



HILTON COLLEGE

View from the Dugout

NUMBER 36 • 8 March 2018

Just the other day I heard a true story about a top executive who recently lost his job in what became a 'media' scandal. The fact that the judge, jury and executioner was twitter, and he had no legitimate arbitration is not only worrying but it is a sad indictment on our modern society. Today, if there is bad news (particularly regarding a person or an organization) people are not only happy to consume it but they are just as happy to believe it - even if the news is written by someone with a pseudonym! A further irony is that whilst kangaroo courts are outlawed in society, social media hubs are given carte blanche to crucify the innocent.

It's somewhat depressing that schools are not immune to this type of attack. People with depraved agendas eagerly wait to pounce on the smallest bit of school 'news' which they hope to twist into a scandal for their own gain. School sport is an obvious target. An emotive part of any school, this sphere of education is vulnerable prey for social media sites to increase their viewer ratings (and their revenues). Society, often times, allows people, devoid of integrity, to rank, report and comment on our school sport; and many consume it... and many believe it. Scary thought. As a community let us guard against becoming embroiled in the negative talk and dishonour which is so prevalent in social media sights. Preferring in the words of our school prayer to promote '*whatever is true, whatever is noble and whatever is of good report*'.

I am immensely proud of our summer sport codes. Each one has made significant improvements this term and much fun was had by all of the boys. In the final weekend of summer sport we hosted Michaelhouse at home, with our 1st team Basketball, Cricket, Water Polo and Rowing travelling up to Johannesburg and Pretoria for the national events that were being hosted there. I made the trip to Gauteng to support these teams and was delighted with our performances.



One of the highlights for me this term was getting to watch the rowing club in action at the SA Schools championships at Roodeplaat Dam on Saturday. The magnitude of the regatta was astounding and it was fascinating to learn how the sport really 'works'. Our club is really minute compared to all of the other teams that were at the regatta... but boy do we pack a punch! I was immensely proud of the team and felt very privileged to watch them row to a silver medal (2nd in Southern Africa!) in the 1st quad. In this race the crew of Rory Plunket, Mike Carter, Matt Karlson, Patrick Plunket and Luyanda Cingo pushed a very strong St. Albans outfit all the way, narrowly missing out on the gold by just under a length.

The Friday's opener was the U19 single scull, with an initial field of 76 entries. In a very close final, Patrick Plunket placed 2nd with a silver medal, Rory Plunket placed 3rd with a bronze medal, and Mike Carter also qualified for the final. It is wonderful to note that the Hilton College Rowing Club represented no less than 25% of the participants in the semi-final of the sculls. The last day, Sunday, produced a spectacular finale. Out of the top 35 doubles crews in the U19 doubles event, Rory Plunket and Patrick Plunket took a magnificent second place overall with a silver medal and Mike Carter and Matt Karlson achieved a well-earned 3rd place with a bronze medal.

Congratulations to all the boys and staff for an exceptional season!

(Thanks to Tyrone Plunkett for his contribution to this report)

CRICKET

In cricket, our 1st XI competed at the Independent Schools Cricket Festival held at St. Albans from Thursday to Sunday. They were in devastating form, comfortably winning all three of their matches. In their 2-day opening fixture against Falcon (Zimbabwe) some brilliant batting in our first innings set us up for the game (James Ritchie 106, Robbie McGaw 50 and Michael Booth 53). This was complemented by our strong bowling attack which saw us bundle out Falcon for 110 runs. Another exceptional batting performance (Michael Sclanders 123) left our opponents with 390 runs to chase. In the end, we were too strong and Falcon slumped to 71 all out; a 319 run victory for the 'White'. On Saturday we met Michaelhouse in a declaration match, with 'House' batting first. After a good start by the boys from Balgowan, we were able to restrict their total with excellent bowling in the latter overs (Colby Dyer 9 overs, 3 maidens, 17 runs and 4 wickets). They ended their innings on 187 runs. In our reply we were in all sorts of trouble with the loss of three quick wickets in the early stages. An incredible fight back, however, by Michael Sclanders and Gareth Schreuder put us back on track. These boys were unshakable and systematically ground down the Michaelhouse attack. In the end, they both carried their bat to seal the win by 7 wickets (Michael Sclanders 100*, Gareth Schreuder 61*). On the final day of play, we met St. Benedicts in a T20 encounter at 'Bennies'. Batting first, the Johannesburg side did well to amass 148 runs in their innings. We were confident, however, that this sizable total could be surpassed on what was a batting friendly strip. Our openers, Robbie McGaw (71*) and James Ritchie (77*) made the chase look easy and their well-constructed partnership was unbeaten at the end of the match; the 1st XI completing a resounding 10 wicket victory in the 17th over. At home, Hilton were fortunate to have the better of many of the contests as the 3rd's, 4th's U15B, U15C, U14B, U14C and U14D teams won on the day. The U16A, U15A and U14A matches all were ended prematurely as weather intervened, with all of our teams in strong positions in all of those contests.

