

Perseptions

The Perse School newsletter • School news and developments • Issue 25



Kirkham's All-Stars take on the Perse XI

On Saturday 15th November, an All-Star hockey team containing members of Great Britain's Olympic hockey squad took on a team of Perse students.

The match was organised by Glenn Kirkham to celebrate the official opening of the new Astroturf at the Upper School. Glenn has worked as a sports coach at the school since 2005 and invited some of his Beijing team mates including Alistair McGregor, Richard Mantell, Richard Alexander, Jon Bleby and Rob Moore to take on a Perse XI.

The game opened with the Perse XI putting Kirkham's All-Stars under a huge amount of pressure. The students worked tirelessly to thwart any attacks by the All-Stars, aided by some superb saves by Ollie Roberts in goal, and managed to create a few chances of their own. As the game settled down the All-Stars started to

find their rhythm and eventually took the lead through Old Persean Jack Franklin. Not to be outdone, the Perse XI struck back straight away from a penalty corner where Dudley Spiers impressively flicked the ball past Great Britain keeper Ali McGregor to make the score 1-1 at half time.

The second half continued at a frenetic pace allowing the All-Stars to make the most of the space that was starting to open up. Richard Mantell, Great Britain penalty corner specialist, made the most of his flicking power by scoring a second half hat-trick, and Jack Franklin added a further 2 goals to complete a hat-trick in a memorable day for him. With the Perse XI starting to tire they still mustered some energy for a fantastic second half goal from Ben Creese.

The final score settled at 9-2 to the All-Stars, an entertaining match fitting for the occasion. The Olympians and Old Perseans of Kirkham's All-Stars were highly impressed by the standard of the Perse XI and the fantastic new pitch.

Academic Results

The 2008 GCSE results broke all records with 57.5% of all grades being awarded A* with a combined A or A* figure of 87%. Ten pupils achieved 10 or more A*s. Similarly, the Perse A-level results were outstanding with 94% of entries gaining A or B grades – up from 88% last year.

We were delighted that ten Perse pupils received special recognition from the Edexcel board for finishing in the top 10 nationally in AS levels and GCSE subject papers including IGCSE Mathematics, French, Spanish, Russian and Italian.

Over the summer the Perse has been placed in the top 25 schools nationally by most of the newspaper league tables. Ed Elliott, Head, commented, "These are the best results the school has ever achieved. I am delighted that our students have done so well and congratulate both them and their teachers."



MUSIC

Britten Sinfonia at the Pelican

Children at the Pelican celebrated the opening of their new hall, The Nigel Richardson Hall, by composing and performing their own piece of music entitled 'Night'. Members of the Britten Sinfonia Orchestra came into school for two days to work with children and staff. Each year group, from Nursery to Year Two, worked on building a rhythm and melody to go with some night themed words or poetry that they had written previously. The musical journey

through the night began with a gently rocking lullaby from the Nursery and then visited some nocturnal animals before a quick trip into space to the stars. The piece culminated in a finale involving the whole school performing the 'Sunrise' section – a cacophony of voice and instruments rising to a huge and resounding climax. It was a truly thrilling experience for all and the performance will be remembered by staff, children and parents for a long time to come.



Prep news



New School

The Prep has benefitted hugely from its multi million pound building programme that was completed in September, with improvements to Leighton House, the creation of a new Music Technology room, and of course the opening of New School. New School makes a tremendous impact as you approach the Prep, and on the inside it offers truly magnificent facilities.

At the centre of New School lies the library, right in the heart of Prep school learning. Eileen Castle, Librarian, said "The library is just wonderful! I have four extremely helpful and diligent library monitors to give me support. They have been busy producing book reviews for the weekly library news link to the newsletter, and are generally around during most break-times."

The extra library space means that teaching staff can make use of the resources with their students even if a

library class is going on – impossible in the cosy but small old library! Lots of research is going on during the day and more and more children are coming in to borrow non-fiction for their homework, as well as fiction for their leisure reading. Parents are also finding their way in at the end of the day to help their children browse. Great news! And, of course, there is the view...all those beautiful trees...





HISTORY

First World War Battlefields Tour 2008

During October half-term 52 fifth formers and four staff travelled to France and Belgium to the battlefields of the Western Front.

The trip covered the main sites of the Ypres Salient, the Somme and the Franco-German battlefield of Verdun. At the latter the group became the first British school ever to visit the remarkably preserved tunnels and trench systems at the Butte de Vauquois. During the tour members of the group were interviewed by BBC Radio Leicester for a programme broadcast in the run-up to the 90th anniversary of the Armistice.

