

Established in 1936

The Doon School WEEKLY

"I sketch your world exactly as it goes." -Arthur Foot

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THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

Aviation expeditions. The birth of a business. A monumental gift.

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A lasting connection between boarding schools worldwide.

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A hilarious account of the events of the past week.

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TikTok to Parliament

Krishiv Jaiwal discusses the shifting political dynamic within the United Kingdom.

Evolving. That's the optimal way to describe the United Kingdom's current political climate. Reform UK, a party long considered as fringe, is suddenly exerting pressure on Westminster politics, which was once a predictable struggle between Labour and the Conservatives. The party, led by Nigel Farage, has experienced a sharp rise in support, redefining the usually predictable political system of the UK.

Closer scrutiny reveals that Nigel Farage, a symbol of British populism and an individual whose influence transcends institutional politics, is at the centre of this comeback. Farage has led Reform UK into discussions that were previously exclusive to the two big parties since his recent return to leading lines of politics, raising the question of whether Reform is going to emerge as the primary opposition party in the UK.

Farage's political career has been anything but traditional, starting as the leader of the UK Independence Party from 2006 to 2009, and bringing the second referendum on Brexit into the mainstream debate. He has also built his base through constant media appearances and social provocations. With Reform UK, Farage is chasing a broader disillusionment, targeting the "political class" itself — a message that resonates in a nation struggling with rising living costs, stagnant wages,

and escalating immigration anxieties, as per *The Guardian*.

Farage's political clout grew exponentially in June 2023, when the private bank Coutts closed his account, triggering a public outcry. Farage's assertion that the bank's choice was driven by politics heightened worries about partisanship and free speech in financial organisations. Farage accomplished what many had thought was unthinkable in 2024: he was elected to a seat in Parliament for Clacton, solidifying his role in the political realignment of Britain.

Farage's approach blurs the boundaries between ideology and entertainment. In a media world where attention frequently overpowers information, this uncertainty surprisingly works...

Reform UK has since established itself as a respectable alternative, as the Labour Party is in decline and the Conservative Party is unable to bounce back. What's more? Prime Minister Starmer may encounter an internal uprising inside the Labour Party if this tendency persists, which would further destabilise the organisation. Farage's ideological shift away

from the Brexit narrative alone echoes current voter sentiment. Communities who feel excluded by established parties engage well with his views on immigration, vows to "scrap net zero" to fund giveaways for families, and criticisms of the BBC.

However, Reform UK is more than just UKIP 2.0. This party, in contrast to Farage's earlier endeavours, is committed to permanency as well as insurgency.

Under the "Britannia Card," a scheme unveiled by Reform UK, affluent foreigners and returning British residents would be granted a 10-year residency permit and tax perks in exchange for a one-time payment of £250,000. The controversial "non-dom" status, which exempts cardholders from inheritance tax and UK tax on offshore income, would be reinstated under the plan.

The idea was introduced by Farage himself, who said that it would "encourage the return of wealth and talent to the United Kingdom" by providing a 20-year inheritance tax shield and a "stable, indefinite remittance-style regime." *The Economic Times* reports that according to Farage, the program would draw several affluent people to the UK.

Current polling suggests that voters are very dissatisfied with traditional political institutions, as Reform, the right-wing populist movement, continues

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This Week in History

1775 CE: George Washington officially assumes command of the Continental Army during the American Revolution, several weeks after being appointed to the post.

1776 CE: The Declaration of Independence is adopted, calling for the American colonies to secede from Great Britain.

1867 CE: The Dominion of Canada is established.

1884 CE: The Statue of Liberty is presented to the United States by France in Paris.

1900 CE: The first Zeppelin takes flight from a floating hangar on Lake Constance near Friedrichshafen, Germany.

1937 CE: The airplane piloted by American aviator Amelia Earhart disappears over the central Pacific Ocean during her attempt to fly around the world.

