



HILTON COLLEGE

View from the
Dugout

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The Easter Holiday was a very busy period for our sport department with no less than 10 rugby and hockey festivals on the go during this time. All-in-all this period turned out to be very successful for our teams with the rugby club doing particularly well to win 19 out of the 20 matches they played.



The 1st XV had a very tough schedule playing in back-to-back festivals at St Johns and at the World Schools Festival in Paarl. In our first match of the festival we were scheduled to play our friends Nelspruit, a tough ask against this very competent rugby school. All sense of comradeship, however, stalled for the duration of the match, an encounter that was characterised by bone crunching tackles and aggressive ball carries. Making a clinical start to the game, we took the early lead with an excellent try. This was gradually eroded, however, with Nelspruit dominating the territory and possession statistics and eventually scoring some points. Dogged defence, however, prevented them from getting too far ahead and with 3 minutes remaining in the match we were able to steal the lead and the victory with a converted penalty (10 - 8). St Johns followed in the main game on Saturday. St Johns have an excellent team so this match was tipped to be a very close encounter. This proved to be correct as despite our territorial dominance the Johannesburg boys steadily built a lead from long range penalties with them taking a 3 - 9 advantage into the half time break. Midway through the 2nd half we took the lead for the first time. A wide ball followed by a perfectly weighted kick by Rob Mattison saw Robbie McGaw pounce for the try (10-9). Another penalty, however, allowed St Johns to regain the lead (10-12) - the game was going down to the wire. With minutes remaining, our boys bashed away at the St Johns line with repeated forward play and eventually scoring to break St John's hearts, winning (15-12). In a final scrappy encounter on the Monday, the 1st XV took their time to break down a spirited St David's outfit. Late tries in the 2nd half sealed a deserved 24-10 win. St Johns mission accomplished - played 3 and won 3. The team flew directly from Johannesburg to Cape Town for the final Easter matches in Paarl. Here too they showed real determination and bravery against two international teams; the AP Dragons, from the Pacific Islands, and the USA Rhino's. In the first match we had to defend wholeheartedly against the massive Dragons players, who we struggled to contain. The islanders took a convincing lead early on which would require an exceptional effort to overturn. A blitz from the White in the last quarter, which included a hatrick of tries by Niaan Taljaard, did just that for us to eventually come out as winners 35 -24. By contrast, in our final match, the USA Rhino's had no answer for our structured play. This created numerous scoring opportunities for the 1st XV and in the end we finished our Easter campaign on a high, winning 78-19.

The Hilton College U16A squad attended the Independent Schools Rugby Festival held at Hilton College from the 11th to the 14th of April. The team played 3 full games against leading Independent Schools that we don't often come up against in our usual season. In the first match the team played St Johns College and won comfortably, 44-12. On the second day, we produced another sterling performance against St Benedicts, winning 39-10. Our final fixture was against a very competitive St Albans side. In this tightly contested game the U16A did well to take all of their scoring opportunities to come out on top 29-5.

The Hilton College U15A rugby squad had a successful rugby festival with a number of good wins. The first day saw the team going down 5-7 to St John's in a 20 minute match. Unfortunately, this was against the run of play as the 15A dominated most passages of play. The second match of the day, another 20 minute match, saw the team bounce back in very wet conditions with a good 17-0 win in a lightening shortened game against Midstream College. The second day saw the fixtures return to full length matches and our boys pulled together for a convincing 31-13 win against St Stithians. A superb training session with former Sharks legend Jacques Botes on our rest day and a braai with our parents in the evening set the foundation for the highlight that was to come the following day. The third and final day of fixtures saw us up against a formidable Helpmekaar team. Our boys made every effort to impress, displaying huge amounts of courage they refused to back down against their bigger and stronger opponents. Coming from 8-10 behind at half time, two splendid tries saw us hang on to win a memorable match 20-15. The match was dedicated to teammate Craig James who is recovering from a severe head injury. Overall, it was an incredible week, with our boys growing immensely and setting us up nicely for the rest of the season.

The U14A rugby squad travelled to the Parktown Boys High Rugby Festival that was held from 27 - 31 March. From the onset we knew that this would be a tough tour with numerous top sides in attendance. Our team surprised all with their determination and never-say-die attitudes and in the end they won all their matches. The highlight for us was a narrow 1 point (18-17) victory over a very highly rated Helpmekaar side with scrumhalf Matthew Bergset converting a kick in extra time to secure the win. The 43-0 win over Parktown Boys High was also a highlight as the team played attractive running rugby to overpower their opponents. The team scored a total of 102 points and only conceded 25 in the five matches played on tour. These statistics speak volumes of this team's determination and commitment on defence which will take them far in future.

