

BLACKROCK COLLEGE NEWSLETTER



Christmas 2017

Dear Parents,

What is your fondest Christmas memory? There is such a flurry of activity during the festive season, it is probably hard to put a finger on it; but I would wager, with reasonable certainty, that it involves people you hold dear rather than gifts received, functions attended or places visited. Ah yes – memories: 'the good old days'!

I tell your sons that, for them, these are 'the good old days' that they should cherish them, enjoy the togetherness of family and close friends. It is a time of celebration, when we press the pause button on our otherwise hectic lives and gather in thanksgiving.

Christmas is special. A child is born. The birth of Jesus impacts us all, changes everything, dispels fear and anxiety, urges us to open our hearts to those around us, to look beyond ourselves.

In a culture that puts devices before people, where so often our heads are down with our fingers doing our talking, Christmas reminds us to look up and around us, to engage with the divine, the transcendent and put community before ourselves.

Through the year our faith isn't always a bright flowing light. It can be a faint flicker to which we desperately cling. Christmas fans the flame, invites us to feel God's closeness.

As Pope Benedict xvi said: "Let us take the hand which He stretches out to us: it is a hand which seeks to take nothing from us only to give". Taking – giving: the fondest memories are, in my experience, in the joy of giving: seeing eyes light up, the sharing of the moment, under the tree, beside the crib.

Christmas also shines a light on hardship for the lonely, the bereaved, the isolated and the homeless. If we can find a way to include those who are hurting, Christmas will be brighter and our joy deeper. Christmas' overarching motif is generosity. We are called to help and serve others with a generous heart, with a hand which seeks to give.

Your sons have responded to this call magnificently. The 6th Year 24 hour fast and raffle, the 5th Year Cyclothon, the TY Soccer Marathon, Mince Pies Morning and hamper delivery, and the 3rd Year/2nd Year Duck Races all provided very practical support for those in need and are among many examples of faith in action.

Making a difference of course is not just for Christmas time. Building community, living the gospel is a year round invitation. This is done through everyday simple gestures.

The power of coming together, building community was evident in Les Misérables. To say it was a triumph is an understatement. Anyone who had the thrill of witnessing it will tell you how special it was. There have been many other great community occasions since mid-term. In particular BCR, a unique project, provided a 'good old days' experience for our Transition Year boys and of course the Carol Service was a powerful expression of our ethos. Debating, M.U.N, Sport, Green Schools, Thursday Tunes, Pastoral Placements, the Soup Run, Liturgies and the Teaching and Learning in the classroom encourage each boy to find his gift, to follow the star.

Thanksgiving – so many bring the spirit of Christmas through the school year: our Spiritan Community, staff, students, College Union and you, our parents, shape the journey for your sons, our boys. We are most grateful.

May the good news of God's love for us in Bethlehem shape your lives.

Happy Christmas, Happy New Year.

ALAN MacGINTY
Principal

Photos from L to R :

- a) Fr O' Brolchain(Spiritual Director) Ms S. Nolan (Deputy Principal) and Mr B. Herlihy (Deputy Principal) at the Carol Service
- b) Colm Fagan (2nd Year) on stage as Macbeth
- c) Ben Wallace (5th Year) and Daniel Foley (6th Year) (SCTV St Michael's)



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 Duff House in second place. Patrick Curley won the Second Year Open 50m with Ben Bracken coming second. The Table Tennis and Chess House Competitions began with great enthusiasm after the Halloween break and they will come to a conclusion at the beginning of the next term.

The **extra-curricular activities** available in Second Year are a vital part of each boy's experience of and contribution to our College community. We are delighted to congratulate the boys on their high level of participation and engagement with the many activities on offer.



Andrew Jones (Inter Schools Jumping Competition)

We have had a great term of Under 14s Rugby. There have been some tough matches along with some great wins and the coaches report that the standard of play is steadily improving. New players are always welcome and training begins again when the College re-opens on 8th January.

Well done to Matthew O'Brien, who represents 2nd Year on the Junior Golf Team and is competing in the Irish Schools' Junior Golf Competition. The U16 Basketball team has some very talented 2nd Year players. They have had a great term and will begin the 2nd Year League after Christmas. Many of our Second Year boys are involved in Cross Country. In November four 2nd Years competed in the *Blackrock College Cross Country Open* with the team of Eoin Dunne, Oscar Lubliner, James Carroll and Ronan McNamara coming 2nd in the Junior Race. Well done! Recently they took part in the *Ballinteer Cross Country Open* with strong performances from Oscar Lubliner, James Carroll, Ronan McNamara, and Jamie Blackburn.

The Junior Chess team have had a very good term. They won against Coláiste Eoin and Gorey Community College but lost away to Gonzaga. Other extra-curricular activities involving many of our Second Years include horse riding, cycling, badminton, squash, swimming, public speaking, MUN, debating, the Art Club, the Science Club, Orchestra, cricket, tennis, table tennis, and rowing. We wish them well in the forthcoming events and look forward to hearing about their progress.



Sean O'Connor, Matthew Collins, John Duffy, Mark McCabe and Jamie Blackburn, Chess (Blackrock V Coláiste Eoin)

The *Scifest Competition* has taken place in Second Year and entries will be judged next term. All Second Years will attend the *Young Scientist Exhibition* in the RDS in January where they will see one of their classmates exhibiting. Congratulations to **Rory Luff** on his qualification for the **Young Scientist and Technology Exhibition** for his project 'How would a weakening of the earth's magnetic field affect Aurora Borealis?'

Many of the boys attended the opening night of the **College Musical** *Les Misérables*. There was a fantastic turnout for this outstanding show and hopefully our Second Years will have gained a few insights in preparation for the 2nd & 4th Year Production, which will take place later in the year. Sincere thanks to the Second Years and their families who contributed so

generously to the Machakos appeal. This contribution ensures that progress in building the Spiritan School can continue. Equally, congratulations to all the boys in Second Year on their fundraising for our annual *Duck Race* in aid of the **St. Vincent de Paul Society**. The 2nd Years raised **€3,000**. It is very much part of our Spiritan charism to have a concern for those less fortunate, especially at this time of year; and all of the boys reflected that in their efforts during the Advent season.



Ryan Holmes, Captain of the Under 14s Major League in Mount Merrion FC

During this half-term we also had our **Carol Service** for the season of Advent, with the whole College in attendance in the Sports Hall. It was both a festive and prayerful occasion with Fr Cormac O'Brien encouraging us all to **Reach Out in Caring and Kindness**.



Ross Halpin, Eoin Power, Philip Breen & Mark Phelan attended the Ronan O'Gara Rugby Clinic, in Donnybrook in November.

When the new term commences, we ask parents to congratulate their son on his weekly Application Card, which he takes home each Monday. This is a very important opportunity to reinforce the good behaviour and practice that is acknowledged on the card. A regular check on each boy's Homework Diary is also advisable, to assist him in the organisation of his daily homework and revision.



Hugh O'Connor and Conor Gorman receiving their Dublin Bay Trophies for Sailing as part of the September Series for Dublin Bay Sailing.

Hugh won the Lawson Cup for Toppers which dates back to 1965, this is his third year in a row to win this prestigious trophy. Conor won the Seapoint Trophy which dates back to 1959. This is his second year to win this trophy, his father Dave Gorman won it in 1980, his uncle James Gorman won it in 1986 and his sister Clare Gorman won it in 2014.

