

THE FROGNAL

UCS NEWSLETTER — ISSUE MARCH 2020

Celebrating the events and achievements of the Spring Term at UCS Senior School.



UCS SPORT



UCS Pupils
Receive Record
Number Of
Oxbridge Offers

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1st XI Create
History Reaching
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UCS Scientists
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Welcome To The Spring Edition Of The Froggnal



It would be all too easy to allow current affairs to overshadow the many, varied activities and successes of UCS pupils throughout most of this Spring Term. It started in early January, which may seem a different world away now – but this end-of-term newsletter rightly focuses on what has been achieved by our 11-year-olds, our 18-year-olds, and all those in between.

For the former, how impressive to have specially trained Transitus pupils leading discussions in form time on mental health, voluntarily offering experience and wisdom to their younger peers? How much more effective this – peer education – than having much older-looking adults attempt to impart the facts? Furthermore, how impressive – and self-giving – that these Transitus students subsequently offered to arrange online help for Entry boys as they begin periods of remote learning or even self-isolation. “A bunch of us could set up a Google Meet session weekly to play Kahoot! with the Lower School. Or it may be that they have worries, or simply want an older mentor in the school, or even just a joke.”

As for the latter, our Sixth, they remain an inspirationally aspirational and positive group of young men and women with a remarkable can-do approach. A significant proportion of the cohort applied for places at Oxford or Cambridge, taking on all the pressures of meeting the early UCAS deadline, submitting extra written work for certain courses, sitting various aptitude tests and succumbing to searching interviews at more than one college so as to demonstrate their particular worth in a global contest that becomes more competitive year on year.

Each and every one of them will have gained immeasurably from the experience; their academic curiosity, research skills and ability to discuss their subjects at great depth will stand them in good stead, irrespective of where they go next year; and putting themselves forward for consideration and being interviewed will prove to be hugely helpful when they come to apply for their first job one day. Not only that, 28 of them received offers. This is an outstanding achievement and sets a new school record – a new high-tide mark for others to challenge in the future.

Welcome To The Spring Edition Of The Frogнал



For the Middle School, perhaps their production of Birdsong captures the talent that lies within. This was a show of such poise, purpose, portrayal and poignancy that the audience very soon forgot that the actors were young teenagers and, rather, were drawn in utterly to the visceral horrors of the First World War and some of its post-traumatic aftermath.

More broadly, the school embraced the return of football to our home ground at Farm Avenue, with the playing fields draining very effectively the greater-than-usual quantities of rainfall. Although we have had to be careful with the still-strengthening new grass, many fixtures were held there. As ever, trying to balance favourably the win-lose ratio while also encouraging mass participation remains important to us. I was just as delighted with victories against our local, friendly rivals Highgate in week 1 as with the block fixture in week 4 which involved 110 pupils representing UCS in 14 matches with 9 wins, 1 draw and 4 losses. This also incorporated 2 schools, 4 venues and 43 goals scored!

At the risk of being invidious, I do feel it important to also mention the work of the musicians this term. They managed to celebrate Beethoven in real style, stun audiences with their chamber music and charm us all with the music-making of various ensembles, whether after school in a formal setting or during the day via pop-up lunchtime concerts. The icing on the cake? Three leaving Sixth Form soloist concertos performed to an intimate yet socially-distanced audience of a few parents, friends and senior staff. An occasion anchored in my heart as we sail through uncharted waters.

Please read and celebrate this latest update on school life, and enjoy what our young people are able to achieve.

I wish you all the very best of health.

— Mark J. Beard, Headmaster

UCS Response To Covid-19



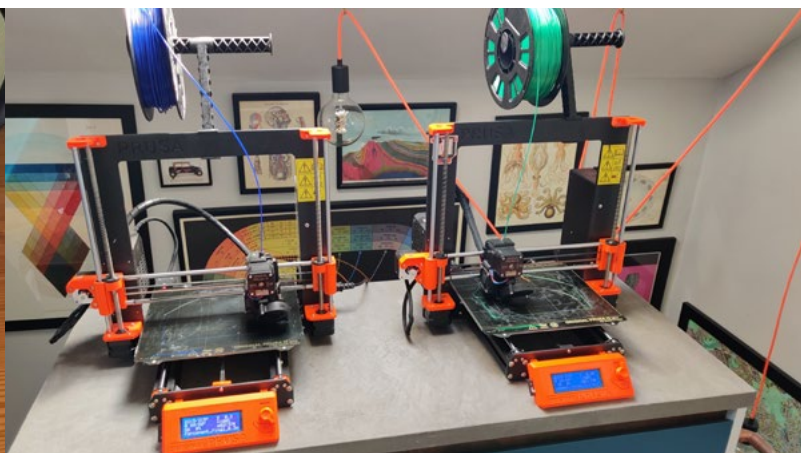
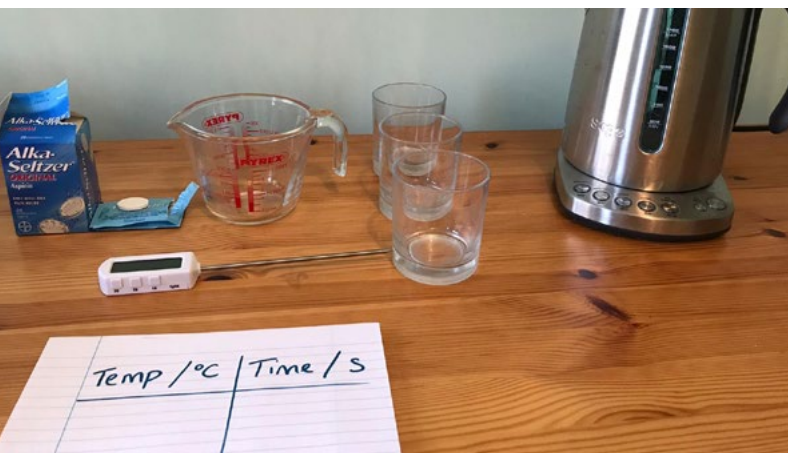
In February, the UCS community followed news of the Covid-19 outbreak in Wuhan with increasing concern. Reports suggested there was a lack of protective equipment available to prevent the virus infecting doctors through the eyes. To that end, staff at UCS arranged for 350 pairs of safety goggles to be transported to Wuhan's hospitals on 4th February. Mr Reynolds explained, "Every year, a small amount of Community Action fundraising money is held back to enable us to respond if a crisis occurs. The outbreak of Covid-19 in China demanded a swift response and we were pleased to dispatch the protective equipment for use by the doctors."

As the pandemic spread, UCS carefully followed guidance from the Department of Education. Sport fixtures were cancelled on Monday 16th March and, throughout that week, teachers prepared for the seemingly inevitable closure of the school by learning how to use a variety of online educational packages that would enable them to deliver their lessons remotely. Departments collaborated and shared their ideas regarding how to ensure their pupils could make the most of the final week of term, and perhaps beyond. The IT department at UCS ensured that every pupil would have access to the online lessons by organising the loan of

chromebooks to pupils who did not have access to a computer. Almost all school events were cancelled in that penultimate week of term but, following the guidance of the DfE carefully, the Spring Concert was staged in the Great Hall on Thursday 19th March with all performers and members of the audience seated at least 2m away from each other.

