

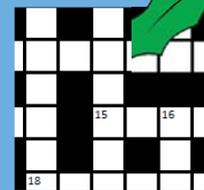
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# The Pupils' Voice

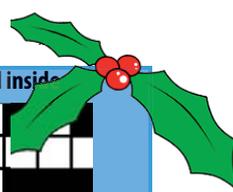


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JUMBO crossword inside



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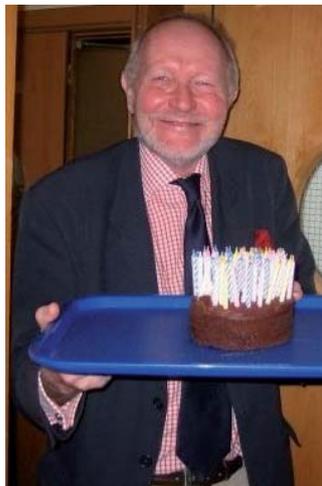


## In the Name of History

Joe Yate, [joe@pupilsvoice.com](mailto:joe@pupilsvoice.com)

Many historically significant events have occurred on the 14th of December. In 1542, Princess Mary Stuart was crowned Queen Mary of Scotland; in 1961, Tanzania joined the United Nations; and on this day in 1942, the reasonably well known (in Greece at least) actress Zoe Laskari, was born.

Oh, and Mr Southworth, of course. Yes, as of Dec 14th 2009, our very own Mr Southworth, the much loved history teacher, is 67 years young. Now, Mr Southworth's birthday has been celebrated in a variety of different ways over the years – many of you may remember that two years ago, Mr Darby announced his birthday to us all in an assembly to thunderous applause that – naturally – lasted for minutes! Last year, in perhaps a more low-profile manner, many people from one of his Y11 history sets (including Messrs Genders, Jenkins, Asif and



LITTLE MIKE was so happy

Zhang, as well as myself) kindly purchased a birthday cake for him, before impaling it with 66 candles! The image of this prestigious event can be seen above. Now, this year, we

Southworth admirers thought 'How can we best celebrate Mr Southworth's birthday?' Now what with the Pupil's Voice's revival, what better way to honour Mr Southworth than with an article? We are sure that Mr Southworth, being an award winning teacher, will appreciate it when we say 'Happy Birthday, sir!'. Not only is Mr S a veritable mine of historical information, but a source of good old fashioned wit.

For those of you who have not had the privilege to be taught by such a 'legend' (as described by the Chief Examiner at the AQA examining board, for being one of few teachers still teaching the Hanoverian Period at A-Level History), I think that it's time to fill you in on a few details. Mr Southworth has been teaching at Camp Hill for the last 43 years, showing unparalleled dedication in educating the

» continued, PG. 2

## How to Shorten School Assemblies

Alex McCormick,  
[alexm@pupilsvoice.com](mailto:alexm@pupilsvoice.com)

Apparently, a number of people have been complaining recently that our school assemblies are becoming too long. They are complaining that sometimes assemblies run over into lesson time, and people often claim that the assemblies are so boring it feels like they have been dragging on for hours on end. However I can inform you that it is not, as many people may believe, the many references to Dunbar United or endless sports reports that have been dragging out our assemblies recently and causing people to be bored. There are actually a great number of other things that, although many people many not realise it, are contributing to the

» continued, PG. 2

## Getting Personal: Mr Russell

Having interviewed teachers relatively new to the school, we now turn our attentions to Camp Hill's 'Old Guard', starting with Mr Russell

James Jordan, Hasan Ali and Sanjeevan Ghag, [theteam@pupilsvoice.com](mailto:theteam@pupilsvoice.com)

**PV:** Could you give us a quick summary of your career so far?

**Mr R.:** My career so far...well it's almost over. I began teaching at Watford Boys Grammar School in '76 stayed there for eight years and was Head of Middle School. I came up to Camp Hill in '85 and was Head of Modern Languages, before going on to be Deputy Head and then standing down as Deputy Head becoming part time French, Critical Thinking, General Studies and Games teacher.

**PV:** What made you become a teacher?

**Mr R.:** Lack of imagination I think - I'd put so much work into French I wanted to keep

it going and I was looking for schools that taught A-Level French, which is why I started at Watford.

**PV:** What other languages can you speak?

**Mr R.:** I used to be able to speak Russian (a little bit), a little bit of Latin as well.

**PV:** Wasn't there an incident in Russia when the Soviet Union collapsed...?

**Mr R.:** Under Brezhnev I was arrested on suspicion of illegal currency transactions, and then under Gorbachov when he went on holiday down to the South Coast and the emergency committee carried out a coup d'état, I was trapped

in Siberia. Those are my two colourful experiences which have featured in assemblies.

**PV:** Why and for how long were you in Russia?

**Mr R.:** Not very long. That was the problem, it's why I'm doing French and not Russian because, though I did a joint honours at that time in the 70s, you weren't allowed into Russia for extended stays so I had a month language course there which was under Brezhnev, and it was a totalitarian regime. Your hotel was bugged, there was a radio on all the time which was party propaganda and there was propaganda around in all the streets. You knew full well that any conversation you

had on the phone was being recorded and kept. So there was no chance of building up a language expertise as there was in France where you could go and live for a year.

**PV:** Did you enjoy France?

**Mr R.:** Oh yes. I'd fallen in love with France at the age of sixteen. I lived in a fairly tough working class area, on a council estate in the wrong end of Sheffield. There was a teacher at the grammar school we went to who decided he'd try and get us ready for University. Us being ordinary people like me, we had no idea about ordering food at restaurants and things like that. He used to take us to

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# NEWS

If you feel there is something missing in this paper that you think would make it better, feel free to suggest features, along with nominations for the next teacher interviews, by e-mailing comments@pupilsvoice.com

We also value all of our readers' feedback, not just pupils at the school. If you have a point to be made, do not hesitate to give constructive advice or criticism to anyone involved in the paper, either in person or by e-mailing the article writers (e-mail is printed with article) or theteam@pupilsvoice.com. We plan to have a letters page with your comments in the next issue, so you might even see your view in print!

## This month's goings on, in and out of school

### Editorial

James Jordan, james@pupilsvoice.com

And so we reach the third issue of the new Pupils' Voice. Again, time seems to have flown by since the last issue, but perhaps getting to the end of term quickly is not such a bad thing. Of course, it's not just Christmas Day that occurs during our holidays, but the new year, and more interestingly a new decade as well.

To commemorate this, a number of contributors have submitted their own 'Things of the Decade', mostly a moment or a music album. A decade may be dwarfed by the new millennium we experienced 'just' ten years ago, but for all of us pupils, the 'noughties' have taken up over half our lives. In 1999, despite my mother's insistence, I never really understood the significance of the new millennium; nor did I notice any change when I woke up on the 1st January (I tried to stay up, but alas, I fell asleep at about 9 o'clock).

Though things are unlikely to drastically change when the clock strikes midnight in a couple of weeks' time, since the start of 2000, issues have. On a worldwide scale, the subject of climate change is probably that of most importance, especially given the summit at Copenhagen taking place at the time of writing. Indeed, following on from last issue we have another article on the topic, but that is not all.

All of the features from the last issue return, and the entertainment section has been expanded with the addition of quizzes, as well as the ever-popular 'Camp Hell' cartoons. In sport, we delve into the realms of the Football League for the first time, as well as analysing the World Cup draw and previewing the January transfer window.

