaknesses of the team and scored eight goals. A succession of losses at Oakham, Oundle and Bedford followed, although strikers Jack Cross



and Archie Gibbs began to find the target. Finally, in March, midfielder James Miller bagged two goals against Uppingham, having threatened in every match so far. Further goals from captain Chris Hutchinson and left-back Maelon Buckland sealed the first win of the season. Although the team's winning form came late, it was carried through with Archie Gibbs scoring a hat-trick in a 4-0 victory over Stowe to end the season on a high. Player of the Season was Jack Cross, Most Improved Freddie Leach and the Golden Boot Archie Gibbs.

BJW

U16B

P8 W2 D0 L6

If I were to write about the U16B's season, which saw three defeats – 6-0 (Bromsgrove), 5-1 (Oakham), and 5-1 (Oundle) – conceding 16 goals and scoring only two, and emphasised the team's strong team spirit, you might look askance at the report and wonder whether a slightly spurious feel-good sentimentality was hiding a frankly dismal sequence of results.

The U16B team's team spirit was impressive, however, as, in the face of superior opposition, they manfully kept striving to produce their best and showed stoical resilience in the face of adversity. Harry Johnson-Hill, replacing the injured Joey Moss after the first match, was a brave, agile goalkeeper, who made some excellent saves: he radiated energy and has talent. The defenders were Karl Desselberger, Alex Ludwick, Guy Wilson, Angus Strachan (capt.), Hasnain Khan, and the irrepressible Henry Elmhirst, who was a mercurial presence at centre-back, sometimes producing fabulous clearances, but, at other times, allowing lack of concentration to get the better of him. Strachan scored the most stunning own goal, a perfect strike from the edge of his own penalty box, that I have seen in 25 years of running school football teams. The midfield consisted of the livewire Ming Pok Ng, the energetic Henry Gurney, the Luka Modric look-alike and fleet-footed Hugo Hunt. The strikers were the fast and guileful Aneel Stevens and William Spruce, who, when in the mood, made solid contributions.

The coaches, Mr Chessell, Mr Swain, and myself, very much enjoyed the training sessions and matches with this good-humoured team, who were full of endeavour.

JOS



The boys' team, consisting of Ed Greig (K), Alexey Rovner (K), Freddie Whitelaw (W), Theo Matthews (T) and Pranay Kantaria (M), made light work of their first two opponents without losing a set, setting up a decisive match vs Magdalen College School to win the group. MCS were however just too strong in the end, placing the boys in the top four.

Half the team left for the train back to Rugby whilst Alexey, Aya, Ed and Alice had to regroup after their disappointments. They got through their first fixture against Framlingham with relative ease (4-0), knowing the strong opposition (Eastbourne and Bradfield) were up the next day. The team were neck and neck against Eastbourne throughout, which inevitably went to two matches all, sending the fixture to a decisive tiebreak shoot-out (first to 10 points). Aya and Ed were selected to play. After initially going down 7-4, they fought hard under the spotlight of spectators in the arena to claw it back 10-8. After the emotions of the Eastbourne fixture, the team still had to beat a strong Bradfield side half an hour later. Having found their form, the team started to play with some confidence, brushing past Bradfield 4-0 and setting up a final with Wakefield, whom they then beat 4-0. The mixed trophy returns to Rugby after three years and is the third national trophy Rugby has won in five years.

TENNIS

National Junior Championships

Pupils had been competing for a place in the Senior Student Finals (Ratings limited) - one of three national events for school tennis. With the juniors earning a top 12 finish before Christmas, it was the seniors' turn in the National Senior Student Competition (Years 11-13). For the first time in Rugby School history, we qualified for all three finals (Boys, Girls and Mixed): a great achievement and the only school in the country to do so!

The teams travelled up on Thursday evening to get a feel for the arena and a late-night practice before the long weekend began.

The girls started their campaign (Alice Taylor (St), Rosanna Brockbank (RB), Jika Nyirenda (B), May-Ling Turner (S), Aya Mekushina (G)) against Strathallan, a team we knew we had to beat. With all four singles up for grabs, we only took two of them, which meant it came down to both doubles. Unfortunately, nerves got the better of them and we went down 4-2. The girls went on to win their last two group matches 4-0 with Strathallan winning the group and tournament. It was a real disappointment for all the girls but a great achievement to be in the top four schools.



Summer Season

After the success of the winter months, the boys and girls went into the summer season with lots of confidence. A short but busy schedule of matches to come, with Rugby fielding ten senior girls' teams, six junior girls' teams, four junior boys' teams and six senior boys' teams. It was fantastic to see over 26 teams competing most weekends.

Senior Girls' Tennis

P6 W6 L0

This was another highly successful season for the VI girls. For the second year in a row, they finished the season unbeaten in school fixtures. In the early part of the season they put in convincing victories against Oundle, Uppingham and St Edward's and, even when the public exam season began to bite and the full team was not available, they were still able to clock up victories against Cheltenham and Oakham.

We say goodbye to Aya Mekushina and Jika Nyirenda, who have been real ambassadors for girls' tennis over their five years, playing in the VI since the E Block. Both have shown real



commitment and skill and we will miss them next year. However, the core of the team, Rosanna Brockbank, Flora de Boinville and Alice Taylor, remain alongside some good junior talent, so we are hopeful that the girls' success will continue.

Senior Boys' Tennis

P8 W8 L0

Once more the boys finished the regular season unbeaten, losing just ten matches out of 62 against Uppingham, Radley, Eton, Oundle, Abingdon, Warwick, Bedford and Magdalen College School. The boys' team consisted of Alexey Rovner(K), Ed Greig(K), Freddie Whitelaw (W), Albert Sitwell (Sh), George Whitelaw(W), Pete Colbourne (T) and Freddie Middleton (SH).

National Independent Schools

Our pupils revel in the opportunity to compete in this tournament, not only because it is a great team trip, but also because it gives them the opportunity to compete against the very best players in the country, including junior Wimbledon players. With 75 schools and over 500 pupils competing over four days on 55 courts, it is a true national representation of the sport. All pupils performed well, and admirably in the 33 degree heat, with the top performances coming from the girls, where both pairs finished in the top 16. George and Albert were one of the top pairs in the competition but had the slight misfortune of drawing top seed Reeds in the last 16. The junior pairs had some great wins against some academy schools but struggled in the blazing heat and after playing five sets in one day were suffering from exhaustion, heat stroke and eventually injury.

The team consisted of: Senior girls: Alice Taylor (St), Flora de Boinville (RB), Rosanna Brockbank (RB) and May-Ling Turner (S). Junior Girls: Harriet Anthony (B), Jemima Barlow (Tu), Izzy Colbourne (S) and Millie Turner (RB). Junior Boys: Albert Sitwell (Sh), George Whitelaw (W), Lucas Killick (Sh) and Raphe Shelton (W). Senior boys: Pranay Kantaria (M), Douglas Ralston (T), Ollie Mourant (M), Freddie Middleton (SH) and Pete Colbourne (T).

15A Boys

P8 W7 L1

The 15s boys (Pranay Kantaria, Pete Colbourne, Alexey Rovner, Freddie Middleton, Albert Sitwell) won the county stages comfortably, beating Warwick, Kenilworth and Princethorpe, then progressing to the regional rounds by beating a strong King Edward's School Birmingham 4-2 and thus setting up a trip to Tipton for the regional finals. The boys did brilliantly well, finishing top 16 in the country and emulating the girls' success three years previously.

JT/KH

National Tennis Championships

For the first time in several decades, Rugby School qualified for the National Tennis Championships: it was an achievement in itself to be regarded as one of the top 16 schools in the country. Rugby School was, moreover, one of the few schools to have both boys' and girls' teams qualify for the competition.

The girls started with an incredibly tough first round match against tennis specialists, Queenswood. They were comprehensively beaten. On day two, the girls then faced off against South Hunsley, only to lose in an agonising match tie-break. After losing on day three, the girls picked themselves up well to see off RGS Newcastle.

The boys were also handed a brutal first round draw in the shape of Reed's School, who had Junior Wimbledon players at their disposal. After defeat, the boys then had a gruelling encounter against Leicester Grammar, being narrowly beaten 4-2 in a tie that could have gone either way. Another tough match followed against Sevenoaks before, like the girls, we met RGS Newcastle, coming out on top.

The girls' team was made up of Alice Taylor (St), Jika Nyirenda(B), Rosanna Brockbank (RB), May-Ling Turner(S), Harriet Anthony (B) and Sophia Middleton(Tu). The boys' side consisted of Alexey Rovner(K), Ed Greig(K), Albert Sitwell(Sh), George Whitelaw(W) and Freddie Middleton(SH).



ATHLETICS

The athletics squad enjoyed some competitive fixtures this year, with a number of individual event victories and outstanding performances. This can be reinforced by mentioning that 18 members of the athletics team competed in the Warwickshire County Championships, and seven of these went on to represent Warwickshire in the prestigious Mason Trophy Inter-County Event. Congratulations to those selected: Henry Woodward, Dara Falope, Leia Gonzalez-Lee, Lucy McNee, Oli Nilsson, Sam Chalmers, and Livi Williams.

