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Sports Report: Common Time, Week 4

Tuesday 1st February

Football: Combined U15/U16 v RGS Guildford U16 (a)

The JCAs with 3 SCA's travelled to Guildford setting a high standard after the win against St. John's Leatherhead. We started off with a high tempo football and focused on getting the ball in to the attacking third. This worked well, as we limited the opposition's time on the ball and created many chances. In attack Tim was setting the tone and with his superb work rate, we were able to get our first goal from a mistake in the opposition's defence. Defensively the back four of David, Alex, Will, and Dom were excellent, with Tomo and Seb joining with their efforts in the second half.

In the second half we focused more on keeping possession and limiting touches to keep the opposition running. This was made harder from the opposition's pressure in our defensive third, but some good ball movement kept the opposition at bay. Some great saves from Tony and Tim's third goal effectively finished the game. A very impressive win, and the boys should be proud of their performances both individually and collectively. W 3-0 (J. Ma)

Rackets v Eton (a)

1st Pair, Ollie Gibbon and Archie Sillars went close in games 1 and 3 but the unusual conditions proved too challenging and they lost a match which was on a knife-edge throughout. Henry Nicholls and Bertie Vallat played Eton's 2nd pair and came away having lost only 8 points in 3 games. Henry showed that his rallying game has risen to new heights and together, with near perfect consistency, executed several explosive winners. Bertie produced his usual, highly competent, efficient performance. Alex Harker and Stephen Lam stepped up to play at Sen Colts 'A' level. They started well, winning the first game 15-5 but despite getting close in the next 3 games they eventually succumbed to a 1-3 loss.

The Junior Colts, Jack Bristowe and Lukus Brunner, set about their challenge with utmost efficiency. Jack, reading the game with maturity these days, presented a new power to his game and executed winners with fine angles and well selected selections of pace. Lukas is also much improved. His return of serve is now at a decent level and his volleying, as always, deeply effective. Although testing at times, it did not take long for to complete a 3-0 win.

Yearlings, Seb Kingsbury and Arthur James-Duff, played twice against two different pairs. Seb, with his power, stacked up the points quickly and worked court well. Arthur demonstrated impressive technique and movement throughout, returning a high proportion of serves. The end result was a win in both matches without the loss of a game in either; an impressive performance. (TERC)

Thursday 3rd Feb

Fives v Marlborough College (a)

Some very close doubles games lead to some slightly more one-sided singles. Chris Lee played well to comfortably beat their number one but lack of match play in the case of Henry and Orlando and the fact that this is the first time Jeffrey (an U15) has played at this level meant Marlborough



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stretched their narrow lead from the doubles into a more comfortable one by the end of the match. L65-58

Some valuable experience was gained by our young U16 side who came up against a strong left handed right handed 1st pair from Marlborough ultimately proving too strong for us. L89-61

Our first away match for the first years and while it took them a little while to get accustomed to the different shape and bounce of the Marlborough courts, they played well and came away with a well-deserved victory. W84-54 (JM)

Hockey: 2nd XI Dauntsey's 4th XI (a)

Stepping out for only a second match this season a depleted squad with no subs sadly lost 3-0 to Dauntsey's, although the performance was much better than the score line suggests.

We started the first half with good intensity and structure. However, not long into the game, having had the majority of possession, Dauntsey's managed to score after a series of shots and tackles in the D. After this setback we managed to stay focused and began to dominate the game, passing the ball around their half trying to look for opportunities to score. Harry Pressland had a few good dribbles through their backline, managing to win a short corner on one particular attack, which sadly came to nothing. Any counter attacks they tried to make were soon cut short by excellent tackles from Charlie Simpson, who was a rock at the back all game. However, near the end of the 1st half we began to tire and just before the whistle they countered quickly and won a short corner, which soon turned into their second goal of the game.

The second half started impressively and soon we were controlling the game again. Halfway through, we won a short corner which Mike Wimbush, who was solid at centre half all game, injected well to Harry Pressland who got off a shot at goal, prevented only by another foot in the D. We then had 3 short corners in a row, all blocked illegally until finally a shot went through to the keeper who managed to put a foot out. Any attacks from Dauntsey's were halted by the backline, resulting in quite a few '16s' for us, which Miles Park often used to start another attack with some good aerials. However, just after the mid-way point of the second half, Dauntsey's managed to attack quickly down our right flank, using clever 3D skills, resulting in a good finish for their 3rd goal of the game.