Third Year



There has been a huge involvement in extra-curricular activities since the return after the Hallowe'en break. James Crowley, Alex Kelly and Evan Walsh were members of the orchestra in the truly exceptional production of *Les Misérables*. We look forward to seeing many more of the year group involved in productions over the coming years as they move up through the College. In addition to this, seventeen boys are members of the Corless Choir that sang at the Family Mass and Christmas Carol Service along with Third Year orchestra members in front of the whole school. In rowing thirteen boys participated in the Muckross Head of the River Competition in Cork, the highlight of which was taking first place in the Junior 15 Octet. The Crew members were Ben Hogan, Alex Cronnelly, Theo Boland, Sam Horkan, Michael O'Sullivan, Matthew Keeley, Pearse Woods, Matthew Gibney and Colm O'hAonghusa. The three badminton teams captained by Darragh Dempsey, Robert Byrne and Joey Horton had winning starts in their League Competition. Following wins against Portmarnock S.C., St. Benildas and St. Conleth's the Junior Basketball Team lost out in the semi-final of the East Coast League but have the All-Irelands to look forward to on their return from the Christmas break.



Third Years and Second Years singing in the choir at the Carol Service

Sean Probert plays the cello at the Carol Service

Eight Boys represented the College in cross country in the open event held in the school where 600 boys and girls competed with our Junior Team coming second to Belvedere. The leading Third Years were Eoin Kelly, Darragh Dempsey and Michael O'Sullivan. Ethan Murtagh had a very successful weekend at the Leinster Swimming Open where amongst his medals were two silver against older competitors. Congratulations to Nathan Van Steenberge who competed for Ireland in a sailing event in the Netherlands finishing 6th out of eighty competitors. A loyal group of up to twelve participate in the Sunday morning cycle with Willow Wheelers and competitive matches for boys involved in table-tennis will commence shortly. In golf the Junior Team which included Alex Bolger and Thomas Harte qualified for Leinsters before losing out to Gonzaga. We have arranged a Third Year Golf Outing in **Stackstown Golf Club on Monday 29th of January** and are hoping for a good turnout. Participants do however require a handicap for the event.

Squash has made a comeback in Blackrock and is being enjoyed by a number of the year group as is swimming. It's good to see that boys have been benefitting from the Winter Tennis Programme and the Art Club which has consistently attracted large numbers this year. Another option on Wednesday is the Free Swim which takes place immediately after class and Codor Dojo takes place on Tuesdays in the CADLC. All the best to Conor Slattery who has qualified for the Young Scientist Competition in January. The Debating Society meets every Tuesday, MUN on Fridays and Public Speaking at 12:50 p.m. on Wednesdays. Boys to the fore and who have represented the College to date are John Cawley, Thomas Kerr and Michael Lucey. Congratulations to James Culhane, Captain of the JCT, and Vice Captains Scott Barron and Michael Moloney and our very best wishes go to the JCT in the Cup and the Junior 2/3/4/5 in their respective League



Scott Barron (JCT v Portora Royal)

Campaigns.

We were delighted to welcome Fr. Aquinas Duffy (Class of '77) as the Chief Celebrant For our Family Mass on the 12th of November. The following extract from his excellent Homily bears reflecting on; "Next August the church in Ireland is hosting the World Meeting of families and also the visit of Pope Francis. Pope



Scott Barron (JCT v Portora Royal)

Francis recently said that family life and community life whether that is at school, parish or home could be greatly enriched if we remember and live three simple phrases... **'Please, Thank You and I am Sorry'**. There is a lot in it. When we say please we show a respect and a reverence for the person we are speaking to because God is present in everyone. When we use thank you we are showing our own gratitude for all that we have been given and we are encouraging and building up the person we are saying thank you to. And when we say 'I am sorry' we show that we have the humility and the courage to reach out and acknowledge our failings and allow God's healing to take root. These three phrases could truly change the way we live, and literally at an International level end wars and sow peace". Sincere thanks to all who participated in the various ministries, the choir, musicians and teachers involved in the preparation. We are also indebted to everyone who supported the Duck Race and Christmas Shoe Box Appeal in aid of St. Vincent de Paul as well as the money raised from the ROAR Cans for Sultan Hamud.



Hugo McCormack (Art Club)



David Arbuthnott with his mother at the Third Year Family Mass

The Parents' Committee has organised a talk on the hugely important topic of internet safety – **Our Sons' Online Reputation**. The speaker is Wayne Denner and we would urge all parents to make every effort to attend on Wednesday 31st January at 7:30 p.m.

Dates for your Diary

Days of Reflection

Tuesday Jan 16th - McQuaid and Shanahan
 Thursday Jan 18th - Ebenrecht and Leman
 Friday Jan 19th - DeValera and Duff
 Wednesday Jan 31st 7:30 p.m. - Parents' Talk- Internet Safety
 Friday 23rd March – Third Year Parents' Dinner
 Thursday 25th Jan – Third Year Parent Teacher Meeting 4:15-6:45 p.m.



Transition Year

What a first term! November and December are busy months in TY with such fantastic opportunities for the students to mature, develop new skills and get out of their comfort zone. But we are not done yet! As we go to print there are still 220 hampers to pack and Christmas trees to sell. I would encourage all students to use the holidays as a time to reflect on their TY experience thus far. Have they been making the most of the many opportunities available to them? Are they involved? Are they participating in the extracurricular programme? I would also encourage the students to think back on the tangible differences they have made to people's lives; be it through volunteering with Gaisce, the clients they meet on pastoral placement, the money they have raised for charity or the people to whom the hampers made a big difference this Christmas.



Andrew Jones, Patrick O' Connor Luke O' Brien and Andrew Kennedy selling Christmas Trees

Blackrock College Radio

We were delighted to have Mary Mitchell O' Connor in to launch the station on Monday 20th of November. It proved to be a fantastic week of broadcasting, only made possible by all the work done behind the scenes in the build-up. We were blessed with a fantastic Management Team who worked so hard, were so organised and without whom the project would not have been possible. It is incredible to think that our TYs can converse and engage with sports stars, journalists and politicians so naturally and professionally. To produce 45 hours is not easy. Of course this was a project that began in mid-September. From advertising to tech to the News Team the students did such tremendous work and it is a credit to the Transition Year class of 2017/18 that they did it so professionally. You would have been forgiven for mistaking BCR for a commercial station. Also it was great to see some of them actually have decent taste in music!



Tom MacNulty, Matthew Nolan, Jamie Sood, Colum Roche and Gerard Downey with Eamon Dunphy before their BCR interview



Members of the News Team with Micheál Martin after his live interview on BCR.

Soccer Marathon

The frost on the ground or the wind chill could not curtail the energy or enthusiasm as 122 Transitions Years who took to the pitches on Friday 1st December. We were blessed really with the weather and by lunch time the sun was out. Credit must go to our soccer marathon coordinators who organised a seamless event. It was a great event and well done to the lads who participated in such an enthusiastic way. It all seems very straight forward at 9am but there were certainly some heavy eyes on show from about 8pm! Despite all this pizzas were devoured in record time. This was preceded by the students getting schooled once again by our staff all-star team! But of course the end result of this fantastic fundraiser is the money raised which goes directly towards the SVP hampers.