The tour ended with the group laying a wreath on the grave of an Old Persean, Sgt Claude Leopold Beaumont, a native of Harston, who was killed at the age of 35 on the first day of the Battle of the Somme when serving with the Queens' Westminster Rifles.



BUSINESS STUDIES

Perse beats credit crunch

The Shares4Schools Competition is off to a great start! As a team of Business Studies students embarked on this year's competition, they were certainly aware of choppy waters ahead. After considerable deliberation and research the students selected their companies and invested the £1500. One thing they have tried not to do is run with the herd and they have followed advice from some star hedge fund traders like Greg Coffey, now with Moore Capital Management. As a result their portfolio has grown by some 17.5% to a total of £1762.26 and the team is placed second nationally and first in our region at the time of writing. Despite the economic downturn and the lack of liquidity in the markets, there are firms out there that excel in every way and will achieve sales growth – let's just hope we keep on picking them!

ENGLISH

Trip to New York

During October half-term, a party of 25 English Literature students led by Mr Jelley and Ms Bellamy visited New York. The action packed itinerary included watching two Broadway shows (the excellent Equus and All My Sons by Peter Shaffer and Arthur Miller respectively), a theatre workshop and discussion with a Broadway actor, visits to the Museum of Modern Art and the Frick Collection and the obligatory view from the top of the Empire State Building. Returning to the UK, the group touched down in Heathrow on an early October morning tired but knowing they had spent three very worthwhile and enriching days sampling the cultural atmosphere of one of the world's great cities.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR

CCF

On 20th October Major Peploe and 10 RAF cadets, mainly new recruits to the section, went to RAF Wyton (near Huntingdon) for Air Experience Flying. The RAF use flight training aircraft called Grob Tutors for cadets and University Air Squadrons, as well as initial air training for new pilots. They are fully aerobatic aircraft and the excellent weather meant 'Loop the Loop' and 'Barrel Rolls' were the order of the day. Cadets in the RAF are eligible for one 30 minute flight per year but often get two via the section and an additional one if they attend a camp.





INTERNATIONAL LINKS

The Perse School continues to develop its international links. This year we have already had exchange programmes with Germany, Spain and France. A new exchange programme has been set up

for the third form with St Stephen's College in Hong Kong and a group of pupils is visiting Japan over Easter 2009. Currently we are looking for other exchange opportunities and partnerships

with schools in the Middle East. This will do much to ensure that Perseans have the necessary linguistic skills and cultural understanding to succeed in the twenty first century.

Knox exchange - a pupil's perspective

More than just tea and biscuits!

To be perfectly honest, we thought that spending six weeks in a country 15,000 miles away from sun, surf, sand and of course family, would be quite a difficult task. The few weeks before we left for England, mainly consisted of excitement, relaxation and fantasising about all of the wonderful and amazing things we would be doing on our trip.

23 hours later, we touched down in Heathrow Airport, and typically, we were welcomed by the famous English weather, rain. It didn't take long for us four Aussie blokes to conform to the UK routine and some of us even developed slight accents! We quickly became members of our different host families, we were welcomed into the Perse society and before long, memories of our family and friends began to fade, and our homesickness had vanished.

We attended school four out of five days a week, with a cultural activity



on Wednesdays, consisting of either sightseeing (London Eye, Tower of London, Duxford Imperial War Museum and sunny Hunstanton) or something "traditionally British", such as paintball, roughing it in the Guildford forest and eating Yorkshire puddings.

As our fantastic English adventure draws to a close, we realise how lucky we are to have been given this amazing opportunity and would strongly

recommend this once in a lifetime opportunity to anyone. Memories of England thrashing Kazakhstan at Wembley, punting along the River Cam and of course making friends for life will be forever remembered in years to come. We now look forward to showing our English counterparts how we do things down under!

The Aussie Boys – Max Turner, Sean Reading, Alex Norden and Matt Woods

Small Ships Race in Cowes

On a chilly Friday in October, a team of sixteen set out for Cowes to crew two boats. Duet, an Edwardian racing yacht operated by the Cirdan Trust, and Pegasus, a brand new pilot cutter launched in May and operated by the Island Trust.

Third former Ben Lomas said "Pegasus got off to an average start while

Duet excelled in a light breeze. After about an hour or so the winds picked up and Pegasus overtook Duet just before the turning point (executing a perfect manoeuvre to bring us within two hundred metres of the Jollie Brise). Sadly, despite several more impressive jibes, Pegasus didn't catch up but still crossed the finishing line in a respectable second place. Duet's

handicap meant that they had actually come in second and Pegasus was pushed to third."