On Monday 23rd March, UCS Hampstead was only open to a very small number of pupils. UCS Virtual was born and at 8:45 am, pupils of all ages were registered online by their form teachers and over a hundred teachers logged onto Google Classroom to start the delivery of their lessons. Few would have anticipated such a smooth start to the online experience. Teachers reported a high level of engagement from their pupils and it was evident that the challenge of teaching their charges online was bringing teachers' creative streak to the fore. Dr Dell delivered a practical chemistry lesson using a demonstration of reaction rates in her kitchen and Ms Hess remotely guided her Shell pupils through the preparation of croque monsieur using a recipe written in French. Pastoral staff checked in with their tutees every day throughout the week. Some form groups used Google hangouts to maintain a sense of community, while others, like Lskh, played

UCS Response To Covid-19



Connect 4 against each other. Dr Quirke and Mr Hind led an online UCS chess competition, Mrs Isaac started several book groups with pupils in the Underwood's Deme and Mrs Anthony's allotment group shared photos of their experiences gardening at home. Mr Vliegen has spent much of the final week of term investigating how the 3D printers in the DT department can be used to make protective equipment for NHS workers and the first batch of these visors was ready to be delivered on Friday 27th March. The DT and Art departments donated their protective goggles to the Whittington Hospital and 50 litres of hand sanitiser was donated to the Royal Free Hospital.

We are grateful to the teachers and support staff who worked in school throughout the final week of term enabling the children of key workers to be supervised. All public examinations have been cancelled but, at the time of writing, it is still unclear

how grades will be awarded. Mr English has worked tirelessly on this matter. He has liaised with Ofqual and other educational organisations to ensure our pupils conclude their courses in the most satisfactory manner possible under these testing circumstances and are ready next term should more evidence be required by the exam boards.

The end to the spring term was certainly unconventional at every school across the UK and whilst we do not know when the restrictions will be lifted, it is clear that the whole UCS community has pulled together. Lessons have been taught, pupils have been responsible and resilient in their learning and we now look forward to the possibility of the summer term at UCS Virtual.

— Contributions by E. Roberts

A Spotlight On... Drama And Dance At UCS



Rebecca Baxter has been the Director of Drama at UCS since 2014. As the dust settled on last term's sell-out run of *Sweeney Todd*, we spoke to Ms Baxter as she reflected on her time leading the Drama department.

Why is Drama such an important part of life at UCS?

I think its success lies in the community it creates. Each production exists as its own collective, and one in which students are trying to help each other out, trying to make each other look good on stage. So, really strong friendships and bonds are created in that sort of environment – and I suppose that's where its importance lies, in human connection.

How has Drama developed at UCS over the last six years?

It's a far bigger subject now, academically. In September we'll have nearly double the number of A Level students we had in 2014 so there's big change there. But our co-curricular provision has probably developed the most over the past six years. We now have a production for each section of the school, and take two shows up to Edinburgh every year.

The wonderful arrival of Dance has also been an exciting development.

How do you choose which plays are going to be performed?

The shows are generally chosen by whichever member of staff is directing, with a little conversation and discussion! There are a lot of considerations that go into choosing the plays; we want them to be ambitious, but also entertaining; we want them to include a lot of pupils, but ensure that everyone has a significant involvement; we want them to be appropriate, but also a stretch! Once you consider all those factors, the list of possible shows gets very short!

UCS was shortlisted in the Performing Arts category at the Independent Schools of the Year Awards in 2018 and 2019. What are the secrets behind these successes?

We have very talented pupils, who work hard, who care deeply about the success of their shows! Being shortlisted is testament to the pride our casts have

A Spotlight On... Drama And Dance At UCS



in their productions and the first-class provision for Music at UCS.

What was the rationale behind introducing Dance into the curriculum? Has it been a success?

Dance is a wonderful form of expression and creativity – and in a totally different way to Drama. Jacques Lecoq once said, “The body knows things about which the mind is ignorant” – I’ve always loved that quote, and in Dance we see this all the time. The blend of physical endurance, technique, expression, and instinct is quite unique within the curriculum, so we thought it would be an enriching addition.

What is the best thing about the Edinburgh shows?

I’ve always loved the Edinburgh project, largely because it is so different to everything else we stage across the year. The shows are always original, devised and written for that year’s festival, so they tend to reflect that particular cast, and be very personal to them. We’ve covered some interesting topics over the past few years – mental health,

gender equality, age, privacy – so I’m always proud of their Edinburgh shows, and the dedication of the students.

Twelve months ago, UCS’s production of *Fine, Thanks* transferred to the West End for a performance at the Savoy Theatre. How did this opportunity arise?

We originally performed *Fine, Thanks* at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe in 2017. One of the original cast members had a family connection to the Lord Mayor, and she heard about the show. Her tenure as Lord Mayor was focused on bringing awareness to mental health, and raising money for two particular mental health charities – which was serendipitous. That’s how the project was born!

What is the best thing about working at UCS?

The warmth and wit of the pupils, undoubtedly. And the excellence of the staff, and their commitment to education. It’s a wonderful place to work.

Peer Education Project Takes Off At UCS



Earlier this year, UCS trialled a Peer Education Project set up in association with the Mental Health Foundation. The scheme involved small groups of Transitus students delivering a series of lessons on mental health issues to Entry pupils. The feedback has been so positive that the school is considering how it might establish an equivalent scheme for older pupils.

Leo Black (Transitus) explained how the competition to lead the Peer Education Project was fierce: “We applied to take part during February 2019 and I was fortunate enough to be selected. We were given a number of training sessions after we completed our GCSE exams and after a little more coaching in September, we started teaching our lessons in November.” The lessons were carried out under the supervision of subject teachers but the Transitus pupils were given some licence to tailor the supplied resources to make them accessible to their classes. Raphael Milne was impressed by the impact of the sessions. He said: “The pupils really

connected with what we talked about. The final session included discussing how to make a mental health first aid kit – I hope they will remember the things we talked about for the rest of their lives.”

The scheme was launched by Andrew Wilkes, Deputy Head (Pastoral), and Stewart FitzGerald, the Head of Middle School. Mr Wilkes said: “We attended a training day with the Mental Health Foundation and were struck by the potential impact of the project. The experience of this trial has strengthened our belief that we made the right decision. We were overwhelmed by the dedication and sensitivity of the Transitus students who have given up so much of their time and we are very proud of what they have achieved already.”

The pastoral staff are now investigating how this project can be used to support pupils in other year groups.

— Contributions by E. Roberts

Transitus Enrichment Broadens Educational Horizons



Every Friday afternoon since the beginning of the Easter term, all Transitus pupils have partaken of Academic Enrichment sessions to enhance their learning in two subjects of their choice. These sessions have enabled students to improve their understanding of subjects that they currently study, want to pick up after Sixth Form, or are curious about. Some of the sessions have been delivered as seminars so we really have seen what studying these subjects would be like at university. These sessions have also been particularly useful as they have allowed pupils to see what further research they need to do in these subjects before applying for university courses.

