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CHURCHILL SONGS

Speech Room, 14 November

Major General Dr Andrew Sharpe CBE

On Thursday 14 November, we enjoyed one of the greatest events of the School year: Churchill Songs. We welcomed guests, beaks, boys and members of the Churchill family for a celebration of our Songs tradition, and the life and work of perhaps our greatest Giant of Old – our very own ‘superhero’ (as the Head Master put it) – Winston Churchill.

The evening began with *Stet Fortuna Domus*, assuredly accompanied by PJE on the organ, Joshua Harris, *West Acre*, on the piano, and the School Orchestra, conducted by DNW. On this occasion, the fourth verse was included, putting Churchill’s name alongside that of Sheridan, Peel, Ashley (1st Earl of Shaftesbury) and Byron. This was followed by *Here Sir!*, with witty contributions from members of the School XII.



We then moved on to the New Boy’s Solo, *Five Hundred Faces*. This was performed to over 900 faces by Fergus Mckie, *The Grove*, who sang with a clear, confident and even tone, receiving rapturous applause from the School and guests afterwards. Next came *St Joles*, the piece that may have started the whole notion of Churchill Songs – when Jock Colville OH, Churchill’s secretary, heard the prime minister singing it in the bath during the darkest days of 1940, and promptly organised for him to attend a Songs concert in Speech Room.

This was followed by the School XII – accompanied by Joshua Harris – in *Songs*, a song in celebration of the tradition. Written not long after the tradition began in 1885, it makes the amazing prediction that Harrow Songs will last forever: ‘Cradled in amber, so songs sleep’. The XII sang with lyricism and great cohesion in this wonderfully expressive piece. Following a hearty rendition of *Song of the Forwards*, we heard another solo, this time from Michael Fitzgibbon, *Rendalls*, who took to the spotlight in *You?*. This song contains references to the Boer War, which is commemorated in the south transept of our Chapel. Churchill, who was working as a journalist at the time, was captured and interned in a Boer prisoner of war camp. However, he escaped to South Africa, fighting in the relief of the siege of Ladysmith, and eventually took the surrender of his former gaolers in Pretoria. Fitzgibbon sang with great poise and intimacy in a moving and memorable performance.

We then had an uplifting celebration of the Guard of Honour for the night, and the Harrow Rifle Corps as a whole, in *Left! Right!*, before welcoming the speaker, Major General Andrew Sharpe.

Just as a young Churchill was ridiculed as a ‘person of no ambition at all’, General Sharpe recalled in his speech that his then Head of Languages – Mr Allen – told him he “didn’t have the personality for the army”. General Sharpe ended up serving 38 years in the army. Recalling his experiences, General Sharpe shared lessons only discoverable in the face of death. Amid the Bosnian civil war, he encountered a man dressed completely in black with the severed hand of a child hanging by his belt. Held at gunpoint by this satanic figure, he realised all that he could think about was what mattered most: people. He didn’t care about money or status or the things he would never go on to achieve; he thought about his mother, his wife and his children. This, he stressed to the crowd, is what truly mattered in life. Narrowly escaping this near-death experience, General Sharpe found himself reflecting on his mortality once again in the back of a truck in Baghdad. Driven by two talkative soldiers – needless to say who were American – the song ‘I Hope You Dance’ by Lee Ann Womack blared on the radio. It was then that General Sharpe, moved by the lyrics, was filled with the desire to pursue new things. At the age of 54, he attended Kings College London and Cambridge for his PhD. An accomplished soldier scholar, General Sharpe emphasised to all the boys in true Womack fashion that ‘when life gives you the choice to sit out or dance, I hope you dance’. Look at him now, Mr Allen.

After this came one of our finest songs, *The Silver Arrow*. As the Head Master acknowledged, while the ‘nation’s might’ is no longer in the ‘arrow’s flight’, we can still learn from the values of fellowship, reverence, learning and bravery that are in the song. This was followed up by the School XII singing *Good Night*, a gentle song of inspiration and hope.



Possibly the most stirring moment of the evening was *Forty Years On*, with the whole School, guests and members of the Churchill family singing together with passion and gusto. The concert concluded with the closing sequence of *Auld Lang Syne* and the *National Anthem*.

Special thanks go to the speaker General Sharpe, to the soloists, Orchestra and accompanists, and to the School for being in such fine voice and for making Churchill Songs a wonderful event and highlight of the School year.

CHERIE BLAIR

16 October

On Wednesday 16 October, Harrow had the great privilege of welcoming Cherie Blair CBE to give a Shaftsbury Enterprise Lecture in a packed-out Speech Room. An audience of Lower Sixth boys and a large contingent of students from other local schools were in attendance to witness Mrs Blair give a talk entitled 'Women in Education.'

Mrs Blair's credentials are undeniable. An impressive list of career achievements includes finishing top of the year in her bar exams before eventually become a Queen's counsel and the creation of the Cherie Blair Foundation for Women, which supports women in low- and middle-income countries to set up and grow their own businesses. Thus, Speech Room fell silent at the beginning of the talk, in anticipation for a particularly distinguished speaker.



She spoke of her early life and how, as a female law student, she had very few people to look up to, and she spoke candidly about her role models growing up in law. This lack of role models was a symptom of the position of women in law in the 1980s and 1990s, which Blair spoke about at length. Law was a profession that was not inclusive of women and, despite being top of her class in the bar, Blair was often overlooked for positions and promotions solely due to her gender. One poignant story which she shared with us was of her experience at the celebration for the bar exams, where she gave a speech. A senior male barrister spoke with her afterwards about how women did not belong in law, which served as inspiration for her. Indeed, the fact that she managed to ascend to such success in an industry that did not want people like her is remarkably impressive and inspirational in itself. There was even evidence of this in a humorous anecdote shared by the speaker, in which she described how a man was promoted above her, despite her being clearly the better lawyer. That man turned out to be her husband Tony.

The law industry has become more inclusive, but Mrs Blair was clear that we have much further to go in order to reach gender equality. For instance, men named John occupy more leadership positions than women in major companies, a shocking statistic in time where gender equality is seen as being almost achieved. Much of this Mrs Blair put down to limitation in educational opportunities for women, especially outside the UK, along with societal stigmas that have, as of yet, not been shaken. Mrs Blair spoke passionately on this topic, expressing frustration with the sustaining global lack of parity between men and women, and documenting the various ways in which her foundation helps give women opportunities to set up businesses and enter industries independently. The gender pay gap was equally an area of frustration addressed by Mrs Blair, and the ramification of a lack of women in leadership positions related seamlessly back to her own upbringing, where she only had a few women to look up to in the law industry. She felt that by equalising educational opportunities and presenting women in leadership positions, this could inspire the next generation in their efforts to achieve true gender parity.

The audience was keen to ask questions, and it was a pleasure to see such a large number of questions coming from girls from local schools in the audience, clearly inspired by and wanting to learn more from our impressive speaker. The questions were wide ranging, and we gauged Mrs Blair's view on quotas, which she thinks are almost wholly positive and important, and also women's presentation in the House of Commons, an interesting caveat which we can pay close attention to in the run up to the election. The talk was particularly stimulating and promoted much discussion between Harrow boys and our guests alike. In all areas, the talk was a great success and provided the Lower Sixth and other guests with much food for thought, stimulation and inspiration, for which we must thank Mrs Blair enormously.