Special thank yous go to Mr Smith and Mr Turner for their help in printing these hallowed pages, at inconveniently short notice.

We regret that with exams, there will be no January issue, however we will be back again in February and from all the team, Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year! ●

## In the Name of History...

Joe Yate, joe@pupupilsvoice.com

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rogues and scoundrels of Camp Hill. This is a daunting task in itself, but as well as his role in teaching, he has organised activities such as history trips overseas (most notably the renowned Battlefields trips, which I urge all Y10 historians to participate in!), produced shows that have aired at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival and coached the hockey and cricket teams, as well as directing and producing Camp Hill's annual drama production with resounding success, most recently the production of Sweeney Todd



just last year. And the energy and enthusiasm with which Mr S throws himself into such duties is unbelievable – earning him the Ted Wragge Award for Lifetime Achievement in the West Midlands. It is evident that Mr Southworth is well

deserving of such accolade, so well done sir! Oh, and I'm told that his singing isn't half bad either.

Whether he can sing or not, all I know is that having been taught by him for the past 3 years, with another 2 years ahead of me, I can safely say that he is a credit to Camp Hill, and his truly limitless energy and kindness is an example to us all. And I am sure that the rest of the school, as well as Mr Southworth's pupils past and present, will agree with me. Happy Birthday, Southy. ●

## How to Shorten School Assemblies

Alex McCormick, alexm@pupilsvoice.com

CONTINUED FROM PG. 1

length of our assemblies much, much more than Dunbar United are. So, for your benefit, and the benefit of the school as a whole, I have highlighted just what these issues are, and what I believe must be done about them.

Firstly, fainting in assemblies, though a thankfully rare occurrence, can nevertheless disturb the assembly greatly and therefore slow down proceedings. Happily though, this problem is easily combated. I believe chocolate bars should be distributed to every student as they enter the hall for assembly, which, when eaten, would cause a temporary yet satisfactory rise in every student's blood sugar levels: enough to sustain the student's consciousness throughout the short assembly that follows. I am certain this solution would not only be very popular amongst students but would also be a practical and efficient means of solving the problem of fainting and keeping assemblies running smoothly.

By far the largest amount of time wasted in assemblies is time spent clapping. Almost fifteen seconds is spent applauding every single presentation the head makes, which is surely



a pointlessly prolonged period of time. In my opinion, just one single clap of the hands here would suffice: it still shows an appreciation and congratulation of the people involved without the endless and repetitive applause which currently drags on for much too long. I assure you that if everyone in the school were to do this in assemblies, you would be amazed at just how much time it saves!

Finally, the last big problem with our assemblies is the amount of time spent waiting for the headmaster. Mr. Roden takes about ten whole seconds to get from the doors of the hall to his throne, sorry I mean chair, on the stage, and he then takes another ten seconds to get down off the stage again. This is twenty whole seconds worth of our lives down the drain, every single assembly! I suggest that we speed this process up dramatically by

asking Mr. Roden to parachute into assembly from the clock tower each morning. This way, when every student is assembled and ready, the head would be able to simply jump from the top of the tower to the stage in no more than a second, at which point he would be able to begin speaking. To speed up the end

of assemblies just as effectively, the head's chair must be equipped with an ejector function, so Mr. Roden would only have to press a button once he has finished to be fired up into the air and out of view. I am sure we can all agree that this would not only save large amounts of time, but also make our school assemblies much more entertaining.

So, there were my few suggestions of how I believe we can shorten school assemblies. I believe that the issues I have addressed are major problems in our assemblies currently; so if you, like me, want to see these things changed, feel free to take the issues to the school council. Just maybe, if we can manage to get these new procedures in place, we will one day be able to enjoy our school assemblies, without feeling the urge to fall asleep about half way through. ●

# Wave March - Climate Change

Alex May, alexmay@pupilsvoice.com

Last Saturday, 5th December, between 20 and 50 thousand people descended on London to protest about climate change, calling on the government to take urgent and effective action to combat global warming: doing more at home, and trying to secure an agreement at the Copenhagen summit, unlikely though that seems.

The march started in Grosvenor Square at 1pm, headed by a banner-covered bus and over the course of two hours, it made its way to the Houses of Parliament. Protestors were encouraged to wear blue - rising sea levels could cause London to become flooded. While most people were content to wear blue, some people took it further and had costumes. There was a polar bear with a sign complaining about his habitat, a world, and even a dragon (Welsh, of course) held up by five people. There was also a multitude of banners and



placards: "Stop Climate Chaos", "Act fair, act fast", "Coal kills", and then some more thought-provoking ones such as "What will I tell my granddaughter?"

The Copenhagen summit has now started; nearly 200 countries will have representatives attending, and for the next couple of weeks, they will be discussing possible action on climate change. Some have



the hopeful view that legislation will be put in place to reduce emissions drastically (80% by 2050 being the long-term goal, in order to "stop runaway climate change" and limit global warming to 'just' 2 degrees centigrade); others the more cynical view that it will be all talk and no action, with Obama just being there for a photo opportunity.

Whatever the result of the discussion, action is needed at the grassroots level - although it will be all the more important if nothing is decided. That means ordinary people, like me and you, have to change our lifestyles to be less polluting. There is currently such a campaign - the 10:10 campaign (www.1010uk.org) aims to help people to reduce their personal carbon dioxide emissions by 10% by the end of 2010 (such a reduction is necessary to achieve the target of 80% by 2050). By signing up to the campaign, you are pledging such a reduction - and will also be helped along the way, as the website gives you tips and advice

on how to make your lifestyle greener: use the car less, recycle more, and eat less meat. A 10% reduction is easy; anyone can do it. There is no excuse not to.

The responsibility falls to you - what will you tell your granddaughter? ●

## The Drake Equation: Why we're all Doomed

Staszek Welsh, staszek@pupilsvoice.com

From UFO sightings to E.T., we've all heard of the concept of life 'out there', whether in the form of little green men or Dalek-like monsters. However, when moving away from the wonders of the silver screen and the idiocy of people who think weather balloons mark the beginning of the Martian invasion, counting the aliens that we could ever possibly communicate with is no mean feat. Of course, with our current technological restrictions, going out there and simply counting aliens is impossible. The only way to get a value is to estimate.

The Drake equation itself, formulated by Dr. Frank Drake in 1960, is one method of estimating the number of civilisations able to communicate with Earth. It is given by  $N = R^* \times f_p \times n_e \times f_l \times f_c \times L$ , where:

- $N$  is the number of civilisations communicating at any given time.
- $R^*$  is the rate at which new stars are forming.
- $f_p$  is the fraction of stars which have bodies orbiting.
- $n_e$  is the number of these bodies which can inhabit life.
- $f_l$  is the fraction of  $n_e$  on which life does actually arise.
- $f_c$  is the fraction of life which evolves to become intelligent life.
- $L$  is the fraction of intelligent civilisations which give



out signals of their existence.

- $L$  is the length of time that civilisations spend giving out these signals.

However, the actual estimates of these values can vary.  $R^*$  is the least disputed of the values, with recent estimates for the Milky Way coming out at around 7 per year. Since, to simplify things, we shall only be considering civilisations in our own galaxy, and to round the value off to a nicer number, we can then take  $R^*$  as 10.