Erin Alpert (Transitus) commented: “I thought the Psychology sessions were really interesting. They were particularly eye-opening and helped me make a decision on what to pursue at university, as I was previously unsure about this.” I personally found both the English and History sessions particularly invigorating and liked the fact that they challenged

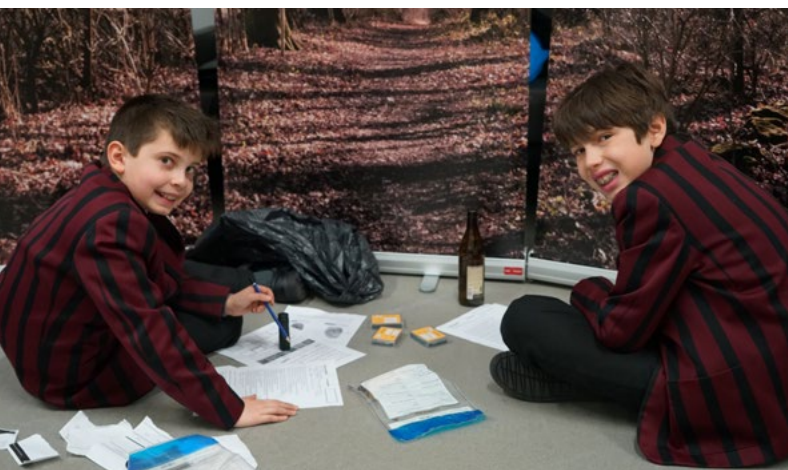
me academically. In particular, my History sessions forced me to think in a different way and challenged my perception of events that I believed were clear-cut, like the Cold War. We discussed the inherent need to use positive stereotypes as opposed to negative stereotypes to simplify historical topics, but how as a result situations have become uncomplicated and therefore, not wholly accurate.

Raf Milne, a budding medic, claimed that Medicine Enrichment “enabled me to understand important issues facing the UK’s medical system and the fundamental basics of how it is run, which will be very helpful in my interview.” He added: “They have also helped point me in the right direction for a niche area to research within Medicine.”

Overall, these sessions were very helpful and interesting for all of us. Thank you.

— Contributions by Georgia Krok (Transitus)

Unthinkably Broad Enrichment Weeks Continue To Dazzle!



It has been another exciting and rewarding term of Academic Enrichment at UCS.

As part of Politics, Philosophy, Economics and History Enrichment Week, Dr Dawson kick-started the Spring Term Enrichment Programme with a truly thought-provoking Morris Lecture titled ‘Thinking the Unthinkable: the Unthinkability of Unthinkability’. This was followed by an engaging talk on ‘Peace in The Middle East’ by visiting guest speaker Tim Peak. The Economics Department created the hugely enjoyable ‘Economics Escape Room’, challenging pupils and staff to solve a series of Economics-related problems in a bid to escape from the AKO Centre classroom.

An extensive range of exciting and inspiring activities were also on offer for Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Maths, Psychology and PE Enrichment Week. Mrs Hawes delivered a fascinating Morris Lecture titled ‘Psychology: The good, the bad, and the ugly’, which considered the varied impacts of Psychological studies. The PE department ensured that the brain was not the only muscle being

exercised as they set up the ‘Watt-Bike Challenge’ in the Great Hall. Pupils and staff were given the challenge of producing the maximum number of watts in six seconds. Entry pupils were treated to a Forensic Science workshop and a spectacular guest lecture about the chemistry of fire from Dr Andrew Szydlo.

Looking forward to the Summer Term, Mr Franks will be launching the Middle School Enrichment Programme. Boys in the Remove will be given the opportunity to explore a range of exciting courses that aim to extend the pupils’ knowledge and learning habits, offer an insight into A level choices, and offer the opportunity to develop academic research skills. This year’s programme will cover topics from ‘Ways of Seeing and the Male Gaze’ to ‘Robot Racers’. The programme for the summer term may change according to the effects of the Corona virus isolation.

— Contributions by L. Hughes

Infinite Opportunities In Maths



The range of opportunities for pupils to widen and expand their knowledge and understanding of various aspects of Mathematics this term has been staggering. Talks, competitions and challenges – there has been a tremendous amount going on! Some of the highlights are below:

Hans Woyda Maths Competition

This London-based competition has been running for over 40 years. This year's team of Ryan Voecks, Alex Burns, Geno Racklin Asher and Michael Humphreys worked well together and it was great to see the older team members mentoring the younger ones. The team battled it out against various schools in rounds involving mental arithmetic, algebra and calculus as well as in the ever-dramatic race round. UCS won two out of the three rounds in the group stage, which put them into the Plate competition. The team, who actually won the Plate event last year, put in a convincing performance against City of London School for Girls, before being beaten in the semi-final.

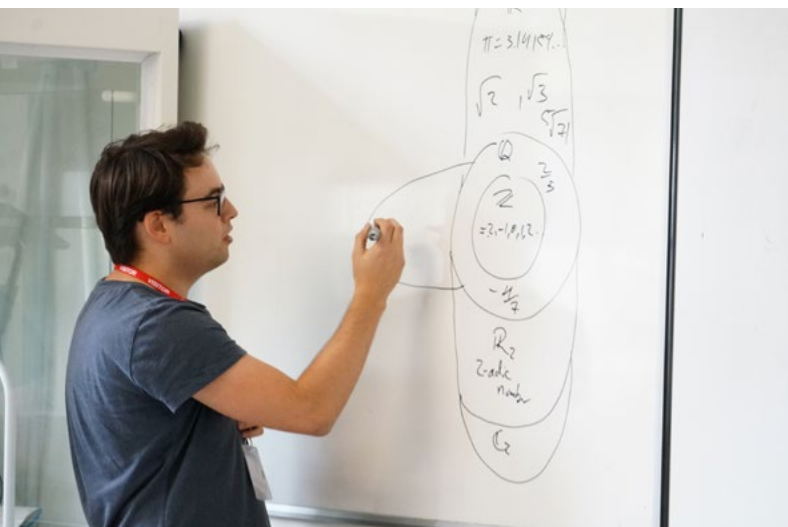
Team Challenges

Last term, Gil Elstein, Tom Richards, Alex Burns and Aryan Kaushal took part in the regional final of the Senior Team Maths Challenge. After a gruelling day of tough Mathematical problems, UCS confidently secured a respectable mid-table spot. In March, Arjun Kumar, George Cooper and Griff Rendell participated in the regional final of the Team Maths Challenge. The pupils developed their problem-solving and team-working skills and, importantly, all had fun at the same time! The UCS team was one member short, but still performed impressively and clinched a commendable fourth place.

Caribou Contest

This year has seen the pilot of the Caribou Mathematics competition at UCS. A group of eight pioneering Lower Remove pupils took part in the competition, which takes place over six rounds throughout the year. Special mentions go to Jack Leader and Lucas Verpoest, who were both placed in the top 10% of entrants in different rounds, and Asher Hill, who was not only placed in the top 10% in every round to date, but whose round-three score placed him in the top 3% of participants internationally.

Infinite Opportunities In Maths



Geno's Integration Bee

UCS had its first ever 'Integration Bee' competition founded and organised by Geno Racklin Asher. Talented Further Mathematicians battled it out in knockout rounds of quick-fire Maths. The competition was great fun for all involved and it was fantastic to see so many people taking part.

Lower School Team Challenges

Entry and Shell pupils took part in a Team Maths Challenge where they needed to work together to solve some very tricky problems. The winning team from each form went on to compete in the finals where teams had to answer ten particularly challenging problems. The Entry and Shell finals were both close competitions and the winners will be announced in due course.

Maths Enrichment Lectures

Mathematics Enrichment Week welcomed two guest speakers: UCL Research Fellow Dr Andrew McLeod delivered a lecture concerning Differential Geometry where pupils were introduced to non-flat geometries and the 'parallel postulate' and Mr Julian Hind delivered his lecture on the introduction to calculus.

