

BLACKROCK COLLEGE NEWSLETTER



Christmas 2015

Dear Parents,

It probably does not surprise you that **Silent Night** is the world's most popular Christmas Carol. Its tender, intimate, gentle, quiet and reflective message calls us to peace ...

“ALL IS CALM, ALL IS BRIGHT”

Christmas draws us together. The immediate concerns of our daily lives, the hustle and bustle, are put on hold as we take time out for those close to us. But Christmas is about more than this. Christmas is extraordinary because of a transcendence, a crossing of paths of the Divine with the human.

“GLORIES STREAM FROM HEAVEN AFAR”

The Christmas story is one of peace and goodwill, hope and survival, love and family. The message is that we are not alone, that we are loved and that we should share this love not just with those we know but also with those we do not. For each of us, it is a time to consider the gifts in our lives that cannot be wrapped – our family, our faith, our talents. As we pause, we could ask whether our faith is an appendage, to be seasonally adjusted, or is it indistinguishable from the rest of our existence?

A Blackrock education is about **Christian** formation which is so much more than the gathering of knowledge as a means to an examination end or material prosperity. It is a call to serve, to set aside individualism and embrace others. It is a call to the boys to do more than is expected, to give more of themselves than is requested.

Christmas is tough for so many people. It can be a particularly difficult time for the homeless, the lonely, the needy and the infirm; for those who despair because their house has been flooded or the toughest cut of all, the heartache of the absence of a loved one departed. As a Christian community, our rhetoric of values must manifest in ways that reach out instinctively to comfort the distressed and forlorn.

Christmas is a time of generosity and goodwill, of giving of self without any expectation of return. The St Vincent de Paul Appeal - **6th Year** Fast and Raffle, **5th Year** Poker Classic and FIFA Competition, **Transition Year** Soccer Marathon, Mince Pies Morning, Christmas Trees, packing and delivery of Hampers, **3rd Year** and **2nd Year** Shoebox Appeal and Duck Races provide ample evidence that the hearts of our boys are in the right place.

We have had a great term. Our outstanding Musical and the incomparable BCR were highlights but also the Pastoral Placements, extensive sporting opportunities, Academics, Pastoral and Liturgical programmes continued to enrich our school community and inform our boys on their capacity for greatness.

So many make this happen, yet their efforts may go unnoticed, unsung. Catherine Scott has been our catering manageress for sixteen years. She leaves us for Roscrea College, a posting within the Sodexo network closer to her home town (she assures me that it has nothing to do with the Senior Cup!). We are deeply indebted to her for the calm, considerate and professional way in which she has managed the tastes and needs of the students, staff and Community with both good humour and good food. Thank you Catherine.

Finally, Brian and I thank the Spiritan Community, our colleagues, the Parents' Council and Year Committees, our College Union and, of course, our boys for their goodwill, generosity of spirit, faithfulness, passion and concern.

“CHRIST THE SAVIOUR IS BORN”

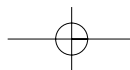
Yours sincerely

ALAN MacGINTY
Principal

Photos from L to R :

- a) Darragh Rowley, David Drennan, Jonathan Landers, Liam Dunphy (Fourth Years) selling Christmas trees to help SVDP.
- b) Tom Dooley (Second Year) lighting a candle at the Carol Service





Second Year



The Second Year boys have completed a busy and enjoyable first term in the College. The **House Competitions** have continued with the Swimming Gala being the first big contributory event. Leman House came first overall in Second Year with McQuaid and Duff Houses coming joint second. Philip Towns won the Second Year Open 50m with Jack Grant coming second. Philip also came second in the Junior Championship Race. The Table Tennis and Chess competitions are continuing, each coming to a conclusion at the beginning of the next term. During the second term we will have the Art Competition, the House Cross Country and some other events.

The boys attended the opening night of the **College Musical** entitled *The Story of Joe & Grace* with a fantastic turnout and show of support from this Second Year group. Hopefully they will have gained a few insights so they will be prepared for the 2nd & 4th Year Production which will take place later in the year.

The **Extra-curricular activities** available are very popular with the boys in Second Year and great for their overall development. Rugby is of course the most popular and we wish Mark Morrissey good luck as a member of the Junior Cup squad for the next term. Ronan Cowhey and Robert Galligan were part of the Junior Golf Team that qualified for the Leinster Final, and we congratulate Charlie Cullen and Morgan Lyttle for having been selected for the *Irish Sailing Association Optimist Squad*. Rowing, basketball, table tennis, chess and the Model United Nations have also had good support.

Second Year boys also achieved in the *Clann na Gael Open Cross Country Race* in Irishtown with Liam Blackburn and Eoin O'Farrell finishing 1st and 2nd in the Junior Race, and with Adam Nealon, MJ Power, Jamie Dowling and Leo Wyer also doing well. These boys, along with Adam Harvey and Keith Ahern, participated well in our own school's *Cross Country Open Race* in November. The *Scifest Competition* in Second Year was won in the Life Sciences area jointly by Liam Heylin and Jeff Kenny with Harry O'Leary coming second, and in the Physical Sciences area John Huggard came first with Tom Dooley and Gavin Hoey taking joint second place. Second Year will also be attending the *Young Scientist Exhibition* in the RDS in January where they will see two of their colleagues exhibiting, Tom Dooley and John Huggard, presenting their work on 'Binomial Distribution' and 'The Problem with Pentaquarks' respectively. Other extra-curricular activities availed of include cycling, badminton, squash, swimming, public speaking, the Art Club, the Science Club, the Orchestra, cricket, tennis and athletics.

Congratulations to Gerard Jones and Jack Kane who were joint winners in the **Fabric Print Design Competition** for the Learning Centre, pictured here with Mr MacGinty. Their work was inspired by Autumn Leaves and will be printed onto fabric for the Centre. In December we celebrated the *Feast of the Immaculate Conception* with Holy Mass in the College Chapel led by Fr Tom Nash CSSp. We also had our **Carol Service** for the season of Advent, with the whole College from 1st to 6th Year in attendance in the Sports Hall for a festive and prayerful occasion. Second Year boys in the *Corless Choir* and in the orchestra performed admirably.

The boys should also be proud of their fundraising efforts for the **St Vincent de Paul Society** conference here in the school. Their Duck Race raised



Gerard Jones and Jack Kane, winners of the Fabric Print Design Competition

€2,575 which was noteworthy and gave them the opportunity to show their concern for those less fortunate, during the Christmas season. We will begin the New Year in the College with Mass for the *Feast of the Epiphany*.

When we return after Christmas, we ask parents to inspect their son's weekly Application Card each Monday. It's a great opportunity to reinforce the good behaviour and practice that is acknowledged on the Card. A regular check on each boy's Homework Diary would also be worthwhile, to assist him in the organisation of his daily homework and revision and to continue the great work that has been done in the First Term.

Dates for your Diary

7th January – Young Scientist Exhibition
11th February – 2nd Year Parent-Teacher Meeting



Third Year

A spirit of co-operation and endeavour was very evident in the various aspect of life in Third Year during the first term. It has not been unusual to have over 130 boys on the Principal's List for application cards though fewer boys have made the Principal's list during progress weeks. An ongoing commitment to revision could possibly help to reduce this gap in the months leading up to the Junior Certificate Examination. It is good to see the Parents' Committee supporting our request to fellow parents to insist on getting the weekly cards every Monday evening and avail of the opportunity to affirm a positive work ethic. Any falling off of same ought of course to be challenged and possibly closer monitoring of homework diaries be undertaken.