$f_l$  is less certain, but astronomical data gives a value of around 40%. However, this could be much larger, since our current technology can only detect planets larger than Earth. For the purposes of this example, I will be taking  $f_p$  as 50%.  $n_e$  is more difficult to determine. Determining whether a planet is hospi-

table or not is harder than it may seem as there are many factors involved such as peak temperatures, atmospheric composition, having a permanent and safe energy source of some kind, etc. A common value taken for  $n_e$  is two planets per star.

$f_l$  was initially taken by Drake to be 1, but recent statistical arguments based on the time it took for humans to evolve puts the figure closer to a half.

$f_c$  can be very controversial, with some people saying life will always occur given enough time, i.e.  $f_c = 1$ , whereas others say that, on Earth, only humans out of the many millions of species has become intelligent, i.e.  $f_c$  is very small. To take a compromise, I will use a value of 10% for  $f_c$ .

$f_c$  can be argued in many ways, and, without having any experience of extraterrestrial cultures, can be difficult to gauge. Even if a civilisation were to develop the ability to send messages, whether they actually send them in a format which we, on Earth, can detect is another matter entirely. With these limitations in mind, I shall take the value of  $f_c$  to be 10%.

But it is  $L$ , the length of time that a civilisation spends giving out signals, which I

wish to concentrate on. If we substitute all our current values into the equation:  $N = 0.05 \times L$ . If we were to take  $L$  to be a very tiny value of just 100 years for civilisations to give out signals, we get  $N$  to be 5 civilisations, meaning that, if we to last 100 years or more from the date of our first signal sent into space, we should be detecting 4 other alien civilisations, which we aren't.

More harrowing is, if we say that  $N$  should be 1, since we are the only civilisation that we can detect, then  $L$  comes out to just 20 years, meaning the human race should have died out by now. This is known as the Fermi paradox, where we aren't detecting as many civilisations as we should be.

Now, of course, there have been many assumptions made in the values going into the equation, and the equation itself is only a rough estimate. However, from the values we've got, a very bleak future is predicted for mankind. And with the constant worry of global warming, the occasional threat of worldwide nuclear warfare, and oil supplies quickly running dry, we, as humankind, had better watch where we step. ●

# Getting Personal: Mr Russell

James Jordan, Hasan Ali and Sanjeevan Ghag, [theteam@pupilsvoice.com](mailto:theteam@pupilsvoice.com)

CONTINUED FROM PG. 1

France to tour the cathedrals and look at the architecture and it was on one of those trips that I remember discovering French food, for the first time. I really enjoyed that, and fell in love with French culture.

**PV:** How do you like your steaks?  
**Mr R.:** If I was ordering over here, I would say rare and if I was ordering in France I would say "à point" meaning medium because in France, if they could get away with it, they would simply wave the steak at the oven at about 20 paces.

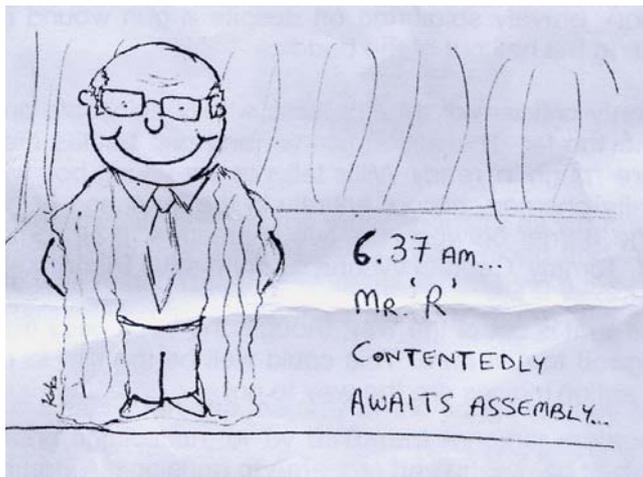
**PV:** What is your favourite meal?  
**Mr R.:** I'm not sure I've got one... A starter of Burgundy Snails, followed by a classic peppered steak and finishing with a "Mont Blanc", which is puréed chestnut paste.

**PV:** What's your favourite book?  
**Mr R.:** I always enjoyed 19th century Russian novels (that's the other reason I kept up the Russian) – Dostoevsky's "Crime and Punishment", "The Brothers Karamazov", Tolstoy's "War and Peace" and "Anna Karenina" are big ones, they deal with big issues. In French literature anything by Flaubert and Sartre, but I also like reading thrillers by Boileau-Norcejac – Hitchcock based several of his films on their novels.

**PV:** What's your favourite film or TV show?  
**Mr R.:** I tend not to go to the cinema much - my wife keeps saying we never go out. The best film I think I saw was Kurosawa's "Seven Samurai" inspired by Dostoevsky. As for TV programmes, I like "Horizon" and "QI" and not very much else really. I get a poor reception and I have an old 12" VTR set with a round screen, we don't really watch it much. In terms of radio, Radio 4 is a national treasure – I listen to "In Our Time", "I'm sorry I haven't a clue" and "The Today Programme"

**PV:** What is your most prized possession?  
**Mr R.:** (no pause) Hi-fi system. I have an old vinyl based one. I have a vinyl record collection of classical music on approximately 3000 LPs, and I still collect them. I was offered a job in hi-fi retail at one point, while I was teaching and didn't take it. I'm very interested in how to reproduce a natural acoustic and became convinced that those old transduction methods of vinyl produce a much, much better signal than you get from digital sources. Strangely enough, with photography I've gone the other way – I'm fully digital; but not with sound where I'm a purist. Analogue rules.

**PV:** What's your favourite piece of classical music?  
**Mr R.:** There are so many. Any one of half a dozen of the



MR RUSSELL was famed for his eagerness to get to assemblies on time.

Mozart piano concertos numbers 19-24, "Requiem", Shostakovic symphonies, Strauss' "Alpine Symphony", Bach's double violin concerto and "Magnificat", Haydn symphonies and quartets, Mahler's "Symphony number 4"

**PV:** How did you become interested in cryptic crosswords?  
**Mr R.:** The fact I couldn't do them annoyed me. I started out trying to work out how to do them. My father-in-law and my mother-in-law were keen crossworders, and they showed me one or two of the 'rules of the game.' Once you knew those rules, you could see ways into them. What really appealed to me was the idea that you have a crossword when you took a first look at it, you can't do a thing on it; your mind's just completely blank. And then you find a way in via one little clue, and two or three days later you've winkled the whole thing open and you can solve the whole thing. I find that very attractive. It's also a cheap way of killing time on long journeys; you can be on a train, two thirds of the way through a crossword and not realise it's been nine hours!

**PV:** Do you have any best friends amongst the teachers?  
**Mr R.:** I couldn't possibly say...

**PV:** Any enemies?  
**Mr R.:** None that I know of, although that might be over optimistic.

**PV:** What sporting interests do you have?  
**Mr R.:** The racquet sports mainly, in terms of participation. I used to play in the Birmingham B leagues at tennis, in a small club, but then sustained a knee problem, which had to be operated on, and that really put paid to tennis at any sort of club level. So now I just potter around on a badminton court. Anybody who can think through their tactics, is half-fit, or even just able-bodied can beat me quite comfortably.