TY students at the Soccer Marathon in aid of St Vincent de Paul

Mince Pie Morning

On Tuesday the 5th December, the Transition Year Home Economics classes hosted a Mince Pie Morning in aid of Saint Vincent de Paul. They had been very busy on Monday producing what were some very tasty mince pies. Just over €343 was raised. It certainly got us in the festive mood for the Carol Service that afternoon. It was good to see so many parents there in support. Many thanks to Ms Karen Marren for making it all possible.

Hampers

As we go to print we are ready to take delivery from the wholesalers for the hampers. Over the Thursday and Friday it will all be counted sorted and packed into 220 hampers ready for delivery on Saturday morning the 18th. It really is a unique opportunity for the students to experience the culmination of SVP fund raising from the Soccer Marathon 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 the delivery.



Aaron Ryan and Michael Cagney at the Mince Pie Morning

Les Misérables

It is the first time in a number of years that we had Transition Years involved in the Senior Musical – and what a show to be involved in! It is a testimony to the guys involved that they were able to juggle the show with the week of broadcast for the radio station. We were delighted to see students involved in all aspects of the production, from front of house, crew, orchestra and stage – even those providing refreshments at the interval. It really was an incredible production and I'm sure something the lads will never forget. We look forward to seeing such talent on show in the Fourth Year- Second Year production in the final term.

Extra-curricular

We are delighted to have so many Transition Years involved in both the House and Senior squads but it is also worth noting the Colts recorded their first win of the season beating Kilkenny College in what was an epic match. Luke O' Brien has been flying the flag for TY in badminton, with the U19 team playing in division two this year. In cross country – well done to Liam Blackburn who finished second in the Intermediate Competition at the recent Ballinteer invitational. Commiserations to Rory Reid and Ronan Cowhey who were members of the Senior Golf team who lost narrowly in the semi-final of the Leinster Championship. Andrew Kennedy and Cian Brennan were part of U16 panel who defeated Portmarnock CS in the East-Leinster quarter final before eventually losing out to a very strong Luttrellstown side in the East-Leinster semi-final. The team has now qualified for the All-Ireland League Playoffs.

Nicolas Brusasca was a member of the U19 panel who had excellent wins over St. Declan's and Adamstown in the East-Leinster quarter and semi-finals respectively before losing out to Castleknock in the East-Leinster final. The U19 side have the All-Ireland playoffs to look forward to after Christmas.

Volunteering

The generosity of spirit amongst this group is very evident. On the 11th of November 35 students helped out with bag packing in Cornelscourt for the Blackrock Alzheimer Society. The group raised €2506. Customers, staff and management could not praise the boys enough – they were great ambassadors for the school. 70 students volunteered to take part in the an envelope drop on Wednesday the 6th in the local area for the Saint Vincent De Paul Christmas appeal. Students have also made themselves readily available for helping with the duel in the pool, to count Machakos money and to assist at the Monkstown Christmas party. Their attitude has been great thus far, always willing and able. We look forward to more of the same in the New Year!

On behalf of my colleagues in Transition Year: Mr O' Neill, Mr Savage and Mr Sullivan I wish you a very peaceful and Happy New Year.

Dates for your Diary

Monday 8th Tuesday 9th Friday 12th January – Part two of the Leadership Course.

Thursday 11th January – Young Scientist Exhibition

Sunday 21st January – Leman Concert

Friday 26th January – Transition Year Parents' Social

Monday 19th – Friday 23rd February – Work Experience

Fifth Year



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.

SVP Fundraiser

Congratulations to Fifth Year students who raised almost €6000 for the St. Vincent de Paul's Christmas Appeal. On Thursday 30 November, almost all students were involved in the first ever 12 Hour Inter-House Cyclothon. Good humour, healthy competition and Christmas FM ensured that all enjoyed a wonderful event! The House Captains once again were excellent in their organising of this event. Thank you to our in-house support teams and thank you to the parent body for their support and contributions to the raffle. Special thanks to our sponsors MCSPORT.IE, Friends First and Gowan Motors and the biggest thank you of all and a huge well done to the students for their enthusiasm, participation and determined fundraising to help such a worthwhile cause.



Stephen Dunne



Jamie Keaveney



Peter Murphy



Edward McKenna

Remembrance Mass

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 been bereaved 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 are of particular note for their remarkable leadership of the year group and performances.

Cross Country

Fifth Years' enthusiasm for cross country racing continues to grow. This term the Senior Squad enjoyed the team event of the Blackrock College Cross Country Open. This was followed by a solid performance in the Balinteer Community School Open with a third place finish overall.

Chess

The U19 Chess Squad have had mixed fortunes in their Leinster School Chess League and we congratulate them for their efforts.

Golf

As the active term draws to a close we commend the Senior Golf Team for their efforts in the Leinster League disappointingly losing out in the final stages of the competition.

Basketball

After a disappointing end to the All-Ireland campaign the Senior Basketball Squad returned to form with great early victories in both their South Dublin League and East-Leinster Leagues. It has been a thrilling season so far but alas the team was disappointed with their result in the League Final against Castlknock Community College. We commend their good spirits and wish them continued success as they continue to grow in numbers and strength.

House Rugby

The House Fourths and Fifths have had a promising start to the season but are not without a number of injuries. Their score sheets have been mixed and all are looking forward to upcoming games building strong teams from high numbers. The House Seconds and Thirds are training lots and are continuing their good form. They have also had a mixed season so far, with some very good performances. They were delighted to host the South African Glenwood Tour and are looking forward to welcoming a strong Welsh side in the next term. All House players are commended for their good attitude and commitment.

Fifth Year is strongly represented on the Senior Teams and all thoroughly enjoyed their successful away trips this term. All are looking forward to the draw and the upcoming first round match.



Ross Barron (SCTV St Michael's)

Model UN /Debating

Fifth Year members of the MUN society have enjoyed yet another outing in Rathdown, and more are developing their public speaking skills through debating challenging topics at weekly debate meeting. Some are looking forward to the next round of the L&H debates and are strongly represented at upcoming Mace debates as both debaters and adjudicators. Their lunchtime debates covering topical areas such as *Helicopter Parenting* and *Reducing the Voting Age* are increasing in popularity and all are welcome to attend.

Meanwhile the Fifth Year Spanish debaters were disappointed not to make the quarter finals of their competition but are determined to return next year even stronger!

Fifth Year Cont'd



Soccer

As their Metropolitan League continues we congratulate our Fifth Year soccer players on their draw against Coláiste Éanna, their victory against Marian College together with their victories over Drimnagh Castle and Confey College in the Leinster Cup. We wish them well as they make their final preparations for the quarter finals.

We congratulate Andrew Lyons for his selection of the U18 Ireland Squad. Andrew enjoyed a fabulous two week training camp in Spain in November. We wish him continued success.

Cricket

Huge congratulations to JJ Garth who has been selected to represent Ireland in the Cricket World Cup in New Zealand in January. After a long summer and term of training we are delighted for JJ and wish him well.