Other notable performances include the U16 squads for boys and girls, who both progressed into the Regional Round of the ESAA Track & Field Cup. This is the second round of the national competition. Furthermore, a special mention should go to the girls involved in the Achilles Relays who managed to win the Senior Girls' Hurdles Relay event - a prestigious fixture which features many of the top-flight schools for athletics. Athletics colours were awarded to Theo Rodney, Jeremy Weru, Angahard Wylie and Anousha Salehi.

BADMINTON

Boys: P13 W8 D0 L4
Girls: P5 W4 D0 L1
Mixed: P23 W14 D1 L8

The Badminton team had a very successful season covering both the Advent and Lent Terms, ending with a resounding victory over Stowe in the last match of the year. Other notable wins included return matches against Repton and Oundle as well as St Edward's Oxford, a new fixture this year. The loss of Joel Haines (K) for a number of weeks following a dislocated

shoulder in the first match of the season against Uppingham was unfortunate, but the rest of the team rallied round with the result that the Boys' VI captained by Theo Matthews (T) played 13 matches, winning eight and losing four, while the Girls' VI captained by Anna Faynshteyn (St) were a touch more successful, playing five and losing only to Bromsgrove early on in the season. A number of our competitor schools have moved to a hybrid format whereby the teams play a mixture of singles, level doubles and mixed doubles. This has enabled our best players to enjoy some singles play and highlighted Jane Mak (B) as a talented player and someone to watch out for in future.

This year a number of long-standing players will leave the School. For the boys, Julian Fung (K), Joel Haines (K), Patrick Clifford (K) and Theo Matthews (T) have all been playing since the D Block, while for the girls Anna Faynshteyn (St), Yammi Yip (G), Joy Yu (G), Inaara Weiss (D) and Rachel Stevens (G) have been stalwarts of the Girls' and Mixed teams over the past couple of years. Their departure means that we will need to recruit some new players to join Henry Lushington (T), Emir Tataroglu (C), Louis Malin (K), Stefan Palade (T), Jacob Bunting-Relph (T), Rohan Jain (K), Jane Mak (B) and Riya Jain (D), all of whom have represented the School over the year and will form the basis of next year's team.

Regrettably our coach George Tarver left during the year, but we were delighted to welcome Matt Hanson (a former England Junior player, Junior Performance Coach for Badminton England and Badminton Programme Co-ordinator at Loughborough University) as his replacement. Under Matt's guidance we are confident that the badminton teams will continue to thrive and enjoy success. This year also saw Dr Morse step down as Master i/c Badminton, a role that he has held for 20 years. Dr Morse will, however, along with Mrs Outhwaite, continue to assist with the teams next season.

NJM

CROSS-COUNTRY RUNNING

In cross-country Rugby School again displayed particular strength on the girls' side, fielding two teams at most events. The strength of the team was such that the A team won bronze overall in the East Midlands Independent Cross-Country League. Well done in particular to Catherine Marlow, Annie Mangan, Pip Crowhurst and Lauren Duke, led by their captain Angahard Wylie, for contributing to their team's success over at least three of the fixtures. The girls also displayed good strength in depth at the King Henry VIII relays with both the A and B teams finishing inside the top 20.

Rugby School was also represented well by Harri Ogilvie, Santiago Bobone Mendia De Castro, Tom Capewell-Salisbury, Charlie Thomson and Sam Ribeyron, led by captain Lawrence Reynolds. Special mention goes to Harri and Santiago who came first and second for Rugby at every fixture, finishing well inside the top half of a competitive field of runners.

On the county front, Clover de Jonge, Livi Williams and Gigi Woodward were all selected to represent Warwickshire at the prestigious English Schools National Cross-Country competition.

In the Timed Run House Competition, Town narrowly beat Rupert Brooke and Whitelaw, finishing only two points ahead in the Lent Term. Southfield just pipped Town to the House win in Advent and Whitelaw won convincingly in the Trinity Term. Special mention goes to Clover de Jonge who claimed record times on both the summer (running 15:28 on the old House Cross-Country Course) and winter (running 13:33 for four laps of The Close) courses, which is particularly impressive with The Timed Run now into its seventh year.

In the House Running Cup, Town did particularly well in winning both the Junior and Senior events and won overall in the boys' competition (School Field won the Inter event). Southfield were particularly impressive in winning all three age category events as well as the overall competition. Rupert Brooke were impressive



on a House involvement front as they won the representation standings with 98% participation of the whole House.

As ever, The Crick and Barby Runs were well represented, making this event one of the biggest in the School calendar. There were 290 runners altogether and there was a good spread of representation across all Houses. The day Houses again demonstrated their dominance in the team competition with both Town and Southfield winning (with the lowest total of their top three runners' positions in each of the Crick and Barby runs). Congratulations to the overall winners Wilf de la Hey and Issy Turner in The Crick and Sam Chalmers and Alice Jackson (Alice recorded a fantastic time of 46:14, placing third overall and less than two minutes behind Sam) in The Barby. Special mention goes to staff member Hettie Burrows who claimed a course record for the OR ladies, finishing The Crick in 1:08:44, only three-quarters of a minute behind the overall winner Chris Prince (OR) who won in 1:07:59. Furthermore there was a hugely impressive number of 40 staff who ran 'for fun', which is nine more than the previous highest number of staff who ran in the 2017 event.

AJS



FIVES

The 18/19 season was once again a little disappointing, especially in terms of tournament entry and success. However, the courts remained very busy and many players developed their games rapidly. The biggest disappointment came with both boys and girls being unavailable for the key matches or competitions and not fully realising their potential at the tournaments that were attended.

The four highlights of the year were well spread and three of them involved adult or OR participation. The annual match against the ORs was reinstated and for the first time there was a splendid mix of young and old ORs who returned. George Terry and Marcus Kerr from the new court era more than held their own in the company of the old court greats. The evening became an opportunity for the ORs to get some quality game time on the courts and it was followed by a splendid pizza super. Earlier in the season George Terry was also kind enough to partner Freya Harrison at the Lady's Cup and they proved a very competitive pairing, eventually having to settle for third place victory and thus the Plate. Derby Moor adults also came to play with and coach the 1st IV and as ever this was a hugely enjoyable and constructive evening. At the Midlands tournament the Rugby teams were very competitive at both U15 and U18 level, but unfortunately the invitation to Sedbergh to participate in the Midlands rather spoilt the party and Rugby boys had to settle for second places. The best performance came from club captain, Jacob Drabble; he reached the finals of the U18 singles only to find that a very sharp increase in the standard was required for victory! At the same tournament Xav Christopher and Tom Sloan won the U18 doubles plate as did Max Molloy in the U15 singles.

Special mention must go to both Freya Harrison and Jacob Drabble who have been fine servants of the game at Rugby for the last four years. They are both very able players but perhaps

did not have quite enough internal competition to push them to the very highest standards. Tom Sloan and Sam Stoddard have also been great supporters of the game and both have developed very well in their final year at School. There is less obvious talent emerging from the lower years and on several occasions younger players have not made themselves available for tournaments. A change is needed in organisation and it is hoped that the courts will get even more use next year as Fives becomes part of the games options for the senior pupils.

TMW

POLO

The polo teams have gone from strength to strength and represented the School at the SUPA National Senior Schools Arena Championships. Captain Isla Sandeman (S), Alice Broadbent (S) and Harrison Davies (C) won the Tier 3 competition, winning all three matches and scoring maximum points. Captain Amin Fazal (SF), James Holland (SHF) and Jack Fossick (K) won the Tier 2 competition. Congratulations to Toby Bradshaw (M) who played in a select team in the Tier 1 competition and came second after a nail-biting final that saw Toby score all of the goals for his team. The girls' team played in the SUPA national arena championships and won the beginners' section.

We also entered the SUPA national outdoor championships. Our A team won the Intermediate division, having not lost a game, and our B team came second in the B team. We were also awarded a Bronze medal in the Copenhagen cup after beating Millfield. A fantastic performance by Fred Thame (SF) and Toby Bradshaw (M) helped secure our position.

DLS



RACKETS

We had another enjoyable season with so many seniors of good quality to pick. The following seniors all played matches: Noah Martle, Will Gardener, Wilf De La Hey, Hugh Oliver, George Langran, Peter Colbourne, Freddie Middleton and Charlie Bruce-Jones. The first pair quickly settled as Martle and Colbourne who won over half their matches with the greatest achievement being a double over Radley. At junior level the strongest year group were the E Block with Albert Sitwell, Fred Thame and Jacob Bethell all showing promise and winning nearly all their matches. Sitwell gained valuable experience for next year by playing three first pair matches. In the D Block both Harry Seagon and Will Vaughan made good progress and will be competing for places next year.

At Queens, there were two highlights. Peter Colbourne won the Renney cup, twice playing the day after playing for the XV and narrowly beating the Harrow number one player in the semi-final before winning the final with a bit to spare. Albert Sitwell had a great run to the U15 semi-final, showing enough in the process to suggest he could go further in the future.