1962 CE: American businessman Sam Walton opens the first Walmart store in Rogers, Arkansas.

2002 CE: American adventurer Steve Fossett becomes the first balloonist to circumnavigate the world alone.

LISTENER'S CHECKLIST

What members of the School community have been listening to this week:

Veer Duggal: *Sapphire* by Ed Sheeran
Laksh Baheti: *Metamorphosis* by INTERWORLD
Kaavye Sood: *All the stars* by Kendrick Lamar
Dhruvraj Negi: *Toxic* by Britney Spears
Yashveer Tewatia: *Show Me Love* by WizTheMc

“

I never let my schooling interfere with my education.

—
Mark Twain

OBITUARY

The *Weekly* deeply regrets the passing of Mr Sunjay Kapur (ex 147-HA, 1990), an Old Boy, member of the Board of Governors, and Chair of the Sports and IT committees at School. On behalf of the entire School community, we extend our heartfelt condolences to his family and friends.

READER'S CHECKLIST

What members of the School community have been reading this week:

Vivaan Arora: *The Armchair General* by John Buckley
Sumer Gill: *Educated* by Tara Westover
Zorawar Sandhu: *Freakonomics* by Stephen J. Dubner
Aditya Koradia: *The Odyssey* by Homer

NEW BEGINNINGS

The *Weekly* welcomes, Mr Adnaan Farooq, Ms Arpita Chatterjee, Mr Justin Burrett and Mr Soham Roy as Masters in their respective departments.

We also welcome Ms Sreshti Rawat and Mr Shubham Sharma who have onboarded as part-time teachers.

We wish them a fruitful tenure!

Around the World in 80 Words

Thailand's Prime Minister Shinawatra was suspended from office. Shubhman Gill scores 269 runs in the second test match against England. The Bank of England launched consultation on future banknote designs. Rapper Sean 'Diddy' Combs was acquitted of racketeering and sex trafficking. Indian Chess grandmaster Rameshbabu Praggnanandhaa became the country's highest-ranked player after defeating Nodirbek Abdusattorov. Liverpool forward Diogo Jota passed away following a tragic car accident. Massive protests were held in Bangladesh after Hindu woman was raped by local politician.

Do Sco Doodle

The Dragon Scholar
Reyansh Agarwal



(Continued from Page 1)

to pose problems for Britain's political duopoly. According to an April 2025 *Electoral Calculus* study, Reform UK had 227 MRP seats, surpassing Labour, which sat second with 180 seats.

Rural and working-class populations share this disillusionment. Farage's message pierces through with an unwavering clarity that plays on despair and exhaustion, while Labour tries to reclaim Red Wall seats and the Conservatives hold onto historic shires. Similarly, voters in economically distressed areas believe that Farage is the only politician who is prepared to reciprocate their concerns about their perceived loss of control over the economy, borders, and culture in a period where the unemployment rate in the United Kingdom has reached a four-year high, as per the Office for National Statistics.

In all, to the population, Farage seems willing to listen. In addition to denouncing immigration policy, he has charged the government with mishandling public services, housing expenses, and rental pricing. His reputation as a politician unafraid of awkward confrontations has been strengthened by his readiness to engage on contentious matters.

To that end, the secret ingredient to Farage's success is his media approach. Reform UK has conquered the digital battlefield, even though it lacks the structure of the Tories and the financing of Labour. One example is Farage's presence on TikTok. His short videos span from caustic comedy to political commentary. Therefore, whether intentionally or not, Farage's approach blurs the boundaries between ideology and entertainment. In a media world where attention frequently overpowers information, this uncertainty surprisingly works to his favour.

He has also, almost abruptly, become a recognised figure in international politics. His influence has grown as a result of his affiliations with conservative groups overseas, American neoconservatives, and US President Donald Trump.

However, Reform UK still has fundamental obstacles to overcome despite its progress. Smaller parties with widespread but fragile support are disfavoured by the UK's first-past-the-post voting system. Reform runs the danger of converting mass support into a small number of parliamentary seats unless it can focus votes geographically.

On top of that, institutional

resistance is on the rise. The established parties have stepped up their assaults on Farage, calling him "divisive," "xenophobic," or "chaotic," as *The Conversation* details. In the meantime, civil society groups caution that inclusive political traditions are eroding.