**PV:** When you were at school, did you see yourself as a good

pupil or a rebel?  
**Mr R.:** I suppose I would have been an archetypal good pupil, but that didn't stop me being caned a couple of times, well slipped. I was in the express stream that did all their O-levels and A-levels a year early. I got slipped for flicking paper at a P.E. teacher's backside, he was bending over and it was too good a target to resist! I thought I would never get this chance again in my life and thought 'Hell's bells, let's just do it.' But then you have to accept the consequences and corporal punishment was quite acceptable in those days.

*"I got slipped for flicking paper at a P.E. teacher's backside"*

**PV:** What newspapers or magazines do you read?  
**Mr R.:** Not many magazines, I suppose *Practical Photographer*, *The Independent* and *The Guardian* as newspapers.

**PV:** Which celebrity do you fancy most?  
**Mr R.:** I don't think I know any of the celebrities! When you see these programmes like 'I'm a Celebrity...' and they do trailers for them, I don't recognise anybody who is in the jungle (having originally said "on that island") at all. I despise celebrity culture, they seem to be famous for being famous. I prefer people to be famous for doing things.

**PV:** If you were the headmaster, what changes would you make?  
**Mr R.:** If I'd got ideas along those lines I'd have applied to be headmaster, as I didn't have many ideas, it might account for the fact I didn't. I think I'd try and find some way of impressing on the boys that 'softer' skills count for quite a lot and communication skills as well. I don't mean foreign languages, I mean broadly. I think boys

here, by the nature of the selection process, are very heavily geared towards maths and science at a very convergent focus, and I think they lose out later having not necessarily developed communication skills. For example, there was a boy a couple of years back who blew his interview at Birmingham University for Medicine. He was put on the back foot; he was completely fazed because they pressed him about the fiction he read. The problem was, he could not see the point of the question.

**PV:** How did you find being Deputy Headmaster?  
**Mr R.:** Just about the best job in the school. I got to see the end product; people getting their A Level results and going on to university. I didn't have to carry the can which the Head does, which is a very onerous responsibility. The Head has the sort of job where you can lose a lot of sleep. You have to decide whether to exclude pupils and the future success and well-being of the school is in your hands. As a Deputy, it is very pressured job, but you don't carry the can like that, so you've got an easier life than the Head, but benefit from the positives at the end.

**PV:** Why did you give up being a Deputy?  
**Mr R.:** I suppose that fifteen years is long enough to have a go at it and really, you need a change in the end. I'd always wanted to stop when I could still do it. I wanted people to ask me that question, 'why did you stop being a Deputy?' rather than 'when are you retiring?' When they're asking you that, you know you've hung along for too long. That coincided with winning the *Sunday Times* School of the Year Award, so it seemed a nice high point to call it a day.

**PV:** So do you think you've still got a few years left as a teacher?  
**Mr R.:** Oh, I'd think so. It doesn't sound it with a voice like this (he has a cold) but I hope to potter on. I'm getting back to basics now; I'm getting back to teaching French and focusing on that, whereas as Deputy, that is fairly low down your priority list because there are lots of other things making demands on your time.

**PV:** You said 'back to basics,' on the subject of politics who do you think will win the next election? (Famous John Major speech).  
**Mr R.:** I think either the Con-

servatives will win or it'll be a hung parliament.

**PV:** What do you think of Gordon Brown?

**Mr R.:** I think he's a bright character but I don't think he's got the personality to make a success of that job. I think to be a political leader, irrespective of what you believe, you've got to be able to project an image and I think he is pretty hopeless of projecting an image that is going to win the next election. I think he may have a lot of integrity to him and he might mean well, but the reality of politics tends to dispose of people like that.

**PV:** What are your hobbies apart from photography and cross-words?

**Mr R.:** I love cooking, but travelling and reading also. I get through masses and masses of books. Classical music is the other one; I'm a season ticket holder for the CBSO. My wife plays in a couple of orchestras; quartets and quintets, and I go round supporting them and I photograph her orchestra when they are on tour.

**PV:** You say you like travelling, have you got any plans to travel to any exotic locations?

**Mr R.:** Well, there was that trip to

the Arctic Circle, currently we're finalising a trip to return there and I want to take a trip next February to see the Northern Lights. But this means going up into the Arctic Circle in February and there's certain downsides to it apart from the temperature- you might not actually see the Northern Lights! There'll be so little daylight; you're not going to see much else either! But we're sort of half committed to doing that.

**PV:** When you retire, would you like to stay in England.

**Mr R.:** I think I would because of my family. If you'd asked me

when I was a bachelor, I'd have loved to have lived in France, but I've got too many roots here and too many other people to think about. I can see myself pottering around doing this and that. I already work once a month in a charity shop, for Oxfam, sorting through and valuing their classical records. I'd assume I'll be doing more of that.

**PV:** Can you sum yourself up in three words?

**Mr R.:** Five words: too fat to play badminton. ●

## Student Council Report 3/12/09 to 10/12/09

James Jordan, james@pupilsvoice.com

After the excitement of the house quiz, Thursday lunchtimes welcomed back the student council for the first time in a month. The first issue was that of the mobile phone policy in which most people agreed on, yet still had to discuss at length, that for the sixth formers, they are permitted a phone on them but if it goes off, punishment is at the teacher's discretion. For members of the lower school, the current situation would mean that they should not have a phone on them in lessons, but in the event that a phone should go off, there

would be a short-term confiscation. For repeat offenders, there will first be another confiscation (possibly for a longer length of time), after that there should be a detention for each offence, but at the start of each new school year, any previous offences would be ignored (as with 'lates').

We then discussed the issue of a non-uniform day, both the date this term and the charity which money would be raised for, as well as the charity for whom donations would be collected at the Christmas concert at All Saints' Church, Kings

Heath. An informal agreement was in place that we would collect for Acorns Children's Hospice at the concert, and a local homeless charity for non-uniform day. A number of dates were shortlisted.

With the information that a representative was due to meet with us the following week, the meeting was adjourned, and less important issues were forwarded to next term.

The next week, there was to be no representative. There was also to be no non-uniform day this term, due to the need

of an assembly to explain the charity and the lack of notice that would be given. It has been verbally guaranteed that there will be two non-uniform days next term, from none other than everyone's favourite Dunbar United-supporting teacher.

After these less than positive bombshells, a number of smaller (and in many cases, time-wasting) suggestions were discussed, varying from a rolling news channel to be shown in the hall during cold and wet winter lunchtimes, to a new Gurdwara to be built for school use. ●

## 6th Former of the month - Sam Groves

Hasan Ali and Sanjeevan Ghag, theteam@pupilsvoice.com

**PV:** If you could live in any country what would it be (apart from England)?

**Sgrov:** Your brackets there ruin my answer, after all, England is where it's at. But with that removed as an option, I'd have to say Canada, though not having been there myself it seems to me to be the second most English country, because even the Scottish don't want to live in Scotland.

**PV:** What is your favourite cheese and why?

**Sgrov:** Despite the fact it's French, sorry to any staff who are unfortunate enough to have this ailment, Roulé is great. It's creamy and stuffed full of garlic and herbs, this means as an added bonus, this keeps away Edward Cullen.

**PV:** Which TV show character do you think best represents you and why?

**Sgrov:** Everyone loves 'Friends' and I'm no different in that regard, I've also been told I'm a very Chandler-like character. Unless you happen to be the head boy who has decided that I am Ted from Scrubs, very flattering indeed.

