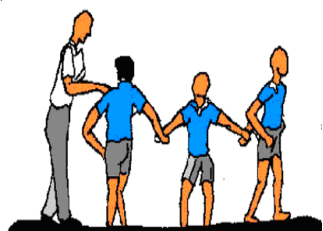


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Clear Streams

Yash Dhandhania reports on his midterm trek to Kush Kalyan

After eleven kilometres of tireless trekking on the third day of our midterms, the first group of boys from our party emerged from a dense forest into a clearing. At that moment, the majestic peak of Kush Kalyan came into view. The first sight of our final destination gave us a feeling of hope and satisfaction. But the feeling was short-lived. It eventually dawned on us that we hadn't yet reached the peak. We still had to cover a daunting distance along the ridgeline. Eventually the group (and I don't mean to blow my own trumpet, but, me too!) reached the peak and stopped at the gathering of stones which marked the summit. Even now the guide seemed ready to run a marathon, and I felt mocked whenever he glanced over at us as we panted. We hadn't spoken much with the guide along the way, except to ask for directions at those points when the path split. It was the guide in the end who broke the ice. He took us to one side of the peak, but strangely, he didn't point out the giant mountains in the distance or give us their names and heights. Rather, our guide took us over to the side of Kush Kalyan facing the lesser hills. The valleys below were spotted with tiny settlements, each peak above them stood nameless. Our guide pointed out a small settlement just a few kilometres away. He told us the village name was Kalyan, and it was from that village that the peak on which we stood was named Kush Kalyan.

Midterms had a rather sleepy start. As with most parties, we left school at 4 AM in a bus. After four hours we stopped for breakfast at a *dhaaba*, and after the break, we continued our journey. Lunch was in Uttarkashi. In all our years in School, we had only experienced mild, harmless midterms, so there was no way for us to know that this would be the last proper sit-down meal we would eat for the rest of the trip. We again continued in the bus, and after a total of ten tiring hours on the road, we stepped out to the flow of the river in Lata. Again our naiveté got the better of us and we over-enthusiastically grabbed our rucksacks as they were hauled down off the top of the bus. This would be our first trek carrying a rucksack.

After crossing the river at Lata, we took a turn and walked along one of the tributaries of the river. In just two days we would be at the very source of this tributary. We followed the mules, which everybody kept confusing for ponies, and we quickly learned how exhausting midterms could be. We began to notice the vegetation. Our first brush with botany was a small bush with thorny leaves. We were told that this was 'Poison Ivy' or '*bibchu butti*', a painful plant, though not nearly as menacing as its name. We trekked on and looked at more plants when suddenly we stopped because the guide wanted us to camp in a small farmed piece of land which was not the scheduled site. Apparently the mules were tired and could go no more. However BKC and UDV put their feet down and had us continue all the way to our proper camp site next to a clear mountain stream. At the camp site, we pitched our tents thanks to the recent training we received at Dhanaulti. Most of us retired soon after the Maggi we devoured for dinner. It rained that night.

The next morning was another early start as we began the first actual uphill trek. Even though the gradient wasn't steep, the rucksacks coupled with the absence of a proper path, made this the toughest trek we had ever experienced. Then around 11 AM the gradient suddenly increased and we really struggled.

The last portion of our second day trek was a steep slope through a forest, and just as we cleared the forest, we reached our second camp site. Exhausted, we were delighted to hear that we would be staying here two nights, and even better, that we would be trekking the next day without our rucksacks!

We rested for a spell, and once everybody arrived at this camp site, we ate *khichardi* prepared by the cooks. Then we set off to inspect the route we would take the next day to Kush Kalyan. We hadn't gone very far when we encountered snow and stopped for a good snow fight. We returned to camp, rested some more, and then after a warming campfire and MGP's chilling campfire stories, we went to our tents. The next morning when I woke up I couldn't feel my toes because of the cold, even though I was wearing four pairs of socks. Gradually the feeling in my feet returned and I crawled out of the tent only to hear others talk of their sleepless nights. It had snowed on the peak in the night, and the tents were covered in with a layer of ice. We eagerly ate the warm *paranthas* offered by the cooks, Subhash *ji* and Dinesh *bhaiya*. Then we set off again, this time for the peak.