One purpose of those who run school sport is to encourage participation when students leave. There are now wonderful opportunities for our best players. A long line of Rugbeians have gained fellowships in the USA which give them three months of work and play experience. Will Hardman, last year's captain, after touring with the ORs, had this opportunity in Chicago. Noah Martle and Will Gardener follow this year, also to Chicago, and we wish them luck. The OR tour went to Chicago, Detroit, Philadelphia and Montreal and our current senior players can look out for a repeat in three years.

Girls' rackets is developing fast at many schools and our next aim is to encourage more to play who are not just introduced to the game by their brothers. There are a number entering the School next year who have already expressed an interest so we look forward to seeing girls' rackets develop.

PJR

SAILING

The 1st Sailing Team, consisting of captain Julian Fung (K), Rory Odell (T), Sarah Bibby (RB), Will Jacklin (M), Olivia Jacklin (G) and Lucas Marshall (W), have had another great year, going undefeated in all matches against other schools for the third year in a row. They also won the Midlands Regional Championships for the first time in the School's history and retained the title of Eastern Regional Champions for the third year in a row, the first school ever in the tournament's history to do so. The highlight of the season, however, has to have been the Youth Nationals, a two-day event which saw more than 40 teams from all across Britain competing for the title. Winning the round robin stage with straight wins, our team went on to win the semi-finals 2-0 before beating defending champions Sevenoaks in a very close final 2-1. This made them National Champions, a first in Rugby School's history and a fantastic achievement. Most of the 1st team leave for university this year and they will be a big loss, but it is exciting that there are a number of young sailors keen to be taking on their mantle, so the future looks bright for Rugby sailing.

Julian Fung (K)

SHOOTING

The clay pigeon shooting teams had success at two major competitions. Max Broad (VC) was high gun at the Marlborough Challenge where the A team came second. Ben Harris (Capt) did a magnificent job keeping everyone focussed. We had our first competition vs. Cheltenham at home and narrowly came second. Shooting against one of the best teams on the circuit is giving younger members of the club valuable competition experience for the future. The A team won Harrow School's Fido May trophy at the Churchill shooting ground. We finished the year with a Parent and Child competition. The winners were Ben Harris and his dad - a fitting end to his two-year role as captain.

MAT

RUGBY SEVENS

P21 W14 D0 L7

The Rugby Sevens season culminated successfully in the Rosslyn Park National Schools 7s tournament for the U14, U16 and 1st VII squads. The performance of all three squads was perhaps the strongest in recent history. The U14 squad won all their group matches, which put them through to the knock-out stages the following day. They eventually progressed to the quarter-finals of the plate competition, but unfortunately narrowly lost out to a strong Finborough School team. The U16 squad produced some creditable performances in a very tough group. The squad beat a good Kirkham Grammar team and narrowly lost to Bedford School who progressed well in the overall tournament.

The highlight of the Rosslyn Park sevens was undoubtedly the U18 squad. The 1st team squad produced some fantastic free-flowing Rugby sevens, breezed through the group and progressed through to the knock-out rounds on the second day of the tournament after beating RGS Newcastle who had had a very strong season. The squad achieved two comfortable wins in their knock-out games against Wimbledon College and RGS Guildford, which saw them through to the semi-final group stages. They had to face two very tough teams in the semi-final stages: Epsom College, tournament favourites, and Merchiston Castle from Scotland. Rugby produced a fantastic performance to win a scintillating match against Epsom 14-7, then beat the Scots 15-12, and so progressed to their first final since 1947. Unfortunately, the final did not go our way, but second in a tournament containing over 180 schools is a fantastic achievement for all the boys.

Furthermore, over the Easter break Ben Muncaster played in the Six Nations competition for Scotland U18s in three fixtures. Ben scored two tries in his final appearance vs Ireland, and was selected by his peers to be player of the tournament for Scotland.

Additionally, Emeka Ilione and Rob Hardwick have been selected for an England U17 squad to tour South Africa in the coming months. Congratulations to both.

MAB

E BLOCK BOYS' HOCKEY TOUR

In October half-term 21 E Block boys visited the Basque region of northern Spain and southern France to play three matches, train on water-based astroturf and enjoy excursions in the sun including surfing, playing the sport of pelota and pintxos (Basque tapas) tasting.

The standard of opposition was high. Straight off the plane in Bordeaux, we played a French representative team and, despite two excellent goals from Lochie Bruneau, suffered a heavy defeat. However, it was clear what needed working on and the biggest positive of the tour from a sports point of view was how coachable the boys were: their response in the next two games was fantastic. The second game ended in a 7-2 defeat against an excellent Club Jolaseta from Bilbao, despite the heroic efforts of goalkeepers Dino Gallone, and the final game ended in a morale-boosting and thoroughly deserved 12-1 win over Club Atletico San Sebastian with Dickon Collins and

George Whitelaw earning themselves joint 'man of the match'; and there was a hat trick for Ethan La Porta.

Many of the boys pushed themselves into contention for a place in the A team in January and, considering we rotated 21 boys in each game, it was encouraging to see how much strength in depth there is in this year group for hockey. We aimed to treat the boys on tour like elite sportsmen and, along with the training, they were educated in nutrition, training habits and sports psychology. They responded fantastically and were a pleasure to take away. Massive thanks to Mr Dhanda, Mr Ling and Mr Tester for their contributions to what was a hugely productive and worthwhile tour.

JMS

BARBADOS CRICKET TOUR DECEMBER 2018

A very excited touring party set off for Barbados, looking forward to the prospect of six competitive cricket fixtures on an island steeped in great West Indian cricketing history. A tour of the famous Kensington Oval, Bridgetown after an incredible Catamaran cruise got all tourists well in to the calypso Caribbean spirit.

The first match against Grantley Adams was a spin fest with Matty Coe (T) and Will Dudley (SF) both taking masterly control with the ball. Both Rugbeians with match figures of 3 for 15 restricted a spirited opposition to 118. Alex Parker (W) and Harry Seagon (SH) claimed the other wickets. Archie Gibbs (W) started his tour in fine form with a controlled 45* and along with the 2019 captain Ross Warwood (Sh) steered Rugby home to a 9 - wicket victory.

The Dover Beach hotel situated right on the south coast of the island provided the perfect respite for the team. The early morning swim team of Watson, Parker and Dudley did not miss a sunrise and made use of the swimming opportunities in a superb location. The Crick Mechanics were blown away by the Swing Trio of Marcus Richards (W), Will Gardener (M) and Harry Seagon (SH) who took 8 wickets for 40 runs between them. Gibbs, Warwood and Richards then secured a second victory in as many days on what was a sporting pitch. The early finish provided the team with another opportunity to enjoy the local cricketing history with a trip to Franklyn Stephenson's academy for a practice with their local cricketing talent. Jacob Bethell (W), a product of Franklyn's academy, joined the team and demonstrated his Caribbean talents in a late afternoon practice led by Mr Tester. A day off to enjoy a tour of the island was a real treat. Mr and Mrs Gardener hosted a wonderful evening on the west coast, where the team enjoyed an incredible local spread and were well watered and brilliantly hosted in idyllic surroundings.

The third match of the tour was switched very late on as the local herd and ground staff didn't quite meet the expectations of the visiting 1st team coach, Mr Tester. A wonderful setting saw a brilliant game of cricket against Alleyne School. A

competitive score of 172 in 35 overs was set by the hosts, while George Langran (Sh) taking an excellent 4 for 18 from his seven overs kept Alleyne at bay. Captain of the day Hugh Ogle (M) then gave his father and top tourist John Ogle a wonderful birthday present by hitting a fantastic 91 off 94 deliveries to lead the side home with just two balls to spare. The young Paddy Powell-Capper (K) and Will Gardener, both contributing 21 runs apiece gave Rugby a 5 wicket victory. A very pleasant evening at the venue and a trip with top host Graham Bethell ended an excellent day's cricket at the beach house on the east coast. Top tourist Muncaster (Sh) made sure of captain of the day and man of the match Ogle toasted his brilliant performance. The team celebrated together with their loyal travelling Rugbeian support at an amazing setting overlooking the Atlantic Ocean to round off a wonderful day for all. The individual performance of the tour came in the fourth match at the Empire Cricket Club against a good local club side. Rugby, batting, first watched young D Blocker Archie Gibbs (W) amass a superb 155 off only 116 deliveries. Along with Will Gardener (M), Archie led Rugby to a match-winning total of 251 in their 35 overs. An excellent 5 wicket haul by George Langran (Sh) then restricted Empire to 188 all out, Rugby taking a thoroughly well-deserved victory by 63 runs.

The tour culminated with a return to Isolation Cavaliers and to Empire Cricket Club. Archie Gibbs continued his brilliant tour form with a 35* in the penultimate game. Alex Parker (W) finished his tour with the unusual bowling figures of 1 for 0 off one ball before hobbling off the field. George Langran (Sh) finished with excellent figures of 4 for 37 off his 7 overs taking his tour tally to 14 wicket off just 28 overs. Archie Gibbs won the batting award for the tour with 258 runs in just 6 innings at a strike rate of over 110. Although the final match ended in defeat to Passage United, the Rugby touring team enjoyed an excellent tour to Barbados. A huge thank you to Mr Tester, Mr Thomson, Mr Robinson and Mr Dhanda (top holidaymaker) for making the tour so enjoyable for all concerned.