THE BYRON CONSORT

4 November

On Monday 4 November, the Byron Consort braved a waning Metropolitan line in a bid to reach St Paul's Cathedral. Upon reaching Barbican and eventually determining there were indeed no Shells or music left on the tube, we started the long walk south. After five minutes or so, we were greeted by a pair of rather apathetic security guards who were quick to ensure that JPBH wasn't carrying his usual contraband. It's rather a good job they didn't check our folders; a quick look at the anthem we were singing and they all would have been confiscated. The annual performance at St Paul's is a very enjoyable experience; the supreme privilege of performing at one of the greatest buildings in the country is felt by each of the boys – perhaps not Daniel Sidhom, *The Knoll* – who feels better suited to the Royal Opera House. There is a recognisable feeling of deference in the choir when we perform there – much like Lyon's being a boarding House – like we're not really supposed to be there. Arriving in the rehearsal room, PJE made the alarming announcement that, due to the severe lack of musical ability, we were going to have to sacrifice the usual mid-rehearsal café trip in order to spend more time rehearsing. Chaos is what ensued. Boys ran as fast as they could to purchase some flapjacks, which had risen in price far more than from inflation alone, and a homemade (not really) lemonade. George Gallagher, *The Grove*, and Nicky Platt, *Moretons*, supposedly had a bare-knuckle fight over the last piece of Soreen malt loaf that was available. Alas, we will never know if this was true. CST had a heated argument about the lack of a cortado on the menu and Leopold Florescu, *The Head Master's*, got ejected from the cathedral by the security guards after several demands from the café employee for his order, to which he only replied with excerpts of Byron's *Don Juan*: "My heart is in passion and my head on rhyme," he cried. Amid the chaos, JPBH managed to issue some 8,000 double. After rehearsal had finished – mostly because PJE had given up with everyone – it was time to rehearse the procession for the beginning and end of the service. Co-ordination is not a skill that members of the Byron are famed for, so this was harder than expected. At the first attempt, Harry Lempriere-Johnston, *Druries*, began screaming "Left, Right!" because he normally would be doing that on a Monday afternoon. Cerebellum problems aside, the choir sang what really was a splendid service. There was *Preces and Responses* by Philip Moore to open the service, Psalms 13 and 14 with chants by William Sterndale Bennett and John Bertalot, and the rather magnificent *Magnificat* (if you'll pardon the pun) and *Nunc Dimittis in G* by the stalwart of English church music, Herbert Howells. The anthem was, undoubtedly, the highlight of the occasion. *Seek him that maketh the seven stars* is an exciting and contemporary anthem by Jonathan Dove with an incredibly difficult organ accompaniment played (almost) exquisitely by DNW. After the service, we made the short hop to the local Nando's. The

only complaint from what was otherwise a lovely meal is that my boneless half-chicken tasted notably more of garlic than the lemon and herb I had ordered. Blake Mosimann, *Bradlys*, needless to say, was not impressed. The only casualty of the evening was Michael Guo's, *The Grove*, unfortunate decision to leave his folder, not himself, in Nando's. At this point, the Byron's commander-in-chief PJE faced a decision: either face the now severely delayed and overcrowded Metropolitan line or take a chance with the Piccadilly line from King's Cross. The latter was deemed the least bad option. Fifty minutes later, Harrow's elite vocal ensemble cautiously emerged from Sudbury Hill station into one of the more notorious areas of Harrow-off-the-Hill. It was then announced we would take a bus back to the Hill. "What's a bus?" Jake Posner-Kane, *Moretons*, replied. All in all, it was a very enjoyable way to miss afternoon lessons. Great thanks to PJE who continues to lead the consort with great enthusiasm, care and aplomb as we look forward to our tour to Madrid in February.

PALMERSTON SOCIETY

Rt Hon. Andrew Mitchell, MP

"The challenges and significance of the forthcoming Election", OH Room, 12 November

On Tuesday afternoon in the OH Room, we were fortunate to be afforded a portion of Mr Mitchell's time in what proved to be a refreshingly detailed analysis of the landscape that all the major parties face in the forthcoming election. Mr Mitchell's parliamentary career was outlined by Charles Harrison, *Rendalls*: MP for Gedling from 1987–97, Sutton Coldfield from 2001–19, a Government Whip, Minister for Social Security, Vice Chairman of the Conservative Party, Shadow Minister for Economic Affairs, Shadow Minister for Home Affairs, Shadow Secretary and Secretary of State for International Development and Government's Chief Whip. However, despite the multitude of offices he has held, it was Mr Mitchell's long experience as an MP – having experienced seven prime ministers and eight Conservative leaders and all the change of the last 30 years or so as an MP – that proved most insightful.



Mr Mitchell began with a brief outline of what makes this election so unique. He believed that the left/right political axis over which elections are usually fought has been overridden by Brexit, as voters' choices at the election depend not only on their historical parties but also on their Brexit position. The erosion of these partisan lines was – as he went on to say – the main force behind the fractured and extreme political scene we see today, with the parties "lacking appeal for moderates". As a strong advocate for One Nation Conservatism, labelling it the "election winning machine" (having the magic effect of combining both 'country' and 'metropolitan' views), he warned against the surge of populism encouraged by the referendum.

Having also established (with only two members of the audience adverse to voting Conservative) that any campaigning wasn't necessary, he instead embarked on a detailed outline of the advantages and disadvantages facing the Labour and Conservative parties. In favour of Labour was the fact that being 'a cricket-playing nation, we are inclined to be good sports and let the fielders have a turn at the bat'. Having been in power for nine years, the Conservatives are asking the nation to elect a fourth consecutive government, which has never been done before. Not only, Mr Mitchell cited, does this cause "Conservative fatigue", it also means that younger generations are unaware of the implications of a Labour government. Further in Labour's favour is the proposal of never-seen-before policies, alien to British elections, which have an appeal due to the change they promise. However, while defending Jeremy Corbyn, stating, "I have known Jeremy a long time" and that he is certain that "Corbyn doesn't have a racist bone in his body", Mr Mitchell saw the far-leaning-left approach of the Labour leadership as a problem for Labour. When asked about Mr Corbyn's impact, he confided that if it was Ed or David Miliband, leading a more central-leaning Labour, that "the Conservatives would be completely wiped out". Furthermore, the fact that Mr Corbyn has "never changed his view" was both a curse and a positive, eloquently labelling "consistency [as] the hobgoblin of the small mind". However, Mr Mitchell had less time for Mr McDonnell's outspoken Marxist approach, labelling it a severe danger and disincentive for all. Finally, he sited the anti-Semitism in the Labour Party as a massive burden heading into the polls because of the disastrous effects it is having on the party (the Labour Jewish group is refusing to campaign for Labour) and in deterring the electorate.

Moving on to the Conservatives, he warned us not to be fooled by Farage: although the relinquishing of 317 seats might look like help, the Conservatives still need a majority to win. As it stands, due to the probable loss of up to ten seats in Scotland, the danger of the South-West – although Brexit-voting and blue now – harking back to their hereditary yellow and the loss of strongly Remain-voting marginal seats, he explained, the Conservative Party is facing this election with a starting bedrock of 250–290 seats. He pointed to the Midlands' and the North's Brexit-voting former 'mining land' as the battleground where voters will be torn between their historic family partisan alliances and their opinions over Brexit. Moreover, "much depends on the success of the Lib Dems". Using his own seat – Sutton Coldfield – as an example, he explained that during 'Cleggmania', four of every five of the 3,000–5,000 votes they gained were taken from Labour; this time around, however, in Sutton Coldfield, the first increase in the Liberal vote will come overwhelmingly from Labour but thereafter Liberal success would be at Tory expense.

With this established, Mr Mitchell outlined the three major 'Tory offers' of this election. First, Boris' deal. Although only agreed on in principle by Parliament, the Tories are offering to 'take Brexit out of the headlines' with a viable and agreed-upon deal. However, he openly admitted that there is still much to be done before the deal is cleared and that the trade negotiations are still to come.

Secondly, while there is a force pulling the Conservative Party towards populism, the Tories are, in this election, standing on One Nation Conservative principles. This promises financial restraint but culturally and socially it promises openness. With a policy to lead the country and warn the people of adversities, Mr Mitchell supported Mr Johnson taking the helm due to the no-mean-feats of being a Tory Mayor of a 'red city' twice and his previous battle for the National Living Wage and same-sex marriage.

Thirdly, somewhat wrongly in Mr Mitchell's view, is the strong feeling of a PM versus Parliament complex. The idea that Parliament is in contempt of the people and has dithered, delayed and blocked not only Brexit but also crucial legislative

reforms goes hand-in-hand with the personal politics of Mr Johnson: Bojo's Mojo. Mr Mitchell sees Boris' 'compelling and funny' rhetoric as a lift for the otherwise poisonous atmosphere surrounding politics, and one that creates an atmosphere that encourages a "can-do" mentality that is "oh-so needed".