After being runners-up in the 2006 and 2007 races aboard Duet, the team were hopeful of winning in 2008. However, they came back very contented with their performance and are eager to return next year.



Access to Excellence campaign

The Access to Excellence campaign to raise much needed funds to pay for bursaries and building projects is nearing completion. Our target is to raise £3 million by Founder's Day, 25 March 2009, and we are delighted to report that due to the generosity of parents, past parents, Old Perseans and friends of the school, we have now raised over £2.7 million. In doing so we have broken all previous Perse fundraising records, and as a consequence we are now financing more means-tested pupil bursaries than ever before (88 in the current academic year). We are thus able to enhance the Perse's direct grant traditions and continue to provide children, whose families could not afford our fees, with a head start in

life. Our increased bursary provision also provides evidence of our charitable purpose at a time when independent schools are being reviewed by the Charity Commission. We are confident that our bursary provision will justify our charitable status, and thus allow the school to claim a number of tax concessions that help to keep a downward pressure on fee increases which benefits all parents.

We have just £270,000 left to raise, and at this stage every donation makes a difference. If you are considering supporting the Perse, and wish to help us provide more bursaries, now is an excellent time to give. Not only do we need to reach our £3 million target by 25 March 2009, but changes to the

tax system from April 2009, will reduce the amount of gift aid the Perse can claim back from the Inland Revenue. (The current gift aid rules mean that for most UK tax payers, the Perse is able to claim an additional 28 pence for every £1 donated from the Inland Revenue. This 28% enhancement of a donation is at no cost to the donor.)

If you would like to support the Access to Excellence campaign, and help us raise the last £270,000 to finance bursaries and building projects, please contact Liz Jacobs on 01223 403808 or email DevelopmentOfficer@perse.co.uk.

Access to Excellence building projects

Two of the three building projects supported by the Access to Excellence campaign have now been completed, and are being well used and enjoyed by pupils.

The Nigel Richardson Hall at the Pelican was formally opened in October, and has vastly increased the opportunities for music, drama, and physical education amongst our younger pupils. The new Technology room at the Prep has also been operational since September, and this state of the art facility has received some first class reviews. It underlines the Perse's long standing commitment to high quality science and engineering, and a belief that these subjects can only be taught really well in purpose built facilities.

The final building project in the Access to Excellence trilogy is the Upper School new gym, construction of which is due to begin in spring 2009. It will provide a much needed space for gymnastics, netball, dance, fencing, martial arts and during the exam season it will be used as a venue for public exams.

School co-education and expansion plans running ahead of target

In September 2009, its centenary year, the Perse Prep will become fully co-educational a year earlier than originally planned. This reflects the demand for places by girls who are keen to access the academically challenging, but all round education on offer, and to benefit from the excellent facilities including New School and the sizeable outdoor sports and play areas.

At the Upper, we have been under pressure to admit girls at 11-16 a year early in September 2009, but are unable to do so because our new 22 room teaching and learning centre incorporating a state of the art library, will not be ready for use until the summer of 2010. This exceptional new facility will revolutionise the Upper site, in much the same way as New School has done at the Prep (both buildings share the same architect). Demand for places at the Upper continues to increase, and we already have a substantial number of registrations for girls from 2010 onwards. Meanwhile, there are record numbers of pupils in our sixth form including nearly 100 girls.

Old Persean becomes the new Perse School Development Director

We are delighted to announce that Eddie Copeland, an Old Persean, and graduate of Bristol University, will take over as our Development Director in January. Eddie has worked in the House of Commons, the United States Congress, and in the offices of Boris Johnson. He joins us from Accenture, where he coordinated a number of global IT projects. Eddie is keen to make a move into the 'not for profit sector' and is passionate about the Perse's commitment to widening pupil access by providing more means-tested bursaries. As Development Director, Eddie will have responsibility for all aspects of alumni relations and fundraising.



Schools' Challenge General Knowledge Teams

News of the success of the Upper School General Knowledge teams came too late for the summer edition of Perceptions. The Schools' Challenge competition is run on the lines of University Challenge. The Senior Team won the East Anglia regional championship for the third year running, defeated Nottingham High School in a close inter-regional round and then took part in the national finals, where they finished sixth out of the top eight schools in the UK. The Junior Team won the regional title for the fourth year in succession, won the inter-regional round against King's Canterbury and then claimed third place in the national finals. This is the first year that both age groups have reached the national finals in their respective competitions which each attract over 200 entries.