The lost property cage is full of items with no names on them or names in pen that have faded beyond legibility. As you know, the replacement cost is considerable, we encourage a "stock take" over the break on all your sons' property to ensure that each item is identifiable. Finally a sincere thanks for all your support in the Duck Race and Shoebox Collection in the aid of St. Vincent de Paul.

Extra-Curricular

Debating and Model United Nations (MUN) afford boys the opportunity to represent the college over the course of the year. It is wonderful to see their confidence grow and the fulfilment that they get from their participation. We would urge more to consider getting involved, in debating on Tuesdays at 4pm and MUN on Fridays at 4pm. Public speaking is available on Wednesdays at 1pm in the 6th Year area and boys are free to leave early if involved in the games programme. With the Rowers having linked up with Neptune Rowing Club it is very encouraging to see Third Years

Josh Loughrey, Conal Regan and Sean Hamill fill the first three places on their first day of competition. The Junior Basketball team, led by Michael Ryan, have participated in a number of games and were pipped recently in the All-Ireland qualifier. Cricket coaching is available on Saturdays from 9-11am in the Sports Hall. Cross country, swimming and water polo are other sports that have kept the boys fully engaged. Table tennis competitions will be starting soon and those interested in squash and tennis should contact the Dean on their return. The opening round of the Junior Cup against St. Mary's College beckons, as do the various League matches for the Junior Thirds, Fourths and Fifths.

Parents' Committee

The Parents' Committee have made email contact with the parents prior to Christmas and it intends to continue with the emails to inform parents of what's going on for the remainder of the year. If for some reason you are not on the group email please let the Dean know by email and the list will be updated without delay – 3dean@blackrockcollege.com. Details are enclosed with this newsletter.

Following the success of the Parent Course Noel Canavan has arranged a follow-up course in the Learning Centre. It is not necessary to have participated in the first course so please feel free to contact Noel in the coming days to book a place – (Phone number 086 228155 or at noelcanavanone@gmail.com)

Family Mass

Great participation by the boys at the annual Family Mass helped create a very positive atmosphere which was indeed commented on favourably by a number of parents and the Chief Celebrant Fr. Brendan Carr of the Spiritan Leadership Team. A vibrant liturgy is a good



Sam O'Carroll and his family at the Third Year Family Mass

start to Christmas and hopefully helped to awaken the real meaning of the season in all in attendance. Fr. Carr's sermon was

powerful, challenging and full of encouragement as he told the gathering amongst other things, "Advent is about being sharp as to what we know and what we experience. Advent means the patient anticipation of hope being fulfilled – a lot of life is Advent in character, waiting and preparing in anticipation of accomplishing our hopes and dreams – be it in sport, music academics, charity work or family life. And although it is about preparing, it is also about savouring the moments of anticipation on life's journey. Savour your family and your friendships, the promise of God to be fulfilled". Thanks to Mr. Tom Ryan, Director of the Pastoral programme for his organisation of the Mass.

Dates for your Diary

Days of Reflection
Tuesday Jan 12th - Ebenrecht & Shanahan
Thursday Jan 14th - Duff & Leman
Friday Jan 15th - De Valera and McQuaid

Thursday Jan 21st - Third Year Parent -Teacher Meeting 4:15pm – 6:30pm
Monday 1st February - Junior Cup First Round vs. St. Mary's College

Transition Year



In the midst of exams as the end of term approaches, all is still very busy in Transition Year. There are Christmas trees to sell, 220 hampers to delivery and committees are already being formed for the St Patrick's Day Badge Appeal in the New Year. Over the holidays, I would encourage all Transition Years to reflect on what has been an incredibly productive second term, on their personal involvement, the work they have done including producing 50 hours of radio and the difference they have made with their work on the Soup Run, Pastoral Placement, Community Work through Gaisce and Saint Vincent de Paul. I commend the students on their commitment, work ethic and caring attitude.

Blackrock College Radio

We were delighted to have Mary Mitchel O' Connor in to open the station on Monday 16th of November. Going live on air at 8 am, the hard working News Team set an amazingly professional standard that was maintained for the week. Despite all the work that goes on in the weeks coming up to broadcast, one can never be too sure how it will go until that 'on air' light goes on Monday morning. The students never cease to amaze me when it comes to the diligence and professionalism with which they go about their work. BCR 2015 brought us a week of music, chat, news and sports. At times you could have been forgiven for thinking you were tuned to a commercial station such was the quality. Well done to all involved, particularly the management team who produced such a fantastic week of radio.



Josh Garvey interviewing Micheál Martin for BCR

Soccer Marathon

It was a testament to this year's group, that despite the appalling weather mid-afternoon their spirits were never dampened. 126 students donned their football boots for the Annual Soccer Marathon for Saint Vincent de Paul, in the process raising over €12000. The atmosphere as the teachers took to the hall shortly after 11 pm was reminiscent of the Ali Sami Yen stadium on a European Cup night. Despite the best efforts of the partisan crowd, the teachers left unbeaten at 12:30, well past their bed times. Perhaps the students were paying for their earlier excursions, but I think they will have to



Fourth Year Students who participated in the SVDP Soccer Marathon

acknowledge the occasion got to them and they were out played. I was delighted with their positive attitude even in the early hours of Saturday morning, during what was a very successful fundraiser.

Mince Pie Morning

On Thursday the 10th December, the Transition Year Home Economics classes hosted a Mince Pie Morning in aid of Saint Vincent de Paul. They had been busy during the week producing what were some very tasty mince pies. Just over €300 was raised. It was good to see so many parents there in support. Many thanks to Ms Karen Marren for making it all possible.



Daniel Thomson, Eunan Linders, Aran Horgan, Louis O'Reilly, Rory Gallagher, Cillian Cummins, Ted Godson Treacy in the kitchen on Mince Pie Morning

Hampers

As we go to print we are ready to take delivery from the wholesalers for the hampers. Over the next two days it will all be counted, sorted and packed into 220 hampers ready for delivery on Saturday 19th. It really is a unique opportunity for the students to experience the culmination of SVDP fund raising and to experience first-hand the difference they will be making to families less fortunate than ourselves. I thank all the parents who helped with delivery.

Volunteering

The generosity of spirit amongst this group is very evident. On the 6th of November a number of boys took part in bag packing in Marks and Spencer's. I

received very positive feedback about the students' helpfulness and friendliness. On Wednesday the 9th of December 60 students took part in an envelope drop in the local area for SVDP while 6 students gave up their Saturday on December 12th to volunteer at the PPU children's dinner. It is great as a Dean to experience this generosity of spirit on a daily basis.

Extra-curricular

Congratulations to the TY Gaelic Football Team on their victory over Oatlands in the opening round. Unfortunately they have had their next fixture postponed on a number of occasions due to the weather. It is looking now like they will face St Colmcilles in the New Year.

Well done to the Junior Golf Team captained by Jack Small who qualified for the Leinster Final finishing second on the day.

Members of Model United Nations where awarded the outstanding delegation award at the Rathdown MUN conference in November. Well done to Chris O' Flaherty who was part of the delegation. In debating Stephen Ryan successfully proposed the motion "This House Would Ban all Political Donations" in the Leinster Schools' Debating Competition. Stephen and Ben Heapes have been busy helping out with debating in Willow Park.

