



Established in 1936

# The Doon School WEEKLY



Saturday, October 16 • 2010 • Issue No. 2263

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## Tribute to a Schoolmaster

Number thirteen was indeed unlucky for the Doon School on Wednesday, as it proved to be a day of great loss. Sheel Vohra, the longest-serving teacher of The Doon School and former deputy headmaster, who taught generations of Doscos from 1959 to 1998, passed away this morning. Exactly, a week before the School begins its platinum jubilee celebrations. Mr Vohra had viral fever and this morning, he had a heart attack.

Known lovingly as 'Bond' by thousands of Doon School boys down the years, Mr Vohra was a well-known and well-loved personality of the Doon Valley. He was a simple, disciplined and affectionate man, with an ever-smiling face. His devotion to cricket is legendary and stories of his dedication to cricket have been part of the Doon School's treasure of anecdotes and interesting tales.

Mr Vohra was often the only link that the *Weekly* had with generations of Old Boys as well as well-wishers of the School. He kept up with them and supplied the *Weekly* with a steady flow of information pertaining to former students and old associates of the School. The "Old Boys' News" section depended most heavily on news given by Mr Vohra.

Says School's Director of Public Affairs, Piyush Malaviya, "Even though he retired many years ago, he was at the School almost every day for the matches, for developing the Archives and for providing guidance to the students. His is an irreparable loss for us."

**Courtesy:** The Pioneer, *Doon School Legend Sheel Vohra's Innings End* by Jaskiran Chopra

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Two events will always remain in my mind as I reflect on Mr. Vohra's extraordinary passion for the game as well as his unique nature. One was the wet evening when the rain had driven everybody indoors on Ground 2, but Mr. Vohra was on the prowl, a solitary figure picking up pieces of clothing and kit left behind by careless schoolboys scuttling for shelter. He slipped and fell, seriously injuring his knee which later needed surgery. The second was during a staff match, where I was keeping him company at first slip. He had been struck by a nasty delivery and actually wrung his hand in pain (something one hardly sees him do) – it was only many overs later when the glove turned red did we realize he had broken his thumb. Left to himself he would have certainly continued but the doctor, fielding at 3rd man, intervened.

**Philip Burrett, Deputy Headmaster**  
(from *End of an Innings*)

I was never taught by Bond – that privilege fell to a younger generation. I have yet to meet a schoolmaster like him who made a school and his students so entirely part of his life. There was never an occasion that I know of where he was not actively involved with boys of all ages – in the classroom or on the games field or on a cycling or mountaineering expedition. That's true – there was one other place that one was

sure to see him, an Old Boy's wedding! To bless his student, he was known to leave at 2 p.m. from Dehradun on a rickety bus to Delhi and be back on time for a first school the next morning! It was this devotion to his students that singled him out as an extraordinary schoolmaster. There can be no gathering of Old Boys, as old as those who left in the '60s, where conversation would not veer almost naturally towards the one and only Bond! And it would be accompanied with merriment and laughter hued by nostalgia and affection. As a colleague I found him to be steadfast and wise. He led by example and ensured that he was where he was meant to be, on time and fully prepared. A teacher of math, he took enormous pains to ensure that boys understood the subject and was available at all times to help. But it was cricket that was his mantra and even when he was stricken by a chronic foot problem he would continue to stride out to the centre of the main field unmindful of his pain which was visible to all and then stand throughout an innings umpiring, advising and occasionally playing by keeping wickets. It is fitting that the Old Boys have decided to give him a cricket match as a farewell – nothing could have been more appropriate.

**Shomie Das, Headmaster (1988-1995)**

(Message at *The Sheel Vohra Farewell Cricket Match*, 1998)

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His kind will not disappear, he has seen to that. A novice once, he learnt with humility and admiration from the stalwarts of the time, who gave The Doon School its character. What Sheel imbibed from them were the principles of their practice, embodying a perfect understanding of the educational needs of a growing boy. These insights Sheel has passed on to successive waves of young teachers and deserves credit for being the most consistent influence on our School culture in recent times. As he has given, so has he received. While people speak in awe of his dedication in the classroom, to School sport and the boys past and present, he makes no claim for such recognition. He has lived his life simply, one day at a time, responding to the calls of the School. It is all he ever wanted.

