

HEADMASTER'S LETTER

25 May 2023



Dear Parent

The examination season is underway. As ever, I wish all students every success in the coming weeks. It has been good to see so many boys in school whether in the Sixth Form Centre, the 'Mezz' and the Library catching up on revision. Just a reminder that staff are available when they would normally be teaching Year 11 or 13 and boys should feel very confident to drop in for help if they need it.

It is always the end of an era when a cohort of Year 13s leave the school. Our Sixth Form Team, supported by the Senior Prefects, make a real effort to make the last few weeks of their time at the school memorable. This included a Leavers' Ball at Missenden Abbey and a breakfast, BBQ and 'bucking bronco' type inflatables on the very last day. My thanks to Mr Noyes, Mesdames Tan and Wallace for their hard work.

This also means that we have appointed a new Senior Prefect Team and Heads of House who are, from this year, senior prefects as the House System grows. Please do encourage your son to raise matters with senior prefects (identified by a green tie and a 'swan' tie pin) and, of course, to covet the green tie themselves when they reach Year 13.

Boarding is an important part of our school and the bond between boarders and Fraser Youens staff is particularly strong. They are keeping an extra special eye on Years 11 and 13 during their exam season, and carefully continue to nurture boys in other years, as well as looking towards September and welcoming our new boarders. Our Director of Boarding, Mr Scourfield, writes a half-termly boarding letter which you may wish to read [here](#).

SPORT

We are enjoying success in the Summer Sports. In athletics, Year 9 came 3rd in the District Athletics with Year 10 winning their age group.

Cricket has finally (following a change in the weather) got off to a great start with wins and 'close seconds' against a number of great cricketing schools. The U15As are through to the County Cup final and Year 7 teams have made some great debuts.

If you want to know more about school cricket, take a look at excellent [Cricket pages](#) on our website and, if you enjoy watching the game, click on [the RGS Cricket YouTube channel](#) for live streamed matches.

Recreational tennis is now up and running too, with large participation. Please ask your son to speak to one of the Sports staff or Mrs Woodbury, who leads the tennis programme.

We have two fantastic events for your diaries. [Touch Rugby and Beer Festival](#) on 24 June. Looking ahead to the Autumn, our not-to-be missed [Sportman's Dinner](#) compered by David Flatman (with a special guest) takes place on 2 November, hot on the studded heels of the Rugby World Cup.

WAS SHE WORTH IT?

There was a goodly crowd at the RGS Parents' Association Bingo night. I made my debut as a bingo caller, alongside my wife who handed me the rather fiddly balls with the numbers on! This event raised money for the School - please do support the PA events - they are great fun and, ultimately, benefit your sons.

CCF

Its 'berets off' to the CCF who pulled off an absolute triumph. Captain Pettengell writes:

'On Friday 19th May, the RGSHW CCF team deployed to Sennybridge Training Area, Wales, to take part in Cadet Cambrian Patrol 2023. This is the premier Military Skills competition in the UK and is run by 160 (Wales) Brigade Cadet Training Team. The competition is the culmination of teams earning their places through their regional Brigade Military Skills competitions, with teams training all year for the event. The RGS team, composed of two Year 12s and six Year 10s, was entered as a last-minute reserve and was one of the youngest and least experienced we have sent to the Competition. The following report was written by the Patrol Commander, Cadet Colour Serjeant Matthew Yarwood.

An early start on Saturday morning meant we began the patrol at 06:30. We immediately met the military knowledge test, an emotional experience so early in the morning. However, quizzes wouldn't be our hardest test that day. With the test out of the way and off to a good start, we moved on to our second stand, the Section Attack. Having sprinted up a steep Welsh hill and taken the enemy position we allowed ourselves a brief moment of self-congratulation. However, this would not last long as we were contacted by a second position further up the hill, and then to add insult to injury, another even further up. Safe to say, we took a while to get to our next stand. On we went through the day, tackling each stand as it presented itself and raking up the kilometres across the rugged Welsh Black Mountains. By early afternoon and having no time to have a proper meal other than what we could have on the hoof, we began to flag. With the end in sight we pressed on, covering our longest march of just over 8km to reach our final stand at a (literally) blistering pace. Having completed the Range Card taking, we continued with only 20 minutes to cover the last 2km. With time ticking away, we broke into a jog and, our bodies battered and broken, we finally crossed the finish line with 6 minutes to spare after 12 hours 24 minutes. We would be the only team to finish the course. As tough as this had been it was not over yet, as after the relief of a short minibus journey back to the legendary 'Dixies Corner' we were back at it. We deployed into a pitch-black woodblock, which would be our home for the night and onto the Orders process for the next day's Platoon Attacks. After a frantic 40 minutes of model-building and hastily scribbling orders, we began. We delivered our Orders in 35 long minutes, at which point I breathed a sigh of relief and was greeted with some surprising but very welcome news. The soldier who had been unknowingly roped into assessing the Orders described them as "better than most of the guys I work with"! We were delighted but with no time to dwell on it, it was off to bed for all of us.

Sunday, the last day. After what felt like a lie in (it was still 05:30hrs), we dragged ourselves out of bed and prepared ourselves for the last big push, the final Section Attack. A short 3km patrol later saw us patrolling slowly across an open field towards the likely enemy positions. We were contacted to our front by machine gun fire, we reacted. Pushing forward to take the position in a whirlwind of shouting, controlled aggression and gun fire, we had done it, Cambrian was over! But no, as always Brecon had one nasty surprise left in store as the Directing Staff shout "extract the casualty to the helicopter landing zone". This boiled down to a sickening run with a stretcher weighted with sandbags to the final position. Finally, almost 30 hours after starting, Cambrian was over. All that was left now was the proverbial 'tea and medals'.

We went into the competition with high hopes but a very realistic understanding of our odds of success. We were overwhelmed to find out that RGS' 2023 Cadet Cambrian Patrol team was awarded a Gold Medal, meaning we scored at least 75 % of points and no less than 65 % on any one stand, an incredible achievement in itself. We were over the moon! The surprises weren't quite over though as we also won Best International CCF and scored the highest overall score, something RGS has never done before.

It was an honour and privilege to command the CCP 23 team and it would be remiss of me not to pay tribute to my outstanding teammates, without whom we could not have achieved what we did. The 2023 team was: Cdt CSjt Matthew Yarwood, Cdt Sjt Charlie Booth, Cdt LCpl Amanvir Wassan, Cdt Chris Campbell, Cdt Austin McDade, Cdt Alfie Parker, Cdt Nick Sutton and Cdt Adam Wetherall.

I also wish to take this opportunity to thank the RGSHW CCF training team, without whom we would not have had the knowledge or skills to succeed. Particular thanks go to the OC, Captain Pettengell, Captain Rose, Lieutenant Geering and our SSI, SMI Barrett.

We now look forward to defending our title at Cadet Cambrian Patrol 2024.'

Artsfest RGSHW is a multi-discipline celebration and showcase of creativity @RGSHW and of its wider community. We are bringing together the creative subjects, and the diverse skills, talents and achievements of the RGSHW family, alongside local cultural organisations and arts providers. The Festival will include exhibitions, workshops, performances, showcases, stalls, events and happenings.

I wish you all a very happy bank holiday weekend and a restorative week to staff and students.

Philip Wayne

Headmaster