We were slightly disappointed about the result, which did not reflect the quality of the sides, but there were lots of smiles around at being back on a hockey pitch. Thank you very much to Mr Quayle and Mr Winter for coaching and umpiring both games today, as well as providing us with helpful comments at half time and throughout the game. (Miles Park, F)

Rackets v St Paul's (a)

Hopperites, Oli Gibbon and George Nutting, teamed up to take on a decent St. Paul's senior pair. Although probably the most challenging court on the circuit, they impressively won 3 – 0. Two Chawkerites also teamed up to represent the Sen Colts pair, Stephen Lam and Bertie Vallat.



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Despite recovering and levelling the score from a two-game deficit, unfortunately the deciding game was beyond reach and the spirited St. Paul's pair managed to force the win.

Yearlings, Jamie Mitchell and Rory McGregor, had a difficult task playing a pair a year older. The challenging court and dexterity of the older boys proved a tough test. However, they did improve significantly as the match progressed by working out the unfamiliar angles and the quick pace of the floor and ended up playing their part in some decent rallies. (TERC)

Squash v Wellington College (h)

The Winchester College Sen VIII recorded a good 7-1 win against Wellington College. The closest match was between the two 1st string players with Tom Burge (Captain) losing the first two games 10-12 and then showing resilience to come back and win 11-8 in the fifth. The rest of the team, many of whom had previously played for the 2nd team, all played well and had good games with only one recording a defeat. Team was: Tom Burge (Captain), Oscar Henshaw, Freddie Fisher, Brian Chan, Ludovic Remers, Will Gladstone, Pran Busrapan and Arthur Duckworth. (RAA)

Rugby 7s

The senior rugby 7s squad headed over to Canford School for a joint training session with Canford and Bryanston. Playing touch and progressive contact games allowed the WinColl boys to learn from their more experienced counterparts. In the final training block Winchester ran out against the Bryanston U17 squad and performed impressively to take the session 4 tries to 1. (MSB)

Basketball: v Wellington College (a)

There is no escaping the fact that this was a disappointing performance for the U18s. Wellington only really pulled ahead with some long-distance shooting in the final quarter, but to be fair their victory was well-deserved. Defensively Winchester played well, but going forward our lack of match experience showed. There were highlights, Van Every's fierce competitiveness under the basket, for example, but we also made too many fundamental mistakes. More big games next week, and more experience to be gained. Let's hope the Winchester machine runs smoothly and this team can start to show their true potential. L61-22

Wellington's U14 team was tough and physical, and they had several experienced players. Contrastingly, Winchester contained players who were playing their first ever match as we continue to try to get everyone's debut nerves out of the way. That said, the talent gap was small and on this day Winchester just did not play with the necessary intensity and fluidity to challenge the hosts. With more experience, confidence and valuing of the fundamentals, there is no doubt that this group of players will one to watch in the future. (LNT)

Saturday 5th February

Badminton v Abingdon (h)

After having a close game against Wellington College, the WinColl Badminton Team was ready to play their hardest game of the term against Abingdon School at home. The last match against Abingdon was a disappointing one with a lack of real fight shown by us. However, the recent match against Wellington showed the team's ability to perform well with the right mindset. Going



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in to the game, the team did not have two of its main players, Kaito Bremmer and Alvin Yu. The team had to completely change its pairs for this encounter.

The fourth pair of Sebastian Walsh and Ashmit Pande fought hard against Abingdon's second pair and earned a surprising win. However, the pair lost to Abingdon's third and fourth but their performance showed great intent. The third pair of Harris Faizi and substitute Jian Chao fought hard against Abingdon's first and second but failed to secure a win. Against Abingdon's fourth, however, they managed to pull off a win even as Jian Chao got injured mid-match. The surprise second pair of Yuyao Xie and Ben Wen showed great intent as they beat Abingdon's second and fourth pairs. Lastly, the first pair of Rudra Patel and Richmond Yeung cruised through Abingdon's bottom three pairs. However, against the first pair, even with a miraculous comeback from 10-2 down in the second set, the pair lost 26-24 to Abingdon's first. Overall, this was an excellent performance but the team lost 9-7 in a hard-fought battle. (R. Patel, I)

Fives v St. Paul's School (a)

5 out of 6 singles games were won in the U18 match along with 8 out of 10 doubles games won. A convincing victory. Special mention to Anthony Cloke Browne who, despite injuring his right hand badly in the warm-up showed an awful lot of guts to win his Singles 11-9. W95-157

An excellent match for the U16s. Chan impressed in winning his Singles as number 1 seed, as did Kennedy at number 3. The overall result was particularly impressive given the inexperience of the team-Aubury and Kulkarni were playing their first ever match and Kennedy and McGregor pushed the St. Paul's 1st pair hard in losing 12-10, 11-7 despite being two years younger. (JM)

Hockey: 1st XI v Lord Wandsworth College XI (a) L8-2

Rowing: Wycliffe Head

Winchester College Boat Club raced at Wycliffe Big Head, on the Gloucester Berkeley Canal. A race that we thought might not happen due to forecasted high winds. WCBC fielded five crews throughout the day, a J14 octo, a J15 eight, a J16 coxless quad and two combinations of the Senior eight.