Guinness Book of World Records

Old Persean Jean-Yves Kanyamibwa has joined the family of Guinness World Record holders. He ran the fastest marathon while dribbling a basketball, in 4 hours 30 minutes and 29 seconds!

Sports update



Events

31st December	Deadline for pupils to be registered for Perse entrance tests
12th, 13th, 14th January	7+ Entrance Tests
Sat 31st January	11+ and 13+ Entrance Tests
Mon 2nd March	The Perse School Enterprise Conference
Sat 14th March	PPA Annual Quiz Night at 7.00pm
Weds 25th March	Founders Day Dinner for Dr Perse and Dr Rouse Societies

National Rowing Championships

Over the summer Old Perseans Joe Baddeley and John Hale, both studying engineering at Cambridge, took part in the National Rowing Championships. Rowing in a double scull, they progressed to the final despite high winds that made the conditions very tough. In the final they recovered well from a slow start to secure the bronze medal, narrowly missing out on silver (by 0.3 seconds) in the final sprint! Both Joe and John are now doing very well in their trials for the Cambridge University heavyweight and lightweight squads respectively and hope to compete in the races against Oxford in March.

First Spanish Exchange

Twelve Upper School students took part in the exchange with IES Nestor Almendros in Tomares, Seville. They spent four days in Seville and visited Cadiz and Cordoba, its Mosque and ruins of Medina-Azarah Palace. One of the highlights of the visit was to be received by the Major of Tomares in the refurbished City Hall, which was a traditional Andalusian country house. We had a great time and are looking forward to returning soon!



Hockey

The 1st XI Girls Hockey team have achieved commendable victories against The Perse for Girls, Wyomndham College and two very respectable draws against Oundle and Royal Hospital School. The girls have been training hard

for the Indoor County round in December.

Michael Franklin and Adam Miller (Lower Sixth) were selected to play for the East and South East of England team (Saxon Tigers) and played in the England Future's Cup and went on to beat the North of England (Pennine Pumas) in the final 3-1. Michael has also been selected to attend England U18 trials that take place next month.

The Perse U16 Indoor team have been given a bye and go through to the East Finals as county champions, defending their impressive Double U16 East and National Champions title.



Rugby

The 1st XV have played 9 and won 7 including an outstanding victory against Stamford (21-7) and an impressive pre-season win against Uppingham (40-20). The 1st XV have progressed into the semi finals of the

Eastern Schools Cup where they face Colchester College; the team are confident that they will be able to defend their title as Eastern Schools Champions. The U15 Rugby team are through to the 5th round of the Daily Mail Cup, two matches away from the East Area Final.

The U13 A team are undefeated with first time wins against Stamford, St John's School and Bishops Stortford Junior School. The Perse has high hopes for this team, an unbeaten season is on the cards and will be an outstanding performance given the opposition they have faced.

Football

The 1st XI have taken on a more competitive fixture list this year and the highlights of the season so far are wins against The Leys 5-2, Kings' Ely 7-0, Gresham's 9 - 0 and Balmoral School, Argentina 2-0.

Cricket

Congratulations to Tom Sherwin and Will Wright (Fourth Form) who have gained places in the Northamptonshire Cricket Academy.

Orienteering

Thomas Louth represented England in the Junior Home Internationals. In the British Schools Orienteering Championships Thomas finished second, whilst the Perse Year 10 team came fourth. Thomas has been selected to represent England in the 2009 World Schools Orienteering Championships to be held in Madrid.

Basketball

The U18s achieved a first time win against Long Road and a convincing victory against The Leys 72-24.

Tennis

Alex Davidson has been selected for the U16 Cambridgeshire Team.

Golf

The Perse A team of Hugo Christie, James Littlefair and Dominic Hinde competed in the ISGA National Cup at Collingtree Park in Northampton in October and out of 18 schools finished a very credible 9th in the Gross Competition and 6th in the Nett Competition, beating some very prestigious golfing schools such as Uppingham and Wellingborough along the way.

The ISGA Matchplay is also going very well with the Perse A team playing Woodbridge in the Quarter Finals and the Perse B team currently at the semi final stage having defeated Framlingham College and Thorpe Hall, the latter of which won the event in 2007.

The future of golf at The Perse is in good hands with a Golf Academy aimed at the Lower School due to start in March 2009.