— Contributions by D. Armitage and J. Verran

Economists Enjoy Room Escape And Scavenger Hunt



As part of their Enrichment Week, the Economics department showcased two extraordinary events: the Economics-themed escape room and the school-wide Economics scavenger hunt. Both activities were devised to enrich participants' knowledge of the subject in a fun and interesting manner and were open to all students from Shell to Sixth Form.

Pupils who took part in the scavenger hunt were placed into teams of three and each was given a task. In advance, QR codes had been placed inconspicuously around the site. Each QR code had a question that needed answering as well as a cryptic clue to divulge the location of the next code. The questions focused on topical Economics issues and pupils entered their answers into a Google Form which instantly told them if they had got it right or wrong.

The escape room challenge was a little different! Pupils were thrown into a mission to save the world from power-hungry politicians and they had to learn Economics to solve the puzzles to finally escape. Participants had to learn about various economists, interpret basic supply-and-demand graphs, calculate responsiveness of demand-on-price changes (elasticities), and even learn some cross-curricular Geography map-reading skills. Participants had to use phones for picture messages, dictaphones for audio messages, and even had to read invisible messages through UV torches. It was a great experiment, and the world was repeatedly saved thanks to the quick wit, communication and teamwork shown by the participants.

It was pleasing to hear from the feedback that both events were hugely enjoyed by the students and the department was also pleased that we also shared these events with our partnership schools.

— Contributions by P. Fernando

Careers Education For All



Throughout the Spring Term, various year groups have been undertaking careers-related events and the pupils involved have gained an appreciation of what their education may lead to in terms of future employment.

Shell Learning and Working Values Afternoon

Shell pupils spent an afternoon in March working with boys from other forms. They completed team-building tasks and reflected on how the skills they were developing related to the UCS Learning Values and how they could be extended to the classroom and their lives beyond.

Lower Remove's Go To Work Day

Every pupil in the Lower Remove took part in the annual Go To Work Day. The range of working environments was vast: some boys were placed at the Junior Branch and one actually had a placement in Poland. Form teachers enjoyed hearing about pupils' experiences in subsequent Careers lessons where they have also been undertaking research into specific careers and learning about degree apprenticeship opportunities.

Careers, Degree Apprenticeship and Gap Year Fair

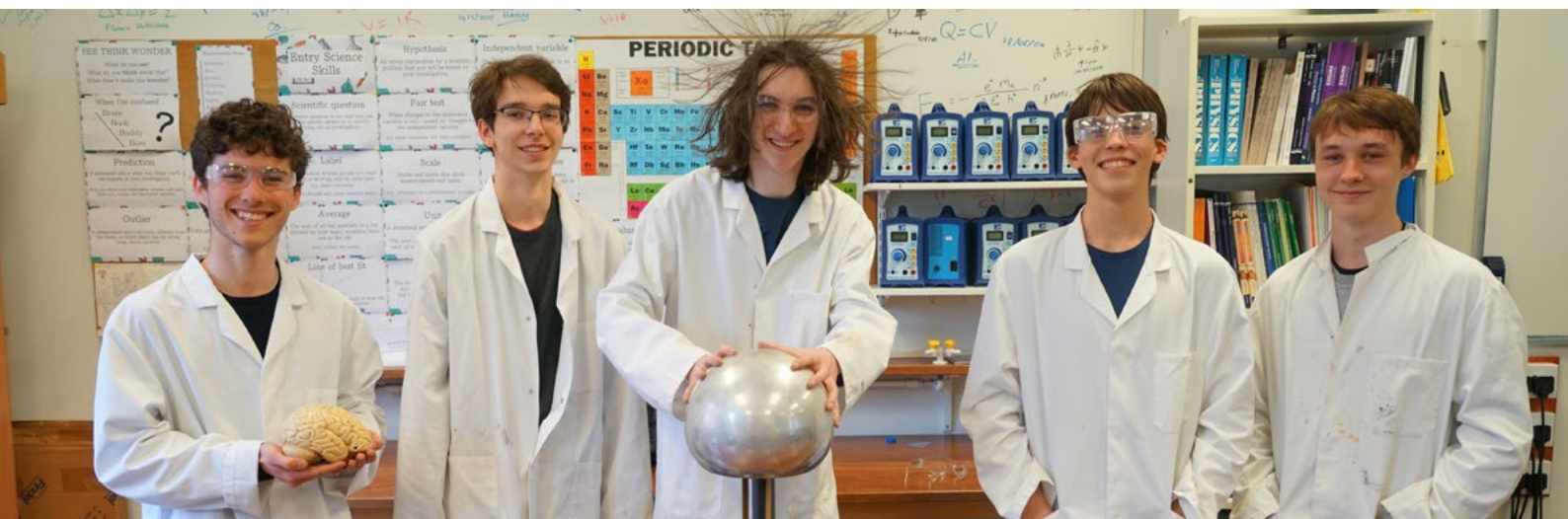
In February, UCS welcomed visiting organisations for the third annual Careers Fair held in the Great Hall. This year, visitors included HSBC, British Airways, Savills, TFL and many more. Pupils in the Sixth Form, Transitus and Upper Remove were interested in hearing about the vast opportunities available to them in the form of degree apprenticeships, summer work experience and gap year opportunities.

Careers Lunches

The AKO Centre has been busy with Careers Lunches throughout the year. Since September we have welcomed speakers from Law, Finance, Real Estate, Marketing and Engineering. Careers Lunches are a great introduction to an industry and are perhaps a chance for pupils to hear more about a career they are already interested in.

— Contributions by D. Armitage

UCS Scientists Triumph In Challenging Olympiads



Nine pupils sat the first round of the Physics Olympiad. We were delighted that three achieved gold medals meaning they scored in the top 100 students in the country. Nik Maslov was placed in the top 13 pupils who sat the British Physics Olympiad and Sasha Boone was placed in the top 13 of pupils who sat the British Astronomy and Astrophysics Olympiad. The boys have sat over six hours of papers, with questions on topics ranging from Supermassive Black Holes to Quantum Mechanical Models for Conduction Electrons. They will now attend training camps at Oxford University and stand a good chance of representing the UK at the prestigious International Olympiads which were due to be held in Lithuania and Italy over the summer.

Over 50 pupils sat the Chemistry Olympiad. The demanding exam asked pupils to consider the chemistry behind using hydrogen as a fuel and the colourful compounds in leaves, blood and skin. Nic Sanschagrín, Sasha Boone and Noah Grodzinski received gold medals. Geno Racklin

Asher also claimed a gold medal and his mark of 70% was the highest mark by a UCS pupil in over six years.

Biology students enjoyed great success in February's British Olympiad. Noah Grodzinski, Gautum Jain, Daniel Knorr and Nic Sanschagrín all achieved gold medals with scores in the top 6% nationally. Noah's impressive result of 85% placed him among the 16 highest-scoring students in the UK. He has therefore been invited to complete further practical work and assessments at the University of Warwick in April and will compete to represent the UK at the International Biology Olympiad 2020 which is due to be held in Nagasaki, Japan in July.

The forthcoming events mentioned here are all subject to change depending on the effects of the coronavirus pandemic.

— Contributions by E. Roberts, R. Lam, J. Powell and S. Hoyle

Lower Remove Latinists Travel To Bath



On Tuesday 4 February, around 70 Lower Remove latinists travelled to the Roman town of Aquae Sulis (Bath).