**PV:** Favourite catchphrase?

**Sgrov:** I would say probably the one where they unveil parts of the screen until one of the contestants gets the right saying, it's a good'un.

**PV:** Fave book/film/tv?

**Sgrov:** I'm afraid that I'm repeating myself once again. The number 17 top rated film according to IMDb: Fight Club. When you get to the ripe old age of eighteen and are then allowed to watch it, it is not an experience that should be missed. This film contains a twist so amazing that even when the book was written by Chuck Palahniuk, he did not know about it until he was about two-thirds of the way through writing it, now, tell me that's not amazing.

**PV:** What is your worst quality/characteristic?

**Sgrov:** My ability to kill off even the best of jokes is unseen in other humans.

**PV:** Favourite band?

**Sgrov:** Arctic Monkeys, hands down. A legendary set of three albums, each in a different style and yet each album is brilliant. I'm still not bored of them despite the colossal play count i have on itunes.

**PV:** Who would you turn gay for?

**Sgrov:** I'll be honest, and say the gayest possible answer to this question, Brad Pitt. The man's a legend and let's face it, those rippling pecks as seen in fight club are wanted by any woman

and envied by any man.

**PV:** If you could live as a celebrity as day, who would you be and why?

**Sgrov:** For rippling pecks, not to mention Angelina, I'm going to cop out with Brad Pitt again.

**PV:** Do you 'Max It Up'?

**Sgrov:** No way, Dr Pepper is the best without doubt.

**PV:** Alesha Dixon or Cheryl Cole?

**Sgrov:** I reckon Cheryl has it in the face, but I reckon she's way too thin. Besides I think I'm sick of seeing her face everywhere, so Alesha as the lesser of two evils.

**PV:** Zac Efron or Taylor Lautner?

**Sgrov:** You won't be able to out me that easily. ●



SAM GROVES 6th former of the month, Decemeber 2009

## Birmingham Democracy Forum 2009

Sanjeevan Ghag, sanj@pupilsvoice.com

Fifteen members of the Debating Society made the short journey north to the Birmingham Council Chambers. The Rotary Club of Birmingham had organised a Democracy Forum with around ten schools from the local area attending including all of the King Edward VI Foundation grammar schools.

The event began with a short speech from the Lord Mayor, who highlighted the problems that the nation faced due to the recession. A short multiple choice quiz followed, where the students were asked to select answers to a range of questions. When asked who they thought would win the next election, the majority voted Labour, by a considerable margin ahead of the Conservatives, which is interesting as general support for the two parties is extremely close. It would appear that in Birmingham at least, Labour have the support of teenagers (although this doesn't mean anything as they can't vote!)



A version of Question Time followed, where each school would have the opportunity to ask two questions to the panel, which comprised of Gisela Stuart MP (Labour), Jo Barker (Conservative), Tim Hodgson (Lib Dem) and Dr Philip White-man (an academic).

Camp Hill's Matthew Mears and Rehan Mirza volunteered to question the panel. Matthew was interested in the panel's views on the European Referendum, whilst Rehan's question was regarding the

grammar school system. However, it was King Edward VI Aston School who won the competition. Their student, Giles, decided to blow his top and, in a ranting manner, criticised Gisela Stuart for the government's failings over the creation of high speed rail links. The panel decided that this 'rant' demonstrated some form of 'debating skill' and bravery to an extent, even though the question itself was rather lacklustre.

All in all, the event was a beneficial experience to those involved. The students were able to take heed of the views of a politician and listen to similar and opposing opinions offered by members of the Conservative and Liberal Democrat parties. Camp Hill's delegation were able to observe a debate and therefore develop their debating skills. The Rotary Club did a fine job organising the event and were duly thanked for doing so. ●

## Swine Flu – the worst kind of Christmas present?

Joe Yate, joe@pupilsvoice.com

Last summer, as I am sure you are all aware, swine flu was declared a pandemic (i.e. an outbreak of disease that spreads throughout the world) by the World Health Organisation and... well, you know what happened as well as I. People were terrified as the number of swine flu cases rocketed, wondering if they would be next; the government printed leaflets of that man sneezing; doctors were swamped by patients who thought they had the virus; and breathing masks were distributed by the army in Mexico (such as the very fetching example to your right).

Some parents of young children have infamously tried to infect their children at the notorious 'swine flu parties' – the reasoning being that by making sure they contracted it in the summer, they would be less vulnerable in the winter. Now, as the first scare passed with the end of the summer, you may be wondering why I'm talking about swine flu – surely this news is well and truly outdated?

Well, as you may have noticed, it is now winter; and people are more likely to catch viruses. If you ask Dr White, she will say that it is due to the fact that we spend less time in the sun, so produce less vitamin D (which is necessary to maintain a strong immune system), and the fact that we huddle together inside (increasing the chance of the virus being transmitted); whereas if you ask Pupils' Voice's very own Nishant Prasad, he'll tell you that it's due to fewer UV rays killing fewer viruses, so they have more chance to spread. We may never know the truth, but the fact remains: we are more likely to catch viruses in winter – including swine flu. The second wave of swine flu is currently in progress in the northern hemisphere – in some places (e.g. the USA) vaccination is underway, and case numbers are climbing fast. From 20th-27th November, the number of cases climbed by more than 1000, a 12% increase in the total number of cases, all in one week. Now while there is a great deal of scare-mongering present in society, there is also a great deal of complacency – some people just do not understand the risk that swine flu poses, and have serious misconceptions.

For example, some say you are safe if you are healthy. Wrong – roughly 20 million people (a third of the popula-

## Interview with a politician - Gisela Stuart MP

Sanjeevan Ghag, sanj@pupilsvoice.com and Robert Smith, robert@pupilsvoice.com

Following the Democracy Forum at Birmingham Council Chambers, an opportunity to interview a prominent Labour MP presented itself to your correspondents.

Gisela Stuart is the Labour MP for Edgbaston, Birmingham. She was born in Germany but moved to the UK in the 1970s. She graduated with a law degree from the London School of Economics and has previously worked in pensions law.

Stuart won her seat in the 1997 election and was a junior health minister until 2001. She has accompanied Tony Blair on televised visits and has sat on the European Convention's 13-strong presidium. She is now a member of the UK Parliament's Foreign Affairs Select Committee.

In 1999, Stuart was privileged to represent the UK government in Dresden for the 10th anniversary of the re-unification of Germany. When it is considered that France's representative was their President, Jacques Chirac, it can be seen that this was a significant honour.

**PV:** What were your main reasons for pursuing a career in politics?

**GS.:** Well, politicians give a lot of answers and always want to change things. Most people know that they want to be a politician. I worked in pensions law and wanted to put my knowledge of the law into practice.

**PV:** What would your advice be to anyone wishing to pursue a career in politics?



**GS.:** Get a job and create a life for yourself first.

**PV:** What do your day to day tasks involve?

**GS.:** It is virtually impossible to follow a set daily routine. The day ends differently to the way that you thought it would initially. I travel to London on a Sunday and work from Monday to Thursday. I spend Friday and Saturday in my constituency. I'm usually at work at 9:30 and if I get home for Newsnight, then that is good for me. I am currently in the Foreign Affairs Committee and have travelled to Afghanistan, Saudi Arabia and North Korea. I have an attachment to the Royal Navy and attend many conferences. It really goes from 'the sublime to the ridiculous.' I hold advice sessions four times a month. You talk to a wide range of people from those who say their rubbish hasn't been collected to those claiming a 'miscarriage of justice.'