We trudged along weary after the sleepless night. Slowly our bodies woke up and were energized. At first, the gradient was very easy to navigate. But slowly we felt the path get steeper and steeper. Eventually we reached 'Belak Khal.' It was sparsely populated, but there was a patch of snow which most boys tried – and failed – to ski or glide across. We played around for a while but then pushed off for our final destination. The gradient from here on was quite a challenge. In fact there was an increase in altitude of 1.4km from Belak Khal to the top of Kush Kalyan, over a distance of only 10km. For a long time it was just one foot in front of the other. Somewhere amidst the harsh cliffs we passed a spare mountain temple and rested for a spell taking in the panoramic Himalayan vista. We reached the peak around 1pm. Of course the trek itself was very demanding. But I feel it was the experience of living in tents, of drinking from clear stream waters, and generally, of fending for ourselves, which I will cherish and keep from these midterms.

DRAMATICS

There was a performance of “**Hercules and the Augean Stables**” in the Rose Bowl on 1st April, 2013. An article on the play runs in the forthcoming issue.

GOLF

The school was represented by Zahaan Qureshi, Sumer Sehgal, Varun Sehgal, Divij Kapoor, Rishabh Agarwal, Jayaditya Singh, Jaiveer Puri and Ranveer Modi at the **World School Golf Challenge** held in **Hua Hin, Thailand** from March 31 to April 5. Zahaan Qureshi finished in the top ten while Sumer Sehgal and Varun Sehgal finished in the top fifteen in category A. Congratulations!

WIDPSC

Anshul Tibrewal, Udbhav Agarwal, Arnav Joshi, Vishal Tummala, Devansh Agarwal and Krishna Lohiya represented the School in **The World Individual Debating and Public Speaking Competition** held in **Durban** from April 1 to April 5. Anshul Tibrewal reached the finals of the Interpretive Reading event. A report runs in the forthcoming issue

Well Done!

INDO-PAK

Rahul Srivastava, Utkarsh Jha and Kunal Kanodia represented the School in the **First India-Pakistan Debates** held in **Delhi** from April 1 to April 4. The Team reached the third round of the debates.

Well Done all!

HMUN

Harshil Agarwal won the **Outstanding Delegate Award** at the Harvard Model United Nations Conference, China held in Beijing.

Congratulations!

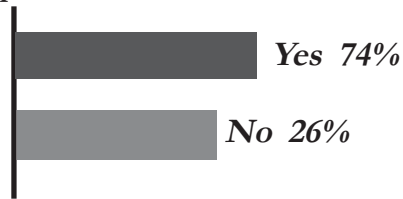


Around the world in 80 Words

This week saw the death of Margaret Thatcher, who served as Britain’s first female Prime Minister. On the other side of the world, North Korea stepped closer to the ‘dangerous line’ as it kept up its rhetoric and threats to start a thermo nuclear war. Nearby, in Hong Kong a number of people succumbed to a bird flu known as H7N9. This week also saw the first time in 69 years in which there were no American tanks in Europe.

Opinion oll

Do you believe that midterms are an essential experience for a Dosco?



(320 members of the School community were polled)

Next Week’s Question: Have you been following this season of the IPL?

The Week Gone By

Utkarsh Jha

Well as *Week Gone Bys* go, the week that just went by was memorable. For ‘starters’, DoscOs returned from midterms which also led to a spike in sales of starters at Prez and President. More importantly, this last day binging and hogging at Astley Hall has also caused the linen room bearers a great deal of trouble. No Dosco seems to be able to fit into his old summer shorts and trousers. The sight of juniors and seniors alike trying to squirm, squeeze, hoola hoop and wriggle into their shorts is indeed a common one (let us not mention the herculean task of trying to button up thereafter!)

We are also privy to the information (thank you, ASH!) that certain midterms parties are ‘Gut-tu’ go for midterms again. We wish them all the best and look forward to reading about their treks in future issues of the *Weekly*.

In other news, the D Formers have also joined school. I suggest that the D formers invest some money in buying a few GPS systems for themselves, as I am tired of people coming up to me in the Main Building and asking for directions to (wait for it...) the Main Building. However, I must also admit that I am always tempted to misdirect them towards the Swimming Pool. Thank god I have not carried through with my plans or we would have seen SJB, SKD, DNJ and ANK becoming the busiest masters in school with all the D form classes they would have to take! Summer is in and we are being has also been invaded by swarms of mosquitoes. Though many members of the board of the *Weekly* challenge my theory that mosquitoes are on the brink of staging a coup in School, I have personally been the victim of a number of mosquito attacks (and in the process seem to have lost three liters of blood.) Maybe I displeased the mosquito God?