Mr Mitchell finished with two warnings. One was what the European referendum had done: "The referendum has mixed oil with water". The principle when electing an MP, which Edmund Burke proclaimed in his acceptance speech as MP for Bristol in 1774, is not that they carry out the electorate's will exactly, but rather that the electorate pass the power to that MP to assert their judgement based upon the principles they stand for when elected. However, the referendum – binding in all but name – inverts this principle, making the act of governance impossible. Second, as Britain's global influence continues its staggeringly fast demise, the global principles it has heavily influenced must not also fall. This referred to our internal government and how the dangerous autonomous increase of power under Blair and recently exemplified by the withholding of the Russian investigation sets a dangerous precedent. The government should always be under the thumb of the individual as that is its role. Never, he spoke with gravity, should it be that the government be bigger than the individual.

Mr Mitchell offered an insightful, intellectual and truthful address of the layout of our political landscape. In questions from the floor, he gave strong but balanced support in favour of the HS2, the need for a by-elections when an MP crosses the floor; opposition to the removal of the whip, the referendum and the accusation that parties being a 'broad church' decreases cohesion; detailed analysis on the 2017 election; Rory Stewart's chances as mayor; presidentialism and the controversy surrounding the ITV debate. Theodore Seely, *The Head Master's*, then gave a vote of thanks on behalf of the School and Palmerston Society to close what was a fantastic address. We are very thankful to Mr Mitchell for braving the Metropolitan line and for his talk, sharing his time in what must be a hectic and packed schedule. Additionally, many thanks go to DRW for stepping in and to the Palmerston Society for organising such a terrific address at such a significant time with the election campaigns just getting under way.

OSRG ARTS SOCIETY

Visit to the Eliot Hodgkin exhibition and the Treasury at Waddesdon Manor

Last half-term, the OSRG Arts Society visited the magnificent manor of Waddesdon, the Buckinghamshire house of the Rothschild family.

Suitably, the trip was Harrow themed, and we first visited the Treasury, which Charles Marsden-Smedley OH had converted from a maid's bedroom. It contained marvellous jewellery and precious pieces of great significance to the present Rothschild family, an example of which was a lapis lazuli table centrepiece.

The idea of a *Schatzkammer*, or treasure room, would have been familiar to Baron Ferdinand de Rothschild, the builder of Waddesdon. He displayed his 'Renaissance Museum' in bespoke cases in the Smoking Room in the Bachelor's Wing. This was a collection of intricate, precious objects made from exotic and rare materials at a time when exploration, discovery, and a desire to understand the physical world were inspiring patrons, collectors and craftsmen alike. Collections like these were intended to evoke wonder – whether because of the skill required to create the objects, the beauty and rarity of the materials, or their physical history. In creating his collection, which he bequeathed to the British Museum, Baron Ferdinand was following in family footsteps. The Rothschilds are renowned

collectors, part of a story of collecting that continues today with roots in the great princely treasuries of 16th-century Europe.

Many of the objects were on display for the first time, lent by the Rothschild family. Some had been in the family collections for generations; some had been acquired recently. The present generation of Rothschilds are continually adding to the collection. Because of these familial links, many objects have personal links to the Rothschilds, whether the bracelet given to Alice de Rothschild by her friend Queen Victoria, the naturalist Charles Rothschild's microscope, or Baron Ferdinand's baby set and an array of splendid family jewellery. Some works are prized for their technical ingenuity, such as clocks and automata, and many others are admired for the rare materials from which they are made, be it amber, lacquer, mother-of-pearl or other semi-precious stones. Some items were acquired through the family's interest in the ancient world. The displays include objects which have appealed to many family members, such as the gold boxes. There are also objects reflecting a particular interest of an individual, such as the dining and serving silver assembled by the present Lord Rothschild in response to the Rothschilds' associations with the great wines of Bordeaux.

After the Treasury, we moved on to the exhibition 'Eliot Hodgkin: A Life in Painting'. Eliot Hodgkin OH (1905–87) was born in Purley, near Reading, where his father owned an engineering works. An only child, he came from an intellectually curious and gifted family. His cousins included the artists Roger Fry and Howard Hodgkin, and Nobel prize-winning biophysicist Alan Hodgkin. He was educated at Harrow, where his precocious artistic talent was recognised early, and then went to art school where he honed his drawing skills. His early career was diverse, with projects including fashion drawing, portrait painting and making decorative murals. He also wrote a well-received novel, *She Closed the Door*, published in 1931.

In the mid-1930s, he began to paint seriously in oils, particularly highly detailed still lifes, often with unusual viewpoints, sometimes with Surrealist undertones. In 1936, his first piece entered a public collection when a flower composition, *October*, was bought by the Tate Gallery. In the same year, he held his first one-man show in London. He also began to experiment with the then unusual medium of tempera, originally a medieval technique to bind pigment with egg yolk. It was fast drying, and allowed him to paint in fine detail.

The outbreak of World War II changed everything for Eliot. Born with a withered left arm, he was not fit for military service but became an air raid warden in the Blitz, and worked at the Ministry of Information. He also married Mimi Henderson, set up home in Chelsea and had a son, Max. Painting became a spare-time activity, but his technique was maturing. He began to paint small, close-up views of plants and trees in arresting detail, and was fascinated by bomb sites in the City of London, creating one of the more unusual records of the impact of air raids.

At the end of the war, Eliot returned to painting full time, working on a smaller scale, usually in tempera. Through the late 1940s and 1950s, he focused on still lifes, everyday objects like feathers, birds' eggs, bread, strawberries, brussels sprouts or radishes, carefully arranged and painted from life. His work shows the influence of Dutch and Spanish 17th-century painters such as Juan Sanchez Cotan and Francisco de Zurbaran, and more contemporary inspiration from artists such as Giorgio Morandi. His gift was to make the viewer look afresh. As he said, "People sometimes tell me they had never really 'seen' something before I painted it, and I should like to believe this."

However, Eliot did not only paint still lifes. On holiday with his family, painting outdoors, and in oils, he produced delightful landscapes. Though he never became a famous artist, he was sought after by collectors and exhibited regularly at the Royal Academy Summer Exhibitions and in commercial galleries from the 1950s to the 1970s. Some of his works are in public collections. From the 1970s, as his eyesight became increasingly

weak, he concentrated on painting more broadly in oil and, in 1979, he stopped altogether. He died in 1987. This exhibition was the first major showing of his work since 1990.

All in all, the OSRG massively enjoyed the trip and look forward to their next expedition.

ORIENTAL SOCIETY

Kevin Lian, The Head Master's, "The Rise of the Chinese Super League", 13 November

This week, on a damp and chilly night, the Oriental Society held two talks on football in Asia, one of which was by Kevin Lian, *The Head Master's*, discussing 'The Rise of the Chinese Super League'. It is no secret that the Chinese Super League has had a questionable reputation in the past, with Antonio Conte saying "The Chinese market is a danger for all." The lecture was split more or less into the history, the improvements and rules, the impact on foreign players and the future of football in China.

Lian began by showing a map of the most famous football clubs in China and, unsurprisingly, the teams were mainly based around Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou. The league began in 1951, when it was called the National Football Conference and consisted of eight teams. In 2001, a new league system was discussed and, in 2005, the Chinese Super League was born. There were several founding criteria, including the necessity of having a youth academy in every team, as well as a reserve league alongside the professional league. This was an attempt to promote high-level football while encouraging the influx of foreign players. There were many initial problems and scandals. One such scandal involved the infamous Fabio Cannavaro, an Italian legend, who was caught up in match fixing against rivals. This match-fixing issue, along with several other controversial occasions, led to a decrease in popularity of the game and a fear of betting on matches among the population.