Once the pleasant journey had passed, we were organised into groups and we then started our first activity. I was in Mr McAra's group and we had the privilege of engaging in a private teaching session where we expanded our knowledge of the nature of Roman rule in Britain. We discussed various concepts adapted by the Roman Empire. These included town planning, architecture, trade, clothing and general life, and were all supported by different ancient artefacts which we were shown. We also learnt about the true purpose of the baths, relating to necessities such as religious practices, congregation, exercise and cleanliness. It was interesting to know that the name 'Aquae Sulis' was Latin for 'The waters of Sulis': the Romans identified their goddess of wisdom, Minerva, with the Celtic goddess of healing and sacred waters,

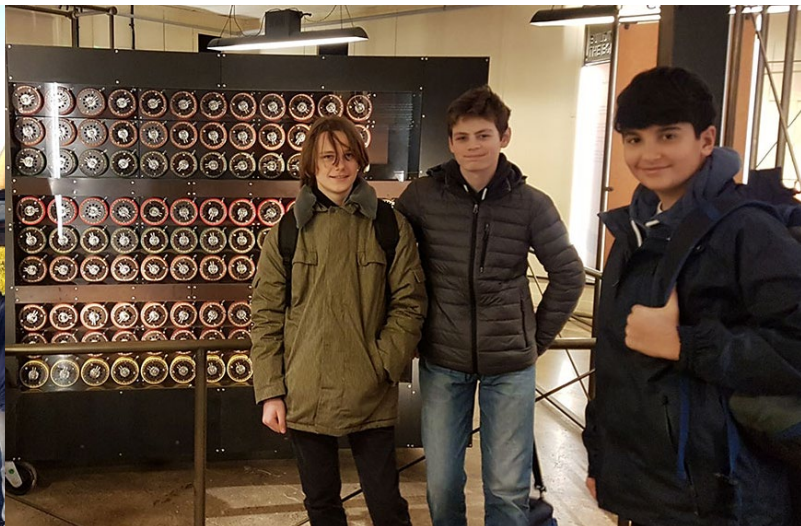
Sulis. The similarities between these two figures helped the Celts adapt to Roman culture.

After a quick lunch break, we set off to the baths themselves with great eagerness. Here, we really got a taste of Roman architectural methods, along with the true scale and significance of the site itself. Embracing the excellently-preserved environment was thought-provoking in terms of how people operated there, along with appreciating the true workmanship invested in creating such a stunning structure. Within the museum was a display of various artefacts, with my favourite one being the Roman Gorgon (an inherently Greek figure).

Overall, it was great fun for all. We learnt so much about Roman life and I now appreciate the complexities of the Roman Empire much more than I ever had done before.

— Contributions by Kristian Partridge (Lower Remove)

Tour Of Bletchley Park Captivates Computer Scientists



In March, all Remove Computer Science pupils were lucky enough to be taken to Bletchley Park. This facility was used to crack both the Enigma and Lorenz ciphers during the Second World War and the Colossus and Bombe were also developed there. These machines helped to quickly decode the two aforementioned ciphers, and the Colossus is often referred to as the world's first electronic computer.

After arriving at the destination, we participated in a workshop where we learned more about the Enigma and Lorenz ciphers. Throughout the war, the German forces used Enigma machines (one of which we got to see) to send secret messages to other stations. These were sent by radio waves so anyone including the Allies could intercept them, though initially they had no way of decrypting them. In the course of the workshop, the speaker frequently used the phrase '12 o'clock Berlin time' whenever he wanted us to stop working. We found out this was because every day at '12 o'clock Berlin

time' the key would change, and so working on the current cipher any longer would just be a waste of precious time. We were also told of the far less common Lorenz cipher, which was only used by Hitler and his most important commanders.

During the day we did numerous other activities including visiting the Bletchley Park Mansion, which contained the office of Alan Turing (who is habitually mentioned as the father of theoretical computer science); we had a tour of the area; and we finally watched a short film about how Bletchley Park played a massive role in the successes of the Allies – its staff truly were unknown heroes for a long time.

The day was extremely enjoyable and everyone would like to thank Mr Spence-Hill, Mr Davis and Mr Hind for organising such a brilliant trip.

— Contributions by Aidan Pick (Remove)

Model United Nations Flourishes



Already 2020 has been a busy year for everyone involved in the UCS Model United Nations. In January, we sent our first ever delegation to St Paul's MUN. We represented Poland, and engaged in much lively debate. We left the conference with two awards. Noah Grodzinski achieved the most accurate delegate award in the Security Council whilst Felix Dresden received best delegate award for the Legal Committee. We celebrated by establishing close diplomatic ties with the St Paul's chairs and other members of the MUN community.

We then set our sights on our most significant conference, HabsMUN. We were immensely lucky to be given the delegations of China, Israel and Ukraine and these were led by Felix Dresden, Daniel Kohn and Alex Burns, respectively. These countries are all controversial players in contemporary affairs. Everyone worked with commitment to produce resolutions and speeches to be delivered over the three days. Another first for the school was the appointment of a UCS student to be chair. Joel Harris was selected to chair the Special Committee. Unfortunately, coronavirus

had other plans, and the conference was cancelled prematurely. However, every cloud has a silver lining and we look forward to using these resolutions at other conferences.

Another highlight of the term has been the increase in attendance at our regular meetings. It has been great to welcome new members and they are all showing great potential. We look forward to watching them lead the club in the future.

Finally, we are immensely grateful to Miss Desmond for all she has done, helping to arrange the club, the conferences, and sacrificing her weekends to chaperone our delegations.

— Contributions by Joel Harris and Felix Dresden (Sixth)

Success For UCS Debating Teams



For Senior Debating it has been a busy term of competitions and some impressive successes. The expanded and reinvigorated society, under the stewardship of Miss Desmond, now has a professional debating coach who gives us expert advice and we have all thoroughly appreciated this. Bi-weekly visits from the coach have allowed us to continue to improve and achieve success at various competitions along the way. Topics including Economics, Philosophy and Politics have all been argued masterfully, sometimes possibly too passionately! In addition, we now have a UCS Debating Twitter page so that students, parents and members of the community can keep up to date with the latest club news.

We started the year with two Novice teams (Rhianna Spencer-Moore, Theo Aveline, Cyrus Singer and Tom Taborn) breaking into the final at the UCL Schools competition, and another two teams (Alex Rich, Lucas Radhakishun, Tom Taborn and Charlie Benjamin) made it to the final at the Debate Mate Schools competition.

Then a superb ensemble of Adam Fobel, Alex Rich and Tom Taborn progressed to the second round of the ESU national competition, while the pair of Lucas Radhakishun and Adam Fobel reached the final of the International Oxford Schools' Debating Competition, at the Oxford Union in early March.

Thus far 2020 has been a great year of debating and we look forward to further coaching, competitions and heated discussion in the future.

— Contributions by Adam Fobel (*Transitus*)

Sixth Form Contribute 2,000 Hours Of Voluntary Work On Friday Afternoons This Term



Throughout the Spring Term, pupils in the Sixth Form spent their Friday afternoons carrying out weekly voluntary work at a number of charitable organisations throughout London. The variety of work that our pupils undertook was impressive and the organisations were unfailingly delighted by the proactive and personable approach our students took to whatever task they were assigned. Many pupils acted as classroom assistants at primary and secondary schools, some taught Latin and French for beginners, whereas others worked in charity shops, helped with administrative tasks at Lauderdale House, carried out conservation work on Hampstead Heath, and one even helped visitors use the telescopes at the observatory in Highgate. The total time spent volunteering by this year group during these afternoons amounts to approximately 2,000 hours and we wish to congratulate the 150 pupils who worked with so much commitment.

