



# DownsMatters

THE NEWSLETTER FOR THE DOWNS SCHOOL

SUMMER TERM 2009



## National Champions 2009

The tournament started on Monday and our first game was against Hall Grove. We played some good rugby and won the game 41 – 0, the nerves had gone and we cruised through our next game against Cummor House winning 57 – 0. We knew that we had to win the next game to progress through as group winners. The weather turned and the game continued through torrential rain and finally a hail storm. The match was abandoned and we had done just enough to see us through.

To qualify for the next day we had to beat a strong St Johns Cambridge side. After an early try by them we managed to regain our composure and run in two tries before half time. It was a tense second half but we came through to see us win 28 – 7 at the final whistle. We had qualified for the quarter finals which were to be held the following day.

After a hearty breakfast, we were excited for the games ahead. Shrewsbury House were our opponents in the quarter final. It was a physical game and we did not play our best rugby. It wasn't pretty but we had beaten them 10 – 0. After a few encouraging words from Mr Vella, we relaxed and were ready to meet Sedburgh in the semi final. We had dominated from the start - however at half time the score was 5 all. Composed and confident we went into the second half determined to win.

We played some great sevens and won 19 – 5. We were delighted with our performance and were through to the final against Bedford.

Defeat was never in doubt, we started off with a strong try by Joe and dominated for most of the first half leading 14 – 7 as we broke for half time. The second half started with a try from Bedford which put us at 14 all. Nevertheless we dug deep and responded. We won the game 28 – 14 and were crowned National Champions.

*The team was delighted with the result, and I would like to congratulate the whole team for a magnificent effort. A special mention should go to Joe, Jake and Rhys who were the backbone of our success. The support from Ciaran, and Aaran was outstanding with Oli and Hayden who still have another year to hone their skills. I would especially like to thank Jonjo, Sam and Finn for their patience on the sideline and we were delighted to feel the support from the whole school, even those on the ski trip managed to send their screams of congratulations to us via telephone. What a fantastic season! Let's look forward to defending the trophy next year.*

*Mr Mathew Vella.*



# Ski Trip '09



After a few hiccups with forgotten coats and 'will she or won't she get on the plane', staff and children from the school set off for their week on the slopes in Valloire. The journey was long but wonderfully uneventful and we arrived with the sun shining and snow on the slopes.

Once settled in the hotel with kit organised and tummies full, we had a short treasure hunt around the village to find our bearings and check out the best places for those all important presents to take home!

Valloire was beautiful and the skiing was fantastic. Those who had skied before seemed to go from strength to strength (with encouragement from each other and a healthy competitive spirit), but it was our beginners who really shone for me with one boy who had never been skiing before, progressing from group 5 to group 3 in the space of 3 days. The whole of group 5 (beginners) were skiing in all conditions, snaking their way down some red runs and confidently picking up some speed on the blues – the staff didn't do too badly either!

Evenings were filled with ice skating, bowling, a quiz night and the talent show for a finale. The children and staff arrived home exhausted but elated after what had been a super trip. The staff were incredibly impressed with the children, how well they behaved and their kindness to others throughout the week. Well done to you all.

*Mrs Phillipa Roach*

# Buster *from* Barnstaple *to* Bristol



Setting off from Littlebridge House in Barnstaple for 120 mile charity walk! We first headed for Coombe Martin through Barnstaple and towards Lynton. I was joined by my mate Dave who was the driver and along the route by some friends from Portishead R B L Bowling Club. We covered 18 miles in 5 hours, ending the day along the bridal path into Coombe Martin. We were very happy with that. I was joined on the next day by my nephew Jo, Stuart and Lionel from school. We saw some beautiful scenery along the coast line, primroses and wild orchids. Some very steep slopes and a narrow coast path with sheer drop to the sea. We had planned to keep a pace of 3½ miles an hour but with the steep slopes and paths we managed 1½ miles an hour. We reached Countisbury after 8½ hours, a little short of our destination Porlock but decided to call it a day.