MJP



U14/U15 DUBAI CRICKET TOUR 2018

Why do school teams tour? Is it simply to have a holiday with your friends where you create even more bonds and relationships than you already had? Is it to understand the cultural aspects of another country and how they live their daily lives? Or is it to hone your skills individually as a cricketer in order to give yourself a higher chance of being successful? Maybe it could be to develop a tactical system in order to prepare for the system.

For the U15 and U14 cricket squads it was, in fact, an amalgamation of all the factors mentioned above. As the flights grounded in Dubai, it was immediately obvious that the Arch trophy and plate competitions that we were entered would test the players both physically and mentally, and the heat of the Emirate climate was the first challenge. The touring party arrived at the hotel to be greeted with facilities that would counter this: the swimming pools, spacious suites and the wonderful food and hospitality allowed the squads adequate and high-quality rest time. Indeed, this was supplemented by a yacht trip around Dubai and other visits to differing places of interest. Several of the U15s found the local golf courses and Mr Powell even challenged his fear of fast rides in a trip to Ferrari World, as Ethan La Porta (T) and Eddie King (T) took him on to the fastest rollercoaster in the world.

This challenge of Mr Powell's was countered by the fantastic challenges that awaited the touring party in what was the main focus of the time away – the cricket tournaments. The Arch Trophy has now become an established fixture in the cricket calendar for some of the country's finest cricket-playing schools, and this year the standard was even higher. Challenge is crucial for any person's development and, whereas Mr Powell, through years of practice, would have been entirely at home on the pitch, he found the jump from 0-60mph in four seconds hard work. The players were on tour to try to get a little bit closer to being as comfortable in these cricket conditions as they would be on a rollercoaster.

The plate team were the epitome of rising to these challenges. After the first match, where Lachie Bruneau (S) top scored with 42, and the second game, where the top score dropped to 34 (from Alex Cartwright (K), who should be applauded for his obduracy at the crease), the gauntlet was laid down to the team to bat for the full 40 overs in order to create a strong base and score. And how Luca Cinquini-Steele responded! Captaining the side, he opened the batting against Skinners School to lead his team to an innings score of 352. This was a huge improvement, and, whilst he was ably supported by Praan Moodley (T) and

Jack Paybody (C), his score of 163 was rightly lauded by the touring party as a testament to the hours of practice he had put in over the winter months.

The linear relationship between practice and performance has been widely documented in differing pieces of writing over the years. Luca's perseverance over the winter in challenging himself to hone his skills has seen his development rise and rise. The performance improvements in cricket are so measurable that this innings can easily be related to the number of Tuesdays and Thursdays spent in the nets over the winter. And this is why touring is so important. The time spent with the players is so focused that one can gain these measures so much more quickly than in a term. The Plate team exhibited so many of these gains. Maybe, then, Mr Powell needs to drive more fast cars?

On to the Arch Trophy competition. This is a high-quality competition and, once again, the challenges became more and more comfortable during the tour. Dom Ritchie, having scored a strong 42 in the Plate team, pushed himself out of his comfort zone, and, in the final match of the tour for the cup team, scored a superb 50 in contributing to a strong win for the side. The winning and losing, of course, wasn't important, as the development of the players, both as cricketers and players, was of the foremost concern in this tour. Indeed, the understanding of how to help each other on and off the pitch also got better and better, and the slogan "be a good bloke" was consistently used in everything that the players and staff did in terms of interaction with each other. Jacob Bethell's (W) captaincy and leadership of the team was important here, and his work in helping the players with less experience through games, coupled with the runs and wickets they took, was pleasing to see. Eddie King's keeping and batting, and the bowling of Freddie Fowler (SF) in the final match, exciting. Indeed, every player in the squad contributed at some point on the tour.

The concept of positive contributions on a tour is the key thing. We didn't win any trophies, and we didn't play cricket like we would later in the season, but we set the foundations for a group of young cricketers that will continue to represent Rugby School with aplomb over the coming years. The future is bright, and this tour has given wings to so many cricketers in F and E Block over the years. Well done to all involved, staff, players, and to the tour company. We all develop together, and accept the challenges whenever they may arise.

NT



Adrian Bradbury (1991)

Adrian Bradbury started his Rugby School career on one day a week in 1991 introducing Photography at A level, and by 2000 had 99 students across the LXX and XX studying photography at A level. He was appointed full time and joined Whitelaw House as a tutor under Malcolm Burns, and all this after a career as a professional photographer in London, working in fashion and advertising. Whilst at Rugby, Adrian found the time to spend four years working as a Lecturer on the Photography degree course at the then Falmouth College of Art, as well as in his London studio. Adrian also established Graphics at A level at Rugby and was a highly successful “hands-on” Head of Department whose students trusted his practical professionalism. He was also a very popular Tutor in Southfield latterly and it’s been good to catch up with Adrian over the years at our Tutors’ suppers over a curry and a beer! As well as his aesthetic pursuits, Adrian is a mad keen, self-taught guitarist and a founder member of the staff band, Rockage, and of Blue Note with Nigel Beavan. Alison tells me that it is one of Adrian’s regrets that he did not play in more bands over his life time but she also let slip that Adrian used to be a DJ back in their student days! Adrian also loves Alfa Romeos and is never happier than when spending a race day at Silverstone with other aficionados. He has competed very successfully in a very modified Alfa Romeo in the Southern area Sprint Championships and has owned 17 Alfas over the years. Three years ago, Adrian made the decision to teach part-time and concentrate on his own work. He and Alison have now bought a house in Wales and are looking forward to producing more art there and Adrian hopes he will be able to mount his own exhibitions in galleries around the country. He has already established a link with a Swedish design company (no, not that one!) and so you may even be able to purchase some of Adrian’s work

in John Lewis in the future. So, Adrian is gone, but never forgotten, and maybe his next career will take him to newer and more commercial heights! We will miss your avuncular presence, your deep chuckle, and prodigious artistic talents. Good luck to you and Alison, and I hope the denizens of Ceredigion are ready to hear some Gilmour-esque riffs ringing out from your studio at all hours of the day and night!

LMB

Jane Higgins (2003)

I first met Jane or, as she was then known ‘Harry’, Higgins on the Thursday of my first week at Rugby. This was because I had been allocated to help staff the CCF. Those who know me will recognise that it wasn’t a posting that particularly played to my strengths. However, Jane’s nurturing and cheerful nature not only helped me to survive my brief foray into the world of the Armed Forces but also enormously helped me to settle into life at Rugby generally. There are few things that can be done to make night exercises in the Staffordshire countryside enjoyable, but somehow Jane always managed to put a smile on my face. It was this memory of Jane’s support that I returned to when I was looking for a new tutor in Rupert Brooke. If Jane could help me survive a year in the CCF, then she could certainly help the Rupert Brooke sixth-formers through their A levels! Even then, however, I could not foresee how much Jane’s presence would strengthen the Tutor team.

The girls who were lucky enough to have Jane as a Tutor received endless amounts of her time and patience. She brought her enormous careers experience to directing UCAS applications and personal statements; but she also brought huge amounts of empathy and warmth to support her charges in all aspects of their lives. The contribution Jane made to tutoring can best be demonstrated by one example from her first year as a Tutor. Faced with a tutee who was doubting her ability to climb the mountain to achieve her predicted grades, Jane urged her to believe that even the most ambitious of goals can be achieved if they are broken down into a series of small, gradual steps. To prove her point, Jane made a deal with her tutee that she, herself, would start

training and would, by the end of term, complete the 10.2 mile Crick Run. Three months later, Jane finished the Crick and six months later her tutee achieved her predicted grades. Few people would go so far to support their tutees. It is for this reason, and countless others, that we will miss Jane tremendously in Rupert Brooke. However, it is only right that her talents be shared and the Turn to Starboard charity, where she has gone to be Events and Fundraising Manager, will undoubtedly be strengthened by her arrival. It is a cause close to Jane’s heart as it seeks to support serving and former service personnel who have been affected by their service and who need help in moving forward with their lives. I can’t think of anyone better for the role! (KH)

KH has captured the essence of Jane Higgins’ contribution to Rugby School in the above piece. Jane believes in the ability of people to be resourceful and make progress, and she will work with tireless energy, huge empathy, genuine curiosity and, wherever possible, a (slightly mischievous) sense of humour to facilitate the attainment of their goals. She is always and rightly clear that empowerment plays a huge part in achievement, so her emphasis was fiercely on supporting responsibility. Such attributes made Jane an enormously effective employability and gap year adviser. Her biennial employability fairs were a genuine highlight of the school year, where students mixed with eminent and pre-eminent speakers in open forum, truly wrestling with the possibilities of well-planned or completely unexpected career pathways. Jane was able to call on a large and diverse network of contacts from the ‘real’ world, and she exercised a high degree of quality control over her speakers, so that these fairs became moments of real discovery, excitement, and inspiration for the large numbers of students and parents who were able to participate.