Musical

Fifth Years' presence in this year's musical, *Les Misérables*, was remarkable. Both onstage and off students put heart and soul in to the outstanding production. From weekend long rehearsals to late night performances all are to be commended for their wonderful efforts providing such high quality entertainment for all who were lucky enough to experience the emotional rollercoaster of Les Mis. Encore!

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



Marc Kearns, Mattie McShane, Luke Lee, Scott Henderson, Robbie Hughes, Ross O'Reilly, John Kirby, Ross Barron, Billy Flannery, Jamie Keaveney at the Cylothron .

Dates for your Diary

Saturday 13 January:	5th/6th Year Student Career Talks I
Saturday 27 January:	5th/6th Year Student Career Talks II
Friday 26 January:	5th Year Annual Parents' Dinner
Thursday 01 February:	5th Year Parent Teacher Meeting
Sunday 11 March:	5th Year Family Mass

The Arts



A selection of recent art work by 5th Year students was displayed during November at the CADLC. The exhibition was in part a response to trial topics provided by the Department of Education for the introduction of project work for Art at senior cycle. The Art Club attracted record numbers of students during the term. Some members attended the DIT Open Day to get a sense of a possible career path in Art



Theo Stephens-Kehoe (5th Year)



Patrick Calma (Third Year)



Michael O' Sullivan (3rd Year)



Cameron Carton (5th Year)

The Arts Cont'd



Luke Moore (6th Year)



NOVEMBER 2017

Fergus Wood (5th Year)

Music & Drama

The Hallowe'en to Christmas period is one of the most productive times of the year for the Music & Drama Department. In the third week of November, we staged a critically acclaimed production of *Les Misérables*. For the first time in years the theatre was packed full every night, so much so that we added a preview night and opened on the Monday. It was the first show co-directed in the recent history of the College, such were the demands. As well as Toirleac and Killian, other staff members involved in the production included Cathal Maher, Aisling Corcoran and Naomi Keenan. Boys from 4th, 5th and 6th Year were involved and including Mount Anville, the cast, crew and orchestra well exceeded one hundred students!

Special thanks to our patrons Harry and Claire Kearns and to our sponsor Mark and Anne O'Meara and John Curran. Also, thank to Conor Smith from SNAP Print and Ken Rogan from the class of 1996. We really rely on parental and past pupil stakeholders to bring shows of this scale to the stage. Thank you.



Members of the Orchestra who played at *Les Misérables*



Isabel Ryan (Mt. Anville) and Eoin O'Meara (6th Year) in *Les Misérables*

In December the 87-members of the choir, 50-piece orchestra and cantors staged a mammoth Carol Service in front of the entire school body, including Willow Park Senior School. The ceremony celebrated the ongoing excellence of liturgical music in the College. We look forward to seeing all these boys performing at the Leman Festival Concert, Wesley Interschools' Music Festival and the Summer Concert.



Art Lynch (6th Year) and Peter Murphy (5th Year) playing the oboe and the clarinet at the Carol Service



Members of the choir perform at the Carol Service

Remarkably, despite past success, music and drama in the school keeps growing and thriving. Blackrock can proudly look to the performing arts as a keystone in our cultural landscape.

Creative Arts & Digital Learning Centre

Learning Centre Committee Trip

On Wednesday the 29th of November, members of the Learning Centre Committee accompanied by the Learning Centre Manager Lorraine Marrey, and Mr. Madden attended a tour of the Book of Kells exhibition in Trinity College Dublin followed by a self-guided tour of the Yeats Exhibition in the National Library.

These exhibitions form part of the academic year for our committee where we aim to visit at least one information/library or cultural setting.



Michael Lucey, Michael McDonald, Thomas Kerr, Lorraine Marrey, Robert McNabb, Oisín Ryan, Mark McGrane & Dylan Hutchinson outside the Book of Kells exhibition in TCD.

Book Clubs

Our Staff Book Club began at the beginning of term one. Our Student Book Club meets weekly to discuss what they are reading. It is currently Philip K Dick's *The Man in the High Castle*.

Our Parents' Book Club has been postponed until January 2018. They are reading Maggie O' Farrell's *I am, I am, I am*. If you would like to join the Parents' Book Club please email lmarray@blackrockcollege.com.

JSTOR

We are currently trialling an online multi-disciplinary database called JSTOR which would give our students access to hundreds of scholarly journal articles on a range of subjects.

Many of our senior and junior cycle classes have attended research classes in the Learning Centre this term in order to build their research skills base and use appropriate academic material for their projects and assignments.

Snapshot of 2nd Half Term 2017



Oisín Ryan (6th Year) reads at the Carol Service



Stephen Madigan and Rory Madigan (SCTV St Michael's)



Robert Kinsley, Conor Austin and John Corless (5th Year) in *Les Misérables*



Mr H. Rowsome getting to know Kevin the chameleon



Mount Anville girls performing in *Les Misérables*



Cormac McCabe and Mike Hayes (5th Year) at the Cyclothon in aid of SVDP



Tony the Python having a good relaxing stretch with some of his new friends from 4th Year.



Transition Years who ran the Mince Pie Morning in aid of Saint Vincent de Paul



Alex Kilroy (6th Year) Tadhg Egan (5th Year) and Aidan Canavan (4th Year) in *Les Misérables*



Mark Fitzgibbon, Tom Dwan, Tim D'Arcy Gavin Jones and Harry Hughes Cyclothon 5th Year SVDP Fundraiser



Oisín McEnroe (class of 2017) received the Institute of Physics in Ireland medal for first place in Ireland in last year's Leaving Certificate in Physics

Snapshot of 2nd Half Term 2017



Hugh Kelly and Stephen Ryan (6th Year) in *Les Misérables*



Mr Grumley Traynor leads 6th Year Choir for Christmas Jumper Day Lighting of 6th Year Tree



Paddy McGowan and Cormac O' Brien (3rd Year) JCT V Portora Royal



Ms S.Henchy & James Kelly receiving his medal from the Classical Association of Ireland. James came 1st in Ireland in Leaving Certificate Latin 2017



Rory McGuire with his mother at the Third Year Family Mass



Thomas Clarkson & Daniel Foley (6th Year) SCT V St Michael's



Harry Kearns (6th Year) winner of the Senior Science Quiz with Ms M.Kelly, Head of Science.



Gregoire Vidalinc with his parents at the Third Year Family Mass



Marcus Dodd and Paul White (JCT 3rds V Clongowes)

News from the Past



10 THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT THE CLASS OF 2017



1 12 boys scored over 600 points with 6 achieving the 'perfect 625'. One student was in the country's 'top 13' with 8 H1's. 64 boys (32.3%) attained over 500 points. 107 boys achieved over 450 points (54%). 72.3% scored over 400 points

2 Joe MacIntyre, Ross McCann, Kyle Murray, Mark Rolland and Robert Sheedy acted as Student Helpers on the **Dublin Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes** from Wednesday 7th September to Monday 12th September 2016.

3 **Oisín McEnroe** was the joint winner of the Institute of Physics in Ireland Medal which is awarded to the student who has obtained the **highest mark in Physics in the Leaving Certificate 2017**. Fantastic achievement!

4 Congratulations to **James Kelly** who was **1st in Ireland in Leaving Certificate Latin 2017** and was awarded a medal by the Classical Association of Ireland for his outstanding achievement.