On Sunday Brian took over as back up driver and we were joined by more walkers to take us to Minehead. Our first stop was County Gate – we were back in Somerset. I was hoping to meet Brian Pike, who I had never met but had known me from my days at Bristol City. As we took a well earned rest in Minehead I heard “Hello Buster” it was Brian Pike with £154 sponsor money which he had raised. How wonderful! Monday took us from Minehead towards Hinckley Point, we were rained on once, just outside the café in Blue Anchor, where we stopped for a cuppa. On the leg from Hinckley to Sterte Point we spotted 5 white Egrets, lovely birds. The wild life and scenery along the route was magnificent. Unfortunately, we couldn’t cross the river at Sterte Point or at Brean Down so Dave drove us round and from Uphill we headed for Yatton. If we had walked around the rivers it would have added 20 miles to our journey.

We made good time on our last leg of the trip from Yatton to Charlton Farm. I was joined by some members of staff from school, Sue, Anne, Martin and Greg. We waited outside Noah’s Ark Zoo for 20 minutes as we were early and then headed up the drive for a wonderful reception.

*Buster*

*“A huge congratulations to Buster who has just completed his 120 mile charity walk. He was joined by several members of friends from the school and the general consensus is that Buster, who turned 71 this year, is a super fit individual with a big heart. With monies still coming in he has already raised over £3000 and hopes to reach the £5000 after the Sporting Dinner. Well Done Buster”*



Artist of the Month – Harriotte Preston Year 7

## JUDO CHAMPIONS



Congratulations to Freddie Wilson, Angus Allen and Henry Coombes, and all of whom are in Year 2 and were each awarded trophies at the recent Judo Area Championships at Prior Park.



## Choral Day

On Thursday 30th April 2009, The Downs School hosted its fourth Choral Festival. We were delighted to welcome two other Prep Schools – St Johns on the Hill and Wycliffe who joined our own choir for a fantastic day of Choral singing directed by Miss Eloise Adams (Singing Teacher at The Downs). The Day started in the Theatre at school and then concluded with a performance in the beautiful setting of Clifton College Chapel.

As we all assembled together, Mr. Weaver welcomed everyone and explained the format for the day. Miss Adams then took the singers through their paces. To start with we got to know each other through various warm up exercises and games. This was great fun and everyone enjoyed participating in the different activities. Then we started to rehearse the two songs we would sing together. These were 'Panis Angelicus' by Cesar Frank and 'Bless this House' by May Brahe.

Each choir was invited to perform individually in the Chapel of

Clifton College and the following is a programme of the items sung.

The Downs School (Conductor – Eloise Adams, Accompanist – Mark Weaver) sang three pieces 'I'm Gonna Sing' by Gardener; 'An Eriskay Love Lilt' by Fraser and 'There's me' (from Starlight Express) by Andrew Lloyd Webber. Then Wycliffe (Conducted by Phillip Duffy) performed three items. They were 'Stir My Heart' by Sue Rinaldi and Steve Basset, 'Magical Kingdom' by John Rutter and 'The Storm is passing Over' by Charles Albert Tindley. Finally, St Johns (Conductor – Neil Middleton, Accompanist – Joe Butcher) performed two songs by Bob Chilcott called 'All for Love of One' and 'Agnus Dei'.

The day was a tremendous success and thanks must go to Eloise Adams for all her hard work in organising such a fantastic day. The sound of the combined singers in the Chapel was truly amazing and was received by rapturous applause as the final notes were sounded.

## Year 7 in France

This term was the year 7's French Trip. After a long journey we finally arrived at the port for our ferry to France. We arrived at the Château late and it wasn't until the following morning we had a tour of the place. We played a few games in the Salle du Jeux and were split into three groups. This was followed by some more activities and for some, a French lesson! Each day at 5pm we had some diary time, filling in everything we had learnt. This was the routine for the rest of the week.