Notable performances in these matches included the following: In the U14C, after the early loss of wickets, a 100 run partnership between BT Ramolefe and Kyle Gilson set up the win. In the U14B team, a hatrick by Brent Hildebrand provided impetus to clean up the tail of the Michaelhouse U14B team. The fighting U16A's appreciated the unbeaten 47 run 10th wicket partnership between Josh Cox and Thabiso Dlamini. The grit they showed allowed the U16A to come within a whisker of winning their match. Some outstanding team achievements were from the U15A and U14A, both of which managed to score over 250 runs in their batting innings.

Congratulations to all who added value to the success of the Hilton College cricketing program this season. We would also like to wish Tim Groenewald (1st XI coach) every success as he starts his English County season with Somerset and we welcome Dale Benkenstein back into our structures. Dale will travel with the First team to the National finals of the Coca Cola T20 tournament. (Thanks To Warren Kirsten for his contribution to this report)

WATER POLO



The 1st team travelled to Johannesburg for the KES water polo festival. All the best schools are in attendance at this tournament and it is, therefore, widely regarded as the premier school boy water polo event in the country. Our boys were assigned to the 'pool of death' and, as such, it was always going to be hard to advance to the cup play-offs against top sides, SACS, Jeppe and St. Johns. Our boys, however, took up the challenge and played some exceptional water polo. In their first match they came agonisingly close to beating St. Johns, losing by a goal in the last minute of play (7 - 8). In the second pool match against Jeppe, the top Gauteng team in the tournament, we were outmuscled in the end losing (8 - 12). We did, however, lead the match at times, and were playing some sublime polo. In the last pool match we came close again, losing in a humdinger to SACS 10 - 12. This relegated us to the plate section of the tournament. The team played two exceptional play-off matches beating KES and then Reddam with relative ease. This qualified us for the plate final against Jeppe (who had also been knocked out of the cup section). In a heart-stopping encounter our boys took a 2 - 1 lead with moments still to play. Unfortunately, Jeppe found the equaliser (2 - 2) and the match was destined for penalties. In the penalty shootout we clutched defeat from the jaws of victory after having had clear opportunities to win. Despite the losses, the 1st's can look back with pride on their performances as in every game they were equally matched against the best teams in SA.

At home, Hilton Water Polo completed an incredibly successful domestic season with an exceptional day of matches at the weekend against old rivals, Michaelhouse.

The club put on a great all-round performance by winning 7 of the matches and very narrowly losing out in only 2 of the encounters (the 15B and 2nd team matches, who lost 6 - 7 and 3 - 5 respectively). Notable performances of the day were: the U14A team (with a comprehensive 19-0 victory), the U15A team (with a comfortable 6-0 victory) and the 5th team (in a dominant 11-2 performance). These performances also saw the U14A and U14B teams both posting an unbeaten (term 1) season. Some pleasing statistics to celebrate were as follows: The club posted a 76% win ratio across all the teams (Played 67, won 51, lost 13 and drew 3), along with an impressive overall goal difference of 388 goals (Goals for 626, goals against 238).

Representation:

TJ Joubert (SA U16), Tim Mundell (SA U17) and Mr. Andrew Duncan (SA U17 Coach) are currently in Durban playing matches against Zimbabwe and Egypt in the CANA Championships. We wish them all the best of luck.

BASKETBALL

The 1st basketball team competed in the St. Johns Basketball tournament. This event is the biggest of its kind with exceptional teams from all over Southern Africa in attendance. Our boys were extremely unfortunate in their pool matches, losing a number of matches by the narrowest of margins. If these results had gone our way they certainly would have been at the very top of their section and competing for the top places. As it turned out we were not able to advance to the finals. It is worthy to note, however, that the team was never outclassed in their matches and they earned two exceptional victories against very good teams, KES and St. Charles. St. Charles has consistently been considered one of the top basketball schools in the country and a team that we have never beaten in our past. The match against them happened to be our final pool match and it ended up being an absolute thriller. With scores tied at the end of the game, extra time was applied. St. Charles took the early initiative scoring first. Our boys, however, were not going to give up and they fought back eventually surpassing the St. Charles score and holding off our opponents in what was a nervy last minute for the win (33 - 31).



The rest of the club did exceptionally well against Michaelhouse. A real cause for celebration was the exceptional achievement of the U14 teams who completed a clean sweep of victories. The U14A (28 - 8) and U14B (27 - 15) completed resounding victories whilst the U14C showed real match temperament by winning a nail biter (13 - 12). Other victories came from the 4th (33 - 30) and 5th teams (16 - 7).

Tony Shuttleworth
Executive Director - Sport

