



Established in 1936

The Doon School WEEKLY



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REGULARS **2**

ON THE
RAILS **2**

CAREERS
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We wish the School community **Happy Holi**, and all those appearing for the **Board Examinations** good luck

Ganges Getaway

Shikhar Singh writes on the recently-concluded Prefects' Workshop at Shivpuri

"Education is an admirable thing, but it is well to remember from time to time that nothing that is worth knowing can be taught."

– **Oscar Wilde**

Perhaps this was the primary objective of the three-day workshop held for the Prefects at Shivpuri, 20 km from Rishikesh. Twenty-one of us, accompanied by the Headmaster, Deputy Headmaster and PRC, enjoyed the company of an enthusiastic team from iDiscoveri. Over the next three days, we would interact, coordinate and plan for the busy year ahead of us. In doing so, we would be guided on how to administer, actualize set goals and solve problems efficiently.

I must admit that we were sceptical, at the very outset, of the utility of such a trip. However, a sumptuous lunch by the riverside rejuvenated us. We got off to a rather hilarious start when we almost strangled the Headmaster during a rope game. We were housed in luxury tents on the river-front property— Silver Sands. While most of us expected long, formal discussions that would bore the living daylights out of anyone, we were surprised to note that there was a healthy mix of verbal and physical activities planned for us.

In our first interaction, we were given folders to document observations, notings and thoughts and some basic reading material. After an introduction with the group, the iDiscoveri members began the first group-task – transporting marbles in pipes. While the activity seemed ridiculously simple, it was when we got down to doing it that the real challenges began to appear. Not only does a team require good inter-personal coordination but efficient leadership, instruction and participation by members. After the initial chaos, everyone began taking their roles seriously and helped the group succeed. If one thought that physical recreation was all there was to it, then the debriefing sessions proved to be valuable learning experiences. Firstly, the purpose of the activity was understood in such discussions and invariably a lesson was learnt. Secondly, subconsciously, such interactions made others understand one's response to varying external stimuli.

For instance, the game 'Win As Much As You Can' taught us that mutual cooperation often benefits everyone. Citing examples from corporate understanding be-

tween Pepsi and Coke to diplomatic negotiations, the 'win-win' idea was brought home. In the school's context, it taught us that even in competition, one does not have to win at others' cost, and that cooperation maximizes the group's effectiveness. Another interesting outdoor activity was the tree-climbing exercise. Here, the activity tested one's response to a challenging situation and helped one to understand the group potential. As it emerged, like any other group, we had a varied view of our potential as we, by and large, underestimated ourselves as members of a team.

Some of the interactive sessions produced healthy discussions on school administration and functioning, discipline issues, student participation and the state of other activities like the STAs and SUPWs. In one of the activities where we had to design a newspaper clipping on school, our wide-ranging ideas on the direction the school should take were noted and appreciated by all.

Apart from our hectic schedule that always kept us on our toes, in the evenings we would sit together and recap the day's happenings. Once dinner was over, a fire kept us going as the waters of the Ganga pounded on the rocks. The Headmaster initiated many lively discussions about school history, prefectship and a plethora of other issues. Sitting in the cold night we understood the relevance of Nelson Mandela's famous lines— "*Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness, that most frightens us.*" The camp taught us to overcome this fear.



Opinion Poll

Do you think the new School Bag is a better product than the previous one?

Yes	78
No	9

(An alarmingly low number of students are responding to the Weekly poll on the Resource Centre computers. We call on more members of the community to participate.)

Next Week's Question: Do you feel that boys serving at table in the CDH is a good practice?

REGULARS

HINDI ACCOLADES

The results of the **Inter-House Hindi Declamation** held on February 24 are as follows:

- First- Vatsal Khandelwal
- Second - Chandrachud Shukla
- Third - Arnav Sahu

The following were the House positions:

First: Oberoi; Second: Kashmir; Third: Tata; Fourth: Jaipur; Fifth: Hyderabad. Well spoken!

RACQUET UPDATE

The **School Tennis B Team** played and won a friendly fixture against the Woodstock School Team on Saturday. Congratulations!

CHESS MOVE

Aditya Dhirani has been appointed the **School Chess Captain** for the forthcoming year. Congratulations!