5 8 students were awarded **Trinity College Entrance Exhibition Awards**. Congratulations to **Alex**

Corcoran, Mark Heavey, Peter Horan, Shane Keane, James Kelly, Ross McCann, Dylan McCarthy, Oisín McEnroe .

6 Congratulations to **Christopher Aylward, Lorcán Brophy, Justin Carroll, Robbie Condon, Sean Desmond, Mark Dignam, Charlie Fitzgerald, Kevin O'Donnell, Cian Reilly, Charlie Ryan, Robert Somers, Jack Stacey and Daniel Wall** each of whom has been awarded an Academic High Achievers Award to U.C.D.

7 Congratulations to **Mark Dignam, Cian Ryan and Charlie Ryan** who were awarded both Academic High Achievers and Sports Scholarships from UCD.

8 2017 was Blackrock College's best year so far at **The Wesley Music Festival**. Both the Libermann Choir and the 16 Choir won first prize in their respective competitions. Square One Rock Band won second prize and Chris Wong achieved first class honours in the Solo Singing Competition.

9 27 students from the class of 2017 travelled to **Machakos** last summer to continue the work begun by Rock Boys in 2011. €110K was raised by fundraising to contribute to the Rock Reaches out to Kenya project

10 **Andrew Murphy** is a member of **Connacht Academy**. Congratulations on your achievement!



Sixth Year



The second half of Term 1 has been a very busy and productive period for the class of 2018 who continue to show excellent leadership in all aspects of life in the College...

General:

The application to study has progressed well with Credit List numbers, while slightly lower than before midterm remaining at encouraging levels; as they enter the New Year the Class of 2018 have been advised to press ahead with their study plans, giving their Leaving Certificate projects a particular focus at this time.

Outreach:

As part of the College's annual Christmas fund-raising for the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, the 6th Year House Representatives organised a 24-hour sponsored fast between the 30th of November and December 1st. The 6th Year Parents' committee under the leadership of Mrs Ursula Grogan and Mrs Denise Gallagher sourced prizes from the parent body to run a raffle alongside the fast. 119 students (62% of the year group) participated in the fast and between both events, an amazing €5,549 was raised for the VDP. The ending of the fast was celebrated with a special meal in the College Dining Room for all those who participated. The raffle was also held at this time. Leo Downes was the winner of the Nespresso Coffee Machine identified by the House Representatives as the first prize. Many thanks once again to all parents who contributed prizes and to Albert, Catherine and their team for the wonderful meal that they served up. A really positive 24 hours for the Class of 2018!



119 members of the class of 2018 completed the fast for the SVDP

Extra-Curricular:

Les Misérables: A total of 11 Sixth Year students took part in this year's musical *Les Misérables* between the 20th and 24th of November. After the preview Mr MacGinty referred to the show as 'extraordinary' and anyone who was lucky enough to have had a ticket for any of the five nights could only agree with this assessment. From a Class of 2018 point of view, the performances of Stephen Ryan as Jean Valjean, Hugh Kelly as Javert, Luke Demichel as Thénardier, Harry Kearns as Marius and Eoin O'Meara as the Factory Foreman deserve particular mention in a Blackrock College / Mount Anville Production that will live long in the memory.



Eoin Fuller & Alex Kilroy in *Les Misérables*



Harry Kearns & Luke Demichel in *Les Misérables*

Rugby: We wish Liam Turner (Capt.), James Burke (VC) and the rest of the SCT squad well as they prepare for their opening Cup match against Castleknock College at the end of January. The Cheerleading team for 2018 will be led by Charlie Byrne and he will be assisted by Matthew Curran, Liam Dunphy, Mike Henderson and James Lunt in this leadership role. We look forward to a Blue & White January in the College!

The Castle Rugby squads have enjoyed large numbers at training and

encouraging performances before Christmas sees them planning for their league campaigns after Christmas with increased confidence. We hope that many 6th Year students will play for the Castle in January, their last term of rugby in the College.

Soccer: The Senior Soccer squad under the leadership of Aran Horgan has completed a very busy term. An excellent away win over Drimnagh Castle qualified the team for the quarter-finals of the Leinster Senior Cup against St. Mary's of Drogheda but unfortunately a late goal saw the squad exit the Cup on a 1-2 score line on the last day of class before examinations. A tough way to lose but the squad is still unbeaten in the League and we wish them ongoing success in this competition.

Basketball: Our Senior Basketball squad, captained by Barry O'Sullivan has also enjoyed a most fruitful term reaching a Leinster Final against Castleknock Community College. Unfortunately, in an excellent final in Inchicore, Castleknock just proved to be too strong in the end. However, this performance means that the Senior Basketball team will be playing in an All-Ireland completion in the New Year. We wish them well.

Miscellaneous: Patrick Hassett and Joseph Egibfoah both feature on the Senior Chess team participating in the Leinster U19 league while Conor Fitzpatrick, Callum Ryan and Alex Houlihan are members of the Senior Badminton squad participating in Division 2 of the Leinster League. Conor Halpin has led a strong Senior Cross Country squad through the Winter League while our Senior Water Polo team with a strong 6th Year presence enjoyed a recent friendly victory over Marian College as they prepare for their competitive phase of the season in the New Year. In the pool, Jack Flynn was a member of the College Senior Medley Relay team that finished 2nd in the Leinster Schools' Championships in the National Aquatic Centre. Finally, congratulations to Mark Grogan and Alex Hatt who have been selected as members of the Dublin Colleges' Hurling Panel for the Leinster Senior Hurling League.

Senior Science: As part of Science Week, in a well-received address, Dr Cormac Kilty addressed the 6th Year Students on his life story and career highs and lows under the heading of 'Science meeting Business'. Unfortunately our three Senior Science teams of Tom Gibson, Harry Kearns and Oisin Ryan (Team 1), Neil Holohan, Avi Shandilya and Conor Williams (Team 2) and Josh Garvey, Patrick Hassett and Conor Lacey (Team 3) who represented the College at the ISTA Greater Dublin Regional Senior Science Quiz did not progress to the next round of this competition. Many congratulations to Harry who won the internal Science Quiz Cup for this year. Many thanks also to Ms. Kelly for her facilitation and organisation of these events.

Modern Languages & Debating: As we approach Christmas it is good to note that French Debating (full 6th Year Team of Harry Kearns, Rory O'Reilly, Neil Holohan and Matthew Dillon) is still going strong in their competition while unfortunately our Spanish Debating Team (including Luke Demichel and James Kos) was knocked out by Loreto Beaufort in the last 16 of their event.

Careers:

On Tuesday 7th November, Ms Natasha Drew gave a most informative presentation on the CAO process to the 6th Year parents. Information presented on this night has been made available to the students and is also available online via the College website.



Richard Downes on 'Christmas Jumper Day' with Ms T. Storey and Ms D. Ryan

Since mid-term, speakers



Sixth Year Cont'd

from UCD, DCU and DIT have visited the College to speak with students who have expressed an interest in studying in these colleges and many of the year group have availed of the Saturday Open Days in UCD, TCD and DIT. The HPAT preparation course has also continued on Saturday mornings.