We did lots of different activities including aero-ball using a trampoline and a basket ball, making our own photographs and a blindfolded obstacle course which took a lot of team work. We made our own bread, fed the farm animals and learnt how cider is made. The orienteering was great fun, we were given a map and told where to



find numbers and pin them on our sheet. It was funny how the girls beat the boys in all three groups. A lot of people expressed their fear of heights when we were told we were going to climb an 8 metre wall. However, when Dan Mead completed it in 14 seconds a few nerves were put at ease.

On Friday, we were allowed to go to the market. We had some time to look around and try some different things, it was a great experience. After a picnic in the woods we drove to Mont St Michele Castle, looked around the shops, had an ice cream and returned home for an early night.

We all came home from the trip knowing a lot more French having experienced France in such detail.

Georgia Argent

# DAS Camp!



We stayed at school this Wednesday afternoon for a camp set up session with the DAS. Mr Torbett said we were going to set the tent up for the Pre-Prep. We opened the big bag and followed the instructions. Yannick threw some grass into the air to see which way the wind was blowing; Max took on the role of reading out the instructions to the rest of the team. Firstly, we assembled the poles into blue and black pockets in the tent. This was the main frame to hold the tent. We put the bonnet on and held up the tent so we could connect the pole ends to the key shaped connectors. We were then able to peg the tent to the ground – It was a success, the tent was up! After some lemonade Mr Torbett got a much larger tent for us to put up – this was a success too.

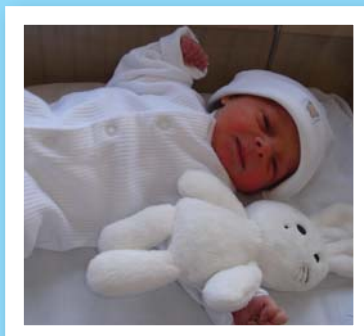


## *New Arrivals*

Many Congratulations to Jo Toogood, Vanessa Lyle and Karen Davis, all of whom have been blessed with new arrivals to their families. – Vanessa with twins, Jo with her second son and Karen with a little brother for Jasmine and Cameron.



Arthur



Isaac



Albert & Romilly

# Year 2 at the Zoo



**Year 2 were invited to be the first school to visit the brand new attraction at Bristol Zoo - Explorer's Creek.**

**After a chance to wander through the rainforest and encourage the Lorikeets to perch on their heads there was also time to enjoy the new wet play area 'SPLASH' before anyone else.**

**Heart Radio from Bristol were also there to record the opening and some children had the added excitement of being interviewed for the radio station.**

## Cross Country Results

### Pre-Prep Boys

1st Lloyd Wotton  
2nd Max Teixeira  
3rd Jake Thompson

### Pre-Prep Girls

1st Jessica Bryan  
2nd Holly Horton  
3rd Alice Cockerton

### Junior Boys

1st Conor Moran  
2nd Tom Teixeira  
3rd Declan Moran

### Junior Girls

1st Katie Swan  
2nd Brodie Walker  
3rd Abbie Miller

### Senior Boys

1st Oliver Nott  
2nd Tristan Robbins  
3rd Thomas Stoodley

### Senior Girls

1st Iona Thomas  
2nd Lucy Mead  
3rd Goergia Argent

## Speech and Drama Results

*Congratulations to all those who took part in the Bristol Speech and Drama Festival.*

### Duo Poetry

1st Harry Holder & Jack Mead

### Solo Acting Year 6

1st Phoebe Sheppard

### Poetry Year 3

3rd Alexander Hann & Caitlin Wring

### Poetry Year 4

2nd Harry Holder

### Poetry Year 6

3rd Stephanie Allen

### Improvisation

3rd Lillie Grant & Beth Horsham

## Dates for your diary

- Friday 22nd May - Half Term Begins 5.10pm
- Monday 1st June - Second Half of Term Begins 8.35am
- Saturday 6th June - School Sports Day 9.30am / Summer Fete 2.00pm
- Saturday 13th June - Girls Rounders Tour 11.00am
- Friday 19th June - Grandparents Day 2.00pm
- Monday 22nd June - Arts Week