HOCKEY



Our 1st XI hockey boys played at the St Stithians festival and at the Nomads festival over the holiday period. These top level events attract the very best hockey schools in the country. After a lack-lustre start to the Saints festival (drawing to Bishops 1-1 and losing to St David's 0-1), our young 1st XI found their mojo with an excellent performance in the main match against St Stithians on the Saturday evening (3-1). They carried this form to the final 2 matches proving just how dominant they can be with a comprehensive 3-1 win against St Albans and a 8-2 win against Uplands. Missing some players going into the Nomads festival certainly took its toll on the team. The boys struggled to regain their form with some inconsistent performances. All of the teams they played rank amongst the very best in South Africa and whilst we lost 2 matches (against Grey College Bloemfontein 1 - 3 and Selborne 0 - 3) we showed what we are capable of by drawing 2 other games (Grey High 2 - 2 and Jeppe 1 - 1) and by dominating KES in our final Easter match 3-1. The boys will no doubt seek to emulate this performance consistently in the domestic season.

The U16A hockey team travelled to Selborne in East London to attend the annual Nomads festival. It was always going to be a tough festival for this team as they were missing key players who were representing the 1st XI at St Stithians. The side managed only one draw from the festival but walked away having learnt valuable lessons which should hold them in good stead for the remainder of the season.

The U14A hockey team were hosted by Jeppe in Johannesburg for their Nomads festival. The tour was a fantastic success with the team playing dominant hockey. This is an exciting group and one to watch going forward. Overall it was a fairly satisfying festival period with many lessons learnt and a renewed focus to keep improving as a hockey club.

PRETORIA BOYS HIGH TOUR

We are very excited about our upcoming fixture against Pretoria Boys High School on the 11th and 12th of May. We are working frenetically on the numerous logistics for this tour and we will be communicating arrangements to parents as soon as possible. Besides the fixtures, an immediate deadline is to finalise accommodation for our boys. We hope that all of our boys will be able to stay with family, friends or Hilton College parents living in Pretoria or Johannesburg.

To this end, the coach of each team will be taking responsibility to ensure each of his players is hosted. Coaches will be liaising with their boys to find out whether they have accommodation and whether or not their families are able to host other boys. We hope to have this process completed next week, so please will parents confirm with their sons if they are able to host boys. Some other logistics that parents should take note of at this time includes the following:

Leaves: Boys may take a weekend leave and stay in Jo'burg or Pretoria on Saturday night. In order for permission to be given, the normal application process will have to be followed. The school is willing to consider providing buses from Jo'burg departing at 12:00pm on Sunday, should there be enough boys who wish to do so. This will require a booking by parents as it will come at an additional cost. Details in this regard will be communicated in due course.

In terms of the drop off/collection time and venue, this will also be communicated to all parents next week. The final match on Saturday will be the 1st XV which will kick off at 13:15. We will, therefore, depart PBHS at 15:00 sharp with a view to being back at Hilton College by no later than 21:30.

I would like to thank all of our parents in advance for being willing to assist us with this tour. It is going to be a real team effort by our community and a fantastic experience for our boys.

WATER POLO

Congratulations to Luke Tillim, Thomas Joubert and Reece MacEwan (non-travelling reserve) on their recent selections to the South African U16 squad. They will be representing our country at the Pan-Pacific Games in New Zealand from 7th-17th July. This is an exceptional achievement.

SWIMMING

At the South African Junior championships (level 4) held in Durban, Christo von Loggerenburg earned a 3rd place in the 50m freestyle and a 4th place in the 100m freestyle against the best junior swimmers in the country.

At the South African level 2 and 3 championships held in Sasolburg in April, 3 of our swimmers, Josh Roberts, Amren Naidoo and Hylton Royden-Turner all won medals. Josh Roberts ended as the top swimmer in the 16 - 18 year age group winning 1 gold, 4 silver and 1 bronze medal. Amren Naidoo won a silver medal and Hylton Royden-Turner won a gold and bronze medal.

FIXTURES

This coming weekend we are travelling to Maritzburg College for our annual winter fixture against the Midlands giants. By all accounts it should be an exciting day of matches. The 1st XV game is scheduled to be a televised game so parents can look out for our rugby boys on Super Sport (14:45 start)

Our remaining fixtures are:

28th April - Kearsney College (Home)
5th May - Michaelhouse (Away)
12th May - Pretoria Boys High (Away)
26th May - Westville (Home)
2nd June - Kearsney College (Away)
9th June - St Charles College (Away)
16th June - Michaelhouse (Home)

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