**John Mason, Headmaster (1996-2003)**

(HM's Address at *The Sheel Vohra Farewell Cricket Match*, 1998)

## NEW SCHOLARS

Bharat Ganju and Arjun Sethi have been awarded the **Scholar's Blazer** Congratulations!

## MUSIC COLOURS

**School Music Colours** for 2010 were awarded to Shantrunjai Rai Dewan, Uddhav Prasad, Divyam Agarwal, Arpan Agarwal, Siddharth Bathla and Yashasvat Kapur. Congratulations!

## IH BASKETBALL

The following are the results of the recently-concluded **Inter-House Basketball Competition:**

Seniors:	Juniors:
<b>1st:</b> Kashmir	<b>1st:</b> Jaipur
<b>2nd:</b> Oberoi	<b>2nd:</b> Tata and Hyderabad
<b>3rd:</b> Tata	<b>3rd:</b> Hyderabad
<b>4th:</b> Jaipur	<b>4th:</b> Oberoi
<b>5th:</b> Hyderabad	<b>5th:</b> Kashmir

Congratulations!

## FINANCIAL TALK

**Ravi Kumar**, co-founder, India Bulls gave a talk on stock marketing and careers in finance in India, in the AV Room on Thursday, October 14.

## HINDI LAURELS

Chandrachuda Shukla has been awarded **School Hindi Debating Colours** Congratulations!

## PT PRIZES

The following have been awarded the **PT Commendations** for 2010: Kartic Sharma, Aseem Balraj Sahni and Viren Kapoor.

**PT Jerseys** were awarded to Shivam Katyal, Karanbir Dhariwal, Abhishek Jain, Arvind Sharma and Faraz Khan.

Well done, all!

## SOCCER ACCOLADES

The following have been awarded **Soccer Half Colours** for 2010: Udai Bothra, Tushar Gupta, Anmol Jamwal and Yuv Vir Khosla

**Full Colours** were awarded to Karanbir Dhariwal, Shivam Katyal and Neel Madhav.

**Full Colours** were **reawarded** to Shiva Gururani.

## THE WEEKLY REQUIRES...

All D, C, B and A formers interested in joining the **Editorial Board** of *The Doon School Weekly* must e-mail a poem, short story, report or cartoon to 475@doonschool.com. They must do so latest by Wednesday, October 19

## Opinion oll

Do you think DS-75 will live up to its expectations?



(215 members of the community were polled)

(contd. from page 1)

## Adieu...

**Mr. Sheel Vohra (SKV)**

- Joined The Doon School – 1959
- Served as Housemaster of Jaipur B – 1975-1984
- HOD, Mathematics – 1984-1994
- Senior Master – 1985
- Officiating Headmaster – February-March, 1996

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Generations of Doscocs have known Sheel Vohra as 'Bond' - a nickname he earned soon after joining School because of his James Bond-like ability to detect anything going wrong. The nickname, I feel, is perfect but the reasons for it are not. If SKV is to be called 'Bond'; it should be because he was the living bond between the School and generations of its old pupils and associates. Without recalling this incident, my tribute to SKV would never be complete. It was during the Round Square Conference at Doon in 1991. Some boys requested SKV and me to act in a skit as ourselves. The story, most expectedly, was about Bond and myself catching boys breaking bounds to have fun in town, and taking to task the chowkidar who had fallen asleep, allowing the boys to escape into town. We were just told the story line about an hour before the performance. There was no rehearsal and we did everything impromptu. Mr. Vohra knew exactly the words the boys wanted him to say were, and the gestures they wanted from him. Mr. Vohra had the audience in splits, caricaturing himself! Masters come, masters go. We are unlikely to see anyone of the stature of Sheel Vohra. He will remain a legend at The Doon School.

**Janajit Ray**

Master-in-Charge, *The Doon School Weekly*, 1998

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In the centre of the School that we love so much lies a hallowed plot of green. As boys from The Doon School, this wide open space that we call the main field will always be part of our collective memories. As enduring for many of us is the memory of a presence that has most often stood in the centre of that ground. And "Smell the ball," is one of the many sounds that rings clear with this eternal memory.

The first reaction for most of us who remember this would be to automatically put a foot forward, heads down, and imagine our bats close to our pads.

It is uncertain if anyone can actually remember the smell of the cricket ball, but undoubtedly, no one will ever forget the man. Sheel Vohra, aka 'Bond' is as permanent as our memories of The Doon School itself. For over four decades, generations of boys (and the occasional girl) have been influenced in some way or other by the man who dedicated himself completely to the School. Sheel Vohra lived up to his nickname of Bond—he knew everything about everything and much like Ian Fleming's secret agent, our Bond is still always one step ahead of the game.