SCHOLARS

Vishnukaant Pitty and Vishesh Goel were awarded the **Scholar's Blazer**. Congratulations!



doonspeak

The Railway Budget 2007

Lalu rocks! – **Tanuj Bhramar**

The Budget had a bias towards Bihar. – **Vikram Aditya Chaudhri**

Lalu's masterpiece! – **Kanishk Gupta**

I'll go by train from now on. – **Arjun Sharan**

Very good. Lalu is surely a good minister. – **Ashutosh Kejriwal**

Good for the common man. – **Amitaabh Sahai**

Lalu's ascent as the Prime Minister of India. – **Akash Binjrajka**

TAKE 5 *Recently, Lalu Yadav, Railway Minister, presented the Annual Railway Budget. The following were the highlights of this year's speech:*

✦ Reduction of passenger fares in every category (ranging from 3 to 8 per cent).

✦ 32 new trains and 8 new Garib Raths will be in operation.

✦ Rail electrification to be done across the country right from Kashmir to Kanyakumari.

✦ Customers can dial 139 at local rates anywhere in India and get routed to Railway call centers. Passengers can also get alerts through SMS.

✦ Railways record Rs 20,000 crore profit in 2006-07 with 20-30 per cent increase in passenger traffic.

(Note : *In the light of the recent bomb blasts on the Samjhauta Express, it is a matter of concern that the Minister did not project any significant plans for increasing security at stations and on trains – Ed)*



VIJIT RAMCHANDANI DOON SCHOOL SCHOLARSHIP

Vijit Ramchandani (ex-225 JA '76), son of former Headmaster, Gulab Ramchandani, was the first Doon School boy to study at Muskingum College. Since then many Doon School boys have proceeded to Muskingum. We carry an excerpt from a letter from the President of Muskingum College, Dr. Anne C Steele, on the naming of the full tuition scholarship in memory of the late Vijit Ramchandani.

I write today with important news about the full tuition scholarship that Muskingum College annually provides to an entering student from The Doon School. I am very pleased to tell you that the full tuition scholarship has been named, the 'Vijit Ramchandani Doon School Scholarship'.

All of us at Muskingum College are very proud of our relationship with The Doon School, of your graduates who come to study at Muskingum, and of the many outstanding contributions they have made as members of our learning and alumni communities. Each year, Doon School students become Muskingum campus leaders in varied academics and co-curricular pursuits. And as they go on to lead illustrious professional and personal lives, they become committed and caring alumni, who exemplify the collective values of The Doon School and Muskingum College.

Jaideep Khanna '85 led a group of his fellow Muskingum and Doon School alumni in encouraging the naming of the Vijit Ramchandani Doon School Scholarship, to help us honor this very special partnership between our institutions.

In naming this scholarship, we pay tribute to the memory of Vijit Ramchandani – the very first Doon School alumnus to attend Muskingum College, who became a recognized expert in the field of business leadership and development – and to the visionary leadership of Vijit's father, Mr. Gulab Ramchandani, who initiated the Muskingum-Doon partnership during his distinguished tenure as Headmaster of The Doon School.

When Vijit Ramchandani came to Muskingum in the fall of 1978, he immediately became an outstanding contributor to the College community. He was an excellent student, an active participant in theatrical productions, and a star varsity tennis player. His writings for *First Circle*, the campus literary magazine, displayed his passion for well-crafted poetry and prose, which continued throughout his personal and professional endeavors. During his time at Muskingum, Vijit paved the way for those who would follow in his footsteps at Muskingum, setting a remarkable example for succeeding generations of students.

With the naming of the Vijit Ramchandani Doon School Scholarship, we wish to symbolize our great respect and appreciation for Vijit, for the Ramchandani family, for our institutional partnership, and for the outstanding tradition of excellence of Doon-Muskingum students and alumni.

| Viewpoint |
Counsel Needed
Ashish Mitter

I would like to present in print three facts that the community is already well aware of. Firstly, we have seen that over the past few years, a growing number of people have been leaving school after the ICSE, and joining non-residential schools, or worse, tuition centres. Last year, more than twenty boys left. Secondly, those who remain, enter Sc form with little or no knowledge of the opportunities for higher education both in and outside India. Thirdly, every year we see a number of Doscocs selecting a group of subjects (better known as a 'stream') to study for ISC without knowing what they are getting into, resulting in students wishing to change streams or worse, getting stuck in a stream which they simply do not like and cannot cope with. These are unfortunate facts, but facts nonetheless. All point to one thing: the lack of an exclusive career counselling department in school, and this is written with no disrespect meant to the current department. What is required is not a regular teacher also serving as a career counsellor, but a full-time career counsellor, whose sole responsibility is to advise students on their choice of higher educational institutions, depending on their career options.

