



Cubitt Newsletter

Lent 2010

Housemaster's Comments

It seems a long time since the start of term with the excitement and frustration of the snow – depending on how you looked at it! We managed to keep going with routines remarkably well and we did appreciate all the efforts of parents in getting the boys to school – some fine tales of intrepid journeys such as two hour walks through the snow! Once again the boys were quick to point out that it wasn't fair as we were one of the only schools in SE England open for business!

For the majority of the term there has again been a super atmosphere and supportive, friendly feel about the House. However, the weeks leading up to half-term are always the toughest and most demanding of the year as the boys are tired, occasionally lacking a little purpose and feeling cooped up with the long, dark winter days – never a good recipe. The majority responded well showing good stamina and patience and those who did struggle (sometimes resulting in a few social tensions) were quick to learn lessons and, as ever with boys, move on quickly; it was very heartening to see the spring weather arrive after half-term and the boys able to get outside and throw/kick some balls about together!

The recent A2 and AS modular exam results have helped to refocus the mind of the sixth form on to the importance of the next two months in terms of their studies work and they, along with the GCSE students, will have to ensure they find the right balance in the holidays between an effective revision programme and a good rest. There are over four weeks in total so there should be ample enough time for both and the boys would have discussed the best approach with their tutors.

In the following pages, Gordon Neill will once again regale you with the pleasingly successful exploits of Cubittians in many of the competitions this term. There has been an unbelievable amount crammed into this, the shortest of the terms, and whether it has been the House contests or school-based events, the vast majority of boys have been fully involved and achieving good things. My personal highlight would have to be the stunning musical show "Fiddler on the Roof" which, although very much a school-based production, did have Cubitt boys dominating

the male lead roles and proved that we are blessed with real talent – one has to mention Dom Murray who was simply sensational as Tevye. It was also tremendous that so many of the House went to support them.

I trust you enjoy the extended family time together over the holidays and I look forward to welcoming the boys back re-energised for the excitements and challenges of the summer term.

CHDB



Cross Country

For Cubittians, the Lent term of 2009 will forever be shrouded in the ignominious mist of cross-country defeat. After fourteen glorious years of unbroken success, a remarkably unfortunate series of injuries had allowed the wretched usurpers of East to pilfer our crown and our goal in 2010 was clear – to win back what was rightfully ours. It was a fine, crisp spring afternoon when Cubitt's finest – happily all fit, for once – gathered at the starting line. "Cry havoc and unleash the dogs of war!" we cried and unleashed they were. Their names will forever resound through the corridors of Cubitt – Allon-Smith, Batchelor, Wilson, Rowson – for all four finished in the first seven of the seniors and, with Jack Pearson coming second in the junior competition, the cross-country crown was retrieved, given a hasty wipe and placed firmly back on Cubitt heads. Hurrah!

Hockey

On the hockey field, alas, it was a different story. On paper, we looked strong. Seven players from the unbeaten Under 14 As: three England internationals in James Gall, Johnny Gall and Tom Batchelor: wily veterans in Sam Wilson and Max Rowson. "Who can stop us?" we cried. The answer? Pretty much everyone. The sum fell some way short of its parts as we staggered to a joint second position overall which, the cynic might observe, also meant joint last. Never mind – the Stonesett competition gave us, as ever, a wealth of comic capers and I

particularly enjoyed watching the now traditional "Front Row" team, marshalled by James Atkinson, with outstanding support from his trusty lieutenants, Justin and Crinage. As ever, they played precious little hockey (scoring two goals and conceding nineteen) but they charged around to splendid effect, leaving a trail of bruised and bewildered bodies in their wake.

On a more serious note, it is a quite remarkable achievement for three boys in one house to have gained international recognition in one sport and the Gall brothers and Tom Batchelor deserve the most sincere congratulation.





Football

In football, controversy was our unwanted bed-fellow, as our semi-final against North ended in acrimony and defeat. We lost in a penalty shoot out but only after a Cubitt goal had been contentiously disallowed. There were howls of dismay from our manager, that shrewd tactician Anthony Dunkley, but all to no avail. The anti-climax of the 3rd/4th place play-off beckoned and, in an unremarkable encounter, we went down 1-0, consigning us to last place, in a season which confirmed John Greenleaf Whittier's old mantra: "For all sad words of tongue or pen, the saddest are these: it might have been."



Water-Polo/ Chess!

There are certain houses that clearly have a taste for the aquatic. Certain houses for whom the mere whisper of the words 'water polo' are like the sweet taste of water upon parched lips. Cubitt is not of their number. As ever, the water polo competition saw Cubitt make a hasty – and frankly ignominious - exit as, once again, we entered the competition with a less than secure grasp of the rules, splashed around gamely and then lost. As Jamie Ellis, that doyen of the water polo arena, put it, "Things were going well until we were told we couldn't stand up." Befitting our reputation as a house of great thinkers, our chess team, marshalled by Dan Weston, was a great deal more competitive. Knights donned their armour, rooks were roused to a state of near hysteria and certain pawns were not allowed to take the board, under suspicion of steroid abuse. They can count themselves unlucky not to have come away with some silverwear.



Music and Drama

The highlight of the term, as Charlie mentions above, was undoubtedly 'Fiddler on the Roof' and I can only add my congratulations to Dominic Murray for a quite exceptional performance as Tevye. It is rare indeed to see an eighteen year old so accomplished at engaging an audience through both acting and song. Anthony Dunkley made an excellent Lasar Wolf and Jon Oldfield's suitably meek tailor, Patrick Cahill's Jewish villager and Tommy Lyster's splendidly comic rabbi were all performed with real flair and musical understanding. We were also well represented in the "Battle of the Bands" where, for the second consecutive year, Paddy Fletcher, Charlie Henry and Dan Wasswa's band, "Palace Guard" emerged victorious – just reward for a very talented group of young musicians.



Academically, we have had another fine year, with the large majority of Cubittians once again receiving consistently impressive reports for attainment and effort throughout the five year groups. The Upper Sixth have received some very good offers and, pleasingly, the vast majority are well on course, after the recent modular results, to fulfil them. Particular congratulations should go to James Atkinson (offer to read English from Balliol College, Oxford) and Charles Rea (offer to read Mathematics from Clare College, Cambridge) from this year's Upper Sixth and, from last year's, Ben Sanderson, who was offered an unconditional place to read English at St.Hilda's College, Oxford as a post-A Level applicant. This year's academic prizes went to Ollie Clark (4th form), James Thompson (5th form) and Charles Rea (6th form). Many congratulations to them all.

It only remains to record this term's winners of the House Fellowship Awards, given to those boys who most exemplify the spirit of the house. This term, these were awarded to James Atkinson in the senior school and Henry Thomas in the junior school. Congratulations to them both and I hope that all Cubittians and their families enjoy a splendid Easter holiday.

GJNN

Cerebral Matters

Away from the sports field, we had high hopes for our Debating team of Fin Johnston, Alex Clarke and James Atkinson this year. Unfortunately, however, we were bested by a very impressive West unit, although it is still worth noting that James Atkinson was the outstanding speaker on view that afternoon. We have been fortunate to have a debater of James' quality available for the last five years and he will be sorely missed. In the Junior Schools Challenge, our team of James Thompson, Fin Johnston, Alex Foster and Angus McConnell-Wood performed splendidly against a very good Loveday team, losing on the last question by 670-660. To score 660 points and still lose is virtually unheard of but, with Fin and Angus both only fourth formers, there is clearly some promise for the future.