Furthermore, there are issues with Farage's past performance. Many are suspicious of his long-term function in a pluralist democracy because of his close ties to extreme ideologues, his provocative speech, and his prior links with conspiracy-laden discourse. It remains to be seen if Reform UK endures as a long-term opposition movement or if it dissipates after a brief period of widespread discontent.

All in all, Farage's insurgency runs the risk of turning into a loudhailer without a movement in the absence of effective local party frameworks, a convincing economic strategy, and wider institutional partnerships. However, the United Kingdom's political climate is now a different "ball game" altogether. Farage is no longer just a sideshow now that the political duopoly has been disrupted; he is well and truly on the ballot and might as well be at the helm.



Nigel Farage speaks during a campaign meeting, ahead of the United Kingdom's general election (Source: Agence France Presse)

From Doon to Durban

Zorawar Sandhu *expresses his thoughts about his exchange to South Africa.*

This summer, I had the opportunity to be part of the Round Square Student Exchange Programme with Hilton College, a 153-year-old institution nestled in the rolling hills of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. As I arrived, I felt a wave of nervousness at the prospect of being placed in a completely new environment, where I knew no one. The first few days passed in a blur of introductions and unfamiliar schedules. But soon, the nerves melted away, replaced by the sense of brotherhood that all boarding schools seem to share. I quickly realised that Hilton and Doon have a lot more in common than I expected. My dormmates and I shared our tuck, discussed sports fixtures and indulged in good-natured banter. Like School, Hilton strongly emphasises sports and co-curricular activities as integral components of their school curriculum.

Everyone at Hilton was warm and welcoming, often going out of their way to ensure I was comfortable. The *Afrikaner* slang words *sho* and *awe* stayed with me. The highlight of my stay was the honour of representing Hilton in both squash and hockey.

I was fortunate to be able to experience the height of the Hilton-Michaelhouse rivalry: the

excitement of witnessing a 1st Team’s rugby match was comparable to an IPL contest back home. The school organised numerous cultural activities for us, ranging from a traditional lunch with a Zulu individual, thereby learning more about their culture (including how they build a house for each of their departed family members), to visiting the Nelson Mandela Capture Site, where he was arrested before spending the next 27 years in prison. Exploring the Durban market, much like our *mandis* in India, going on safari in the school’s own game reserve, and even shark diving were just a few of the unforgettable experiences I had during my time there.

But beyond the country and the experiences, the greatest gift of this exchange was the people. I made lifelong friends and countless memories, besides becoming familiar with a new culture. This exchange programme taught me a lot, from resilience through days-long power cuts to perseverance after scoring a goal in my own goalpost while playing for the Fourths. I came back not only with stories and souvenirs but also with a wider perspective on the world and a deeper understanding of what it means to be part of a global community.

Minds in Motion

Madhav Mehra *writes about the G-PIE conference, recently held in School.*

The Groton Program for Intercultural Exchange, a joint collaboration between the Groton School, Welham Girls’ School, and The Doon School, commenced on June 22. The campuses hosted a gathering of 43 vibrant and young minds, who came from diverse cultures, and who, throughout the conference — through discourse, discussion and a gamut of intercultural activities and collaborative sessions — learnt about each other’s countries and cultures, making life-long connections. This year’s conference focused on the theme of ‘Water and Culture’, exploring the significance of water in diverse cultures and the problem of water security around the world.