While the current career counselling facilities in school are by no means non-existent, they are most definitely inadequate. Yes, talks are organized for us, a noticeboard is maintained for our viewing, a publication about how to apply abroad has been released, but many Doscocs do not know what to look for when applying abroad, much less know the difference between a Liberal Arts college and a National University, how to write an essay for the college application, or the procedure involved in applying for financial aid. Equally few Doscocs know that there exist quality institutions for higher education in India apart from the IITs and

IIMs. There is an astonishingly widespread level of ignorance amongst Doscocs about what they want to do after school, and this ignorance is the primary cause for the three facts mentioned above. A revamped career-counselling department, consisting of full time counsellors, will be able to dispel this ignorance by providing individual attention to students and their future plans. A result of this individual attention is that counsellors will be able to direct students to what stream they should take, which colleges they should look out for, how to go about applying to these colleges, who to approach for recommendations etc. In short, students will have someone to assist them while they undertake the difficult, yet important task of making decisions concerning their life after school. Currently, students are left to negotiate this tricky procedure almost all alone, with serious consequences.

Many Sc formers routinely complain about stress arising from the fact that they are expected to lead (in some form or the other) other students, study for the ISC and fill out college applications for foreign colleges: in just ten months. It is no surprise then that some Sc formers give up on their ISC, choosing instead to focus on getting into a good college abroad, or a good engineering/medical/law institute in India. This leads to poor results, which make parents of junior boys feel that Doscocs are academically not performing to potential, and that it is wise to take their sons out of school after ICSE.

Presently I find myself scurrying around researching colleges and figuring out how to fill in the many application forms. It is not a pleasant experience. I can only hope that future batches don't find themselves in a similar position!

THE AUDITIONING ACT

Uday Shriram relives a histrionic experience

I thought that it was still quite early to begin working on the Inter-house One Act Play, but the auditions in H House began a few days ago. I stepped in just after toying into a cheerless and intimidating room, expecting to be asked to read a passage from a play. It so happened that I was wrong. Seated on a mattress were Rajnush, Prateek, Shikhar and, of course, the director, Anindya. I suddenly felt very self-conscious and just as I stepped in, Anindya commanded, "Laugh." For a second I went blank. "Is this part of the audition?" I asked stupidly. They stared back at me, deadpan. When I finally got down to laughing, sounded like a hippo in distress.

I was then told to act out a scenario, but Rajnush and Shikhar continued to intervene with different situations which included "pretend the teddy bear is your girlfriend."

Anindya finally rescued me and instructed me to act as if I was in jail and my father had just suffered a heart attack. This I acted out pretty well with a range of emotions like fear, grief, anger and remorse. The only reaction I got from my audience was one of uncontrollable laughter. Doom seemed imminent. The director then told me to sing a song. Here too, I hesitated too long and started sweating profusely, muffled laughter filling the tiny room.

Finally, we came to the one reliable thing I thought I could manage – reading. I read a passage aloud only to get a snide remark from the director, "This is not a reading competition, it is an acting audition." My so-called 'strong point' was shattered into a zillion pieces. I re-read with as much emotion as I could muster and my voice reverberated off the four walls. There was a moment of silence in the room followed by squeaks of suppressed laughter. As soon as I was getting into the groove (finally), Anindya said "OK, go." I was taken aback, but nonetheless made a hasty exit, face still red, and contorted into a grin of relief. I went out thinking there was no way I was getting selected after *that* effort. When I think back, I can still remember the embarrassment and laughter that one measly audition had caused. The next day, as I walked down the corridors of H House, my eye caught a notice on the board. I had been chosen! What luck! I had been chosen, not for a major role in the play, but merely for a second audition.