Harry Kearns won a bronze medal at the Irish Junior Science Olympiad in October. We also wish him well at the Young Scientist Exhibition with his project 'an air quality survey of the Dublin area twenty five years after the smoky coal ban using lichens as bio-indicators'.

Dates for your Diary

Thursday 7th January – BT Young Scientist
Friday 29th January – Transition Year Parents Social
Sunday 7th February – Transition Year Family Mass



The second half of term one continued to highlight the busy and productive work ethic of Fifth Year students. They continue to make significant contributions to school life through their courteous and cooperative manner and their vast involvement in and contribution to extra-curricular activities.

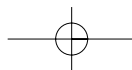
SVDP Fundraiser

Congratulations to Fifth Year students for raising over €3500 for the St. Vincent de Paul's Christmas Appeal. On Wednesday 2nd December, over half the year group

was involved in some way with the Poker Classic, FIFA Tournament and Raffle. Fancy dress, good humour and generosity led by our wonderful compère Mr Conor McMahon (RE Dept.) ensured that all enjoyed a fantastic evening. Charlie Lawless was victorious in the Poker, with Patrick Patterson coming second. Stephen Fitzgerald's FIFA skills saw him take victory over Alex Concannon. The House Captains once again were excellent in their organising of this event. Thank you to the 5th Year Tuck Shop and the 6th Year Parents' Committee 2015 for their generous donations. Special



Carl Delaney, Alan Francis, Kevin McCabe at the SVDP Fundraiser



Fifth Year Cont'd



thanks is offered to the local businesses and the number of families who donated so generously to the raffle.

Remembrance Mass

Feast of the Immaculate Conception

Many thanks to the College Pastoral Department for organising the celebration of the Feast of the Immaculate Conception for Fifth Years on 8th December last.

A number of Fifth Year boarders contributed meaningfully as cantors and servers to this year's Remembrance Mass for those in our community who have passed away in the past year. We thank and commend them for their much appreciated involvement.

Carol Service

In full voice the Fifth Year group provided strong leadership at the recent whole school Carol Service. Whilst all participated commendably, the Fifth Year members of the choir and the orchestra deserve mention for their remarkable leadership of the year group and performances.



The Annual Carol Service

Cross Country

We congratulate Ross McCann who was part of the Senior Boys' Team who won gold at the recent Clann na Gael Open race. All runners are looking forward to the East Leinster Championships in the spring and we wish them well in training.

Basketball

Building on their commitment to training, Fifth Year Basketball players have had a great season with twelve victories out of thirteen games before defeat in the Quarter Final of the All Ireland Cup. A narrow defeat in a very closely contested East Leinster Semi-Final was disappointing but we encourage the players to be proud and hold their heads high and wish them the best of luck in the All Ireland League.

Rowing

Thanks to a new partnership with Neptune Rowing Club, Fifth Year Rowers have the opportunity to return to full training. We thank them for their patience, commend their commitment and wish them well.

Soccer

We commiserate with the Fifth Year members of the Senior Soccer Squad whose League campaign came to an end with defeat away to St. John's Ballyfermot. We wish them well as they look forward to the visit of St. Bede's Manchester in the New Year.

Model UN /Debating

Fifth Year MUN members won an Outstanding Delegation Award at the recent Rathdown MUN Conference. Scott Donohoe, Mark Heavey and John Heavey were awarded individual Distinguished Delegate Awards. All are looking forward to upcoming conferences at home and possibly abroad.

The debaters are continuing to progress to the next rounds of the Leinster Schools' Debating Competition and are eagerly awaiting Mace competitions in the New Year.

Musical

Fifth Year's contribution to this year's musical, *The Story of Joe and Grace*, was remarkable. The sensitivity, passion and conviction of the Fifth Years added to the wonderful production. The contribution of students to the various music numbers is of note as is the efficient and professional work of the crew and front of house members who ensured all ran smoothly.



Bill Madigan and Jack Crowley (5th Year) in 'The Story of Joe and Grace'

Leman Auditions

Fresh off the back of their *The Story of Joe and Grace* performances many Fifth Years were eagerly auditioning for this year's Leman Festival concert and we look forward to seeing those successful in securing a highly coveted slot perform in the National Concert Hall on Sunday 24th of January.

House Rugby

Unbeaten to date the House Fourths and Fifts squads have had a promising start to the season and are building strong teams from high numbers. All are looking forward to their Leagues in the New Year. The House Thirds are training lots continuing their good form and are seeing big improvements since the start of the year. The House Seconds have seen straight victories and are enjoying good levels of integration with Fourth Year players. All House players are commended for their good attitude and commitment.

Fifth Year is strongly represented on the Senior Team and content with their draw facing the winner of the Vinnie Murray Cup. After a recent defeat to Belvedere all are looking forward to improving over the Christmas training sessions.

Rotary Ireland Youth Leadership Development Competition

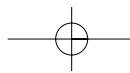
We congratulate students Jack Caffrey, Robert Somers, Mark Nealon and Chris Aylward who all participated in the Dun Laoghaire Rotary Youth Leadership competition. All were commended for their presentation and performance in interview. Eoin Bleakley was chosen to go forward as one of nine participants to the Regional Final for further interview. Delightfully Eoin was named one of three winners of a trip to the EU Parliament in Strasbourg. We congratulate Eoin and wish him well. Rotary is a global non-profit organisation aimed at promoting community values.



As term one draws to a close, we commend Fifth Year students for their participation and contribution to school life. We wish them well for a happy and healthy Christmas break and look forward to the New Year with high hopes of continued excellence.

Dates for your Diary

Saturday 16 January: 5th/6th Year Student Career Talks I
Saturday 30 January: 5th/6th Year Student Career Talks II
Thursday 04 February: 5th Year Parent Teacher Meeting
Sunday 28 February: 5th Year Family Mass



The Arts

Creative Arts and Digital Learning Centre Learning Centre Assistants

We have four students working in the learning centre as assistants – they provide a valuable service to our students by keeping the learning centre open on Monday and Thursdays until 5.30pm. They are also heavily involved in activities such as setting up The Scrabble League for term two and producing reviews for both film & books. We greatly appreciate the work and effort put in by our learning centre assistants 4th years Oisín Ryan, Conor Williams and Killian Callaghan and 5th year Scott Donohoe.



Preparation work for 1916 Exhibition

Ms Harlowe and her 4th Year History class have begun preparatory work for the 1916 Rising Exhibition which will launch next April. Entitled "Road to the Rising" the boys are researching such topics as the proclamation signatories, women in the rising and working closely with our College Archivist Caroline Mullin on Rock in the Rising. We also have a number of new print titles on 1916 that have been added to the collection.

Borrow a Book Campaign

For the second year running we're encouraging all of the boys in 2nd, 4th & 5th year to bring home a book to read over the Christmas break. There's a wide range of material in fiction from classics to recently published, along with an excellent history collection, sciences, sociology, spirituality, business and sport. After Christmas we will be setting all of the boys up with passwords for an App where you can check our collection from home, and see when your son's books are due back, as well as review the books they have borrowed.



Christmas Book Tree

Two of our learning centre assistants Conor & Oisín have created a wonderful Christmas tree out of books to display over the festive period. There is a book voucher up for grabs for the person who correctly guesses the amount of books that were used. At 50c a guess, all money collected will be donated to St Vincent De Paul.