Dosco Doodle

Madhav Dutt



Golf Report

Varun Sehgal and Jaiveer Puri report on the golfing trip to Thailand.



After a long journey, we reached the golfing city of Hua Hin, Thailand. The team was led by Zahaan Qureshi and accompanied by SJB. The team checked into the Banyan Golf Resort, where all the students were participating in The World School Golf Challenge. We were greeted and taken to our lavish villas. In an attempt to get the sweat (caused by the heat) off our bodies we jumped into the villa's private canal right away. After touring the resort we decided to get some rest so we could be fit for our practice round the next day.

The Springfield Golf Course proved to be not only challenging (with an island green on the eighteenth hole) but also long and tiring, the humidity and scorching thirty five degrees celsius playing spoil sport! By the end of the day, all our games improved. We returned to the resort and attended the opening ceremony, where we were introduced to our hosts, the participants, rules, Thai culture and most importantly the Thai food. Participants came from prestigious golf schools like Milfield School, Hilton College and John Meglashin School. We returned to our villas, although tired, we were now aware of the stiff competition.

The first round of the tournament was held at The Palm Hills Golf Course where the narrow fairways gave us Doscos a tough time but like always we fought till the end and stayed in the race.

The second round was held at Black Mountain Golf Course whose hilly terrain tested our abilities but this was also the team's favourite course. Zahaan Qureshi proved that the Doscos should be watched out for after playing an outstanding round of eleven over!

The next day was a rest day. We started the day by practicing at the driving range. On our return some of us stayed in and ordered room service while others went to the grandest and most crowded mall in Hua Hin.

After our day of rest we played at the Banyan Golf Course where finding a ball in the hazards was like finding a needle in a hay stack! However, this did not affect Sumer Sehgal's round of eighteen over!

For the last round of the tournament we returned to Springfield Golf Course. With the experience of a practice round we all managed to do well, but for our competitors the water hazard on the eighteenth hole acted as a ball magnet. Once again Zahaan managed to play a fabulous round of eleven over. Later that day at the closing ceremony the results were

announced. Zahaan Qureshi finished in the top ten while Sumer Sehgal and Varun Sehgal finished in the top fifteen in their respective divisions.

Even though we, as a team, comprising Zahaan Qureshi, Sumer Sehgal, Divij Kapoor and Varun Sehgal finished nineteenth and Jayaditya Singh, Rishabh Agarwal, Jaiveer Puri and Ranveer Modi finished twenty fourth, as the only representatives of India, we can say we did our country proud and our school too. It proved to be a great experience and undoubtedly gave us a great deal of confidence.

HOWZZATT!

Chaitanya Kediya and CC Chengappa write on the recently concluded Inter House Junior Cricket Competition.

Cricket is the most popular sport in India. It's a time when all Doscos can be seen in their whites trying their best at the pitch, diving on the field, driving a ball or swinging the bat to hit a boundary. But most of all it's a time when everyone can enjoy the sport as one. From the first ball of the innings to the last run or wicket, this Inter House Junior Cricket Competition was thrilling and entertaining.

The opening match of the tournament was between Kashmir and Oberoi Houses. Although Madhav Agarwal took five wickets the winning house was Oberoi. At the same time Tata House took on Jaipur, Tata House won the match. The second round was between Jaipur and Kashmir in which the latter emerged victorious. A closely contested match between Oberoi and Hyderabad ended in a tie with Sikander Suri hitting just a single on the last ball. Though we had reached half way into the competition it was still not clear which house would emerge victorious. The match between Oberoi and Tata will be remembered, although the warriors made an excellent target of 130. The boys of Oberoi House played very well ensuring their victory with ten wickets! Sikander Suri and Vihaan Bhatnagar scored half a century. As the chinars clashed with the nizams Udaiveer Jaijee was seen taking five wickets and even though the match went to the very last over Hyderabad was victorious. Round four witnessed a hard fought match between Kashmir and Tata though the warriors did their level best they had to accept defeat. The last match of the round was between Hyderabad and Jaipur with Raghav Kumar making 47 and Hyderabad reaching a target of 160 they won the match. Now things were beginning to get a little dicey and the positions of each house could be predicted. In the last round Oberoi House chased a target of 49 and won the match by ten wickets. In the last match Hyderabad played against Tata with the warriors winning the match.