There will be an opportunity for Sixth Year students to participate in mock interviews in a career area of their choice in January. These interviews are arranged by the Blackrock PPU. These 'mock' interviews have proved to be a most valuable learning experience for Leaving Cert students in previous years and we recommend them very strongly. Places will be limited. Recent Past Pupils also plan to offer an evening of information to the Class of 2018 on the challenges, practicalities, pitfalls and expectations of certain popular third level courses early in the second term as registration for CAO becomes a priority.



Ms McMahon with Rory O'Reilly
on 'Christmas Jumper Day'

Liturgical:

On Tuesday December 5th, the 6th Year students led the School Community in the celebration of the annual Carol Service for Christmas. The event was marked by wonderful communal singing as well as beautiful seasonal pieces performed by the College Choir under the direction of Mr Grumley Traynor. Many thanks to Charlie Byrne, Eoin Fuller and Jack Spain for the wonderful rendition of 'O Holy Night' and to the 6th Year readers who set such a respectful tone for the event. Another treasured memory to store during this final year in the College and a challenge too from Fr. O'Brolchain to the Class of 2018 when he invited us to reflect constructively on our use of Social Media today.

As December 8th, the Feast of the Immaculate Conception fell on a school day this year, Fr. O'Brolchain celebrated Mass with the 6th Year group of students. Many thanks to Ms McGlynn our College Chaplain, to Mr Grumley Traynor, Mr Orroch and RE 68 who provided musical accompaniment for this liturgy and to our team of Eucharistic Ministers who served the whole school community throughout this holy day of obligation.

Important Date for your 2018 Diary

Thursday 11th January - 6th Year Parent / Teacher Meeting
TIME: 4.15PM – 6.45PM

LEMAN XXXII



Date for your Diary

**LEMAN FESTIVAL CONCERT XXXII
IN THE NATIONAL CONCERT HALL
SUNDAY 21st JANUARY 2018
7.30PM**

PLEASE NOTE STARTING TIME

ADMISSION €25

**TICKETS ON SALE FROM
WEDNESDAY 10th JANUARY 2018
Available from
THE NATIONAL CONCERT HALL
BOX OFFICE
Telephone: (01) 4170000
Online Bookings: www.nch.ie**

Guidance and Counselling



CAO - The 6th Year CAO talk for parents on 7th November was highly informative and well attended. The presentation is available in the parents' section of the school website. 6th Year students had received a similar talk. With the CAO application deadline approaching on February 1st, the current 6th Year students are now seriously researching their college options and choices. Any student who is unsure should contact Ms. Drew. All students will apply online at www.cao.ie where they can avail of a reduced application fee of €30 if they apply before January 20th 2016. The regular fee of €45 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 form. DARE applicants are 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 to them. Please refer to the relevant individual HEI websites for further information. For students with NUI exemptions, there is a new tick box on the CAO application to inform HEIs that you have an exemption.

Any student considering a UCD Ad Astra Scholarship application (Elite Athlete/Performing Arts) should do so by January 31st. Applications can now be made online via the UCD website.



HPAT - Students applying for entry to Medicine in 2018 need to register for CAO to receive their CAO number so they can register for the HPAT-Ireland examination. HPAT-Ireland registration will close on January 20th 2018 and the HPAT test will take place in various centres around the country on February 24th 2018. Our 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 3rd 2018. Any student wishing to attend must register online via the RCSI website.



UCAS

UCAS - A number of 6th Years have begun their UCAS applications for a range of universities in the UK. The deadline is fast approaching and students need to be aware of this as the UCAS application is quite detailed. The deadline is the 15th January 2018. Any 6th Year considering making a UCAS application should indicate this to Ms Drew as soon as possible.

USA - Education USA host a seminar every March to give parents, teachers, and students advice on funding, applications, etc. The 2018 Fair will take place on 3rd March. You can read the basics about preparing students on their website: <http://www.fulbright.ie/education-usa/education-usa-undergraduate-study/>

College Talks - Students have recently attended Open Days at a range of colleges including TCD, UCD, DCU, DIT, 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 from UCD, DCU and IADT have visited the College and addressed the 6th Years regarding courses offered in their third level institutions and careers. TCD will be visiting the 6th Years on January 18th 2018.

Career Talks - 5th and 6th Year students will have the opportunity to attend a range of career talks offered over two Saturday mornings, 13th & 27th of January. The talks will cover a range of career areas, which will include Business, Law, Art, 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.

Career Interviews - 6th Year students will have the chance to partake in Career Interviews/Coaching which will be held in the College on Wednesday 24th January 2018 at 7.30 p.m.



TY - All TY students have sat the EirQuest Questionnaire comprising of questions on their interests, abilities and personal qualities without pressure of time. Their answers are then used to produce a Careers Guidance Workbook covering around 50 broad career areas.

5th Year - Students are presently attending one to one Career Guidance meetings which are ongoing throughout the year. They will also attend the Career Talks due to be held on January 13th & 27th 2018.

The Student Well-being Committee - comprises of students from each year group. They meet regularly. The group attended "Zeminar" in the RDS. Zeminar is a social enterprise created to bring all those invested in the development and well-being of young people in Ireland to one place. It was full of information and ideas to generate well-being. The boys are now working at bringing the Amber Flag to Blackrock College. The Amber Flag is about bringing a culture change in the promotion of positive mental health in our school. More information about the Amber Flag can be found here: <http://www.amberflag.org/>



The committee is presently preparing for the school's second Bullying Awareness Day on January 22nd 2018. There will be guest speakers in on the day to talk to each year group. There will be a poster campaign and linked themes running with Thursday Tunes and the Debating Society. Any student wishing to join the Student Well-being Committee should contact Ms Drew. 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

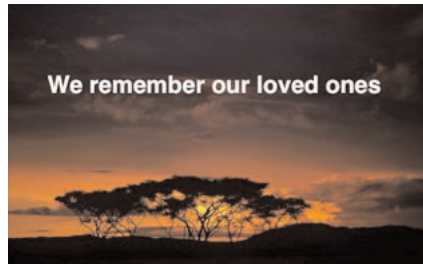
UCD Ad Astra Scholarship (Elite/Athlete /Performing Arts) applications deadline - January 31st

CAO Irish Colleges Deadline - February 1st
(Reduced Application fee of €30 if you apply before January 20th)
UCAS Applications - January 15th

Pastoral Care Programme



November – Month of Remembering



"They have gone no further from us than to God, and God is very near" This was the theme for the 3rd year Family Mass that took place on the 32nd Sunday of Ordinary time on the 12th of November 2017. **"In November, We Remember"** November is the month of Remembrance

commonly celebrated in the Catholic Community. It is a month where the deceased members of our communities are remembered in a special way. There is no difference here in Blackrock. Every class group was given an Altar list of the Dead and this was filled by the students with the names of their loved ones who had died and the lists were used for the 3rd Year Family Mass. We remembered the people whose names were included on the lists and these were brought to the top of the Altar with the offertory procession to have a central role on the Altar for the month of November. The Mass was celebrated by Fr. Aquinas of Cabinteely Parish, who is a past pupil of Blackrock College, class of 1977. In his homily, he challenged the students to not let a period of time go by without telling your family that you LOVE them, as in an instant our lives can change so quickly and we need to value our family. The homily concluded with The Family Faith Prayer read by The Reid Family and Ms McMahon (6th Year Chaplain).