Recent Addition to the College Art Collection

At a reception on the evening of 8th December 2015 in the Creative Arts and Digital Learning Centre two pictures by the late Owen Walsh (class of 1950) were presented to the college by members of the Walsh family.



Eoghan O'Mara Walsh, Eileen O'Mara Walsh, Brendan Walsh and Annraoi Wyer in the CADLC on the occasion of the presentation of the Owen Walsh's work to the College.

Fr. Tom Nash, *Community*, Caroline Mullan, *Archives* and Annraoi Wyer, *Head of Art*, were present to receive the works on behalf of the College. Mr. Brendan Walsh, *class of 1960* and former committee member of the College Past Students' Union instigated the presentation. Eileen O'Mara Walsh, with her son Eoghan, presented the pictures.

Owen Walsh (1933–2002)

Born in Westport, Co Mayo, Owen (class of 1950) studied at the National College of Art in Dublin, where he received major awards for painting. In 1954 he won the first Royal Hibernian Academy Scholarship in Art – the MacAuley Fellowship – and went to Spain in 1955, working and studying in Madrid, Toledo and Barcelona. In 1959, he founded, with others, The Independent Artists' Exhibition.

Senior Debating

Congratulations to Stephen Ryan, Oisín Ryan, Stephen Rooney and Jordan McDonald all of whom have successfully competed in the Leinster Senior Schools' Competition. We look forward to their further progress in 2016. Mark Heavey secured a place in the Second Round but, unfortunately, failed to progress further.

On the last Friday of term a lunchtime debate with a festive twist was held in the CADLC. This was a lively, comic and extremely well-attended event. Congratulations to Stephen Rooney, Oisín Ryan, Scott Donohoe who successfully (*Scrooge-like*) proposed the motion and commiserations to the Christmas-loving opposition of John Heavey, Marcus Ó Faoláin and Jordan McDonald. Thanks to James Huggard and Ben Jordan who adjudicated and chaired, respectively.

In addition many thanks to Kevin Heavey for helping and advising our Senior Debaters.

Gaudete Gaudete!

Rejoice Rejoice

This was the spirit in which the Choirs and the Orchestra combined to transform the Sports Hall into a celebratory space, creating a wonderful occasion. The tremendous singing of the choirs supported by the shimmering swells of the brass section, and the elegant string playing contributed to what was a festive and uplifting Carol Service. The congregational singing was ably led by our choral leaders from 5th and 6th Year. Our three brilliant soloists' (Shane Conlon, Shane Sweeney and Hugh Egleston) rendition of 'O Holy

Night', supported by our wonderful young singers in the Corless choir, was particularly moving. Our soloist on the trumpet Callum Byrne (2nd year), and the Leman Choir brought the piece to its final chorus to the rapturous applause of the audience. This was definitely one of the highlights for all involved! The Music Department would like to take this opportunity to thank and congratulate all the boys who constantly give their time and share their talents with us. We wish you a very happy Christmas jingle and look forward to hearing you all sing and play music in the New Year.



Lorcan Brophy (Fifth Year) playing the cello at the Carol Service

Date for your Diary

**LEMAN FESTIVAL CONCERT XXX
IN THE NATIONAL CONCERT HALL
SUNDAY 24TH JANUARY 2016
7.30PM**

PLEASE NOTE STARTING TIME.

ADMISSION €20

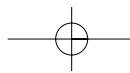
**TICKETS ON SALE FROM
MONDAY 11TH JANUARY 2016**

**Available from
THE NATIONAL CONCERT HALL
BOX OFFICE**

Telephone: (01) 417000

Online Bookings: www.nch.ie





Snapshot of 2nd Half Term 2015



Mr MacGinty and Stephen Fitzgerald (winner of FIFA Tournament) at the 5th Yr. SVDP Fundraiser.



Eileen O'Mara Walsh and Caroline Mullan (College Archivist) on the occasion of the donation of two pictures by the late Owen Walsh to the College.



Mr MacGinty and Charlie Lawless (5thYr) winner of the SVDP Poker Classic Fundraiser.



The opening night of the College Musical 'The Story of Joe and Grace'



Davide Mei, Ricardo Mei and Hugo Galera at the Third Year Family Mass



Robert Somers at the East Leinster Final



The Chess Club with their coach, Lukasz Goralski in the CADLC



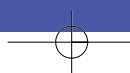
Joseph Glynn, Matthew O'Callaghan, Tiernan O'Hagan and Tommy O' Brien on Christmas Jumper Day

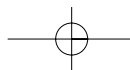


Jack Stapleton interviewing Enda Kenny in Dáil Éireann



The Choir and Orchestra under the baton of Ms Patrice O'Connor at the annual Carol Service





Snapshot of 2nd Half Term 2015



Alan Francis (5th Yr) reading at the Carol Service



Fourth Years working hard selling Christmas trees to help SVDP



'Govinda' rehearsing for the Leman auditions



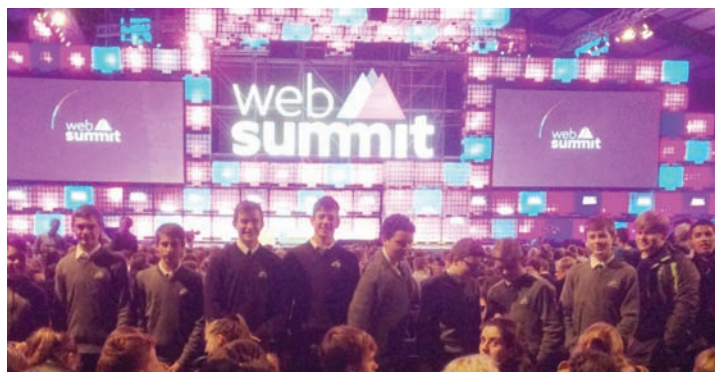
4th Years enjoying a well-earned pizza break during the Soccer Marathon in aid of SVDP



Josh Slevin, Jonathon Landers, Tom Maher and Jack Tonge on clean up duty for the Mince Pie Morning in aid of SVDP



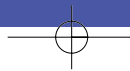
Steve Lambe and Adam Sharkey at the Press conference for the 24 Hour Soccer Marathon in aid of SVDP

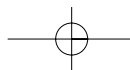


Web Summit for Schools took place in the RDS Dublin on Nov 3rd 2015 from 7.30 - 9.00 pm. Nineteen students attended and were accompanied by Mr Cathal Copeland and Mr Killian Grumley-Traynor.