This raises a further significant aspect of Jane’s contribution: she took on and grew very sizeable projects. Building the database for the myriad potential and actual university outcomes across each XX year group was one. It was a point d’honneur for her to do her utmost not to ask for help and to ensure that ‘products’ were delivered to the highest possible standard, that no stone was left unturned to prepare

for possible eventualities, and that she could deliver a smooth, high-value result for everyone involved. ‘Unflappable’ is another word that must be added to her long list of virtues: someone from her background had seen it all and could handle anything we might throw at her - though we did our best to provide some pretty steep challenges, all of which she handled with unstinting professionalism, energy and pride. I am delighted that she has found a new posting in her beloved Cornwall, which will give her new challenges at the same time as playing deeply to her core values of humanity, hard work and fun. In her quiet, modest way, she had a huge impact on a lot of people here, and she will do the same with Turn To Starboard. (JDM)

KH/JDM



Alison Bradbury (2006)

Having studied Photography at WSCAD (now known as UCA) Alison started her career as an assistant to one of the top fashion photographers of the time, Neil Kirk. In this role, during the early 1980s, she learned about the inner workings of the profession. This ranged from chasing down the most bizarre props to flying out to exotic locations for photoshoots required for the likes of *Vogue*. She experienced some unforgettable moments such as spending a week in Ireland with Bryan Ferry to shoot the album cover for Roxy Music’s *Avalon*. Her career allowed her to meet a diverse range of people from Margaret Thatcher to David Bowie.

In the next stage of her career, Alison went freelance as a fashion photographer and was one of only three female fashion photographers working in London at the time - testament to her photographic abilities and tenacity. Over the next 12 years, she worked for an impressive array of magazines including the *Sunday Times*, Italian *Vogue*, *Good Housekeeping* and *Cosmopolitan*. She shared a large studio in Clerkenwell with her husband, Adrian, where a healthy and enjoyable rivalry for commissions existed.

Alison then decided to take a career break after having her two children, until they were old enough to begin school. Now, both her children, Alistair and Jen, have secured successful positions in the world of graphic communication, reflecting the Bradburys’ creativity. Whilst raising her children, the creative industry saw the arrival of the digital age and Photoshop. Over the next few years, Alison embraced the new technology and began creating more personal work for herself and as a designer.

In 2006 she began working at Rugby and was asked to introduce her Photoshop expertise and skills to the F Block, a part-time position which then expanded to teaching Art to GCSE. Although she was a Photography specialist, Alison’s sense of creativity, her ingenuity and the high standards cultivated during her years in the photography industry meant that she flourished in this role, as did her students. Looking at her GCSE students’ sketchbooks, her positive influence and excellent teaching are plain to see in their attention to detail, the sense of refinement and the constant challenge to develop their ideas. She never settled for mediocre but encouraged her students to show off their full abilities. Her teaching commitments increased over the next eight years and she became full-time in 2014. Over this period she taught all year groups from Marshall House to XX Art, Graphics and, this last year, Photography.

Alison has been a Tutor in Southfield for many years and played a consistently supportive role with both Lizzie Beesley and her tutees. She has continued to use her photographic expertise to produce a fantastic legacy of life in Southfield through her photographic collages of House plays and musical events. This unique collection of memories will remain a treasured part of Southfield especially as the House moves into another era.

As a dear friend and colleague, Alison will be greatly missed in our Department. She has always been a supportive, kind and reassuring presence; her humour and quick wit are irreplaceable. She is now looking forward to having time for new adventures and developing her personal work in photography and printmaking in west Wales. We wish her and Adrian the very best in their new home - and may the healthy rivalry for commissions continue!

HK



John Hughes (2010)

Dr John Hughes came to Rugby to teach part-time in 2010 after he had just completed a stint of cover at Eton College as well as illustrious periods as Head of Physics at both King’s Canterbury and Berkhamsted School. He came to us highly recommended but it wasn’t until his arrival that we really began to understand how the word ‘legend’ really applied to John.

As soon as he arrived John’s great sense of humour and affinity with the students and his colleagues was in great evidence. He brought peace to the Physics Department when there was disharmony and plenty of good-humoured banter with anyone prepared to engage or indeed listen! He quickly and affectionately became known by the students he taught as ‘Gramps’ and walking with John around the school campus made you feel as though Rugby had its very own Mr Chips with shouts of ‘Hello Gramps’ from every direction. John lit up every room he entered and his enthusiasm and energy often put myself and other younger colleagues to shame!

John provided a voice of wisdom at times of crisis and was a constant source of support for both his teaching and non-teaching colleagues. I truly benefitted from John’s supportive, understanding and humorous approach alongside great integrity; he has always been my first port of call for advice and I will miss this alongside his cheery arrival in the department with his signature deerstalker hat!

John was an expert in teaching Physics and could cope admirably with the very brightest and weakest Physics student and brought joy to every group he taught. Nothing was ever too much trouble and John could always be guaranteed to come up trumps with resources and teaching ideas that worked, and shared his wisdom willingly with many young and new Physics teachers during his time in the department.

John has been an immensely popular member of the SCR, an outstanding Physics teacher and above all a much-

loved teacher of many past and present Rugbeians. At the age of 76 John has finally decided that he will pack in the chalk face after a truly dedicated career spanning half a century; a remarkable achievement even in the world of superlatives that is Rugby.

AGD



Omar Gardner (2014)

Omar arrived at Rugby (in a high-vis jacket) in September 2014 after working for PWC in London. He brought with him a range of ideas and skills, not least a knowledge of Microsoft Excel which proved invaluable when it came to writing reports.

There was never a dull Physics lesson with Omar at the helm. From Mr Gardner's particle party, to Mr Gardner's pre-exam buffet, and even to using flatulence in a crowded classroom as a model of entropy (observed by his Head of Department), Omar consistently challenged, engaged and inspired his students.

Despite Omar's complete lack of experience – and ability – on the rugby field, he leaves the School with an unparalleled record of success, losing only three games over his four-year tenure in charge of the mighty U14C team. Few practices involved a rugby ball, but the MiC cross-country was extremely grateful for the core content of Omar's sessions. When asked for the secret of his success, Omar replied, 'I'd frantically be on BBC Rugby trying to find out what on earth a scrum was.'

Omar became DHM of Rupert Brooke in September 2016, much to the delight of the RB girls. Unflappable in a crisis, his first duty night was sure to pass without incident. Three hours later, he was telephoning SMT while searching the garden with a torch for two LXX girls, only to find them chatting over herbal tea in the kitchen.

Omar also contributed regularly to the Duke of Edinburgh programme. Describing it as 'one big game', he would often radio in with 'confirmed kills' when spotting the students strolling about the Cotswolds. In the summer of 2017 Omar led an expedition to Madagascar, a remarkable feat that requires huge

amounts of organisation and four weeks of a teacher's valuable holiday.

All anecdotes aside, Omar is a truly outstanding Physics teacher and all-round schoolmaster. He contributed enormously to the School and is much loved by staff and pupils alike. Omar moved to King's College Auckland in January to fulfil his dream of teaching abroad and will be greatly missed.

SPR/AELT



Dan McLean (2015)

Dan joined Rugby School in 2015 and it is true to say that few members of staff could have packed in as much as Dan has during the last four years.

Dan joined as Head of Department (Philosophy and Theology) and introduced Religious Studies as a full GCSE and A level subject for the first time in many years. The Department has flourished under his leadership and the students have thrived under his tutelage in the classroom. From a small cohort of students in the sixth form, in the last two years, three students have been awarded places to read Theology and Religion at Oxford University.

Dan's schoolmastering has extended far beyond the classroom and he has thrown himself fully into the wider areas of school life. As Officer-in-Charge of the Corps of Drums, Dan founded the Corps and arranged its affiliation to the Grenadier Guards. The Corps of Drums has gone from strength to strength and a recent highlight was marching through the streets of London as part of the 450th celebrations of the foundation of Rugby School. In 2018, Dan was promoted to Contingent Commander and he has led the cadets with dedication and aplomb. His other roles in the School have been wholesome and eclectic, and have included Master-in-Charge of Polo, co-ordinator of the Sidgwick and Black Lamp Societies, Keeper of the F Block Academic Scholars, and Tutor in Stanley and Sheriff.

A strong theme running through his time at Rugby has been his consideration and compassion for others. Dan was instrumental in raising over £2,000 for

charities during his walk from Winchester to Canterbury and in motivating the boys to fundraise in House. His trips to North India to work with Tibetan refugees have been inspiring for those involved and only Dan could have arranged a 90-minute private audience with the Dalai Lama.

It is as Deputy Housemaster in Sheriff that Dan has truly excelled; his work in Sheriff has epitomised his views on the importance of educating the Whole Person. He has been a terrific Deputy and Tutor and will be sorely missed.

In his four years at Rugby, Dan has enriched the lives of students and staff alike and we thank him for the great commitment, energy, initiative and flair that he has demonstrated throughout. He will be an outstanding Housemaster at Downside School and we wish him every success in the future.