“I worked at Westminster Academy and mentored a pupil who struggled with confidence issues. We quickly built quite a strong rapport and I enjoyed helping her with her Maths. It was great to see her make real progress during this period.”

Emilia Taddonio (Sixth)

— Contributions by E. Roberts, L. McGill and C. Rancon

Discipuli Linguam Latinam In Vicino Ludo Renovant



Nine UCS pupils in the Sixth Form have been volunteering since January at New End School, teaching the Minimus Latin scheme to a class of Year 5 pupils. The team's experience with Latin is varied: some are A Level students, some have a GCSE, some haven't studied Latin since the Lower Remove, and one excellent volunteer was taught through the Minimus scheme herself when she was in primary school. The pupils have thrown themselves into the scheme with enthusiasm and dedication, with each quickly forming relationships with their group of Year 5 children. The textbook follows a mouse called Minimus who lives with a Roman family in Vindolanda, and takes in historical, mythological and linguistic aspects of Roman civilisation.

The UCS team have seen great progress from their tutees in recognising English derivations, reading Latin sentences and learning vocabulary. Some eager pupils have even been asking for homework! Learning Latin has been proven to improve literacy and understanding of English grammar, as well as complementing the study of other Modern

Languages, and the pupils at New End have delighted in the connections they have made with other languages. The culmination of this term's work has been the development of a short play about the Daedalus and Icarus myth, written in Latin, to be staged and performed by some talented New End pupils, with homemade costumes and props. We would love to be able to continue this fun and rewarding initiative with next year's Transitus and Sixth.

“The Latin lessons have been fabulous and our pupils are enamoured with them! Thank you so much to Ms Lewis and the UCS pupils who are clearly taking it very seriously. Thank you.”

Heidi Wilmot (Year 5 teacher at New End)

— Contributions by E. Roberts, L. McGill and C. Rancon

Maths Breakfast Clubs In Primary Schools



On Friday mornings a group of 22 Upper Remove pupils have been working with Year 6 pupils in local primary schools. These weekly sessions started back in April 2019 and involved us delivering one-on-one Maths tutoring. We supported pupils who seemed to lack confidence in Maths and have helped them to prepare for their end of year exams. I think the pupils learnt some Maths from us but we learnt far more! We developed our communication and leadership skills. The sessions gave us a different outlook on what skills are required to teach, which also helped up to sympathise with teachers at UCS!

Initially, we were confronted by the challenge of adapting our understanding of a Maths question to form an explanation which could be easily interpreted by a ten-year-old. For us this was very helpful, as overcoming challenges like these will eventually help in later life when we face similar

situations. The Year 6 pupils benefitted from the experience and it was rewarding to see their confidence grow. We all agreed that we saw an improvement in their performance and that their confidence and determination to succeed are now much greater than they were 12 months ago. We feel that the children we have worked with are now much more likely to attempt a question without asking for help.

Although the placement required patience and determination from us (not to mention a reliable alarm clock as our sessions started at 8am in the primary schools themselves), seeing the pupils' progress made the experience worthwhile. It was also very enjoyable and we thank New End, Holy Trinity, Kentish Town Primary, Kilburn Grange and Hampstead Parochial School for hosting us!

— Contributions by Luca Joseph (Upper Remove)

Birdsong Grips The Lund Audience



In November 2018, the entire school stood outside in the rain for the First World War Centenary Remembrance Service. Pupils aged 4 to 18 stood in sombre silence as the names of former pupils – whose lives were lost to the Great War – were read out. These names are also carved into stone on the memorial that rests at the back of the site. It is a feature of the school that is often forgotten; at the start of the year, new pupils are shown this slab of stone on their first tour of the school; at lunchtime, Entry and Shell boys run past it, chasing a football; in summer, Sixth Formers sit on the benches beside it, revising for exams in the sun. But on Remembrance Day, the memorial is viewed with newfound attention. It is the backdrop to an audience of hundreds of young people, the living, all listening to the numberless names of other young people, the lost. It is hard not to imagine the faces of these young men. Former pupils. Boys. Entire classes of pupils lost to a conflict that still defies contemporary comprehension. We spent a lot of time in rehearsals reflecting on the scale of

loss from the conflict. Theatre-making relies on empathy and, for this production, pupils dutifully approached the content of this play with empathy and respect.

However, *Birdsong* is not just a play about war – it is also a memory play: the protagonist is haunted by a love affair from his past, the soldiers try to remember life before the war and, throughout the story, past, present and imagination fuse together. But if this play is about memory, it must also be about the act of remembrance. In acknowledgement of this, we included the names of UCS pupils lost to the First World War in the programme. It seemed fitting that their names should sit adjacent to the names of the cast.

— Contributions by C. Abbott

Deme Dance Competition 2020



There was much excitement in the air after the announcement in assembly about this year's Deme Dance 2020. It also came to light that some of our pupils had been discussing ideas since last summer! Each Deme was once again tasked with producing an original music video and creating a live performance of an existing music video. I was very impressed with the leadership of our Deme Dance Captains and the overall enthusiasm, commitment and team work demonstrated by all those involved. The penultimate week of term saw each Deme rehearsing diligently in every available rehearsal space. The selections for the live performances included:

Baxters – *Dschinghis Khan*

Black Hawkins – *Vogue*

Evans – *Weapon of Choice*

Flocks – *Marilyn Monroe*

Olders – *Single Ladies*

Underwoods – *Uptown Funk*

It was a real privilege to see our pupils find joy and develop confidence in the challenge and we hope to be able to showcase their hard work in the near future. What we can share now, are the original 2020 music videos created by each Deme. One Deme even managed to include a guest appearance by our very own Headmaster! Pupils at UCS can access the videos through Planet eStream and a highlights film will be available on YouTube. Finally, I would like to thank all the pupils and Deme Wardens involved for the time and effort spent in preparing for this competition. You certainly exemplify what the four learning values look like outside of the classroom.

— *Contributions by R. Tran*

Spring Concert



The Spring Concert took place as usual, albeit in a reduced format, showcasing Chamber Orchestra, Symphony Orchestra and three Sixth concerto soloists.

First up was Daniel Kohn, who made a characteristically bold choice to perform contemporary composer Stephen Frost's *Oboe Concerto of 1989*. Frost draws musically on figures as diverse as Vaughan Williams, Black Sabbath and Rick Wakeman. The rhythmic complexity of the work was tackled with aplomb and finesse by Chamber Orchestra and Mr Gibson, and Daniel delivered the virtuoso solo part with sparkling confidence and characterful projection.

Next came Monty Charles (cello) in Dvořák's *Rondo in B Minor*, a typically lyrical, warm work by this most generous of Romantic composers. Monty's performance captured every nuance of the score and he drew an unending stream of golden *cantabile* tone from the instrument, accompanied

with great sensitivity by Symphony Orchestra under Mr Walton's direction.

The concert closed with a powerful performance of the first movement of Beethoven's *Piano Concerto No. 3 in C Minor*. Nicolas Sanschagrín's rendition of the solo part was simply magisterial, demonstrating a keen musical intellect and an exceptionally mature grasp of the Classical/Romantic style that this work traverses. Mr Dawe and Symphony Orchestra provided an accompaniment that both underlined the brooding, fateful nature of the music and achieved a transparency that enabled Nicolas to project his performance with clarity.

This was a concert for exceptional times and a huge vote of thanks goes to the pupil and staff musicians who took part, allowing our Sixth soloists to showcase their hard work and exceptional musicianship.