'Rock Vs Newpark





News from the Past

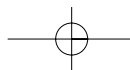


10 THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT THE CLASS OF 2015



- 1** 17 boys (8.6%) scored over 600 points. Vaughan (Academic High Achievers) and Gavin Coll (Choral Scholar).
- 2** A total of 354 A grades in Higher Level papers were attained by the class of 2015.
- 3** 95 boys (48.2%) attained over 500 points.
- 4** 28 students were awarded University Entrance Scholarships to UCD :Sammy Al Mukhaizeem, Tomas Beecham, Andrew Carroll, Austin Dodd, Ronan Doherty, Daniel Doyle, Robert Doyle, Matthew Dwan, Kyle Fierens, Patrick Geoghegan, Andrew Hickey, Christopher Hughes, Joshua Kieran Glennon, Jeff Kirwan, Tom May, Marcus McCabe, Rory McCluskey, Patrick McEnroe, Conal Molumby, Conor Mullen, William O'Flaherty, Stephen O'Hurley, Ivan O'Keeffe, Michael O'Leary, David O'Reilly, Francis O'Reilly, Donal
- 5** 7 students were awarded University Scholarships to TCD:Fiachra Bourke, Craig Duffy, Daniel Dunleavy, Richard Grainger, Kevin McDonnell, Páidí McMahon, Ruairc O'Leary
- 6** 26 students from the class of 2015 travelled to Kenya last summer to continue the work began by Rock boys in 2011. Through The Roar Campaign, Union donations, the school wide car raffle and other fundraisers €151K was raised to contribute to the Rock Reaches out to Kenya Project.
- 7** Hugo Kean (captain SCT 2015) will be playing for the Ireland U 20s after Christmas in preparations for up-coming 6 Nation's Tournament.
- 8** The Liberman Choir won The Frank Hughes Cup at the Wesley Interschools' Music Festival 2015.
- 9** Seamus Duff, Cathal Kinirons, Jeff Kirwan, Andrew McLaughlin, Roghan McMahon and David Walsh represented Blackrock College in September 2014 on the Dublin Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes.
- 10** 5 boys were awarded the Gaisce Award-Silver Medal :Thomás Beecham, Ronan Doherty, Richard Grainger, Patrick McEnroe, Ross O' Mahony





Sixth Year



The run-in to Christmas has been a very busy time for everyone in Sixth Year. A brief summary of events and achievements is listed below.

CAO Talk for parents

On November 3rd Ms McGee gave a very detailed and informative talk to the Sixth Year parents on the CAO process. It was great to see so many parents in attendance, however if you were unable to attend, the PowerPoint used on the night is available on the school website. www.blackrockcollege.com.

Carol Service

On Thursday 10th the whole school assembled in the sports hall for the annual Carol Service. This event is one of the highlights of the school year and it was fantastic to see the congregation of students join in the festive pieces. The choir, led by Ms Patrice O'Connor, and the Orchestra, led by Ms Una O'Kane and Mr Andre Kavanagh, were simply exceptional. Congratulations to Shane Sweeney, Hugh Egleston and Shane Conlon who sang a wonderful rendition of 'O Holy Night'. Well done to all involved in what was a tremendous liturgical occasion.



Shane Conlon, Hugh Egleston and Shane Sweeney singing 'O Holy Night' at the Carol Service

SVDP 24hr FAST

Seventy four 6th Years took part in the annual 24hr sponsored fast in aid of SVDP. All of the boys taking part in the FAST, along with those who sponsored the Dean, were entered into the Sixth Year raffle. The FAST finished on Friday 27th November at 1:30pm when the boys all had a meal in the school canteen. A special thanks to the Parents' Committee for their help in organising the prizes for the raffle and to Catherine and Albert in the catering department. Very importantly €3,208 was raised through the sponsored fast and the raffle. Well done to all involved.

The Story of Joe and Grace

Mr Brian Savage and Mr Toirleac O'Brien came together to write and direct another brilliant Senior Musical. Each night was a full house, and this is a testament to the time, effort and talent of all those involved. Stephen Rooney, Rory Patterson, Miles Lumsden, Dónal O'Cribin and Conor Gallagher were our 6th years involved this year and we commend them for their contribution and congratulate all students and staff involved.

Leman Auditions

The Leman Concert will be held on Sunday January 24th in the National Concert Hall. We congratulate our sixth years Declan O'Sullivan, Marcus Ó Faoláin, Rory Patterson, Shane Conlon, Stephen Rooney, Dynamic Sundays, members of the Choir and Orchestra on being selected to perform. We look forward to another visit to the National Concert Hall to witness the musical talents of our students.

Senior Science Team

Congratulations to Sean Hassett, Matthew Long and Declan Norton who finished second in the Dublin Regional Science Quiz. They qualified for the National Final of the ISTA Senior Science Quiz held in Trinity College. The boys finished a commendable 10th.

Basketball

We congratulate Calum Henry and the Senior Basketball Squad on reaching the East Leinster League final. Trailing at half time the team took the lead in the third quarter, however a strong finish by Adamstown CC saw our Basketballers lose out 53-50. Well done to all involved.



Calum Henry Captain of the Senior Basketball Team

Castle Rugby

Castle Rugby is progressing nicely – The Thirds had very impressive wins over St Michael's, Templeogue SCT and Wilson's hospital SCT. The Fourths lost narrowly to St Michael's but put in a very commanding performance against the Colts. Both leagues will commence after Christmas and the draw is as follows;

The Castle Thirds have been drawn against Kilkenny (A) and Clongowes (H), while the Fourths have been drawn against De LaSalle Churchtown (H), Castleknock (H), St David's (H), St Marys (A) and Belvedere (A).

We wish both squads well for the forthcoming League Campaigns.

SCT

The SCT continue their preparations for the 2016 Cup campaign. The first round draw pits the SCT against one of the Finalists from the Vinnie Murray Cup. We'll find out towards the end of January who our opponents will be. We wish Caelan Doris, Captain, the squad and their coaches well for the upcoming campaign. Please **'Be There'** to support the team on cup days.

The First Cup Match is on Friday January 29th at 3pm in Donnybrook.

Cheerleading

David Fenn has been chosen as the Head Cheerleader for 2016. Daniel Ryan, Mark Savage, David Sharpe, Hugo Walsh and Sam Fenton have been chosen to complete the cheerleading committee. Another 24 cheerleaders will be chosen from Fifth Year and Sixth Year after Christmas. We wish David and all the cheerleaders well for the season.

Cross Country

Blackrock College held an open invitational on Wednesday 11th November. Well done to Brian McGlone, Declan Norton, Bernard O'Sullivan, Jack Stokes

and particularly to Christian McKenna and Luke McCann who finished 4th and 2nd respectively.

The Senior Cross Country team were again to the fore in the recent Clann na Gael open race. The team won the Gold Medal with Christian McKenna finishing second and Bernard O'Sullivan third.

Chess

Chess continues to thrive in 6th Year. The School Chess team including Pengbo Wu, Martin Conlon, Calum Comerford and Karl Moroney lost narrowly to St Benildus in a recent league match.

Soccer

Conor Gallagher and the Senior Soccer team were unlucky to lose their last group game to St John's Ballyfermot, a result which saw them eliminated from the league. Although having finished the season early the Senior Soccer Squad will face the travelling St Bede's after Christmas, in what is always a keenly contested affair.

Christmas Exams

The anticipated exams started on Monday 7th December. Parents are reminded that classes continue during these exams and excusing students from school for **'Study Days'** is **strongly discouraged**. Teachers are in the classrooms covering material that will be tested in their exams and withdrawing your son from class, in our experience, causes more stress for them and results in underperformance. We appreciate your understanding in this matter and look forward to your future cooperation.

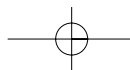
I'd like to take this opportunity to wish you and your family a very happy Christmas and good fortune for 2016.