MAM



Amanda Parker-Jones (2015)

Amanda joined Rugby as a part-time teacher of Philosophy and Theology in 2015, having already been Deputy Head of a prep school and before that Head of Philosophy and Theology at Harrow. Since that moment her wide-ranging experience of both the classroom and examining have proved to be invaluable to her pupils. Having written the syllabus for one of our A level papers and the exam for another, Amanda has been able to provide the most wonderfully detailed and precise assistance to four years of Rugbybeian Philosophers and Theologians, not least since the reintroduction of A level Religious Studies three years ago. Three years spent guiding the School's Oxbridge candidates also gave Amanda further opportunity to mentor those aiming for those institutions. Several years ago she served for ten years as Head of Religious Studies at Harrow, and so her decision to move on to guide the development of the PGCE course at the University of Buckingham is something of a natural one, and one which will very much play to her considerable strengths.

DJM



Isaac Tipler (2016)

Isaac arrived at Rugby in 2016 following two years working as both a Maths teacher and KSS coordinator at Malcolm Arnold academy in Northampton, where he himself was a pupil. He was quick to become fully involved in the Department and has brought plenty of new ideas and resources, including his legendary 'crack the box' lessons, where pupils compete to break the code and win the chocolate locked away. Isaac has led many IT initiatives in the Department and he has been a champion of OneNote, helping some of the less tech-savvy of us along the way!

Isaac has always been generous with his time and a permanent fixture in Maths clinics over the years. In 2017 he became DHD and has worked incredibly hard, writing new Schemes of Work for the Middle School and taking on the unenviable challenge of 13+ Mathematics entry. He is not only an extremely talented mathematician but a considered and approachable member of the Department who has been a great support to me.

This year Isaac gave a lecture to 200 members of the F and E Blocks on the Maths of Christmas, answering the questions we have all been longing to ask, such as 'How can you be sure that everyone wins in a cracker pull?' and 'How can you predict the Queen's Christmas message?'. In his usual calm manner Isaac engaged a packed Macready Theatre so well that many pupils could be heard talking about the Maths on their way home. Isaac is passionate about Mathematics and the pupils in his classes are motivated by his enthusiastic and innovative approach. I have it on good authority that he has promised his D Block that they can come to his wedding should they all get the very top grades in both their IGCSE and their Further Maths GCSE in the summer!

Isaac has been a thorough and reliable Tutor to his Upper School tutees and they have enjoyed his care and consideration for them. As a Tutor in Southfield, he is approachable and has a genuine interest in the girls, ensuring that they make the best of their talents and are able to confront their difficulties and to move on through them.

Isaac is a fierce basketball player and can be credited with starting the first girls' basketball team at Rugby. Hearing explanations of squad tactics from the girls in Southfield convinces me of his quest for excellence on court! He has been heard in the SCR discussing at length the tactics he is currently using as a Premier League football manager; and during the World Cup last summer he was the go-to statistician on all the sides competing. He has had a tough few years as a Manchester United supporter, but we will keep our fingers crossed that things soon start to look up for him!

Isaac leaves us to become Head of Mathematics at Wootton Park School in Northampton. We shall miss his quiet humour and sensible mathematical perspective on all matters, and wish him luck in his new career and marriage to Gemma.

RJF



Mihai Marca (2017)

Mihai joined the Economics and Business Department aged 25. His welcome youth (relatively speaking) in my Department at that time, whilst somewhat disguised by a quizzical goatee, belied his great achievements. Not only had he helped students achieve record A level results at Pate's Grammar during the previous year, he had also completed a Master's degree in Behavioural and Economic Science at the University of Warwick.

Born in Romania and raised in Scotland, Mihai describes himself as a 'romantic new capitalist', preferring radical economic policies, whether they be interventionist or free market. This certainly proved to be the case during Mihai's interview lesson, where he established and perpetuated a wonderful discussion pitting nationalisation against privatisation whilst wearing traditional Romanian dress! Whilst he took an opposing stance to my own beliefs on this issue, he ensured that every specification point was fully and fairly explored, and I was incredibly impressed by his passion and his ability to stimulate, stretch and challenge his students.

During Mihai's relatively short tenure at Rugby, he has fully developed a wide range of teaching techniques, embracing Harkness, debate and student-centred learning. Famed for his engaging and lively lessons, his enthusiasm has been mirrored in the countless co-curricular societies that he has established. These have included Veblen Society, where students have been introduced to undergraduate-level Econometric theory and regression analysis using STATA, designed experiments (devising both hypotheses and questions to test those hypotheses) and undertaken several Distinction-worthy student research papers. Mihai has also been responsible for helping students establish 21Economics, a student-written website and magazine that dissects economic theory and garners genuine interest in current topics whilst also helping students to structure their arguments persuasively.

Tim Day, Housemaster, comments: 'Mihai's attentive work with his Upper School tutees in Michell House has been much appreciated. His diligent and incisive dialogues have assisted his charges to navigate their way through the UCAS process and public examinations successfully. Mihai's tutor group outings have been opulent affairs; his sweet tooth advertised itself most recently at the Italian ice cream café on the High Street. His status as a resident Tutor has enabled him to build a strong rapport with members of the House, and his wide-ranging collection of white ties has been admired at the breakfast table. His residency has not been without challenges, however, and he suffered an early trauma over the function of his washing machine. He has made his mark on Michell; the Thursday night bedtime routine will not be the same without him.'

Never one to conform, always pushing boundaries and exploring new territories, Mihai has shared his ideas, methods and individual ways of scrutinising the economic and business worlds with great effect amongst colleagues, students and tutees alike. As a force of nature, his time at Rugby will always be remembered as dynamic and incredibly impactful as he has truly captured the hearts and minds of his students.

Mihai leaves us to return to Romania in order to pursue his career and add exceptional value to his home nation's educational system beyond the classroom. We wish him every great success in this challenging next step, and thank him for the superb and genuine difference he has made to the lives of

each of his students and colleagues. He goes, as is said in Romania, 'A băga mâna în foc pentru cineva'. Which, loosely translated, means: 'To put my hand in the fire for somebody'. That is, I am delighted to vouch for this man.

CJF

William Murphy (2017)

Will returned to Rugby in 2017 having been a pupil here in Town House and completing his MSc at Oxford. Lizzie Beesley is ancient enough to have taught Will GCSE English in a magnificent top set who devoted their collective intellectual energies to 'red herrings' at every available opportunity. Will used to bring a ukulele to class, discuss darts, and sing lustily 'One Song To The Tune Of Another'. He performed magnificently and then went on to Lizzie's old college at Oxford, before seeing the light and sending himself to Bristol to read Maths. He is as a man, as he was as a teenager, delightful company, always smiling, clever, modest and with a Dorian Gray gene which is the envy of us all.

Not only a talented mathematician, Will also studied A level Spanish under the guidance of Colette O'Mahoney who recalls his great company on the exchange trip to Madrid and – a particular highlight – when the boys in her set pitted their culinary wits against the girls in a paella-making evening in Rupert Brooke. Her recollection is that the girls narrowly won, but it was a close contest.

Will settled in quickly as a member of the teaching staff and, despite not having a formal teaching qualification, quickly became a dab hand in the classroom. He is both giving of his time and passionate about Mathematics, wanting the very best for the pupils in his charge. He has become renowned for his weekly resources, providing his pupils with outstanding LaTeX-produced typed-up summary notes for their files.

Will has always been keen to integrate himself fully within the Department and when the Oxbridge programme needed an enthusiastic Mathematician to lead them through the Thinking Skills Assessment, which requires mathematical problem-solving, Will was typically quick to volunteer. Even at the start of the year he gave a lecture to 150 members of the LXX and XX on 'the secrets of cryptography', guiding us expertly through the changes in cryptographic techniques over the years. It was a thoroughly interesting lecture and taught plenty of staff a thing or two!

We can only imagine the disappointment on Will's face when told that he would not be tutoring in his former House. The trip down Barby Road to the otherwise dark confines of Kilbracken (suitably situated as far as possible away from his own accommodation), must have felt like crossing the floor and joining the enemy. Over the past two years he has oft been asked where his loyalties would lie in a Kilbracken v Town contest: he has always managed, successfully but diplomatically, to dodge the question. His service to the House and commitment to the boys, particularly of course his tutees, has been unstinting. When the Housemaster sent a questionnaire to all Kilbracken boys asking, amongst other things, 'what were the three best things about the House to be preserved at all costs. All Will's tutees, unprompted, included 'Mr Murphy' in their answer. Enough said. His weekly individual sessions with each of them were the perfect mix of professionalism and a deep personal interest in their ongoing lives; all the boys thoroughly appreciated his quiet warmth and kindness. He will also be one of the founding fathers of the Kilbracken Blue Anchor Society, resulting in some late duty nights every other week. His welcoming company quickly became part of the furniture and for future meetings it might appear that someone has removed a particularly comfy armchair.

Will leaves us to pursue his love of Mathematics and begins a PhD at City University, London, on representation theory of finite dimensional algebras. He will also have a role there as a tutor/teacher. We shall miss Will hugely in the Department: a fleeting ray of Murphy sunshine has been much welcome here. Go well, Will!