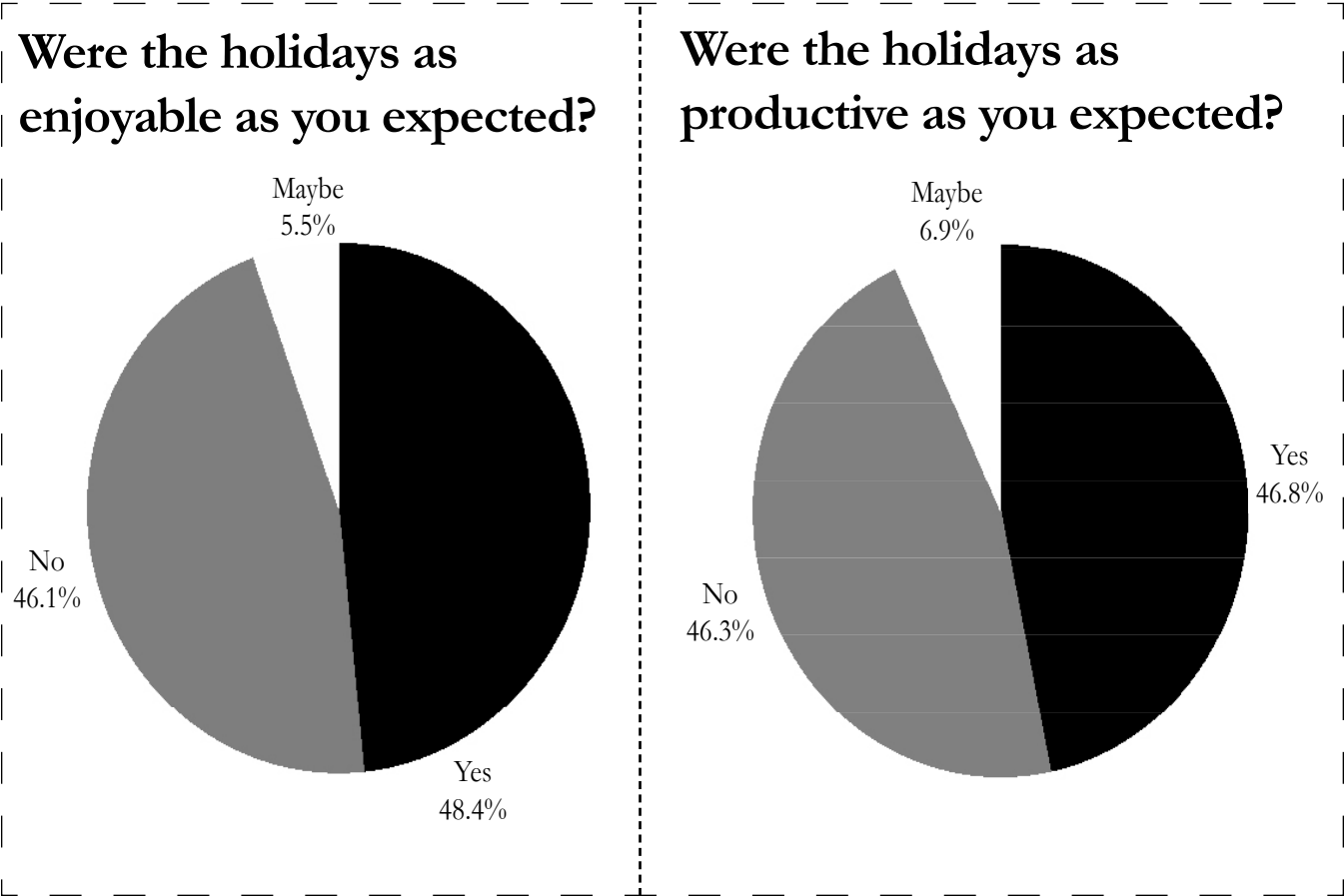
The keynote speaker for the conference was Dr Darla Deadorff, a professor from Duke University, who directed the students towards finding solutions to the ongoing global water crisis. This was also the main theme of the conference. All participants were made to discuss this topic by getting divided into advisories.

The conference lasted for six days with two spent in School and the remaining days in Welham Girls’ School. Throughout the conference, the

days started fairly early, at around 6 AM. This was mainly because the mornings included activities to energize students such as traditional sports like *keho-keho* and *kabaddi*, along with meditation and yoga to learn and master the art of mindfulness. Participants were exposed to different aspects of Indian culture where they imbibed skills in the folk dances (such as *dandiya*), art work, and cooking. Excursions such as owling took place along with a trip to Parmarth Ashram, Rishikesh, where the guests witnessed glimpses of Indian heritage and traditions.