Sean Hassett receiving his selection box from Mr Keogh on Christmas Jumper Day

Dates for your Diary

Wednesday 6th January - Classes recommence.
Thursday 14th January - 6th Year Parent Teacher Meeting, 4:15pm until 6:45pm.
Saturday 16th January - Career Talks I(5th and 6th Year)
Sunday 24th - January Leman Festival Concert
Wednesday 27th January - Career interviews @ 7:30pm
Friday 29th - SCT match in Donnybrook @ 3pm
Saturday 30th January - Career Talks II(5th and 6th Year)
Tuesday 2nd February - Past v Present Debate @ 7:30pm



Pastoral Care Programme



Christmas 2015

Some of the most beautiful images associated with the Christmas season depict Mary the mother of Jesus holding her child in a most tender and loving embrace. Artists also tend to present her in an attitude of wonder and contemplation. Christmas, as a season of faith, invites us to set aside a little time in the mad rush of life and allow ourselves to rediscover the tenderness and love, the wonder and contemplation that need to be at the heart of a human life well lived. A famous German mystic Meister Eckhart once remarked, "We all need to be the mother of God because God is always needing to be born."



During Advent 2015, Pope Francis inaugurated a Holy Year dedicated to the theme of Mercy. Between now and November 2016, he is asking each of us to make a particular effort to rediscover that at the heart of the Good News is a God of Compassion whose tender love has the power to transform our personal lives and indeed our world. What better time than Christmas to begin reflecting on that profound message!

TY Soup Run

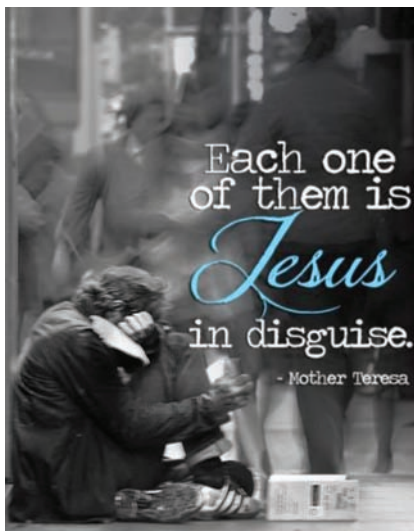
"We think sometimes that poverty is only being hungry, naked and homeless. The poverty of being unwanted,

unloved and uncared for is the greatest poverty." (Mother Teresa)



In her ministry, Mother Teresa of Calcutta (Kolkata) transformed the lives of many people through her compassion and tender love. She was a true example of Christ's light shining in a hurting world. Similarly, over the past two years, our Transition Year students, under the leadership of Ms Mary McMahon have brought this light to bear in a very special way through the Soup Run programme.

Since September, using the front gate of Trinity College as their starting point, the students of RE45, accompanied by a teacher from the College and Mr John Carlin from the Legion of Mary, spend a number of hours travelling the streets of Dublin distributing hot drinks, sandwiches, clothes and sleeping bags to those who are in need. Both physical and spiritual nourishment is offered, as the most welcomed gift in our ministry of service is a sharing of God's love through prayer. The people we meet on a weekly basis are hurt from feeling unwanted, and in prayer they find



a gentle reminder that they are loved and cared for by a God of Mercy and Compassion.

Both the physical and spiritual dimensions to this ministry feature regularly in the student reflections...

'I joined the soup run class because I thought it would be good to go out and assist those on the street. Before when I passed the homeless I felt bad I couldn't help, but now this gives me a chance to give back to those in society and ultimately help those in need. I found that many we met were very friendly and grateful and wanted the Green Scapular and our prayers.'

'When I was on my way in town to the main gate of Trinity College, with a bag full of clothes, I was a bit nervous. But the more I went out on the soup run the more I got used to it. It has really changed my view on life. It's the reaction of those we meet that is the most satisfying.'

'I didn't really know what to expect. We had talked about the soup run for weeks before and I must say I was excited to take part in helping the less fortunate. I must admit when we arrived at the meeting point outside Trinity, it was nothing like I expected. The first man we met was Polish and was not very talkative. He took what he needed, and after some conversation and some stares from the public we moved on. After talking to a few more people, one of which was badly beaten, we met a very religious man who was living with HIV. He was my favourite person. He was extremely grateful for the gifts we brought and we started to say a prayer out of the Bible. It felt good to be a part of something more, it felt really like we were a part of something when we came together and prayed.'

This work of service by RE45, Ms McMahon and others is just one of numerous examples of the very close working relationship that exists between students and adults within our pastoral programme in the College. Other examples of this sharing of gifts and talents since mid-term include the November Prayer Services and Mass of Remembrance, the Third Year Family Mass, our Pastoral Placement programme, the Year Masses to celebrate the Feast of the Immaculate Conception and of course, our annual Carol Service.

May this dimension of life in our school community continue to develop and flourish throughout 2016. A happy and holy Christmas to all.

The Chaplaincy Team



Guidance and Counselling

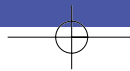
With the CAO Irish Colleges application system deadline approaching on February 1st, the current 6th Year students are now seriously researching their college options and choices. All students will apply online at www.cao.ie where they can avail of a reduced application fee of €25 if they apply before January 20th 2016. The regular fee of €40 applies to applications made between January 20th and February 1st. If any student has a learning disability or a medical condition it is important to tick the appropriate box on the CAO application and if a DARE application is appropriate then students are also advised to get these applications underway as soon as possible. Students can find out more regarding the DARE scheme on www.accesscollege.ie. Students with Irish and Third Language exemptions must also take necessary action to notify the relevant Higher Education Institutes (HEIs) of their exemption(s) and to submit any supporting documentation the HEIs require. Please refer to the relevant individual HEI websites for further information.

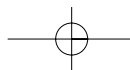
Furthermore, it is necessary for students applying for entry to medicine in 2016 to register for CAO to receive their CAO number so that they then can register for the HPAT-Ireland examination. HPAT-Ireland registration will close on January 20th 2016 and the HPAT test will take place in various centres around the country on February 27th 2016. 6th year students have been participating in a HPAT preparation course on Saturday mornings in the College and have had the option of sitting a practice test. RCSI are holding an open day on January 5th 2016; any student wishing to attend must register online via the RCSI website.

Each 6th Year student has now received a CAO handbook and a presentation from Ms. McGee detailing the CAO application process. Students have recently attended open days at a range of colleges including Trinity, UCD, DCU, DIT, NCAD and IADT where they have had the opportunity to attend talks in relation to the courses they are interested in

as well as getting a chance to talk to lecturers and current college students. Since September a number of guest speakers, professors and lecturers from UCD, TCD and DIT have visited the College and addressed the 6th Years regarding courses offered in their third level institutions and careers. Students attended talks in the areas of Business, Law and Engineering.

This along with additional research completed on websites like www.qualifax.ie, www.careersportal.ie as well as on individual college websites such put students in a good position to make informed choices. On December 1st, 6th Year students also had the opportunity to attend a course information evening in the College. A number of recent past pupils who are in their final years in college come in to talk to the students about their respective courses. Courses that were represented on the night included Law, Medicine, Engineering, Science, Business, Computer Science and





Guidance and Counselling



Economics and Finance. There was a solid attendance and a great atmosphere. The students broke into smaller discussion groups where they had the chance to ask questions in regards to the courses they were interested in. The Guidance and Counselling Department would like to express its gratitude to the past pupils who generously gave up their time to be there on the night and also to the Past Pupils' Junior Committee for their assistance in the organization of the event.