RJF

Oskar Schortz (2017)

It is difficult to imagine a stronger creative force whirlwinding through the Senior Common Room. Oskar arrived at Rugby in September 2017, fresh from a fast-track civil service post in the Department for Education. It is obvious now that a strait-jacketed career as Whitehall mandarin could not be for him. For Oskar, a Cambridge anthropologist by trade, education is chiefly experiential and it is boundary-less. Eschewing traditional methodologies and mechanical objectives, Oskar's history lessons are wildly imaginative - part theatre, part art installation. Students are as likely to encounter disco balls, smoke machines,

and replica *objets d'art* as they are to take in forlorn (by comparison) textbook extracts or power point slides. It is an outlook rooted in an extraordinarily eclectic and fertile mind. A brilliant comic (his second solo Edinburgh Fringe show runs in 2019), a chess champion (representing England in junior ranks), a public artist (funded by Arts Council, England), one-time pig-farmer, part-time PhD student (artificial intelligence in education), paranormal and witch-hunter *extraordinaire* (ask his XX sets), Oskar would be very much at home in Weimar Berlin (his German is flawless). Less so in Vote Leave, Rugby.

Oskar cares deeply about culture creation, and catches the zeitgeist better than any teacher I know. He has been a tremendous support in developing the wider intellectual life of the Department. For students willing to practise lateral and independent thought, Oskar's discussion papers and workshop seminars are second-to-none. He has helped host guest speakers and worked enthusiastically as co-editor of the *Bloxam Project*. In other areas of school life, he has been a popular hockey and soccer coach and a trusted advocate of LXX and XX tutees in Whitelaw, bringing to bear his own brand of wisdom and insight into the rich possibilities of life beyond The Close. He goes next to South Hampstead High School, where a part-time post allows more time for research and for the hybrid sport of chess boxing.

TDC



Katie Warwick (2017)

Katie joined Rugby from a local secondary school in Coventry in September 2017. Having not experienced a boarding school environment before, she quickly settled into the swing of things, her calculator and markbook to hand.

From day one, Katie held her own in the Maths Department, providing outstanding guidance and patience, particularly to those who needed more support in clinics. She executed her teaching responsibilities to a tee.

Following School policy, she gave minors for missing equipment and impositions for missing or incomplete prep – and her students are better for it.

Parachuted into Whitelaw, she quickly made all other Tutors feel completely inadequate through her commitment and work ethic. Her tireless work as an E Block and D Block Tutor went above and beyond pastoral expectations. In her first term, she volunteered for an F Block away weekend despite having nothing to do with that year group and having only just arrived at the School herself! Her success as a Tutor was coupled with her down-to-earth nature – no mean feat as the only female tutor in an all-boys house. She was even known to crack a few jokes, though the punchlines are yet to be found...!

Katie has confessed that she considers herself rather boring and uninteresting, but the facts and evidence stack up in her favour. Her contribution to the wider life of the School is nothing short of remarkable. She led the 6th Girls' hockey team to an unbeaten season (2017/18) and introduced a weekly Dodgeball Community Action club for local primary schools. She sat on the Leavers' Ball Committee in her first year and played a starring role on the Social Committee of the Senior Common Room, reinvigorating the staff social scene. Her work helping in the school holidays with Duke of Edinburgh expeditions has been hugely appreciated: she has already taken part in five. She even participates in activities where her enthusiasm seriously outweighs her skill; the staff squash league comes to mind...

Far from being boring and uninteresting, Katie's adventures at Rugby have often put her on a perilous but heroic path between life and death. One day, as she was walking past the Town-Southfield extension construction site, a stray metal scaffolding pole narrowly missed her as it fell. On another occasion, during a Duke of Edinburgh expedition, adventure-guru Matthew Gray slipped down into a freezing river, with only a lone branch stopping him from total immersion and a very uncertain fate. Katie leapt into action, quickly pulling Matthew out and arguably saving his life. Both occasions are typical of Katie: she really never does stop.

Katie leaves Rugby having made a huge contribution to the School and its pupils in such a short amount of time. From September she will be teaching at President Kennedy School, an outstanding academy in Coventry. Having her weekends back will mean she can dedicate more of her time to playing dodgeball at the highest level of the

game (she regularly plays for Wales). She will certainly be glad that she no longer has to 'Dodge, Duck, Dip, Dive and Dodge' her way through the intricacies of boarding school life. We wish her all the best in her future endeavours.

OS1



Oliver Wright (2017)

Oliver arrived full of energy and enthusiasm in September 2017. And that energy and enthusiasm remain undiminished. As a Tutor he worked in both School Field and Town, of an evening throwing himself into board games and chess whilst building positive relationships with those in his charge. He was never happier than when discussing politics and obscure elections around the world and Brexit provided him with much ammunition. Always wanting to be involved in the wider life of the School, Oliver became a valuable member of the basketball programme during his time at Rugby. He built a strong relationship with the team and was always keen to get involved in training and showcase his dribbling and three-point shooting skills. We hope he continues to play basketball and work on his slam-dunks. Most importantly, academically, Oliver has worked tirelessly to inspire his students and to promote in them a love for the complexity and majesty of Economics. His diverse and dynamic teaching style has generated a tenacious quest for knowledge and proved to be the launching pad for many Oxbridge Economics candidates. After only a relatively brief time at Rugby, Oliver will be long remembered as a highly valued member of the Department. We wish him all the very best in the further development of his teaching career which, no doubt, will continue to positively thrive.

AKC



Olivia Cairns (2018)

Liv joined us on the Biology field trip to Wales in the June prior to her embarking on her new career as a Biology teacher. Her ability to engage and empathise with the students was instantly recognised, as was her excellent company in the evenings. She has been an excellent contributor to the Biology Department and to the wider school. She puts a huge amount of effort into her teaching, producing excellent resources to complement her natural teaching ability. She has also helped with CCF and her sunny disposition on field days was appreciated by staff and pupils alike. As a keen runner, Liv was an excellent addition to the Road Running staff in Advent and was invaluable in the Crick and Barby practice runs, where she ran at the back with the very slowest and her altruistic nature shone through. We wish Liv the best of luck with her future endeavours.

GCEJ

Alex Harris (2018)

A graduate of the Teach First programme and (despite his young years) veteran of a number of challenging inner-city schools, Alex has been an excellent addition to the History Department. For two terms he has provided maternity cover, picking up a full teaching load and (owing to a quirk in the timetable) an inordinate amount of potentially starchy 20th-century German history. Not to be daunted, and armed with a love for death metal and snappy three-piece suits, Alex has carried out his brief with great energy and care. Students have enjoyed his meticulously planned lessons. Colleagues have been struck by his willingness to go the extra mile and trust has rapidly built up. He has a worksheet for everything.

In Bradley, Alex has been an excellent help to the tutorial team, taking on a regular duty evening and being a source of pastoral support across the year groups. At interview Alex said he would get involved as much as possible, and he has. He has camped, hiked and carried for the E Block on Duke of Edinburgh expeditions; he has helped host visiting

speakers; staffed History trips; and given papers at Rugby School's ResearchEd conference. Once the right size sports kit was tracked down, he proved himself an active staff instructor at non-team badminton. Calm, clever and kind, Alex is a brilliant fit to his new role, as subject lead/teacher trainer for new graduate entrants to the Teach First programme. We wish him well as he develops his career. The next generation of Teach First History teachers are in excellent hands.

TDC



Gabor Toth (2018)

Gabor spent nearly four years with his Science colleagues at Rugby School. The first three years were spent as a Physics technician and also as a Chemistry technician on Wednesday afternoons. Gabor arrived in 2015 knowing very little English and left Rugby School fluent. He already spoke Russian, German and some Serbian, in addition to his native Hungarian, so he was going to be proficient in English before too long. In his first month just before lunch, he told his first joke in English. I think he may have heard tummies rumbling. He said, "I am Hungary and you are Hungry". We instantly knew he was going to be a colleague to brighten the department. There was no doubt he was a brilliant technician and that he wanted to be a teacher in England as soon as practicable. Gabor had previously had extensive experience as a teacher in Hungary having taught Informatics, Engineering, Physics and Mathematics. Gabor enjoyed his time at Rugby in Science and he will be eternally grateful to the School for assisting him with his evening language lessons #wholepersonwholepoint.

Gabor was the E block Tutor in Michell and he made every effort to learn the myriad peculiarities of the House routine; he was both prompt and reliable over the course of his weekly evening duty, despite the challenge of constantly changing clothes from jacket and tie to CCF combats to casual clothing etc. from lesson to CCF each Wednesday. He was keen to get to know his tutees well,

and he was supportive in his guidance of them. He attended all the House outings loyally and he rewarded himself appropriately for his commitment from the House 'Beavan' Bar.