The conference allowed students to question the effects of their daily activities and assisted them in realising the need to be globally aware. After nearly a week of interactions and discussions, everyone landed on a common learning of unity. It was understood that our thoughts and emotions, when allowed to run freely, reach a level of significant similarity. The prospect of the cultures to which we belong dividing us into various nations is meaningless when viewed from a global perspective.

Really Going?



The Week Gone By

Ganadhapati Aryan

It's been one of those weeks where not much has happened, but somehow everything still feels a bit tiring. The kind of boring that isn't restful: just routine, wet, and filled with quiet complaints.

Let's begin with the obvious: the rain. Monsoon has arrived, and it's made sure we don't forget. It hasn't stopped pouring all week. The Main Field looks like a cricket pitch that gave up, the corridors are filled with the sound of squelching shoes, and everyone has accepted that their socks will never be dry again. At this point, umbrellas feel more decorative than useful.

And if the rain wasn't annoying

enough, full-sleeve uniforms are back. Nothing says "comfortable learning environment" like slightly wet sleeves clinging to your arms through a double period. Between the humidity and the surprise puddles, we're all just walking around hoping for the return of half sleeves and dry shoes.

Things are slowly shifting from post-holiday catchups to serious academic territory. The word "study" is being used more frequently, and unfortunately, people have started meaning it. Assessment Week has been arranged in the most Doon way possible, with assessments stacked back-to-back. It's like academic Jenga, and we're all just hoping we don't collapse.

Outside the classroom, life is starting to feel normal again. Football season is officially back, which means lots of last-minute kit searching and house practices where half the team shows up late.

For the first time, both football and hockey are happening together. It's impressive, but also slightly chaotic. It's also becoming clear that this term won't slow down anytime soon. With DSMUN, YEC, Chucks, and a bunch of other events lined up, things are about to get busy. Combine that with the fact that this is our first five-month term, and it's safe to say we're in it for the long haul.

And finally, Inter-House Band didn't happen last term. Again. At this point, it's become a bit of a tradition in itself; we just mention it, sigh a little, and move on.

So that's the week: rainy, routine, and filled with a quiet sense of "here we go again." Not exciting, not terrible, just... Doon. And now, if you'll excuse me, I have to study chemistry.

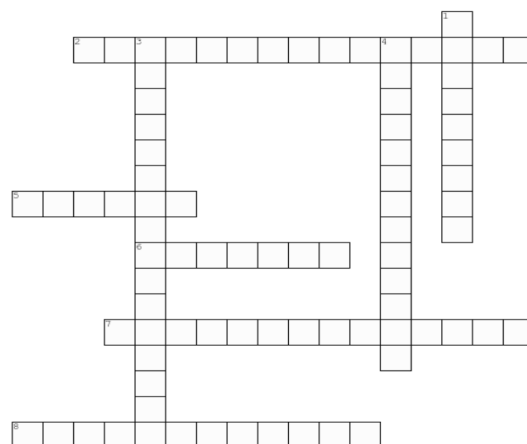
Crossword | Shortest Wars in History

Across

2. This recent war lasted for a little less than a whole day. It was a spat caused by a violation of the ceasefire agreement.
5. This war took place in 1967, when tensions boiled over and Israel nearly wiped out the Egyptian air force.
6. Code-named Operation Democracy, it was an amphibious assault invasion led by Comoros.
7. This 15-day war ended when Austria-Hungary threatened Bulgaria with military action if it didn't stop.
8. This forty three day war took place as a result of the unsettled disputes from the first war.

Down

1. This ten week war was fought between Argentinian Forces and the British Troops, lasting for ten weeks.
3. 1918 war over Lori between two Caucasus nations.
4. Also known as the British-Zanzibar War, it is the shortest war in history.



Across	
2. Nagorno-Karabakh	8. Second Balkan
5. Sixday	7. Serbo-Bulgarian
3. Georgian-Armenian	6. Anjouan
1. Falklands	4. Anglo-Zanzibar

Source: <https://www.theteacherscorner.net/make-your-own/crossword/>

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