Despite these issues, there have been a few attempts at improvements since then. In 2009, a stable 16-club format was introduced as well as an anti-corruption movement in 2011, which improved the image of the CSL dramatically. These improvements led to a significant year in Chinese League football in 2012. Clubs such as Shanghai Shenhua and Guangzhou Evergrande invested in big names such as Didier Drogba, Nicolas Anelka and Seydou Keita. This pattern of famous players arriving in the Chinese League after their prime to 'rack up cash' gave the league a reputation of being the 'retirement league'. Many recent huge signings include Tottenham's Paulinho in 2015, as well as Ramires, Ezequiel Lavezzi, Carlos Tevez and Yannick Carrasco. Chelsea star Oscar made a shock move to the CSL for £60 million, shooting the league into fame overnight.

However, to ensure that a fair chance was granted to domestic players, only six foreign players can be registered by each team every season, and a maximum of three of them can be fielded in each match. In addition, a maximum of one player from Hong Kong, Taiwan or Macau can be registered. What is more, the youth development has been the central attention for the league and thus many academies have been created. The most notable academy is Guangzhou Evergrande, which includes 2,500 students and consists of 50 football pitches. There are even professional coaches from Real Madrid. The speaker rounded his talk off by explaining the possible outcomes in the future for the Chinese Super League. Although it has not developed the greatest reputation, it is developing day by day and more Chinese players are playing in top-tier divisions (i.e. Wu Lei for Espanyol). Lian personally believes that, in the distant future it, will turn into a major league, but he insisted that money would only get you so far.

Overall, this talk was informing, entertaining and intriguing for the the audience. The main goal of Chinese football and a dream of Chinese president Xi Jing Ping, as Lian says, is for China to reach the World Cup – is this too much to ask?

ASTRONOMY SOCIETY

Dr Graham Turnock, CEO of the UK Space Agency

Last Tuesday the Astronomy Society had the privilege of welcoming the CEO of the UK Space Agency (UKSA). Established a mere nine years ago, this government body is seeking to invest in UK aerospace infrastructure to eliminate the need to rely on the Europeans (or the Americans for that matter).

One of the first slides Dr Turnock showed was a graph demonstrating how the rapidly accelerating demand for telecommunications is causing the rate of satellite launch to increase tenfold in the next decade. He mentioned the use of satellites in meteorology, surveillance and GPS, and highlighted the commonly used orbits of these devices. Geostationary satellites have the same orbital period as Earth, so remain stationary relative to a point on Earth. However, to achieve this period, satellites must be a gargantuan 36,000km away, which is almost thrice the diameter of the Earth!

Low Earth-orbit satellites can be more useful (since they're considerably closer to the surface) and are cheaper to launch, but they move relative to the Earth, so a single satellite can't service the area 24/7. This is where companies such as OneWeb and Starlink (from Elon Musk's SpaceX) come in. They are planning to launch thousands of low-Earth-orbit satellites with the purpose of bringing their internet coverage to the entire Earth. There are approximately 1,500 active satellites orbiting the Earth with a further 3,000 inactive (broken) also orbiting. With OneWeb and Starlink's launches, the number of devices will double, so many are concerned about the possible ramifications. In the coming years, our view of the stars may be obtruded by the reflections of our lights in these satellites, and we still have no cost-effective solution for removing these things when they break: they may pose a risk of collision with devices that we put into orbit in the future.

Dr Turnock's next topic of discussion was the locations of launch sites as well as the pioneering launch method being trialled by Richard Branson's *Virgin Galactic*. Snowdonia National Park, Newquay Airport and a northerly Scottish village called Tongue are touted as potential areas for the launch of these devices bound for space. Excitingly, Dr Turnock revealed that just a few weeks ago (05/11/19) the UKSA agreed with Virgin Galactic to help fund Branson's new method of "getting things up there." Virgin have converted a Boeing 787, removing its spare engine and building a custom launcher on the underside of its wing, to launch a rocket mid-flight. The rocket is dropped and stabilises itself before accelerating into the stratosphere. The plan is for this plane to take off from Newquay Airport (Cornwall) where there is an unusually long runway. The planes lift off next to the Atlantic, resulting in fewer risks to civilians. This method is really useful, since Boeing 787s can take off from tens of thousands of locations around the world, meaning you can get your rocket really close to the position where you want it to deposit a satellite. Not to mention the fact that you can re-use a Boeing 787 – it's much easier to land than Space-X's precarious sea-barge gambles.

Tongue in Scotland has been selected as the conventional spaceport of the UK (i.e. for VTOL rockets), with a pad being constructed in the next few years. Obviously, large building projects in rural areas are always met with consternation, but Dr Turnock reassures us that habitat loss is minimal while the economic benefit to the area will certainly not be. This will be the launch site of the new rocket that UKSA has had developed by Danish company Orbex Space (who are now headquartered in Inverness). Their rocket boasts the "world's largest 3D-printed rocket engine," running entirely on "renewable bio-propane".

Obviously, the b-word, (Br*xit) was mentioned, and Dr Turnock said that, regrettably, the UKSA have had to pull out of one exciting European venture, but reassured us that UKSA would continue to work with the European Space Agency.

There were an impressive number of questions from boys afterwards. Many thanks to the co-heads of the society for persuading such an engaging and informative speaker to cycle all the way to the Hill.

PIGOU SOCIETY

*Mass Praditbatuga, The Knoll,
"The economics of airlines"*

On a night of many fascinating lectures, the Pigou society did not fail to attract boys to the OMS for an intriguing talk on the "economics of airlines". The talk was presented by Mass Praditbatuga, *The Knoll*, and it encompassed various aspects of the airline industry including: its overall performance throughout the decades, airlines which have gone bankrupt recently, aircraft leases and seat classes.



The talk began with Praditbatuga outlined something quite shocking: the last 5 years have been the most profitable ever in the history of the whole airline industry. This is due to several reasons, but mainly the fact that oil prices crashed in 2014. Since one of the greatest expenses for airline companies is purchasing oil, many weak airlines were kept afloat due to the benign oil prices. This also meant that airlines could afford to buy new aircraft. Thus, many new (predominantly European) airlines entered the market, supported by loans.

It came as a surprise when Praditbatuga reminded the audience that 2019 represents the year of the highest number of airlines going bust. Furthermore, there had been no bankruptcies since 1950. In 2017, bankruptcies began occurring amongst low cost European airlines which provided short-haul flights, such as Air Berlin and Monarch. This began to increase throughout 2018 and 2019; companies such as Primera Air, Cobalt, Wow Air and, most recently, Thomas Cook were the victims of oil prices which have been creeping up since 2017. The reason why this takes the biggest toll on these types of airlines is due to the fact that the most fuel is consumed by aircrafts during take-off and landing. So, airlines which offer short-haul flights are consuming more fuel per miles covered because take-off and landing times represent a greater percentage of total flight time. In addition, the reason why all the airlines which have gone bankrupt are European is because they target leisurely flyers, which means the demand for flights peaks during the summer. As a result, 75% of annual profits are made in 6 months (customers buy tickets in the lead up to the summer months). In contrast, airlines based in the US target more frequent flyers since people require flights to travel around the US, for example visiting family members, as well as business flyers. This means the demand is constant throughout the year. Overall, European airlines which have gone bust found it difficult to sustain profits throughout many months of the year.

Praditbatuga then went on to speak on ticket classification. He mentioned that it was worth noting that, prior to the 1950's, the majority of revenue for airlines came from mail services. Planes would stop at many different cities, transporting mail. The idea of offering 'business' seats came from the concept of travelling with no stops and there was flexibility in buying

them; whereas 'tourist' seats must have been booked several months in advance and flights would include stops. This concept of ticket classification first came about in 1952.

Nowadays, only 6 out of 30 (20%) of transatlantic flights offer a 'first class' service. This may be because first class seats aren't as effective in terms of maximising profits. Business class seats, on the other hand, are the most fruitful, making 1.5 times more money than a first class seat and twice as much as an economy seat per square foot. This is why airlines have made efforts to offer 'premium economy' seats: they bridge the gap between economy and business seats. Although premium economy and business class seats are the most effective in terms of making profits, there would not be a sufficient demand to fill an aircraft; Praditbatuga offered the reassuring thought to the audience that airlines need economy passengers to fill their aircraft.