Bond was the man who taught us not only to balance mathematical equations in the classroom but also to balance the equations of life outside it. For a man who never married, Bond ended up acquiring a pretty large family. There are thousands of us whom he considers his own. A family that he continues to contribute to, and support.

**Courtesy:** The Official Website of the Doon School Old Boys' Society (February 14, 2007)

# Defence Matters

*Kanishka Malik argues the case for more privatisation in the indigenous arms industry*

I remember when I joined School, the most interesting sight was the Folland Gnat standing in front of the Hospital. It was undoubtedly a symbol of the strength of the Indian Air Force, meant to encourage Doscos to join the armed services. However, now when I look at, I ask myself, how Indian is this aircraft? The plane was made by a British company and was being used by an Air Force that comprised fighter planes only

bribery being resorted to, to gain the lucrative contract. Consequently, all the other unavoidable obstacles will delay the contract.

Our dependence on foreign arms is an inevitable result of our government policy ever since Independence. Companies like Lockheed Martin, Boeing, the former McDonnell Aircraft and Douglas Aircrafts (which later merged into McDonnell Douglas and was

**We know how long-winded the process of picking a company is. Once the company is chosen, its rival will spread rumours about commissions or bribery being resorted to, to gain the lucrative contract. Consequently, all the other unavoidable obstacles will delay the contract.**

taken over by Boeing in 1997), Hughes aircrafts, the former North American Aviation *et cetera* were companies that emerged before the Second World War and became giants through the gains of the war. Despite the chilling connotations of the words 'war profiteering', one must remember that it was these companies that provided the technology that

manufactured by Russian, French or British companies. India is undoubtedly a nation with an escalating demand for arms and, unfortunately, a country that doesn't have enough manufacturing capabilities. Hindustan Aeronautics Limited has so far advanced significantly advanced only in the field of helicopter manufacturing. Our aircraft carrier manufacturing abilities are nowhere near that of China or Russia. Even buying that one Admiral Gorshkhov is taking unacceptably long a deal to finalise.

made aviation what it is today. After the war there companies like Raytheon (missile manufacturer) and General Dynamics that used their opportunity. Despite the criticism of the arms lobby it is important to remember that USA's weapons manufacturing capabilities are chiefly responsible for its military supremacy.

Our programme to develop the Arjun tank took alarmingly long, though it is fortunately being manufactured right now.

**Our supremacy can be guaranteed if government policies favour this industry. Forty-four years of 'License Raj' destroyed any prospects of a weapons manufacturer and the government has failed to carry out the responsibility of making the nation self-sufficient in arms.**

Similarly, our supremacy can be guaranteed if government policies favour this industry. Forty-four years of 'License Raj' destroyed any prospects of a weap-

It is common knowledge that there is the circulation of illegal

arms within terrorist or militant groups. Weapons are, after all, the medium for militant wings to make their plans materialize. On the larger scale, it is the arms lobby and the influence of weapons' manufacturers that governments want to avoid. However, for a country with a high defence spending and immense demand for weapons, an arms industry is vital for self-sufficiency.

ons manufacturer and the government has failed to carry out the responsibility of making the nation self-sufficient in arms. Now, because of the existing corporations, it is difficult for any new company to grow into a position of being at par with established foreign corporations. The capital, technology and acumen are the main impediments. However, the technology and resources can be obtained if the Government makes policies that favour the industry and the entrepreneur goes into a joint venture with a foreign investor or with a giant like Mahindra or Tata, who can afford to take the risk and invest. If the company can provide the required technology it will certainly receive a contract as a result of the escalating defence budget.

Over the last three years, there has been a significant increase in our defence spending. The Air Force is to receive six C-130Js from Lockheed Martin, the American aircraft manufacturing giant and is going to order 126 multi-role fighter aircrafts, from a company that is yet to be decided. The contest for this contract is between Russian (MIG-35), Swedish, American (F-18/F-16), French (Rafael) manufacturers. The recipient will receive about \$10.2 billion and consequently an increase in employment and share prices. Yet the decision is pending and we know how long-winded the process of picking a company is. Once the company is chosen, its rival will spread rumours about commissions or

The Government has to make concessions in order to give this industry an impetus. In the United States, Boeing pays a corporate tax of 2%, in comparison to the usual corporate tax of 34%. A similar arrangement could be made in India. Maybe the government can provide credit to such companies to start with. After all, they will be an asset for the nation.