**PV:** Does it concern you when the issue of MP's expenses is raised?

**GS.:** We brought it on ourselves really. For 30 years, parliament had not been addressing the issues over salaries and expenses properly. Ultimately, you will now have people in the Courts and their reputations will be destroyed.

**PV:** What do you think of Gordon Brown's tenure as Prime Minister?

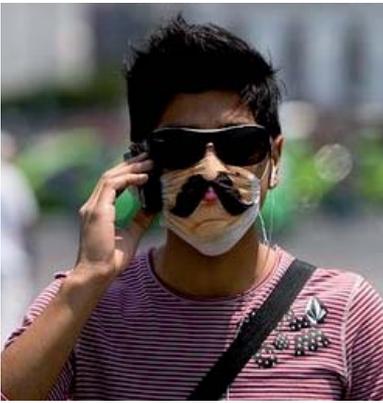
**GS.:** He hasn't been very lucky. It was always going to be difficult for Gordon as he was the only Chancellor in history to have had as much power as he did under Tony Blair. His fatal error, and one that he will regret for years to come, is that he did not call a general election two years ago as he had promised.

**PV:** Do you believe that Labour will win the next election?

**GS.:** It is so close this year that you can't call it. Twelve years ago, people didn't love Labour and now, people don't love David Cameron. It is a similar situation to the 1992 election, when the two parties were 'neck and neck' and Labour thought that they had won the election. Obviously though, John Major and the Conservatives did.

**PV:** What has been your greatest day as a politician?

**GS.:** Getting elected for the first time and being asked to become a minister. Also, I was asked to represent the UK government in Dresden at the 10th anniversary of the re-unification of Germany. What a journey it has been for me so far! ●



JOSÉ WAS PROUD of his new facial hair

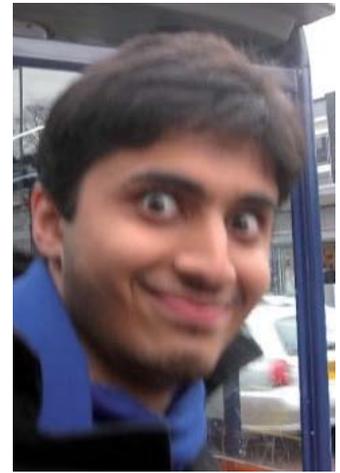
tion) are expected to get this strain of swine flu, in a worst case scenario – most of them without serious underlying medical conditions. Even if you don't have medical conditions, having swine flu could be more damaging than normal flu (for example, if you have lung cancer, you are more likely to suffer) though I would imagine that this does not apply to most people reading the article, so on to something a tad more relevant.

Swine flu is just like normal flu – the only difference is that few people have immu-

nity to it – and as a result, it has spread around the world like wildfire. This also means that your immune system will be unable to fight it as effectively, and so the virus is more likely to be lethal – especially the very nasty variant that can cause pneumonia. It is small wonder, then, that the NHS is so terrified about the rapid spread of swine flu: if the H1N1 became uncontained in a hospital environment, it could wreak havoc among the wards. A recent (though perhaps incomplete) study conducted by researchers in Australia, Italy, and the USA showed the medication Tamiflu, used all over the UK to try and combat swine flu, may not be as effective as previously thought. These findings, published in the British Medical Journal, could be catastrophic if they prove that Tamiflu has little effect upon alleviating the symptoms of swine flu in adults – after all, with the vaccine so scarce, it is used extensively – and if it is no longer effective, it will become even harder to treat this so-called 'killer flu'. Killer flu? While the

idea of a lethal flu virus may seem strange – after all, it only seriously affects the elderly, doesn't it? – killer flu is very real. In 1918, with the close of the First World War, an outbreak of Spanish Flu devastated the population of Europe. It is estimated that 50-100 million were killed worldwide – far more than the 15 million who died in the First World War.

So, will swine flu become the new Spanish Flu (having been described as 'the greatest medical holocaust of all history'), and wipe out millions? So far, the total death toll is 10 074, and still climbing, with an approximate 12% increase in deaths per week. Hopefully, we will be able to keep the swine flu under control – we must remember that in 1918, the world had been too occupied with the First World War to deal with it (apart from denying it press coverage – this would damage morale), as well as lacking modern medical technology, techniques and expertise that has given us the chance to try and prevent swine flu from killing thousands more. Even though several schools have been hit (some quite severely) by swine



HE'S RESISTANT - are YOU?

flu, Camp Hill remains relatively unscathed in the face of this biological onslaught. So rather than worry you about swine flu, I hope this article has helped to alleviate some of the misconceptions surrounding it. I must conclude therefore, by saying: have a very merry, swine flu-free Christmas, readers! ●

## Extinction of the Decade – The Poaching Predicament

Joe Yate, joe@pupilsvoice.com

With the end of this month comes not just a new year, but a new decade, and of course, a considerable number of Pupils' Voice issues in the future! However, as we arrive at the end of the decade, it is only fitting that we pause for some reflection. Now, following the surprising success of 'Cheese of the Month' (in the esteemed Year 7 section), I have decided to address a slightly more macabre, albeit more significant issue that plagues the modern world – poaching.

Many of you reading this will think that poaching is just something that annoys farmers, or enrages members of Greenpeace to the point of insanity; however, it is a much more serious issue than many people think. Take, for example, the plight of the West African Black Rhinoceros; in 2006, it was officially declared an extinct species by the International Union for Conservation of Nature. This animal that once numbered in the thousands has now died – despite once roaming free across the Savannah of west-central Africa, it has been hunted mercilessly. This is not something new, as a considerable number of animals have been hunted to extinction by man – take the infamous dodo, for example, or the passenger pigeon (which once lived in flocks that numbered in their billions). But the fact that something akin to this has happened so recently, in an age where we are more educated about such environmental matters, seems to make such wholesale slaughter all the more disturbing.



Now, some people say that poachers are often forced to kill rhinos and other such animals because they have no choice; that for them it is a choice between shooting and having food, or not killing and going hungry. However, poaching (especially in Africa) is far more than just a few people trying to feed themselves – poaching is a global business dominated by profit. For example, in Madagascar, home to all 99 species of lemurs (more than 90% of which are endangered), hunters across the country are butchering these animals for food which they sell worldwide. Meat of any wild animals that have been poached is called 'bushmeat', and is sold not to people who are starving, but as delicacies. Coupled with deforestation (90% of Madagascar's rainforest has been cut down), poaching could seriously damage the Madagascan ecosystem, which could affect tourism, as well as meaning lemurs and other Madagascan animals are even more likely to disappear forever – a terrible tragedy, I

am sure you will all agree.