Praditbatuga proceeded to explain how airlines can be profitable. Indeed, both desirable lengths of flights and mid-size fuel efficiency can contribute to the success of an airline company in terms of profitability. Airlines which offer short-haul flights consume more fuel for the distance they travel, as mentioned earlier. Moreover, airlines which offer long-haul flights do not attract many flyers. With these in mind, a profitable airline will have a mid-size, fuel efficient fleet. Also, airlines can operate with a "spoke and wheel" or a "slot" model. The spoke and wheel model works by airlines landing their aircrafts throughout the day. The other option is a slot model in which aircrafts land within a time slot of a few hours (this is the model which Emirates implement). Whilst it is beneficial to a business traveller because a business trip from America to China can be completed within a couple of days, it is ineffective because, for most of the day, the crew are left idle. Therefore, a higher number of ground crew must be hired for a few hours of work.

Regarding fleet leases, Praditbatuga elaborated on three types. These included wet, dry and damp leases. A wet lease covers aircraft and crew; it is a short-term solution to the drastic increase in demand for flights (for example, in the Caribbean during summer). A dry lease offers just aircrafts which tackles the dilemma of having idle employees. Lastly, a damp lease provides a mixture of varying quantities of both. Aircraft leases allow for airlines to operate without purchasing aircrafts and to provide short-term increase in capacity.

Towards the end, Praditbatuga addressed a question concerning how airlines can evade volatile oil prices. He responded by outlining fuel hedging, which involves an oil contract being agreed upon by airline and oil provider, settling a price which an airline will pay for a specified number of forthcoming years. Airlines with more room for cash flow, such as Delta Air Lines, have dedicated teams towards hedging fuel, whilst American Airlines do not hedge fuel due to fluctuating and unstable oil prices (both companies are second and first in terms of profit generators, respectively).

METROPOLITAN

LEARNT POETRY

OSRG, 13 November

Last Wednesday, the finals for the annual Learnt Poetry Competition was held in the OSRG. Adjudicated by Mr Joe Treasure, author of novels such as *The Book of Air* and *The Male Gaze*, the night was filled with splendid poetic presentations from fifteen finalists. Starting with the Shells, Nick Finch, *Newlands*, recited "Huff" by Wendy Cope. Describing the feeling of frustration and anger, Nick delivered his lively poem with great energy and dramatic gestures. Subsequently, Kit Henson, *The Park*, recited "An Irish Airman Foresees His Death" by

W.B. Yeats, in which Kit remorsefully conveyed death and its inevitable reality. Joey Quartey, *Druries*, proceeded to deliver “Lines Written in Early Spring” by William Wordsworth. Throughout the poem, Joey discussed the beauty of Spring in a descriptive and self-inquisitive manner. Acting as the runner-up for the shell category, Vincent Song, *The Head Master’s*, delivered an extremely thoughtful and beautifully rhymed presentation of “anyone lived in a pretty how town” by E.E. Cummings. However, the winner of the shell category was awarded to Netanel Lawrence-Ojo, *The Knoll*, whose performance of Roald Dahl’s “Television” spoke about the modern frustration with the rise of technology. Presented with a satirical and humorous tone, Mr Treasure claimed Netanel had ‘really sold that poem’ due to his passionate and intense delivery.

In the Remove category in which five Remove-finalists presented their learnt poetry. To begin with, Connor O’Flaherty, *The Head Master’s*, presented the poem “Vitaī Lampada” by Sir Henry Newbolt, in which Conner spoke passionately and even put his body on the line when the finale of the poem saw himself fall down onto the floor. Ayobami Awolesi’s, *The Head Master’s*, recitation of “Let America be America Again” by Langston Hughes proved to be a patriotic and passionate speech about the raging inequality within the United States. Additionally, Rowland Eveleigh’s, *The Grove*, inquisitive and thoughtful delivery of Kathleen Raine’s “Story’s End” presented a strong sense of curiosity and ambiguity on the topic of love. Commended by the adjudicator, Alexander Seely’s, *The Head Master’s*, recitation of “Cinderella” by Roald Dahl presented a dark and sinister twist on the classic fairy tale. However, the winner of the Removes category went to Aum Amin, *Elmfield*, whose delivery of Edgar Allan Poe’s “Dream Within a Dream” was praised by Mr Treasure for having a natural and personal quality in its deliverance.

Finally, the last category of Fifth and Sixth Form commenced. Starting the group, William Wauchope, *The Knoll*, presented “Stanzas” by Emily Brontë, in which William spoke about the power of nature in an alliterative and pensive fashion. Indi Abrams, *The Grove*, followed with Thomas Lovell Beddoes’ “A Crocodile.” Indi delivered the narrative poem with varying volume and a powerful and daunting conclusion, furiously emulating the strength and terror of a crocodile. John Koutalides, *West Acre*, continued the evening with his comedic and repetitive delivery of A.A. Milne’s “Disobedience” about the narrator’s humorous relationship with his mother. Next, Freddie Strange, *Newlands*, delivered his commended recital of Philip Larkin’s “Wild Oats”. Describing the comedic love affair with a lady, the adjudicator was pleased with the dramatized story of awkwardness in love and romance. Finally, Mr Treasure was extremely impressed with the category’s winner, Gareth Tan, *Newlands*, and his delivery of “Singapore, You Are Not My Country” by Alfian Sa’at, a poem which the adjudicator had not been previously familiar with, impressing everyone with his powerful performance.

THE QUEEN GOES GO-KARTING

Part one: an introduction

HM The Queen: Good day, Phil.

HRH Prince Phillip: Good morning, Lilibet.

Q: So, what plans does the royal schedule have for the family today?

P: I believe we are going to kart?

Q: Going karting?

Prince William: I believe that grandfather means go-karting.

Q: Go-karting? Sounds like an interesting form of amusement. And, my dearest grandson, what does this “karting” entail?

W: It involves driving around in small “karts” and racing each other for fun.

Q: Fun? I hardly have enough time: not the effort for that these days. And driving? I can only hope that Phillip has his wits about him when we are there, as to not cause another accident.

P: My dear, I thought that we were not going to bring that up before the children!

Q: So, how would we travel to the go-karting establishment?

P: Unfortunately, most of the royal staff are on leave. All of them have state-endorsed eye tests, so I’ll have to drive.

Q: Have the House of Commons not banned you from driving, you know, after the incident?

P: If I can’t drive and there’s none to drive us, then we must take public transport.

Q: Do you know where the oyster cards are?

HILL LIFE

There are certain things that are synonymous with one another to such an extent that they are intrinsic to each’s identity. Nike and the swoosh, McDonalds and its golden arches, the Prime Minister with No. 10, Apple and the iPhone and perhaps now maybe Prince Andrew with pig-headedness! As a Harrovian, there is one that I often encounter when the school is brought up: the hats. Without meaning to step on the toes of J.W.Shin & Co. too much this week, dear readers, I would like to question how one of the core pillars of life on the Hill could have been compromised so much.

The straw-hat is, in a Harrow context, a display of gentlemanly etiquette as much as it is a simple piece of uniform. Lifting your hat for a lady, a slight raise for a gentleman, the art of balancing one expertly on one’s head and, of course, the removal of a hat when greeting someone or entering a building should all be standard procedure. Now, rather than write some unreasonable would-be-Victorian rant, I will recognise that the landscape has changed somewhat since the Grandmother of Europe’s death, but, seeing that we still wear our iconic black ties in mourning, it seems right that we should address the discrepancies that have crept into our hat etiquette.

First, the elastic bands. Whilst these have long since been equipped to our hats, the idea that we wear them is like suggesting that, in wearing our hats, we are no different to six-year-olds playing fancy dress. Is the straw hat simply a fancy gimmick or the staple of a Harrovian’s dress and history? Before you take out your scissors to cut out these petulant insults, it is important to note that their presence is more of a reflection on society than us having lost our way. Alas, the straw hat or boater is a less prevalent fashion accessory than it once was. In fact, it is so uncommon it is nigh-on impossible to find a high-quality manufacturer anymore and as such the quality of our hats now make it equally impossible to wear them in the ‘windy yard at bill’ without said strap. After all, a builder is only as good as his tools, etc...