During the month of November, each RE class attended the **College Chapel** where the boys were led in a reflection by their Religion teacher and where they celebrated the lives of our family members in a remembrance service. An altar was set up in the side Chapel and students were encouraged to visit the Chapel and light a candle for their family members and to write their names on the list there. We are lucky in this school to have a beautiful Chapel for these celebrations and also staff and clergy willing and able to assist the students throughout the school year.

The month of November concluded with a **Mass of Remembrance** organised by Fr. Tom Nash. This was in remembrance of the extended community of Blackrock College. The members of the community of Blackrock College were represented by their families in a Ceremony of Light and a candle that was lit for them remained lit for the duration of the mass. This was a very reverent service with moving music from the Past Pupils' Choir led by Mr Grumley-Traynor. Well done to all involved.

The **Matthew 25 Programme** has continued in this half term and two more groups of Transition Year students have gone on their Pastoral Placement. The centres are spread throughout the greater South County Dublin Area to North Wicklow and the centres vary from centres of intellectual disability to that of Mental Illness and Special Needs Schools. The boys assist others with physical, intellectual, emotional or social disabilities. Their job is to befriend the clients and support the staff, and learn. In the journal that each student keeps of the placement, one said: *I didn't know what to expect going on the Pastoral Placement, I was sceptical of the place I was going to and didn't know what I could bring to this place, however on my 2nd week I did not want to leave and the experience has changed my perception on the world and how much joy and laughter I experienced on my placement and how much I have grown in confidence... I don't want this experience to end*". This is an experience of a lifetime for the pupils to grow in understanding of people with intellectual and physical difficulties and for them to bring joy to the lives of the patients and clients in the centres that they visit, but also for the students to experience the joy of the simplicity of life for these people that they encounter.

Matthew 25 Programme



Advent 2017

"A Season of Waiting the Hope"

in Blackrock College came with the arrival of the many trees that adorn the corridors of the College and the arrival of the Christmas Crib and the Advent Wreath in the Chapel in anticipation of the birth of Jesus Christ. **"We are waiting in Joyful hope for this coming"**. At the **glorious Carol Service** on the 5th December in the Sports Hall, the whole school community led by the 6th Year students, joined together in music to celebrate the season of Advent and the season of Christmas.

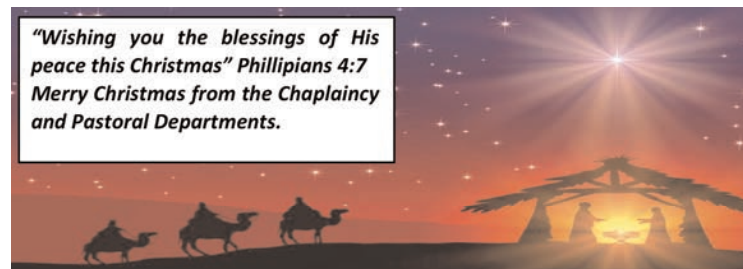


Feast of the Immaculate Conception

On December 8th each year group, along with their class teachers, gathered to celebrate the **Feast of the Immaculate Conception** by attending mass in the College Chapel. These services were organised by the College Chaplain and a number of priests said the mass for each group of students. The students led the music and the readings in the mass, while our newly commissioned Eucharistic Ministers, from 6th Year, ministered the Eucharist to the congregation. This special event allowed the school community to honour Our Lady in a momentous manner.



*"Wishing you the blessings of His peace this Christmas" Phillipians 4:7
Merry Christmas from the Chaplaincy and Pastoral Departments.*



NOTE

An tSraith Shóisearach do Mhúinteoirí

JuniorCYCLE
for teachers



Blackrock College will close on Monday 29th January for a whole staff planning and in-service day. This is a requirement by the Department as specified in DES Circular 0015/2017 as part of the continued implementation of the new Junior Cycle. There will be no classes for students on this day, however, night study will go ahead for 3rd, 5th and 6th years.

Sport



Badminton Under 19

The U19s got their first win of the season when they defeated Lycée Français on the 23rd November. The match finished 3-3 and so it goes back to points won and we prevailed 164-130. Well done to Callum Ryan, Luke O'Brien, Conor Fitzpatrick (C) and Alex Houlihan.

After receiving a walkover against Terenure, the U19s then played another Terenure team at home on Friday 8th December. The team of Calum Ryan, Luke O'Brien, Conor Fitzpatrick and Alex Houlihan all played brilliantly, winning the match 6-0.

The next opposition was against Sandford Park at home on Monday 11th December. In what was an evenly contested match with most games going down to the wire Sanford Park ran out winners 4-2.

Under 16

On the 23rd November the Under 16Bs continued their winning streak when they also beat Lycée Français, again the match finished 3-3 but Blackrock won out on a score of 175-134. This team have now won 3 out of 3 this season. Well done to Colm Kelly, Robert Byrne (C), John Dennison and Sean Probert.

On Wednesday 6th December the U16A and B teams were in action against Templeogue. Playing in Division 2. The A team beat Templeogue on a score line of 4-2 and every game was extremely close. Well done to Stephen O Nualláin, Darragh Dempsey, Liam Prior and Darragh Harrison. Playing in Division 3 the B team also defeated Templeogue, winning on a score line of 6-0. Well done to Colm Kelly, Robert Byrne (C), John Dennison and Sean Probert. The following day the U16C team competing in Division 3 had a comprehensive result (6-0) against Terenure with the team comprising of: Tom King, Sean Harty, Joey Haughton and Andrew Ryan.

The U16B team were again in action on Wednesday 8th December this time against High School. The team comprising of Colm Kelly, Robert Byrne, John Denison and Sean Probert ran out convincing winners 6-0.

On Monday 11th December the U16B team beat Terenure 5-1, whilst the U.

16As also playing Terenure won their fixture 6-0. We wish both these squads the best in the New Year.

Basketball Under 16 Basketball

The U16 Basketball side got their South Dublin League campaign off to a winning start with a 25-19 win against Newpark. In their first year playing at this level it was an excellent achievement for a very young team to qualify out of the group. This term we had a quarter final away to Portmarnock CS which was won on a scoreline of 38-19. Unfortunately we lost out in the East-Leinster semi-final to an excellent Luttrellstown CS side and then in the 3rd place playoff to Hansfield. However by reaching the semi-final Blackrock have qualified for a playoff to enter the All-Ireland series at a date to be confirmed.

Under 19 Basketball

It has been an intense and busy term of basketball for the U19 side. In the South Dublin League Blackrock won three from three in the South Dublin League with victories over St. Mary, St. Columba's and Newpark. Blackrock will have the semi-finals of this competition after Christmas. In the East-Leinster League, we defeated St. Declan's



Barry O' Sullivan (Captain of the Senior Basketball Team)

60-25 in the quarter finals. The highlight of the term was a phenomenal performance away to the reigning champions Adamstown CC in the East-Leinster semi-final where we won 53-41. Unfortunately Blackrock lost out to an excellent Castleknock College side in the East Leinster Final. However Blackrock qualified for the All-Ireland Playoffs on the 21st January which will be run off as a four team blitz. The winners of this blitz will go through to the All-Ireland semi-final. While extremely disappointed to have lost the East-Leinster Final, to achieve All-Ireland series qualification the year we have been promoted is a superb achievement and Barry O'Sullivan (Captain - 6th Year) and his squad now move on and refocus towards the All-Ireland competition.