But this is just the tip of the iceberg when it comes to poaching – and some of the most terrible crimes are committed in Africa. "Why Africa", I hear you ask? Africa has the largest number of 'interesting' animals, such as giraffes, elephants, gazelles, lions and literally hundreds more. These magnificent animals are treated in the most barbaric fashion and are subject to abject cruelty. Elephants are killed for their feet (which are made into waste-paper baskets) and their ivory tusks; lions and leopards for their fur; giraffes for their tails (to make fly swats) and rhinos, of course, for their horns, which are used in Chinese homeopathic remedies. Though this seems dreadful enough, it happens on an incomprehensible scale – in one raid on a poacher's base in Nairobi National Park, 1989, the President of Kenya personally burned 12 tons of elephant ivory. This came from approximately 100 elephants. When you realise that such

raids happen all over Africa (but especially in the East and South), it really is astounding how people are able to do such things. Especially when they often don't wait for the animals to die before they remove their tails or horns and often trap the animals in wire snares, or pits with poisoned stakes at the bottom that could leave animals dying in agony for days on end.

And one of these animals has been the West African Black Rhino – one of Africa's six subspecies of rhinoceros. It had been hunted so heavily since the 1900s, that by 2000, only ten were left alive. Although there was an intense survey of Cameroon in 2006, no traces of them were found. "As a result this subspecies has been tentatively declared as extinct," said Dr Martin Brooks, the chairman of the African Rhino Specialist Group at the IUCN's Species Survival Commission.

Fortunately, when former Kenyan President Daniel Arap Moi torched the tusks, the demand for ivory fell, and as a result, elephant poaching has declined worldwide. So even though it may be too late to save the West African Black Rhino, something can be done to aid the hundreds of animals who are endangered by illegal poaching. While this rhino may be gone, we can only hope that the next few decades are not littered with similar extinctions as other animals also stream into the black void of extinction. ●

# Regional Schools Challenge Quiz

James Jordan, james@pupilsvoice.com

On Wednesday 25th November, eight boys travelled to KES to take part in the regional round of The National Schools Challenge Quiz. After being welcomed into the dining hall, we enjoyed tea, sandwiches and cake. As we learnt which groups we had been put in, our acting organiser in the absence of Mr. Hill, Andrew Briggs, gave us a motivational team talk: "We've got to beat KES because they're KES, and the Girls' High School because they're girls."

An invigorated Camp Hill then went to their respective groups' rooms; Camp Hill 1 of Andrew "Beard" Briggs, Robert Smith, Matthew Hall and Sanjay Nath to play KEHS thirds and Solihull firsts, and Camp Hill seconds of your correspondent, Sanjeevan Ghag, Robert Walters and Ed Thompson.

The group stage consisted of five groups of three, with each team playing the others in a one-on-one match, with the winner of group going through to the next round. Having seen the less than challenging sample questions, spirits were high among the

seconds. When the practice question of "At which ground do Sheffield Wednesday play?" stumped the other two teams in the group, our hope was even greater. Despite some inconsistency from the quiz master, the other teams played out their match, a comfortable win for KES thirds, who we were to play next. It appeared that football was their only weakness. Nevertheless, we approached the match with optimism.

Our optimism was ill-directed. It started badly, and a recovery never seemed to be on the cards. A plethora of literature questions would prove to be our downfall, as well as a lack of experience with buzzers. It became apparent that there was actually a 'technique' to buzzer rounds, with opponents even having their own signature moves, most notably a powerful swipe with the right hand displayed by one of their seniors. Despite this, a scoreline of roughly 720-130 (it's one we've tried to forget) is hard to ignore, and highlighted the gulf in class between the sides.

After some hand-shakes

and sarcastic remarks from KES thirds, we were to play KEHS firsts, in our last chance to prove that attending a fee-paying school does not necessarily mean you are better at quizzes. The scores were fairly close in the early stages, and although Camp Hill did not have the lead at any stage, with the score at 180-210, we were once again showing some signs of confidence, and thoughts of a win rang in our heads. However, a recurrence of the literature theme would again prove our downfall, as well as luck of earning the easy bonus questions, which always seemed to make an appearance when KEHS answered a starter correctly (admittedly, answering more of them did help their chances). Despite our oppositions inability to say the word 'moraine' (they could spell it, but had trouble getting past 'mo'), they would ultimately win 560-230. At least the handshakes were far more modest, a manner which reflected the defeat.

The seconds traipsed back to the dining hall, embarrassed but jovial, with the hope that Camp Hill firsts had managed what we could not. They

hadn't. Though the losses were narrower, they also failed to win either of their games. This did have the disadvantage of them feeling as though they could have won it, and chose to aim their frustrations at Robert Smith for answering before the captain gave him permission to do so.

With the evening not even half-completed, we were out of the competition. However, the fun was not over, and four of us stayed to watch the remaining rounds and scout the opposition if we are to return next year. KES firsts were the eventual winners, beating KES thirds in the final to qualify for the inter-regional competition. Many thanks to Mr. Jack for taking some of us there, and to Mr Carman, who not only had to take us there and look after us but also suffer the humiliation of our defeats. ●

## Senior House Quiz 2009

Sanjeevan Ghag, sanj@pupilsvoice.com

The Senior House Quiz commenced in November after a successful inauguration the previous year. There was an added incentive for the teams as the results of the competition would contribute towards the House Championship standings. A new 'buzzer round' was implemented, which increased interest prior to the event. As in the previous quiz, there would be three sets of matches in the competition, with each house playing each other once. Each house was to field four players in each match. There were five rounds in each match; two individual rounds, two team rounds (one picture round) and a lucky dip round (with the use of buzzers).

The teams for the quiz were as follows:

Beaufort: Paul Thomas (c), Sam Hillman, Alex Riley, Robert Smith, Alex Taylor, Nick West, Gary Zhang

Howard: Matthew Mears (c), Sanjeevan Ghag, Rehan Mirza, Timothy Shao, David Todd, Alec Walmsley

Seymour: Aled Walker (c), Andrew Briggs, Chris Carter, James Jordan, Liam O'Brien

Position	House	Played	Won	Lost	Correct Answers for	Correct Answers against	Correct Answers difference	Points
1 <sup>st</sup>	Beaufort	3	3	0	105	82	+23	6
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Seymour	3	2	1	91	90	+1	4
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Tudor	3	1	2	92	107	-15	2
4 <sup>th</sup>	Howard	3	0	3	79	88	-9	0

Tudor: Nathan Brown (c), Raj Atkar, Alistair Carr, Inderveer Kang, Arun Verma

In the first match of the tournament, Seymour pipped Howard 26-25. After the first two rounds, Howard held the advantage by two points. However, Seymour fought back in the collective nouns and cities rounds to thwart Howard. Captain Aled Walker's performance in the lucky dip round brought about the comeback.

In the other result, Beaufort beat Tudor 38-32. Beaufort dominated in the Olympic cities and mountain ranges rounds to seal the tie.

Howard played Beaufort next in the second set of matches. Beaufort dominated the early rounds and it was only a large win in the lucky dip round that

saved Howard from a crushing defeat. Final score Howard 24 Beaufort 30.

The other fixture saw Tudor face Seymour in what was dubbed the 'Battle of the Mathematicians', as captains Nathan Brown and Aled Walker led their houses against one another. It was Aled though who celebrated victory as Seymour ran out comprehensive victors with a 39-28 win.

In the final round of fixtures, Tudor matched up against Howard in a dead-rubber game. Again, Howard narrowly lost, 32-30 on this occasion. Anticipation levels were high going into the final match of the tournament. Beaufort and Seymour, who had both won two games, faced each other in a winner takes all, battle of the titans. Beaufort demonstrated a superior knowledge of Grand Theft Auto titles and

sporting venues to seal the tie by 37 points to 26, which in the end was a rather comprehensive victory.