Secondly: capping. An original substitute to the ridiculous demand of beaks having to raise their mortarboards for every Harrovian they pass and vice versa, capping was introduced to save effort. However, seldom few beaks don a mortarboard anymore and the idea of walking along with a finger raised has no precedent in behavioural codes: there has never been such an action required of those not wearing a hat. Neither is it necessary as a means of recognising those you pass; a good morning, afternoon or evening would suffice as a more welcoming and friendly way of acknowledging those who traverse the Hill alongside us.

In a greater sense, as the digital age advances and makes it mark in the world around us our quirky traditions become more unique and valuable. However, it should stand that, if we are to hold onto such traditions, we should do so in keeping with their history and not let time erode their meaning more, lest we end up nothing more than clowns.

CHESS CHALLENGE

Regional Final, 7 November

Last Thursday, Harrow sent a team of four to participate in a tournament of the noblest sport of all – chess. The team gathered in the great meeting hall of MS5 and prepared to do battle in the highest intellectual domain. Unfortunately, the team's pre-match rituals were abruptly disrupted by JPBH's insistence on bringing chess clocks and boards (therefore requiring us to open a few new clocks and label them). But as soon as that delay had concluded, the team was off and travelled to Mill Hill County High School – fuelled by the sugar of M&M eggs and the sparkling wit present in the van. Upon our arrival five minutes late, we dashed in through the doors of the tournament only to find it had not yet begun and our clocks and boards unwanted. We waited, anxious at the prospect of four continuous games of rapid-play chess. In our first round, we played the hosts Mill Hill County High School B and quickly dispatched the games on boards two, three and four in swift order. However, Philip Truscott, *Elmfield*, had some difficulties against a tough opponent on board one. Nonetheless, with great skill, he managed to salvage a desperate position to claim a win and put Harrow up 4-0 in our first match. Due to this great display of strategic prowess, Harrow was propelled to the top of the table and paired against the formidable University College School A. In this second match, we unfortunately only managed to claim one and a half points through a win from Gareth Tan, *Moretons*, and a draw from Jacob Goldberg, *Bradlys*. Despite the result, this was still a respectable outcome given that members of the opposition had previously played for England. Still bruised, we were then thrust immediately into our third round against St John's School, which we dutifully won 4-0 with a particularly outstanding display from Sean Hargraves, *The Head Master's*. With this slew of wins, the next match was crucial in determining Harrow's final position in the tournament. We were paired against Mill Hill County High School A, a team viciously eager to avenge the defeat suffered by their B-team brethren. Each game was hard fought, requiring strenuous mental effort to finish. By the end of it, Harrow won 3-1, only losing the game on board 2. Yet, despite our efforts, we were only able to claim joint-second place with University College School B on 12.5 points, finishing one point behind University College School A. Despite this disappointing finish, we still felt proud of the result we managed to achieve (even if we were busy calculating all the permutations by which we could have won). Thank you to JPBH for this enriching experience and to the staff of the Shepherd Churchill, who ensured the team had food to eat after a strenuous afternoon of mental exercise.

OPINION

CHANGE FOR THE SAKE OF...

From the Desk of AC

Anyone who has attended a boys' forum, council or committee meeting will have heard the complaint that nothing changes as a result of what boys say. That is not true at Harrow. It might be the case that decisions are made slowly and carefully. It might be the case that we listen but decide not to change. The reasons are always then explained in the next meeting. Most importantly, we are always interested in boys' ideas and suggestions.

One idea from the boys' IT Committees last year was that access to the network at weekends should be less restricted. We weighed the arguments and we decided last week to make that change: on Sundays, the network will be unrestricted

from 8am till 7pm, except for one hour between 12pm and 1pm for prep. The importance of an opportunity for relaxation on Sundays, alongside the structured programme of activities, prevailed. We are going to allow access to WhatsApp through the School's network too, to make it easier for boys to keep in touch with parents and friends.

The Behaviour Policy was in focus at the start of the term: some rules were made clearer, others were brought into line with the legal and social landscape at university and in the workplace. The new emphasis in the School rules on protected characteristics such as religion, race, gender and sexual orientation will prepare boys better for a world in which standards in relation to language and behaviour are rightly much higher than they were even a few years ago. The same is true for the clearer rules on the use of force. No-one would think it acceptable for a member of staff at Harrow to use force against anyone else in the School community, and the standards should be the same for everyone on the Hill.

On Friday, the Behaviour Policy will be back in focus as boys and beaks reflect on a series of questions on possible changes in 2020. How should the disciplinary process be structured? Who should be involved in it? How effective are our sanctions, and how appropriate? What else can we do to help boys to make good decisions? We have chosen flocks for those conversations, so that we can be sure that all boys are involved and so that we can generate discussion between the year groups.

In next week's column, the changes to Trials over the last few years and the recent work on awards and colours.

SUDOKU

Persevera per severa per se vera

3				6				
4							1	7
		2		9		5		
			4			3		
		1						
5						2	6	
			9					
			1		7			

GAFFE AND GOWN

Quips from Around the Hill

"You, boy. I have been speaking for ten minutes and you've only jotted that one thing down?" "Yes, sir, that's why it's called OneNote."

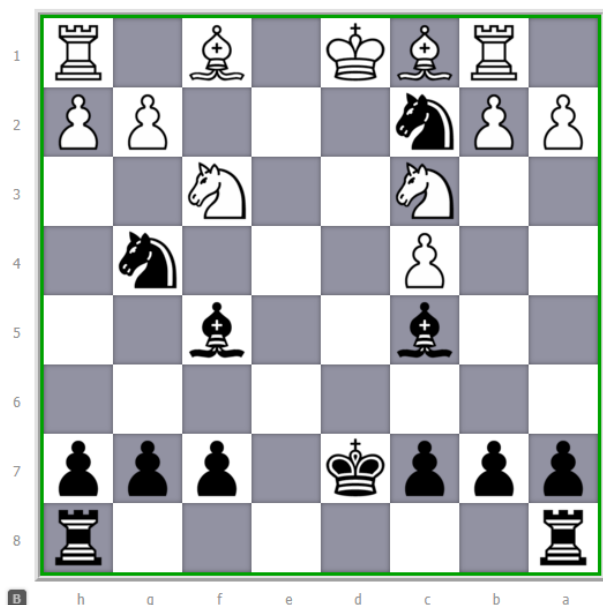
"Sir, does Britain have any ecological wastelands?" "Yes, Slough."

"Now, boys, whoever answers my next question can head off to break." (*Boy throws his bag out of the window.*) "Who just threw that?!" "Me, sir. I'm now heading off to break."

CHESS PUZZLE

The weekly Chess Puzzle set by JPBH. Email your solutions to him (jpbh@harrowschool.org.uk) to enter the termly competition. Answers are published with next week's puzzle.

This edition's puzzle: Black to play and mate in 3 moves.

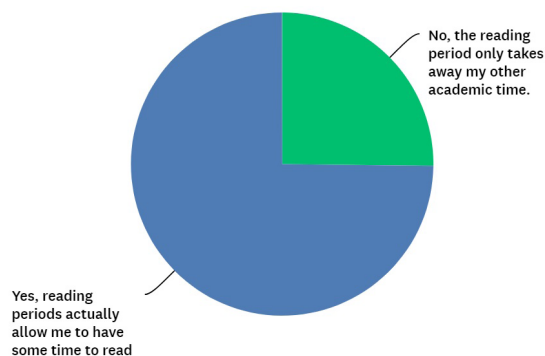


Last edition's answer: 1. ... Re3+ 2. Kxd4 (if 2. Nd3 then Rxd3 is mate) Nc2+ 3. Kc4 b5#

Fancy playing chess? Drop in to Chess Club – Tuesdays and Thursdays 4.30-6pm in Maths Schools 5. All abilities (boy, beak or non-teaching staff) are welcome!

HARROVIAN POLL

With a vote tally of nearly 600 boys across the School, the verdict is in: boys like reading. And it seems that the reading period is appreciated by the majority of boys; it allows them to finally sit down in some peace and quiet (along with some refreshing biscuits, that is, if SMK hasn't already eaten the New Schools' stash in advance).