Cross Country

The first race after the mid-term was the Blackrock College Cross Country Open on Wednesday November 8th, where 600 athletes competed, coming from schools all over Leinster. In the girls race it was Maynooth Post Primary who dominated the day winning both minor and intermediate with Loreto Foxrock winning the Junior Race and Alexandra College winning the Senior Race. In the boys races Belvedere dominated winning Minor, Junior and Senior; Colaiste Eoin winning the Intermediate. Blackrock College performed admirably coming second place in Junior, Intermediate and Senior with Willow Park coming third in the minor. Particular highlights included Liam Blackburn coming second in the Intermediate Race and Conor Halpin winning the Senior Race.

Our second race this half term took place in Ballinteer Community School on December 5th. The races were done via year group rather than age group. Our 2nd and 3rd Years came in 2nd place in their race and our 4th and 5th Years came in 3rd place in their race. Liam Blackburn (T.Y) performed particularly well coming in 2nd place in the 4th and 5th Year Race, in what was a tough contest. I thank Eddie MacDonagh and Eleanor Whyte for their assistance and dedication in coaching.

Golf

The Senior Golf Team was beaten in their Leinster Championship semi-final by St. Kieran's Kilkenny in Dunmurry Golf Club on Thursday 16th November. It was a very close match and unfortunately St Kieran's came out on top winning the last match on the 18th hole. It was a great effort by our Senior Team; Robert Abernethy (Captain) and Jack Small (both 6th Year), Cathal French (5th Year), Rory Reid and Ronan Cowhey (both 4th Year). In the League, we beat St.



Senior Golf Team: Ronan Cowhey, Robert Abernethy, Cathal French, Rory Reid

Benildus by 6 shots at Stackstown G.C. The team on the day was Robert Abernethy, Rory Reid, Ronan Cowhey and Cathal French. The team now look forward to progressing in the league in the New Year. We thank our coaches Ted Collins (class of 2014) and Conor Hart (class of 2015) and, of course, our Golf Manager Ms Fitzgerald.

Rowing

On Saturday 2nd December 13, 3rd Years raced at Muckross Head in Cork. This was the first race of the season, a gruelling 3,000-metre time trial.

In the Junior 8 Man Boat (under 15) the team won comfortably by over a minute. This was the boys first time in the octuplet, an excellent achievement with great coxing from Alex Cronnelly in difficult conditions. The squad consisted of Alex Cronnelly, Ben Hogan, Sam Horkan, Matthew Gibney, Michael O'Sullivan, Matthew Keeley, Pearse Woods, Theo Boland, and Colm Hennessy

Sport Cont'd



In the Junior Quad Boat Blackrock had two entries, the A quad came first and the B quad came sixth. A quad members consisted of Matthew Gibney, Ben Hardiman, Michael O Sullivan, and Theo Boland (cox Colm Hennessy) with the B quad consisting of Ben Hogan, Sam Horkan, Pearse Woods, and Scott Graham (cox Hugo Mangan).

In the U14 Quad Race there was a huge field of entries with over twenty-six crews in this category. The squad made a terrific effort but just missed out on bronze by a second. Well done to the crew which comprised of Alex Cronnelly, Hugo Mangan, Oisín Fitzgearld, and Jack Tarpey (cox Theo Boland)

Overall a fantastic day of rowing with special thanks going to the coaches (Laura Gannon, Niamh O'Mahony and James O'Sullivan) and the parent body especially to Sarah Mangan, Donal Hennessy and Ed Cronnelly for their help on the day.

Rugby Rugby Junior

The Junior Squad continues to gather steam ahead of the Cup Campaign. The Juniors have had fine wins over Terenure, Clongowes, Belvedere and Crescent. James Culhane was elected Captain of the JCT with Scott Barron and Michael Moloney as Vice-Captains. The countdown to the 1st round of the Cup Campaign has commenced and further matches against St Munchin's, Ballymena, CBC Cork and Gonzaga will take place prior to the cup fixture. A strenuous two months await the squad with preparations on-going throughout the Christmas break.



Sean Dempsey and Michael Moloney (3rd Year)
JCT v Portora Royal.

Rugby Senior

Notable victories in the first term against Campbell, Pres Cork and Palmerston North (a return fixture from the summer) were balanced out with a 19-19 draw over in Wellington College (UK) and defeats against Gonzaga, RBAI, St Michael's and Belvedere. Performances have been strong during injury-ravaged periods and the squad has thrived on individual opportunities afforded. Since Belvedere the team has put together back-to-back wins against Crescent and Clongowes as the team starts to settle.



Liam Turner, James Burke and Harry Donnelly
(SCTV Michael's)



Billy Doyle (6th Year) SCTV St Michael's

As we move forward into the busy Christmas training period, we wish Liam Turner (Captain), James Burke (Vice-captain), Thomas Clarkson, Michael McGagh, Louis O'Reilly (Leadership Team), and all the boys in the extended squad the best of luck as they prepare for our Cup Campaign in the new year.

Soccer

The Senior Soccer Team has continued their good run in both the Metropolitan League and the FAIS Leinster cup. A 2-2 draw against Coláiste Éanna and a 7-1 win against Marian College saw them qualify in 1st spot in

their section to secure a home semi-final. We await the confirmation of our opponents.

In the FAIS Leinster cup two impressive displays against Confey College (7-0) and Drimnagh Castle (5-0) have qualified the team to the quarter final and a home tie against St Mary's DS, Drogheda.

We wish Aran Horgan (Captain) the best in both ties.

Table Tennis

A quiet term for junior and senior matches, with the minor teams from Willow occupying most of the fixture slots, as well as some of the teams having a number of postponed fixtures; however junior 2B are off to a good start in the League with a 5-1 win over St. Fintan's. Joey Nelson (6th Year) has been appointed Junior Captain, while Conor Hughes (4th Year) has been appointed Junior Captain. Joey, currently ranked #1 in Leinster at junior and senior level, was also selected for Ireland for the Home Countries Internationals in Guernsey in November. The teams has been enjoying their annual November stay in the Sports Hall while the Musical was on, but return to the Jubilee Hall for Christmas and New Year training.



Members of the Table Tennis Squad in action in the Sports Hall

Chess

The Chess Club meets twice a week after school on a Monday and Tuesday with their coach, Lukasz Goralski. It is open to all years. The junior and senior teams are registered to take part in the Leinster Schools' League. The Senior Team consists of Patrick Hassett and Joseph Eigbefoh from 6th Year, Michael McDonald and Fergus Woods from 5th Year and John Cawley from 3rd Year. The U16 Junior Team is made up of -Sean O'Connor, Patrick Curley, Matthew Collins, Mark McCabe, John Duffy and Jamie Blackburn all from 2nd year.

The first round saw both teams travel to Gonzaga. Gonzaga are the current Leinster League holders so we knew it would be a tough afternoon of matches. Both teams lost 4-1 to Gonzaga with Sean O'Connor and Joseph Eigbefoh winning their matches. The second round saw Coláiste Eoin travelling to Blackrock College. The juniors finished with a 3-2 win. The team was delighted with their first win of the league. The seniors lost 4-1.

Photos courtesy Rock Photography
www.rockphotography.ie

REFLECTION