— Contributions by C. Dawe

Talented Violist Impresses At Royal Festival Hall



Jaren Ziegler, a violist in the Lower Remove, is currently enjoying great success in music competitions across the UK. On 3 March, he performed the first movement of Schumann's *Violin Sonata* (arranged for the viola) at the Royal Festival Hall as part of the Rotary Club's Youth Makes Music Concert. "It was fantastic to play in such a well-known venue," commented Jaren. "I auditioned for the concert via video submission and it was amazing to be introduced by Bill Turnbull from Classic FM."

Jaren's successes are not limited to London competitions. In February, he was highly commended for his performance in Bromsgrove's Young Musicians' Platform and he has already been selected for the semi-finals of the Gregynog Young Musician Competition, which was won in 2015 by Sheku Kanneh-Mason. Jaren has also been invited to play in a masterclass for Rivka Golani as part of the Ernest Bloch Anniversary Festival and will be hosting his own solo recital at All Saints Church on 21 June 2020.

In addition to his solo playing, Jaren has performed this year with the Apollo Philharmonic Orchestra, run by musicians from the Yehudi Menuhin School and the London Young Soloists Chamber Orchestra.

Jaren is part of a number of UCS's ensembles and the Sharp String Quartet, which features Jaren on viola, is due to appear in the finals of the South-East Schools' Chamber Music Competition after a sublime rendition of the sixth and seventh movements of Beethoven's *String Quartet No. 14*. Jaren has enjoyed the benefits of a music scholarship to UCS since he joined the school in 2017 and practises for two and a half hours every day. We wish Jaren luck with his forthcoming performances at the North London Music Festival and the Royal Academy Senior Viola Prize.

— Contributions by E. Roberts

1st XI Create History Reaching Middlesex Cup Final



In March, UCS 1st XI reached the Under-18 Middlesex Boys' Brigg Cup Final for the first time in their history. The competition began back in September with a Champions League-style first round. Topping the group with maximum points after impressive wins over Hendon School and St James' Catholic School, the boys marched into the quarter-finals for their toughest test against a strong Cardinal Wiseman side. Managing the adverse weather conditions well, UCS began brightly and took an early lead with Eliyar Johnson Parsadoust finishing well from close range. Jago Morris doubled the advantage after a solo run and rounded the keeper to slot into an empty net. Seemingly in control of the game, lapses of concentration allowed Cardinal Wiseman a route back from two goals down and, with 20 minutes to go, they took the lead. Yves-Jez Zeigherman levelled the game at 3-3 with a sumptuous free-kick, but with the match heading for penalty kicks, Louis Blair raced clear of the offside trap and finished with aplomb to secure UCS their place in the semi-finals.

Group stage opponents Hendon School stood in the way and the boys wanted to avoid a repeat of the narrow 5-4 group win. UCS dominated proceedings from the start. Guy Lane, Nate Case and Martin Burns controlled possession in midfield. The opposition could not contain Joe Sher and Jojo Lewis in the wide areas and the constant threat of Eliyar Johnson Parsadoust in attack. The boys' resilience, tactical discipline and creative attacking play produced endless goalscoring opportunities that saw George Maurice, Guy Lane, Ryan Bal and Jago Morris get on the scoresheet in what was a near-perfect performance.

In the final they will meet Isleworth and Syon School at Middlesex FA Rectory Park.

— Contributions by M. Noto

UCS Football Makes An Impressive Return To Farm Avenue



With the pitches and Kantor Centre at Farm Avenue complete, anticipation for the football season amongst the pupil and staff body was sky high.

Our senior sides have performed excellently and have enjoyed good wins over the likes of Highgate, Latymer Upper and Dulwich College. I was particularly pleased with the commitment and attitude shown by the boys throughout the term. Our performances have been consistent and we have beaten some very good school sides. We have had lots of movement through the teams and have shown excellent strength-in-depth. The highlight of the 1st XI season was reaching the Middlesex Cup Final (still to be played). The 3-2 win at Dulwich College was also magnificent – Carlo Revel-Chion was outstanding in goal and Eliyar Johnson Parsadoust scored the goal of the season.

The highlights of the Under-15A football season were two great 3-0 wins against City of London School and Dulwich College. The team grew as the season went on and played attacking, free-flowing football. The defensive pairing of Sam Harding and Toby Crawcour in front of the ever-present Shunta Goto made sure things were tight at the back. The midfield duo of Charlie Gordon and Lenny Knight dictated play and supplied the clinical Joe Ohnona in attack. The Under-13A team's highlight came in the shape of a hard-fought draw in the local derby against Highgate. Aarish Haq helped himself to a couple of goals but Leo Crenna was a standout performer throughout the season. The Under-12A team were consistently impressive but the highlight was a 5-4 victory at St Paul's. The win was secured thanks to a thunderbolt strike from Ollie Kramer.

Well done to all the boys and girls who have represented UCS throughout the season.

— Contributions by M. Noto

Dazzling Rugby Played In Sevens Tournaments



Unfortunately the rugby 7s season was severely disrupted this term due to tournament cancellations and the coronavirus. The Under-14s and Under-16s saw the Merchant Taylors' tournament cancelled in February and the Rosslyn Park National Schools 7s tournament cancelled in March. This was obviously disappointing for the pupils and staff who had worked hard during the mornings and at after-school rugby clubs. However, the cancellations were certainly the correct decisions.

There was some cracking rugby played by the Under-13 team in the Haberdashers' Aske's tournament. Thanks to some dazzling scores by Daniel Brunas, Ori Pickford and Charlie Wheeler, the team finished second in their group and narrowly missed out on a chance to play in the final. They continued their good form at the St John's 7s tournament by winning three games from five against Bedford, St Paul's B and St John's Beaumont. Once again, Daniel Brunas was in good form, finishing with five tries on the day.

The Under-18s played in the Middlesex and Surrey 7s competitions and put in some admirable performances against schools like Beechen Cliff AASE, Cranleigh School and RGS Guildford. It was a difficult season but I thought their effort was brilliant throughout and they were never fazed by the opposition in front of them. Gabriel Hartwill captained the side and orchestrated things from fly half. Oscar Cryer, Olly Morgan-Wynne, Oliver Christensen and Guy Greenbaum punched holes around the breakdown and Lucas Katz, Jake Brass and Luca Joseph provided the power up front. Daniel Hoff and Tom Bacon added a bit of pace to the team.

Well done to all the players who represented UCS at 7s this term.

— Contributions by I. Thomas

1st XI Inches Away From First Appearance At National Finals



UCS Hockey has taken another step forward this term with our 1st XI and junior teams representing the school at a number of regional tournaments for the first time.

The Under-13 and Under-12 teams competed in the Surrey Plate held down at Woking Hockey Club and played against some very strong schools such as Whitgift, Kingston Grammar and Alleyns. The Under-13 team (which also included a few Entry boys) played five games. Two were won, two were lost, and one was drawn. The Under-12 team did slightly better. They lost to Whitgift but beat Alleyns, Kingston Grammar and Kingsdale, and then drew with Alleyns B team. They ended the day as 5th= overall.