The boys were asked whether they thought that the sacrifice of lesson time was a good thing, and less than 24% of respondents thought that the reading period actually made a significant impact on their lesson time. Perhaps the benefits outweigh the costs? Boys agree that reading periods actually allow them to have some time to read for fun, something other than just another textbook. Of course, the poll could be skewed: those boys most likely not to have responded are those who don't read – their emails.

SPORTS

BADMINTON

The School v Winchester College

Open – 1st Won 5-3

In our first fixture against Winchester in at least five years, the team produced a convincing 5-3 win. There were notable performances from Pair 1 (Kingston Lee, *Elmfield*, and Jake Forster, *The Knoll*) who won in straight sets (24-22, 21-19 against Pair 1, and 21-4, 21-8 against Pair 2). Winchester's Pair 1 proved incredibly strong and, after an early 21-12 win in the first set, Pair 2 (Lawrence Leekie, *West Acre*, and Yi Zheng Gan, *The Knoll*) eventually scored 12-21 and 22-20. Harrow's Pair 2 then made quick work of Winchester's Pair 2, winning 21-10 and 21-14. Lower down, a strong Winchester Pair 3 put our players under pressure, beating both Pairs 3 and 4 in three sets, though Pair 4 was more easily defeated in straight sets. It was excellent to have so many supporters in attendance, to both score the fixture (thank you Kevin Zheng, *Newlands*, Cody Xu, *The Grove*, Dylan Winward, *Lyon's*, Q Sun, Krish Nigam, both *Moretons*, Archie Kyd, *The Park*, Marcus Tung and Alex Locke, both *West Acre*) and to provide some moral support with so many nail-biting moments.



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HARROW-ON-THE-HILL

CROSS COUNTRY

The cross-country team travelled to St Albans School for a flat 5,000m dash around grassy and muddy sports fields. Notable performances were given by Graham Lambert, *Lyon's*, and George Rates, *Newlands*. Julian Abass, *Elmfield*, and Freddie Taylor, *Newlands*, also excelled, showing grit and determination, given the competition included some of the best sixth-form runners in the London area.

SWIMMING

*English School Association Championships
Olympic Pool Stratford, 16 November*

The ESSA Swimming Championships are the national schools relay finals. The top 30 schools in the country are selected through preliminary rounds held earlier in the term. In order to qualify, a school must have one of the fastest-30 times in the land in either the 4 x 50m medley or freestyle relay events. For many schools, to make it to this illustrious competition is a landmark in itself. It is also worth noting that, in 2015, Harrow did not qualify for any of the possible four relay events and therefore did not attend this event.



Ten of our strongest swimmers travelled on Saturday over the exeat weekend to Stratford to take part in the English Schools Championships. Captains Thomas Khan, *West Acre*, and Andrew Hong, *Lyon's*, led from the front, both in character and performance. Their care and support, especially of the junior members of the team, was impressive. Finn Deacon, *The Park*, must also be mentioned as vice captain of the team, as he came along in moral support, even though he was not racing.

These are the swimmers that had the honour of representing the School:

Intermediates: James Rates, *Newlands*, Data Photpipat, *The Head Master's*, Aidan Wong, *The Park*, Nicholas Finch, *Newlands*, Henry Gray, *Lyon's*

Seniors: Captains: Andrew Hong and Thomas Khan, Ethan Yeo, *The Head Master's*, Henry Pearce, *Newlands*, William Rudd, *The Head Master's*.

The boys performed far better than anticipated, with 15 new personal-best times set out of a total of 32 swims. In some cases, a personal-best time was set in the heats and then it was broken once more in the final. The boys showed great determination, focus, resolve and competitive spirit as they challenged themselves in this impressive Olympic environment. The results of the day's competition are as follows:

Senior freestyle event: seeded 7th after the preliminary heats, *finished 9th overall*.

Senior medley event: seeded 8th after the preliminary heats, *finished 5th overall*.

Intermediate freestyle event: seeded 8th after the preliminary heats, *finished 5th overall*.

Intermediate medley event: seeded 8th after the preliminary heats, *finished 4th overall* (.7 of a second from the podium 3rd place) All swimmers swam to the best of their ability and are to be commended. However, here are some of the highlights of the day. Thomas Khan had the fastest time recorded in the pool from our swimmers on the day. He swam a very impressive 24.6s for 50m freestyle; our School record, set by a former GB swimmer, is 23.72s.

Name	Event	Time	School Record
Yeo	50m breaststroke	31.20**	31.34
Hong	50m butterfly	26.22	5.54
Finch	50 Butterfly	27.64**	27.87
Rates	50 Freestyle	25.5	24.40
Pearce	50 Freestyle	25.25	24.40
Gray	50 Backstroke	30.98	30.19
Wong	50 breaststroke	32.46	31.50

**Does not count as a New School Record as swum as part of a relay

Senior Medley team were the first to compete in the heats. William Rudd started the team off on the backstroke leg. He was followed by Ethan Yeo who swam a near School record Breaststroke leg. Our two Captains, Andrew Hong and Thomas Khan, finished this event with personal best times in the Butterfly and Freestyle. After the heats, this team was seeded 8th and thus advanced to the Final 10 teams in the land. In the final, flanked by Millfield and Kelly College (specialised swimming academies), the boys raised their game even further and in a nail-biting finish between 4th and 5th places fifth overall. Thomas Khan swam 24.6s for his final relay leg, putting every ounce of energy into the water. The Intermediates swam better than expected.

RACKETS

The School v Charterhouse

Senior – 1st Pair Lost 1-3

Rishi Wijeratne, *The Head Master's*, and Ben Hope, *Rendalls*, were unable to find their best form and slipped to a 1-3 defeat.

Senior – 2nd Pair Won 3-2

An excellent effort from Sasha Sebag-Montefiore, *The Knoll*, and Johnny Connell, *Rendalls*, who came from 2-9 down in the final game to win 3-2.

Colts – 1st Pair Won 3-0

Some aggressive strokeplay from Max Shirvell, *The Head Master's*, and neat footwork from Federico Gheri, *The Head Master's*, combined to secure a 3-0 win.

Junior Colts – 1st Pair Won 3-1

A fine 3-1 win for Tarquin Sotir, *Druries*, and Veer Patel, *The Knoll*, characterised by strong serving from Patel and precise strokeplay from Sotir.

Junior Colts – 2nd Pair Won 3-0

Jonty Williams, *Moretons*, and Adi Gupte, *West Acre*, showed encouraging signs of improvement in a convincing 3-0 win.

FIVES

The School v Eton College

Seniors Won 2-0

A 2-0 win for the seniors today against the old enemy was just deserved. The first pair of Freddy Anton-Smith, *The Head Master's*, and Fred Prickett, *The Park*, provided the tightest match completing three sets in two hours with Eton having to leave. (Hence a drawn result was agreed.) Each set went to sudden death and it is clear that both boys are improving rapidly.

The second pair of Jonny Barley, *The Grove*, and Phoenix Ashworth, *The Head Master's*, also improved from their previous matches and produced some solid cutting with better rally play resulting in a straight 3-0 win.

Panav Patel, *Elmfield*, and Caleb Efemuai, *Newlands*, also enjoyed themselves at third pair with another 3-0 win and have yet to be beaten at that level.

Colts Lost : 1-2

Although second and third lost today the first pair of Alonso Fontana, *The Grove*, and Adam Zakhir, *Lyon's*, battled hard to win 3-1 in sets with some great cutting from Alonso and solid returns from Adam proving decisive. This was a great result for them as they are playing up a year.

Junior Colts Won 2-1

The first pair of Gus Stanhope, *Moretons*, and Charlie Hope, *Rendalls*, won 3-0 playing up a year with some great footwork and better volleys. After a close first set they ran out easy winners dominating their opponents particularly in the last set winning that 12-2. It was good to see both boys happy with their performances.

The second pair of Casper Stone, *The Park*, and Leo Gordan Pullar, *Newlands*, pulled out a fantastic result winning 3-0 also. Both boys produced some excellent set pieces and sensible rally play once they got going to get their deserved win.