In the first division we saw three of the crews in action. Firstly, the J15 eight, a squad that has exciting developing athletes and a strong racing spirit. Tricky conditions were dealt with well, as determination saw them power through the last stretch of the race. Finding good rhythm and length, it was good to see training coming into action. Finishing in second place out of a field of five was extremely positive and shows again what could be on the horizon, with continued focus and training.

The second crew on the course was the J16 coxless quad. Previous racing for this crew has been in the coxed four, a sweep boat. This was the first competitive outing for the quad, a sculling boat. It is a vastly different experience moving across the disciplines and the boys handled it very well. Moreover, the coxless quad does not have a steersperson, therefore all credit must go to Jake Crehan Mills, who not only had to row, but also steer through a cable connected to his foot. He



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did both with great skill and maturity. Gaining a third place out of a field of seven shows that there is a lot to be excited about moving forward and a great step in their development.

Lastly in division one was the first combination of the senior eight. This race being used by the senior squad as an opportunity to try out some different strategies. It was encouraging to see that despite the high winds and choppy water, the crew came together to maintain control and cohesion. The technique of the athletes was shown to be at a high level, as there was no loss of structure, which allowed all the power that has been developed through land training to be put down on the water. Certainly, this was a step on, and the race time achieved puts them right in the mix with some very large rowing programmes.

Division two saw another senior eight and the J14 octo. The second combination of the eight following the tone that had been set with the previous crew. Being able to race for a second time was beneficial in multiple ways, solidifying good habits and showing strength in depth. Another strong time achieved that makes crew selection a tricky prospect.

Finally, we saw the J14 octo. The J14 intake this year is one of the strongest WCBC has seen. Working towards setting good foundations for their rowing careers, there is a real sense of professionalism and pride in everything they set out to do. This was the first time that the octo, an eight rower, one cox boat, has raced this year. Showing no nerves, they epitomised everything that we look for in sportspeople and were a real credit to the WCBC. Not put off by any of the difficulties of the day, they powered down the course, showing all their training to good effect. A win in the category was the icing on the cake.

Overall, this was another highly successful day for WCBC. With strong results across the board and a very useful steppingstone to larger races later this year. It was particularly pleasing to see such quality of character in the boys. Everyone came together throughout the year groups to create an upbeat atmosphere that allowed each group to achieve the best possible outcome. We now look forward with optimism to future races.

As always, a very big thank you goes to all the parents and supporters of WCBC. Their continued support is invaluable and greatly appreciated. (SJL)

Sunday 6th February: U18 Rugby VII: South Coast 7s

Making their competitive tournament debut at Portsmouth Grammar School's South Coast 7s was always likely to be a baptism of fire for the fledgling Rugby 7s squad. Torrential rain greeted our arrival and we were definitely caught cold by the hosts in our first pool game. Defending too narrow and turning the ball over too often saw PGS come out comfortably on top. The second pool game against KE Southampton saw a far more improved performance with tries scored by Iestyn Barron (who played every minute of every match) and Frankie Shropshire. Hugo Barnes was full of energy threatening with ball in hand and pressuring at the breakdown. KES outscored us four tries to two but it was agreed by the players themselves that we had gifted them at least two of their scores. Millfield 2s were up next and playing into a strong wind in the first half saw us concede four tries leaving an uphill challenge against the team who were to ultimately top the group.



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We then moved into the Bowl competition but were up against Gordon's School who topped Group 2. This school operates an Academy squad in partnership with Harlequins and with several "big units" to the fore our opponent's direct approach proved too much to deal with. It would have been very easy for the boys to let their heads drop but the character, resolve and determination to keep making progress became evident in the final match. Up against Millfield 2s for the second time after their surprise

defeat to Bryanston we took the lead to go 14-0 up with two excellent tries from skipper Will Matthews. The Somerset school came back with the wind behind them to take a 24-14 lead but Frankie Shropshire outpaced the Millfield defence to peg the score back to 24-21. With seconds left on the clock we were attacking deep inside the Millfield '22 but a dropped ball saw the Millfield winger pick up the ball and go the length to seal the win. To almost turn around a 30-point deficit in just two matches illustrated how much the WinColl boys had developed throughout the tournament. (MSB)

All fixtures details can be found on: <https://sportsfixtures.winchestercollege.org/>

Sporting quote for the week:

"It is normal to enjoy praise & dislike criticism. True character is when you prevent either from affecting you in a negative matter. (John Wooden, Former US College Basketball Coach at UCLA)

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