## | Report |

# Doscas at CWG

*Harshil Aggarwal and Kabir Sethi recount their experience at the Commonwealth Games, 2010*

From October 7 - 10, a group of 30 boys escorted by three teachers – MLJ, MPT, SRT, went to watch the Commonwealth Games taking place in New Delhi.

We took an overnight train from Dehradun to Delhi and reached there in good time the next morning. We were picked up by our parents and relatives at the station. After some rest in the day, we all met at the Indira Gandhi Stadium Complex to watch the Gymnastics event. As there was a huge crowd and the stadium is also very large, most of us had difficulty in finding the right entrance gates and so reached a little late. The stadium was impressive and built to the standard of the Games. There was every comfort and facility for the athletes and the spectators. The stadium was filled to capacity in order to watch this popular sport. It was a lot of fun, hearing the roar of the mob echoing through the stadium whenever an Indian athlete came to perform. We were surprised to see such good performances and were amazed by the gymnasts' flexibility. After watching such a well-conducted event for three hours, we came out looking forward to the remaining programme.

The next day, everyone went to watch Wrestling. This sport was also held in the Indira Gandhi Stadium Complex. Wrestling, being a strong sport for the Indian contingent, a huge crowd had gathered to watch and cheer their countrymen. It was a treat to be present there when India won two gold medals.

The same day in the evening, we went to watch Athletics in the enormous Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium Complex. The events occurring that day were shotput, high jump, long jump, javelin and some track events. It was a bit of a problem keeping track of all the events as several of them were happening at the same time. The only way to keep catch all the events was by watching the two big screens placed on the two sides of the stadium. As India is not particularly good at Athletics, the stadium was only half-filled with supporters. We, predictably, just won only a bronze medal in the 10000m run in the women's category.

The next day, our last one in Delhi, we went to watch Table Tennis. We were surprised to find a sparse crowd at this venue as this sport is considered to be a favoured one in our country. The players from Singapore and Malaysia enthralled us with their skill and technique. Even the players from Australia played well. We left the stadium and spent the day getting some R&R. By another overnight train, we returned to School. It was an extraordinary experience and we all felt privileged to have witnessed the Games.

## The Platinum Year

*Tanuj Kumar gears up for the 75th Founder's Day*

As I write this, a mammoth stage is being set up on the Main Field for our DS-75 celebrations. In less than a week, our School will be celebrating its 75th Founder's Day, and I take great pride in the fact, that I will be attending the much-awaited event, as a student still in School. It is an event which will go down in the history

of The Doon School. The celebrations will be at an unprecedented level, and so will the human presence on campus! It is estimated that around 5,000 people will visit the campus over the course of the event,

which will perhaps make us feel, for the first time, that our campus has shrunk! Talking about the campus, I must say it has never looked more beautiful. The lush, green lawns in front of the Main Building look enchanting. In addition to that, we've got a new Dining Hall, Art School, Jaipur House, a pavilion and Masters' houses. Fortunately, their roofs are still intact (unlike the CWG stadia!) and the walls remain uncracked! Had we given the building contract to 'elsewhere', the completion of the edifices would have remained doubtful till the DS-100 celebrations! But that's a dif-

ferent story altogether.

I can sense the excitement on campus and the birds are chirping more than ever(or so it seems!). Everyone is gearing up for the 'big' event and contributing in their own way. Students and teachers are working on various exhibitions, the instruments in the Music School

It is estimated that around 5,000 people will visit the campus over the course of the event, which will perhaps make us feel, for the first time, that our campus has shrunk!

are audible from quite a distance, and so are the actors rehearsing their dialogues for the English and Hindi plays. My heart tells me it will be a grand show! This 75-year old institution has produced leaders in the past and I'm sure it will continue doing so. This event is of great importance to the School and its students. It is a tribute to the Founders of this premier institution. Therefore, I urge all fellow Doscas to help and make it a big success, so that its memories linger in our minds for all years to come. And then we can proudly say :-  
"Doscas Forever - Brothers for Life!"

Online Edition: <http://www.doonschool.com/publications/the-doon-school-weekly/latest-issue> [weekly@doonschool.com](mailto:weekly@doonschool.com)



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