Gabor was a great member of CCF staff. He was always willing to go the extra mile and helped the CCF shooting at school. He was an expert shooter and a great coach. At one time, he was fourth in the whole of Hungary for rifle shooting. Gabor is genuinely missed by the shooting option and by the CCF. Gabor initially gained some teaching experience by tutoring Maths students at clinics. He gave us a term and a half of Physics teaching and his gift for Mathematics was clear to his LXX set. He knew all the tricks in the book. Gabor left us at the February half-term to work as a Maths teacher at a day school in Northamptonshire. His love of the Peak District can be sated on weekends as well as spending more quality time with his young family. Gabor remains a friend and is beginning to enjoy the spectacle that is English football. He often reminds us that Hungary had a golden team in 1953.

MAT

Graduate Teaching Assistants



Ben Grant (2018)

Debonair and swarthy, Ben Grant sashayed into the Macready in September like a young Omar Sharif. Fresh out of an MA in Contemporary Theatre from the illustrious Royal Central School of Speech and Drama, his first job was to train up a group of Drama Scholars to become workshop leaders at the Bloomsbury Festival in London, delivering drama workshops to children from Camden at the start of the October exeat. So successful was this endeavour that he then worked with LXX scholar Georgi Jones to realise her dream and develop this workshop leadership programme further, offering much-needed drama workshops to local primary schools. Ben supported Georgi's work sensitively, allowing her and the

other scholars to find their own rhythm and voice as a group. It was not about Ben, but genuinely about the mutual good that working with young people across the educational divide could do.

This sums up Ben's approach to work. He is not demonstrative, or show-offy (though he has much about him which he could show off). No. Ben is gentle, generous, giving. His directorial style, seen as director and assistant in a number of key productions this year – from *Mistero Buffo* to the new writing project about to hit the Edinburgh Fringe stage in August – is notable for its lack of what dramaturgs might call an auteur approach to directing where the director lords it over the company, telling them what to do, where to stand, how to speak. Ben's approach is to sit, three or four rows back in the Macready and wait for the students to find something. Then he sighs, and encouragingly offers a 'Good, yes, I like that, so what next?' These are the utterances of a man who knows that genuine creativity isn't given by demonstration or modelling, but by allowing the individual to make choices, reflect on them and ultimately to decide for themselves. That's brave and quite a gamble for a young director. Omar Sharif, a gambling man of some notoriety himself of course, would be proud to have been as effortlessly chilled as Ben. UCS London are lucky to have grabbed Ben as their in-house professional director. And the UCS boys will come to realise that that kind of director is not the norm in schools, and how lucky they are to have had the chance to work with this one.

TDC



Phoebe Pexton (2018)

Phoebe came to Rugby having obtained a First in Music at Oxford, where she was a choral scholar at Merton College. Having also obtained diplomas on the flute and as a singer, as well as Grade 8 on the violin, it's not surprising that Phoebe has brought outstanding quality and versatility as a musician to the Department over the past year. Always eager to leap into unfamiliar

territory, she cheerfully embraced the opportunity to teach in the classroom, learning to tailor strategies and innovate amid the unexpected. A highlight of the year for her was introducing an F Block set to drumming games in a vibrant discovery of percussion instruments and new rhythmic possibilities.

Her involvement in the performance sphere of Rugby's musical life has been inspirational and always executed in a positive and cheerful manner. Her experience as a choral singer and orchestral musician has been incredibly beneficial in both administrative and practical terms. Through leading rehearsals and organising the Music Department's weekly coffee and chamber concerts, she has made a remarkable contribution to the musical development of students. Phoebe says 'a particularly memorable event was the final F Block Music Scholars' concert of Trinity term. Owing to my involvement in Stagecraft sessions and F Block music practice supervision, I was proud to hear the musicians' progression into poised and mature performers; eager to navigate the technical challenges of advanced repertoire and unhindered by the rare clatter of an "unexpected" chord.'

Phoebe's contribution to School life has reached far beyond the Music Schools, notably to Tudor House and to sport. Her own achievement of running the Crick in just over one hour and ten minutes was astonishing, but her encouragement of the students during the build-up to the race was equally impressive. 'Taking part in various training outings (and employing powerful strategies of Jelly Baby bribery) enabled me to appreciate the students' strong team spirit and motivation first-hand. When race day arrived—after ten miles and a few too many stiles, I was overwhelmed by the School support decking The Close's finishing line. On leaving Rugby, I'll be happy to leave the aches and stumbles of the Crick behind, but will cherish the echoes of that unforgettable Rugby cheer for ever.'

RJT

Sports GTAs

Georgie Bullock (2018)

Despite only being with us until Christmas, Georgie made a lot of progress in the development of our Strength and Conditioning programmes. She worked tirelessly with the sports scholars to help them achieve their athletic goals and build a

foundation for effective training with our first teams. We wish Georgie all the best with her future endeavours.

DLS

Jake Ling (2018)

We have thoroughly benefitted from the enthusiastic and knowledgeable hockey coaching of Jake Ling. Jake can be found on the astro pitches of Rugby School almost 24 hours a day! He has been an instrumental coach for the U15 girls and boys, the indoor teams and supporting the hockey scholars with their 1:1 coaching. He supported the department on their tour to San Sebastian in October and has been great with the cricket teams this term. Jake will also be missed in Kilbracken where he has been a reliable member of the tutoring team. We wish Jake the very best of luck in his future endeavours.

CMB

Paula Gomez Asensio (2018)

Paula arrived fresh from graduation in Madrid with plenty of experience of travelling and working with young people already under her belt. She hit the ground running and has worked tirelessly with our young people, getting their oral skills up to speed ready for public exams in particular. Her patience and enthusiasm have served her well, and the students have loved spending time with her, always leaving her classroom with a smile. She has been as flexible as she has been generous in her approach to work, giving extra time to both students and staff on demand, the ideal colleague. We wish her all the best as she leaves to take up post-graduate study.

CAO

DLS

MFL Assistants

Kevin Franke (2018)

Kevin (or: Mr Kevin/K. Frank/Kev Dog as he has affectionately come to be known by the E Block) has made a lasting impact in the short time he has spent with us at Rugby. He has gone above and beyond his remit of German Language Assistant and has made it his business to become totally involved in the life of the School. Alongside the countless hours he has devoted to helping our German D Block students learn the answers to 60 general conversation questions off by heart, he has been a regular contributor to discussions at the Landor Society,



A word from the Chaplain



One day in December 1963 a young French-Canadian university lecturer went to France on his Christmas break. While he was there he visited a friend of his who was a Roman Catholic priest, serving as Chaplain to what was then brutally called an asylum - a place where people with mental disability were kept in pretty inhuman conditions, away from the public gaze, to be hidden from so-called

“normal” society, dismissed as “idiots” and locked up for 24 hours a day.

The young man was so moved by what he saw that he decided then and there on a course of action which would change not just his life, but the lives of thousands of people – as well as changing attitudes throughout the world.

He bought a small house in a remote village in rural France, and invited two men with mental disabilities, who had been detained in the asylum, to come and live with him. That young man’s name was Jean Vanier, the two men who came to live with him were Philippe and Raphael, and their household was the beginning of what would grow into a worldwide movement.

Others joined them in that rural cottage, and they formed a community called L’Arche, which means The Ark – a place of safety, of preservation, a place of growth, learning and love.

Jean Vanier’s belief was that everyone, regardless of ability or disability, should have opportunities to grow and to learn, to contribute to society, to experience community life with friendship and love. He believed that we genuinely need one another. It’s easy, perhaps, to see how the weak need the strong; and how the poor need the rich, but it was his conviction that this works both ways – that we who are wealthy have something to receive from those who are poor; that we who are strong, fit, able and academic have something to learn from those who are handicapped in body and in intellect.

From that first French community house grew a worldwide organisation which now comprises 150 communities in 35 countries. In all of them, men and women with learning difficulties live alongside residents, carers and volunteers, in communities of equal relationships where the daily expectation is that every person there has something to give and something to receive from every other person.

Jean Vanier is something of a hero to those of us who know from our daily experience that sharing your life with someone with learning disabilities is truly a gift - an enriching and life-enhancing way to live, for such people give to us just as much as we give to them, and make our worlds and our world a better place. And if such an attitude is widespread now in 2019, where 50 years ago it was unimaginably alien, then that change of attitude is due in very large part to that one man.

Jean Vanier’s motivation for his work was his Christian faith, and his rule of life was the teaching of Jesus. He wrote more than 30 books, met most of the prominent world leaders in the last half century, won awards in many countries, but always lived in the original L’Arche house. After a few short weeks in a nursing home, Jean Vanier died this year at the age of 90. He made the world a better place.

This is the community prayer of the L’Arche community, spoken in many languages every day all around the world; it works pretty well in a school too:

*Father, through Jesus our Lord and our brother, we ask you to bless us.
Grant that this may be a true home, where everyone may find life,
where those of us who suffer may find hope.
Keep in your loving care all those who come.
Spirit of God, give us greatness of heart that we may welcome all those you send.
Make us compassionate that we may heal and bring peace.
Help us to see, to serve and to love.
O Lord, through the hands of each other, bless us; through the eyes of each other, smile on us.
O Lord, grant freedom, fellowship and unity to all your people
and welcome everyone into your kingdom.
AMEN*

RMH

WHOLE PERSON WHOLE POINT



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