This year Oberoi House emerged victorious in the Inter-House Junior Cricket Competition. Great performances were seen in both Juniors 1 and Juniors 2. Tremendous performances were seen by Sikander Suri, Ashwin Agarwal, Vihaan Bhatnagar, Sasyak Patnaik, Udaiveer Jaijee and Madhav Agarwal. A high standard of competition and sportsmanship has been witnessed during these cricket matches. Promising batsmen and talented bowlers have emerged from every house. But the most important aspect was the team and house spirit.

Kauri Pass-ed!

Sehaj Jouhal writes about his party's trek to Kauri Pass during the recent midterm break.

Our six-man group, comprising Farhan Anis, Nipurn Datta, Agastya Bellad, Shrestha Khetan, Harsh Singhania and myself set out for Auli, a town close to Joshimath, Uttarakhand, for what was going to be a gruelling 11 hour journey to begin one of the most daring and adventurous treks undertaken by a private mid-term party.

Auli presented us with a breathtaking view of the majestic Shivaliks and some light snowfall to keep us company. We checked into our guestrooms and after a refreshing meal, we stepped out once again, only to be mesmerized by the sky that held a million dazzling stars. We stood there, bewitched, for we had never laid eyes on a clearer night-sky, least not in the hustle-bustle of a polluted city like Dehradun. But as we stood there under the sky and the stars, we knew that the adventure we had undertaken was not going to be an easy one. Reaching Kauri Pass, which stood at a height of 17,000 ft. would be no walk in the park-it would require every bit of energy and determination, and we were confident of scaling the height.



Having hired a guide, we began our ascent to Ganso Top early the next morning, complete with our rucksacks and tents. It took us 6 hours to over 12 km and ascent from 11,000 ft. to 14,000 ft. After some rest, we pitched our tents in a little snow-free patch of land, an area that was to be the base camp for our final trek to Kauri Pass. After settling in we had lunch (which we prepared wholly by ourselves, thanks to the culinary skills of Agastya Bellad!). We had a look around the area and got acclimatized to the high altitude and low temperatures. Suddenly, at about 3 in the afternoon, the weather took a turn for the worse. The sky, which had been partially cloudy throughout the day turned dark grey and we had to brave strong winds and heavy snowfall. It didn't take long for us to realize that we were in the middle of a snowstorm on Ganso Top. What made it worse was the knowledge that not many people frequented Ganso Top, and were we to get stuck there, it would be a while before anyone reached us. We all took shelter in our tents and waited till about 7 in the evening, at which point we emerged out of our tents to quickly prepare our dinner because the snowfall had subsided just a little bit. Throughout the night it snowed heavily, the temperatures dipping to as low as -10C. None of us slept the entire night, experiencing mixed feelings of fear and thrill.

The next morning we were greeted with a sublime view of the snowcapped peaks around us. The fresh snow had changed the entire view! We quickly changed up, and after grabbing a quick bite; Farhan, Nipurn, Agastya and I began our trek for Kauri Pass. It was a clear day and the fresh snow had made it perfect for trekking. After 4 hours of going up and down various snow-covered slopes, and trekking 14 km in knee-deep snow, we finally reached Kauri Pass. The five of us, including the guide were at a height of 17,000ft.. After spending some time at the top to take in the magnificent views, we headed back for the base camp. We reached back around 4.30 pm, just before it began to snow again.

We had a well-deserved lunch while it snowed all around us. We continued admiring the white snow and pondered over what we had managed to achieve. It was a great feat, for none of us had ever trekked to such a height before. No one from school had ever scaled the heights of Kauri Pass, unescorted that is, and we liked to believe that in some ways we were the first adventurers, the first boys to explore the unexplored.

Glimpses from other Midterms

Destination: Harsil

Group: Kashmir House B Form

Distance Trekked: 39km

Places visited: Dharali, Mukhba Temple

Escorts: ANC, VNP, PRY

Destination: Uttarkashi (Social Service Midterms)

Party Leader: Madhav Dutt

Project Undertaken: Flood Rehabilitation

Places visited: Gangori, Sivananda *Asbaram*

Escorts: Unescorted

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