Sixth Year Students at a Course Information Evening

A number of 6th Years have completed their UCAS applications for a range of universities including Oxford and Cambridge in the UK. Some students have already attended for interview and received offers while others are currently making preparations or awaiting offers. Any other 6th Year considering making a UCAS application should indicate this to Ms McGee as soon as possible as January 15th 2016 is the final deadline for applications in this academic year. Also any student considering making a UCD Ad Astra Scholarship (Elite Athlete/Performing Arts) should do so by January 31st, applications can now be made online via the UCD website.

5th and 6th year students will also have the opportunity to attend a range of career talks offered over two Saturday mornings in January. The talks will cover a range of career areas, which will include Business, Law, Technology, Entrepreneurship, Science, Medicine and Engineering amongst others. It is a chance for 5th Year students to start considering what they would like to do after school and it gives 6th Years the clarity necessary to finalise their CAO choices. Additionally 6th Year students will have the chance to partake in Career Interviews/Coaching which will be held in the College on Wednesday 27th January 2016 at 7.30 p.m.

A number of 5th and 6th Year students have also signed an expression of interest list in relation to potentially participating in an Introduction to Computer Science Programming and Coding course that will commence in the New Year. This is an excellent opportunity for students considering studying Computer Science at third level as well as for any student who has a curiosity or interest in this particular area. Further details will follow after the Christmas break.

5th Year students have now settled well into their studies after their creative involvement in the Transition Year programme. 4th Year students have received the results of their EIRQUEST tests that they sat at the start of the year and are reflecting on these at present. 3rd and 2nd year students have also settled in well and are engaging well with their academic subjects as well as partaking in a range of extra-curricular activities.

Following on from our first Bullying Awareness Day in September, the College's first student led Anti-Bullying Committee has been established. The Committee includes representatives from each year group. They have participated in a training workshop and are now going about planning a number of goals and initiatives to roll out in the New Year.

A number of students from Second Year to Sixth Year will attend the Cycle Against Suicide Student Leaders' Congress

at the RDS next January, an initiative started by Irish entrepreneur, Jim Breen, as a result of his appearance on RTE's The Secret Millionaire programme. The theme for the 2016 Student Leaders' Congress is 'Together We Can'. The conference aims to promote positive mental health, help-seeking behaviour in young people and the message that 'it's ok not to feel ok and it's absolutely ok to ask for help'. The Congress is run/delivered by the Cycle Against Suicide Charity and is endorsed by the Institute of Guidance Counsellors (IGC). All 4,000 places have now been filled for the Conference, it is hoped that our own students who attend will become leaders at promoting mental awareness in the College on their return.

Regular counselling continues for all students from Second Year to Sixth Year and preparations for the school's second Bullying Awareness Day in January are well under way.

As a department we would like to wish all students and their families a pleasant, restful and safe Christmas.

Dates for your Diary

HPAT-Ireland registration closes - January 20th
HPAT Test - February 27th

RCSI Open Day - January 5th

UCD Ad Astra Scholarship (Elite Athlete /Performing Arts) applications deadline - January 31st

CAO Irish Colleges deadline - February 1st

Reduced Application fee of €25 if you apply before January 20th

Deadline for UCAS applications - January 15th
Career Interviews / Coaching - 27th January

Science News

It has been a very busy and exciting time in the Science Department, with lots of tours, quizzes and competitions.

Second Year Science Trip to the Science Centre in Valencia Spain

During the October mid-term break 49 Second Year students accompanied by five teachers visited the Science Centre in Valencia Spain. One of the highlights was staying in the huge aquarium overnight and sleeping under the shark tank. They were given demonstration workshops in Chemistry and Physics. They visited the beautiful city of Valencia, highlights of which were the view over the city from the Cathedral bell tower and the Valencia CF soccer shop! They also stayed in an Outdoor Adventure centre located in the middle of a forest in the nearby mountains where they immersed themselves in wall climbing, zip-lining, kayaking, hill walking and soccer matches. It was an exciting and educational trip, enjoyed by all.



Second Year Science Trip to the Science Centre in Valencia Spain

Science Week Activities

• **Dr Kevin McGuigan**, a Senior Lecturer in the RCSI Dept. of Physiology & Medical Physics gave a lecture to all the Transition Years on Tuesday the 9th of November. He described his work as director of the Solar Disinfection Research Group which develops appropriate technology interventions against waterborne disease in developing

countries such as Uganda, Kenya, Zimbabwe, S. Africa and Cambodia.

• Fifth Year Chemistry trip to TCD.

Fifth Year Chemistry students attended a morning of lectures concerning careers in Chemistry on Thursday 12th November.

• Staff Table Science Quiz

Members of the Science Department held the second Staff Table Quiz in the staff room during lunchtime on Thursday. It was a fun occasion for all.

• Third Year Table Quizzes

Quizzes were run on the afternoons of Thursday and Friday for 3rd year science classes. The winning teams comprised: Thursday: Ross Fitzpatrick, David Gallagher, Killian McQuaid, Ben White.

Friday: Andrew Angulo, Inigo Belaustegui, Max Connolly, John Corless.

• Senior Science Table Quiz:

Our senior science A team comprising Sean Hassett, Matthew Long and Declan Norton came second in the Dublin Regional Senior Science Table Quiz held in TCD on Thursday 12th Nov. They qualified for the National Final of the ISTA Senior Science Quiz which was held on Saturday 21st Nov. in TCD. The competition amongst the 40 teams present was intense and our team did well to finish 10th in Ireland.

SciFest@School

A SciFest@School competition was held on Tuesday 17th November: Students from Second Year exhibited 99 projects. This was the school's fourth SciFest@School competition. Students demonstrated their knowledge of science and technology through their creative and innovative projects. The winning projects were as follows:

Life Sciences

1st Liam Heylin and Jeff Kenny 'Does music affect a dog's sleeping pattern?'

2nd. Harry O'Leary: 'To investigate if a cricket can accurately be used to measure temperature.'

Physical Sciences

1st John Huggard: 'The problem with Pentaquarks'

Joint 2nd Tom Doorly: 'Binomial Distribution'.

Gavin Hoey: 'Why does a cricket ball swing?'

Chats with Past Pupils

Past Pupils who are working in the scientific, medical, engineering, computing and biomedical sectors have been invited to come in to the College and talk to small groups of science students.

Stephen McGerty (Year 1990) dropped in on the afternoon of Friday November 20th. After leaving Blackrock he studied Computer Science at TCD (Bachelors and Masters) then went on to work as a consulting software engineer. Offered a 6 week stint working in New Jersey he is still there eighteen years later! He got involved with a small start-up company that was later acquired by a larger company. While he transitioned to a business management role, he is still regularly involved with the underlying technology of the company.

It was invaluable for our current students to hear, first hand, about Stephen's career path and his valuable career advice. More past students will be dropping in to chat with our students during 2016.

Young Scientist Competition 2016

The following three students have qualified for the Young Scientist Competition to be held in January 2016:

Leader Name: John Huggard (2nd year)

Project Title: The Problem with Pentaquarks

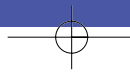
Leader Name: Tom Dooley (2nd year)

Project Title: Binomial Distribution

Leader Name: Harry Kearns (Transition Year)

Project Title: An air quality survey of the Dublin area twenty-five years after the smoky coal ban using lichens as bio-indicators.

We wish them the very best of luck in the competition.