SQUASH

Nationals Round One

v St Paul's Lost 1-4 (Tarquin Sotir, *Druries*, 2-1; Sasha Sebag-Montifiore, *The Knoll*, 0-3; William Orr Ewing, *Elmfield*, 0-3; Freddie Murley, *The Park*, 1-2; Humza Qureshi, *The Park*, 0-3)
v Forest School Won 3-2 (Sotir 0-3; Sebag Montifiore 1-2; Orr Ewing 3-0; Murley 3-0; Qureshi w/o)
v Highgate School Lost 1-4 (Sotir 0-3; Sebag Montifiore 0-3; Orr Ewing 0-3; Murley 3-0; Qureshi 1-2)

There was an encouraging conversation that took place in the pasta-loading/bonding session on the eve of the National Schools group stage.

Sebag-Montifiore: We could win the Nationals

Coach: Only if we kill all the school first teams in the country

Orr-Ewing: And their second teams

The Psychiatric Unit (PU) only survives as a functioning unit through its members honest awareness of their own limitations. It is absolutely vital that they are able to laugh at their misfortune. Only then can they cope with the endless stream of defeats, the so-called Cycle of Misery (COM). Orr Ewing is usually only capable of the odd grunt at training sessions but inability to communicate is a characteristic of the PU, so it was not a real concern. Therefore, his comment at the pasta loading was music to the ears, showing a team steeped in the gritty reality of their endless predicament. It was a truly wonderful comment.

However, there have emerged several serious threats to the sanity and mental health of the PU this term.

The baseless optimism of Sebag-Montifiore: as you can see from the above conversation, Sebag is prone to the "anything is possible" mantra of modern society. There is no place for cheerful optimism when the sanity of the PU lies on a knife-edge. Any sign of self-belief will crumble at the next defeat and end in tears or worse.

Encouragement from the Outside Coach: the Outside Coach is paid to be happy and encouraging. He should be paid to be miserable and abusive. By pretending that improvements are taking place he is placing the PU in to a very exposed position. He also likes to be sent the results of matches, which suggests he believes that he might receive good news. This is a dangerous precedent.

Outside Coach: when I first saw you play at the start of term I was truly concerned but now, having seen you in action over the last few weeks.....

Inside Coach: you realise it is worse than you thought.

It was important to jump in at that point before the boys began to think they were making progress and might become good.

Victory: we had no problem with the 5-0 defeats against Aylesbury and Epsom. These merely confirmed what the PU already knew. However, we had not planned for the basket-cases that were Brentwood and Lancing. Sudden unexpected wins in these matches threw the PU into mental turmoil. Did this mean we are good and could become very good? Are we actually improving? It was vital to step in and keep fragile minds and feet on the ground.

Sebag: Sir, we won!

Coach: Only in one sense.

Sebag: In what sense?

Coach: Only in the sense that we generally scored more points than the opposition.

Injury: this has reared its ugly head and presents an excuse for poor performance. If the PU has an excuse they reach a state of denial and cannot face the reality that they were beaten by better teams. Tiger Powell, *The Grove*, was a key member of the PU and epitomised the endless years of futile struggle. He went skiing one day and never returned. Orr Ewing rolled an ankle in 2016 and has never quite shrugged it off. And where do we start with Sebag? He has become known as Mister Blister. He has had everything from tennis elbow to hip replacements. Blisters seem to have the capacity to burst out spontaneously as soon as defeat looms. The only place that blisters seem to avoid is his tongue.

Qureshi: We lost.

Coach: Yes

Qureshi: But we had lots of injuries

Coach: Do you think that made the difference?

Qureshi: No, we would have lost anyway.

(This is why Qureshi was made joint-captain).

Begin a League Ladder System (BALLS): the joint captains have adopted a BALLS strategy. This is some kind of app that makes it look like the players win a lot of matches. The idea is that the PU keep playing each other and the results are recorded on the app. If the PU play each other, somebody has to win and they experience the feeling of victory so that they can recognise it if it ever happens in a real match. The problems are i) hopes are shattered when real matches are played, ii) severe demoralisation for those who manage to lose against other members of the PU – there may be no escape from that pit of despair.

Murley finds the answer: against Aylesbury, Murley played quite well while being beaten fairly comfortably 3-0. He thought he had found the answer though no-one knew what the question was.

Murley: I played quite well.

Coach: Yes, you did. Why was that?

Murley: I think it was because I knew I wasn't going to win so I relaxed.

Coach: But you always know you are not going to win.

Murley: Yes, but this was worse.

Murley's natural pessimism is, of course, to be applauded but it is not good for him to think he has found the answer because it will end in tears. Players are generally not encouraged to find answers as this is another threat to mental health. And we still don't know what the question was.

Sotir: Sotir plays some shots that vaguely resemble the sport of squash and this sometimes offers the PU a veneer of respectability. But scrape beneath the surface and it is clear that he fits in well with this group. The same conversation takes place each week. It is fast gaining the status of a ritual.

Sotir: Can I play number 2?

Coach: No.

Sotir: What about Sasha?

Coach: He has a blister.

Sotir: Is their number 1 good?

Coach: Yes

At this point, Sotir screws up his face as if he has just taken a bite out of a sour orange. The truth is that no-one wants to play at number 1, or at 2, 3 and 4 for that matter. This level of humility fits in well with the Harrow Values. Or is it just fear?

And so the PU finished third in their group of four in the Nationals Round 1 despite the pasta loading. But there were some crumbs of comfort. i) We beat Forest who were a player short (this was recorded as a win for Qureshi. He is quite effective when his opponent isn't there), ii) Sebag, having announced that he had a pulled muscle in his hip during his first defeat, made a superb recovery to play well in his third defeat, iii) Murley beat a pleasant girl who seemed to have a bad limp, iv) We now go into the Plate Competition, which Sebag thinks we can win...

SKIING

Harrow placed 16th overall of 43 teams, with outstanding performances and top-40 finishes from Jack Behan-Woodall, *The Grove*, Rupert Cullinane, *Newlands*, and Charlie De Hemptinne, *Bradlys*.

The highest place was the team captain, Behan-Woodall, who came 11th of 200. He should also be commended for his leadership and perseverance in very difficult conditions in Stoke-on-Trent.

In addition, despite being injured in a previous event and therefore being unable to compete for the rest of the ski season, Tiger Powell, *The Grove*, gave up his exeat weekend to come and support the squad.

Overall, the Harrow team have put on an outstanding performance in the dry-slope season and we look forward to continued performances in the Canada Cup and British school boys' competitions.

RUGBY UNION

1st XV v Kirkham Grammar School Lost 17-48

In the now annual North v South fixture, Harrow welcomed back to the Hill our friends from Preston, Kirkham Grammar School. Eager to avenge their defeat in last year's fixture, Kirkham came ready to play and defeated a resilient Harrow XV 48-17. Harrow were the better side for the first ten minutes and threatened Kirkham's goal-line twice with some excellent width in attack. However, Kirkham's defence was stout and Harrow could not break through. Two Harrow errors – an overthrown lineout and a turnover – quickly led to two Kirkham tries and the Harrow boys were struggling to bring down some of the gargantuan Kirkham attackers. In controlled phase-play, Harrow had their opposition knuckled down but, in the loose and broken play, supported by a heavy wind, the Kirkham wingers ran rife and the Mancunians' offload game was superb to watch. Harrow nabbed a try back just before the half but Kirkham had sailed out to a 34-7 at the half. In a similar story to the last two weeks' fixtures, Harrow came out firing in the second half and dominated territory but were unable to capitalise, with inaccuracies around the goal-line causing good opportunities to be squandered. Harrow struck back with a well-worked try from Arundell, *The Knoll*, and a superb final try scored directly off set-piece from the backs by Leney, *The Knoll*. However, Kirkham continued their imperious unbeaten form, teaching the Harrow boys key lessons on the importance of tackling low! Eyes now turn to the Eton and Bedford fixtures to finish the season.

2nd XV v Hampton School

SOCS County Cup – Cup Knockout Semi Final

Lost 0-12

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