Wordsearch

Bharat Ganju

Hidden below are 24 terms related to cricket

J	H	H	K	L	M	C	T	D	Z	E	T	L	F	O
C	K	O	E	D	N	C	J	T	R	V	K	V	O	N
S	B	N	W	L	T	O	K	S	L	I	P	G	U	C
S	G	M	Z	Z	M	J	V	F	P	D	V	E	R	G
U	P	L	M	M	D	E	M	E	P	D	M	E	J	O
P	C	U	O	D	C	A	T	C	H	K	U	M	C	L
E	V	S	O	V	P	I	T	C	H	F	O	T	P	D
R	B	J	L	V	E	J	T	U	C	F	U	U	P	E
S	R	E	V	O	C	E	V	R	D	O	L	T	T	N
U	F	G	R	E	V	O	B	C	N	L	F	B	T	D
B	D	C	S	I	X	B	J	U	O	Z	C	M	A	U
C	G	O	S	S	O	T	R	E	C	N	U	O	B	C
R	E	V	E	R	S	E	S	W	I	N	G	K	P	K
F	D	B	U	T	J	Y	R	A	D	N	U	O	B	T

CAREER CALL

The Careers notice board will focus on **Hotel Management** as a career option this week. All budding hoteliers should look up the board.

Unquotable Quotes

The Indian National Congress was titled a seductive body by the British.

Seif Khan rewrites colonial politics.

I will kill you up.

Pulkit Sharma, serial killer.

I was taugted.

Shikhar Singh on basic instruction.

Get your field on the players.

Dilsher Khanna gives instructions.

How many thirds will you take?

Anuj Bhatia fights for food.

Hrithik Roshan wears Johnny Walker.

Yadavalli Aditya, redefining fashion.

Has your headache evaporated?

SDA expresses concern.

LIBRARY FOCUS

The following are the latest additions to the Library.

Democracy and Diversity: India and the American Experience – **K Shankar Bajpai**

The Mathematics Calendar 2007: Discovering the Beauty,

Intrigue and Influence of Mathematics

Memoirs of a Geisha – **Arthur Golden**

100 Significant Pre-Independence Speeches – **H.D.**

Sharma

My Life in My Words – **Rabindranath Tagore**

The Magic of Books

Dhruv Velloor on books as ideal companions

When I first came to school, I remember that I had very few friends. As a result, I would feel lonely and homesick and would cry for my mother every day in school. That was when my mother introduced me to the magic of books.

Books, she said, would be my best friends. They would listen to me when nobody else wanted to. I could swim for hours in a vast ocean of stories, without any need of other companionship. I would be steeped in all the knowledge the world had to offer, and I would find quiet contentment in them. The real human friends came later on, but books were always my first friends. So from then on, I have never looked back, and books have changed me for the better.

The world of books is a fascinating one. It is full of twists and turns, and every new book is an experience in itself, almost like a gourmet delicacy. The feeling one gets when a book is finished is indescribable. And, though knowledge can be obtained now by many other means, there is definitely nothing else like discovering it in the pages of the book you hold in your hands. The lives of the greatest scholars and writers live on through the books they have written, and by reading those books, we are one step closer to becoming like them. There is no such thing as getting bored with reading or too much reading, as there is with playing the same computer game too many times. For reading is a good addiction (if there ever was such a thing), that slowly but steadily grows on the reader.

But sadly enough, the practice of reading is rapidly dying. The joy of reading seems to be lost in a world where the computer's reign is undisputed. Nowadays, children, when asked to choose between a book and a video game, will without doubt choose the latter. For I think the general feeling among us is that books are getting 'old' and are only consumed by people who are clueless about modern trends and lifestyles. The truth is not that they are out of touch with the new world, but that everyone else seems to have forgotten about the old, fun way of doing things.

In school too, one rarely reads during one's spare time. The reason is not lack of time, as is often the excuse. We would rather go play, sleep or chat with friends. Reading in school is usually relegated to an activity done during toy to kill time. I feel that we are depriving ourselves of something really valuable with such an attitude. With a vast library at our disposal, and every incentive given to promote the reading habit, there is every reason to pick up a book and make a friend.

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