The 1st XI travelled down to Charterhouse School for the South Tier 3 tournament. Winners of this progress through to the National Finals. The overall

quality of hockey was very good and UCS did not let themselves down. Unfortunately, they narrowly lost their first game against a very vocal and physical Peter Symonds side, 1-0. Against Stowe School, Raph Milne scored and then followed this up with another goal in the second game against Churchers School. Jan-Michael Baldwin and captain, Nic Sanschagrin, also added to this scoreline meaning that match was won 3-0. The final game against Alleyns was nail-biting. UCS needed a win to secure a place at the National Final. In the final two minutes, the decision was made to remove the goalkeeper for an outfield player and go for the goal. Sadly, UCS narrowly missed the goal on two occasions by a matter of inches in the final 30 seconds so will not be appearing at the Nationals this year. However, it was a great day for these boys who have developed tremendously over the last few seasons.

— Contributions by E. Sawtell

Lower Remove Hockey Players Make Great Strides



The Under-14 hockey team have made great strides this season. It feels like all aspects of our play have come on in leaps and bounds. Thus far, we have won six matches, drawn one and lost two. This is a great improvement on last year and the team have room to do even better next year. The most improved player this season has to be Freddie Edwards, who has become an extremely threatening centre-forward. He has managed to score more than half our goals and even picked some from mid-air before flinging them in the bottom-right corner. In midfield, Calum Papworth and Oscar Sharland have effectively distributed the ball up and around the pitch and have made it hard for the opposition to gain possession. This was apparent during the Mill Hill match in which

Calum managed to thread three reverse-stick passes through the defence to our centre-forward. We have conceded few goals due to our strong defence, with skilful jab tackles from Griff Rendell and tight man-marking from Arun Khiani and Tommy Lyons. The whole squad have contributed greatly to the success of the team and we hope we will do even better next year. In the future, we are going to look at improved ball control, more powerful passing, maintaining possession and, most importantly, keeping our shape. We are all looking forward to working on this!

— Contributions by Oscar Sharland (Lower Remove)

Baxters Take First Deme Netball Cup



The Spring Term has been a challenge for the netballers, with fixtures limited due to the faded lines and the weather preventing repainting. The girls have continued to train hard and have shown the positivity, grit, and sporting conduct that is the collective hallmark of a UCS netballer. The highlight of the term was the first ever Deme Netball – what an event it was!

The Deme competition was organised by Francesca Peluso in Transitus. This sparked a lot of interest and enthusiasm, and captains in each Deme swiftly put together mixed teams. Several of the boys were very quick to get to grips with the rules, which often cause a lot of difficulty for newcomers to the sport. Footwork was the major challenge, but the boys who had played a lot of basketball seemed adept at transferring the skill of rooting their feet when in possession of the ball, and capitalising on their height advantage and jumping skills. Keeping 1m from the opponent when in possession of the ball was more of a challenge, but the teams in

which the boys were quick to learn from the girls had a distinct edge. After the preliminary rounds on the outside courts, Baxters and Evans were the two teams that progressed to the final. This was an exceptional match and was played indoors. The two teams were neck and neck for much of the game. The result was sealed in the final minutes – a well-timed dummy shot on goal prompted an enormous goal-blocking leap from Matthew Costa, and while he was still recovering from his landing, our 1st VII goal shooter Alice Offenbach accurately gave Baxters the lead. This was followed by more outstanding shooting from Mollie Chapman as Baxters clinched the victory – they really do have a strong line in shooters!

This was a great match to umpire and see the typically excellent netball from our 1st's players: Daisy Spooner, Eli Gojkovic, and Francesca Peluso up the court, alongside some great skills from newcomers Max Blaisdell, Ryan Bal and Matthew Costa, amongst others.

Netballers Take On LAE, Stratford



This will be a great new annual fixture in the UCS sports calendar, and is a credit to the organisers and all the participants.

Meanwhile, the final match of the term was a friendly played with one of our partnership schools, the London Academy of Excellence, Stratford. A small group of LAE girls joined the UCS training session, and netballers from each school played alongside each other. With a great range of skill, the UCS girls showed real sporting conduct in ensuring all players were included, and varying their style of play to accommodate a range of ability. In that match, as in all others this season, I was immensely proud of our netballers. Their attitude has been exemplary, and I am delighted that so many Transitus players will still be here next year. We sadly say goodbye to several Sixth Formers who have been superb contributors to the joy

and success of the netball teams during their time at UCS. These include Evie Mellman, Alice Offenbach, Amelia Simpson, Alexia Di Filippo, Maria Drel, and our extraordinary captain Emilia Taddonio, who has been the most outstanding skipper we have had; not only an extremely strong netballer, she is a supportive and motivating leader. She always strives to ensure netball is recognised as the brilliant, fun, and hugely important sport that we know it is.

We now look forward to the new season which begins in September.

— Contributions by C. Hawes

Cross Country Club Grows



We have seen fantastic growth in the running club this year. Every week, we now see between 15 and 20 pupils picking their way through the mud and fog on Hampstead Heath before school on Friday mornings. It is especially gratifying to report that we have pupils across the age range attending, from Entry boys to Sixth Form girls. While we will need to continue to see growth in the club before we can challenge the top schools in team cross-country competitions, there have been a number of strong individual performances this season. Paul Opie was the fourth junior boy home at the South East Schools Cross-Country event at Harrow, and Ross Doran the tenth intermediate boy. Both of these performances came in very strong fields featuring the best runners in the south-east. Thomas Chadwick came 11th and Joseph Hayes 55th out of 139 runners in the London Schools AA Cross-Country Championships at Wormwood

Scrubs. This augurs very well for our intermediate and senior teams in years to come. Our intermediate boys team also came eighth in the Radley Relays, beating a number of senior teams (and masters!); Edward Fairhurst, Leonard Knight and Patrick Kyle ran very strong legs on the day.

Many thanks to the staff who have helped out on Friday mornings and with fixtures this year. The support of Mr Sawtell, Mr Mee, Mr Nicholls and Mr Liddiard-Williams has enabled the club to grow so quickly. Our thanks also go to captain Ross Doran, who has raised the standard of our training no end through his knowledge, commitment and dedication.

— Contributions by J. Firth and N. Hillyard

Old Gowers News



Spring Term is normally busy and this one has been no different. Despite the risk of interruption from snow and pandemics, most of our events have gone ahead as planned. We kicked off the calendar year with the Class of 1995's 25-year reunion in the Phoenix Room – it was wonderful to see the 1995 leavers return to UCS, and for some it was their first time back. Mr Wilkes addressed the group and elicited a bit of fear from years gone by when he threatened to read out people's results from his mark book and get guests to turn in their long-overdue homework.

February saw one of the biggest ever Old Gowers' Annual Dinners – we managed to fit 180 guests into the Refectory for a brilliant and special evening with guest of honour Sir Chris Bonington (OG 1946–52). We also welcomed more than 30 people from the class of 1980, including Lord Daniel Finkelstein, Hugh Dennis and Alan Jacobs. It was a wonderful evening. The Queen even took the time to write a letter with her best wishes, as

27 February 2020 marked exactly 40 years to the day since she visited the school in honour of our 150th birthday.

We're approaching our events in the coming weeks with a bit more caution, as it is hard to plan for a pandemic. We've unfortunately had to cancel two events in our calendar, but we will reschedule as soon as it is safe to do so. If anyone is self-isolating or in quarantine and needs a distraction, we've recently digitised all our editions of *The Gower* magazine, dating back to 1924. Check out our new digital archiving website: <https://www.ucs-digitalarchives.org.uk/>. This is part of a large-scale effort to digitise all our archives by 2030, the 200-year anniversary of UCS. Enjoy!

— Contributions by E. Dwek