Sport



Badminton

Badminton coaching continues on Tuesday and Wednesday afternoons with numbers increasing gradually over the last term. Students are availing of the opportunity to receive coaching from Niall Reynolds who has previously represented Ireland at International level for the sport. Students who have been playing since last September have made great progress and are now playing to a high level despite starting as beginners in the sport. The coaching sessions consist of a mixture of coaching techniques and advice, which is then followed by a number of matches where players get to implement what they have learned as well as having the opportunity to challenge each other. New players are always welcome to join at any stage of the year. The U14's Badminton season will be commencing after Christmas so it is hoped that more 2nd Year students will become involved and come out to coaching. A series of friendly challenge matches will be arranged for the other age categories as the U16's and U19's seasons have now drawn to a close.

Basketball U-19:

The U19's Senior Basketball team reached the All-Ireland quarter final of The School's Cup and came up against an outstanding Colaiste Treasa Kanturk side whose key player scored 46 points, leading them to a 69-29 victory. Blackrock showed great character in their response to their first defeat of the season as two days after a demanding trip to Cork and a challenging match we had a home match in the East-Leinster quarter final against King's Hospital running out eventual winners by 7 points.

In the East-Leinster semi-final Blackrock came up against Pobaiscoil Neasáin. Having built up a 12 point lead, Blackrock showed nerves of steel to withstand the pressure that came in the final quarter and held on to claim a 2 point victory. In the East-Leinster final Blackrock came up against an outstanding Adamstown C.C. side. However 'Rock showed just how far they have come this season as they put in a season's best performance. Unfortunately in a closely fought back and forth battle Blackrock lost 53-50 in what was an incredible match. However the season is far from over. With All-Ireland playoffs to come in January Calum Henry (Captain) and his squad can look to the All-Ireland series with huge confidence.



Rory Linnane at the East -Leinster Final

U-16:

The U-16's Basketball team finished second in their group behind Drimnagh Castle, who defeated Blackrock 37-24 in the group decider. There is no shortage of talent in the side and they responded brilliantly in the East-Leinster Quarter final winning a closely fought game away to Palmerstown 26-21. In the semi-final, at home to St.Finians, Blackrock put in their best performance of the season over the first two quarters and built up a ten point lead. However, St.Finians, to their credit came back and emerged with a narrow 2 point victory. The squad can look forward to next season with huge optimism. Michael Ryan and his squad can be very proud of their efforts.

Senior Soccer

The Senior Soccer team had a disappointing end to the season with a loss away to St John's, Ballyfermot. The squad have plenty to look forward to after Christmas with the annual fixture with St. Bede's, Manchester. This game is fixed for March the 12th.

Rugby

The Senior Squad has had a very busy time since the Halloween mid-term break. A trip to Wales over the break to play Coleg Morgan was a highly beneficial exercise. A see-saw contest with the final score in dispute until the end of the game, saw the seniors just about emerge on the right side of the result. Since the resumption of term five matches have been played to date. Victories against Presentation Cork, RBAI, St Michaels and St Mary's were offset by a comprehensive defeat to Belvedere College. Castletroy await the team on Saturday the 19th of December in Limerick.



'Rock Vs Belvedere

The Schools' Cup Draw was held on the 9th of December and pitted the Senior Team against a Qualifier side from the Vinnie Murray Cup Competition. The match is to be played on Friday the 29th of January. A busy period lies ahead as the squad prepares for its up-coming challenges in examinations centres and fields of play.

The Junior Squad

The second term has proven to be a real test of the depth and quality of the Junior Squad. Whilst training intensity has increased exponentially, they have also had to withstand some difficult opponents. Producing some powerful performances in tough conditions, led by their captain, Gavin Jones, the Junior Firsts have defeated Methody, Terenure, Clongowes and Belvedere, whilst the seconds have beaten Newfoundland Rock, Clongowes, Belvedere and CUS and suffered just the one defeat away to Terenure in a close encounter. Bigger and more important games await both sides after Christmas and the boys are all set for training during the holiday period in anticipation.

Chess

The Chess Club meets three times a week after school on a Monday and Tuesday with their coach, Lukasz Goralski and on Wednesdays in the Creative Arts & Digital Learning Centre. It is open to all years. The Junior and Senior team are registered to take part in the Leinster Schools' League.

The Senior Team consists of Pengbo Wu, Patrick Hassett, Martin Conlon, Karl Moroney and Calum Comerford. The Junior Team is made up of Fergus Woods, Michael McDonald, Patrick O'Connell, Michael Ryan and Aidan Canavan. On Thursday 24th November the Senior Team travelled to St. Bendilus in the morning and St. Bendilus Junior team came to Blackrock College in the afternoon. All games were very competitive and the standard was very high against a strong side of past and present international representatives on both St. Bendilus teams. The Senior Team lost 5 nil with a very close match to the end between Pengo Wu and Patrick Hassett and their opponents. The Junior team lost 1-4. Michael McDonald fought a good fight and held his own to win his match against an Irish U14 panellist.

We wish both teams the best of luck in their remaining league matches in the New Year.



Members of the Chess Club in the CADLC

Cross Country

Blackrock had a promising start to the year at the Clonliffe Harrier 'Brother' Schools Cross Country Open. Our Junior Team came third after a phenomenal performance from Adam Harvey (1st), Liam Blackburn (4th) and Eoin Farrell (6th). Our Intermediate team came 5th with a particularly strong performance from Conor Halpin who came 2nd. Finally our Senior Team also came in 5th place in what was a very tough contest.

We were at home for our second event as Blackrock hosted its annual open invitational race on November 11th. Over 400 boys and girls from all age groups competed. Adam Harvey (2nd year) kept up his incredible form winning the Junior Race. Conor Halpin (Transition year) also continued his good form winning the Intermediate Race. Finally Luke McCann (6th year) came 2nd and Christian McKenna came 4th in the Senior Race. Our Junior Team came 2nd, our Intermediate Team came 2nd and our Senior Team came 1st.

On Wednesday December 2nd 11 boys took part in the Clann na Gael Open Race at Sean Moore Park in Irishtown. Liam Blackburn and Eoin O'Farrell (2nd year) finished 1st and 2nd in the Junior Race. The senior boys won the team gold medal with Christian McKenna finishing in 2nd place and Bernard O'Sullivan finishing in 3rd place. Our focus will now turn to the East Leinsters on January 20th in Rathdrum.

Athletics

For the first time we took two teams to the Leinster Indoor Combined Athletics championship in Athlone Arena on October 28th. The boys had a physically draining day competing in all events: 60m Hurdles, Shot, Long jump, 200m and 800m. Whilst no member of our team figured in the top three of all events, there were many who excelled in individual events such as David Hearne (2nd Year) coming 1st in the 800m and James Burke (Transition Year) coming first in the shot put.

We are continuing our preparations and training for athletics with Ms. Farrell and Dave Sweeney in the Sports Hall every Friday morning at 7.30am. All are welcome!

Rowing

Having established a new relationship with Neptune Rowing Club the sport in Blackrock College continues to grow. The team set off to a great start at the Leinster Indoor Championships where they were awarded the top Men's Club in Leinster. Congratulations to all the boys who competed, especially Josh Loughrey, Sean Hannon and Conal Regan who came in the top three places respectively in the Junior 14 category and Andrew Ryan who came 3rd in the Men's Novice category.

Photos courtesy Rock Photography
www.rockphotography.ie

www.blackrockcollege.com

Reflection

"We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give."

~ Winston Churchill