Beaufort were crowned champions of the 2nd Senior House Quiz. Both Robert Smith and Alex Taylor were instrumental to their house as they recorded 16 individual points each. Aled Walker of Seymour also achieved this feat. Thanks must be given to Mr G Hill, who superbly organised the quiz and assumed the role of quizmaster. We must also thank him for having set up the competition at Camp Hill last year, a move that was greatly welcomed by general knowledge enthusiasts. ●

# THE NOUGHTIES

## Noughties: Man's greatest decade or a false dawn? Year 7 of the

Ten years ago, nations across the globe united in their joy at the beginning of a new millennium. For how many has the joy materialised or, like the Millennium Dome, been a meaningless void?

Robert Smith, robert@pupilsvoice.com

I'm sure all readers here will be able to remember the sense of excitement felt universally by the dawn of a new millennium. Yet a look back at some of the events of the last decade does not exactly give cause for celebration. Events such as 9/11, the Iraq war and the tsunami stick in the back of the mouth as we begin to appreciate that this decade was really "business as usual" in terms of war and natural disasters-hardly a new era of peace and fraternity.

The computer geeks amongst us might point to the "staggering" advances in technology as evidence of the progress of humanity. After all, this decade as brought us the iPhone, Facebook and cloud computing among many other things I am too computer illiterate to mention (just ask Nishant Prasad to fill you in). I merely wish to point out, though, that none of these changes seem to have made us any happier and that surely the truly pioneering inventions of this sort (i.e. computer, mobile phone) were all made in the 20th century, not the 21st.

It also seems to me this has

become the decade of pointless introspection. With ever more people writing down ever more pointless thoughts on websites like Twitter it has become apparent that we are becoming increasingly obsessed with the mundane goings-on of each other (a disease possibly spawned by Big Brother). This has also manifested itself in a virulent celebrity culture as we all concern ourselves about Katie Price (who draws in 14,200,000 results on Google) and her marital status or Simon Cowell's latest Botox. Perhaps a reaction to this frivolity has been a growing sense of nostalgia about ages past - just look at the viewing figures for *Ashes to Ashes*, *Cranford* or *The Tudors*.

So, am I right? Is it time to write off the Noughties as one of the most depressing decades ever? Well, maybe not quite. Of course, there are still 2 weeks left and who knows what awe-inspiring events may occur in the interim. But amidst all this doom and gloom, a few beacons still shine rays of hope. Barack Obama's presidency provides hope to all disillusioned liberals out there and reas-

urance that the dwindling force of sanity still prevails (just) in America. Technology has certainly made our lives much more convenient, so I should not criticise it excessively. President Bush's refusal to adopt the Kyoto Protocol now looks anachronistic, as finally the globe is facing up to the stark realities of climate change. The global economy, so long a story of the excess of bankers and recession is beginning to look up (though these are still problems.) And let us not forget: for all the vanity of celebrity culture there have been some notable cultural highlights. Whether it be the hilarious *Borat*, the epic *Lord of the Rings*, the revival of *Doctor Who*, the rise of Dizzee Rascal, Beyonce, JLS and Simon Rattle, (take your pick) *Harry Potter* films, *A Short History of Nearly Everything* and the magnificent opening ceremony to the 2008 Olympic Games, this decade has had its share of culture. Of course, Camp Hill goes from strength to strength and that can be no bad thing for us all. Finally, Christmas is so coming- so smile, knowing you are ten years older and wiser than you were at the millennium. ●

## Month - Oscar McNaughton

We interview another Camp Hill Victim

Hasan Ali, hasan@pupilsvoice.com, Sanjeevan Ghag, sanj@pupilsvoice.com

Following a rigorous selection process, Oscar McNaughton was chosen as the December Year 7 of the month. Oscar has a rather high number of vowels in his name (he has five!) and is held in high regard by his contemporaries.

Oscar is a keen sportsman and enjoys swimming, rugby and football. He is an Aston Villa fan and regularly watches them play at Villa Park. When not supporting his local team, he can be found reading, particularly the Harry Potter series and the Cherub spy academy novels by Robert Muchamore. Other interests include listening to music (he's a fan of Linkin Park) and rare cheeses, such as 'stinky French cheese' which your correspondent has found common amongst Year 7s.

'Awesomeness' is a strong word but Oscar feels he revels in it. His secret is simple: 'just be yourself.' Other factors which could contribute to this are his love of Coke, his blonde hair and his hatred for the Jonas Brothers.

Around Christmas time, the new boys will, to an extent, have settled in to life at Camp Hill. Oscar has liked his time at the school and made many friends in the short period that he has been here. He finds Joe Harvey 'slightly odd,' but has sights firmly on the future, stating that his plans for the next year involve 'being in year 8.'



## Moment of the decade

Sanjeevan Ghag, sanj@pupilsvoice.com

There can be only one moment for any Liverpool fan. Cast your mind back to the 25th May 2005, the date of the UEFA Champions League Final in Istanbul. Liverpool faced an AC Milan side that had looked strong throughout the various stages of the competition. The bookies' favourites were Milan, who raced to a 3-0 lead at half time. Many Liverpool fans must have thought the game was over, but they were about

to witness one of the greatest football comebacks ever. Goals from Steven Gerrard, Vladimir Smicer and Xabi Alonso took the match into extra time. Liverpool goalkeeper Jerzy Dudek then made two fantastic close-range saves to keep his side in the game. The dreaded penalty shootout followed, one that Dudek would remember for the rest of his life.

The Polish keeper began

a famous routine that seemingly put off the Milan players. Dudek made several saves as Liverpool won the shootout 3-2. Steven Gerrard stepped forward to lift the UEFA Champions League trophy, the fifth time that the club won the European Cup. The ensuing fireworks and 'explosion of confetti' following the lifting of the trophy is my fondest moment of the decade. ●

## Personal moment of the decade

James Jordan, james@pupilsvoice.com

This was perhaps the only ever time I'd willingly got up early for school. I remember leaving the house at 7.15, an hour earlier than I'd ever left for my primary. I'd even paid (the grand sum of 50p) for the privilege.

Then, at 7:56 that morning, complete jubilation. Owen ran onto a poorly cleared Heskey through ball, and struck the ball past Marcos in the Brazilian goal. It took a short frac-

tion of a second for it to register, but then, almost the entire school jumped up from the floor (we didn't have the luxury of seats), cheering and hugging all of those around us. We were beating Brazil. The most feared team in international football. It made the early start worth it, even though it would ultimately prove irrelevant, as Brazil went on to win the game 2-1.

I've been to a few football

matches where there has been a last minute goal to equalise or win the match, but despite a 30,000+ crowd, nothing quite matched the 200 or so at Tidbury Green. The crowd were not, in the most part, particularly interested in football. Nor did the noise compare to the Tilton Road stand or The Holte End. But everyone knew each other, everyone was for England, and we were all getting carried away that we would win the World Cup.

The incident doesn't really have much importance, nor will it remain in the mind of many besides me. But that moment is the one that makes me smile the most.

England didn't win in the end, but the fact that we lost is not the most depressing thing. The event reminds me that we could do with a goalscorer like the 2002 Owen for England. ●

# CHESS

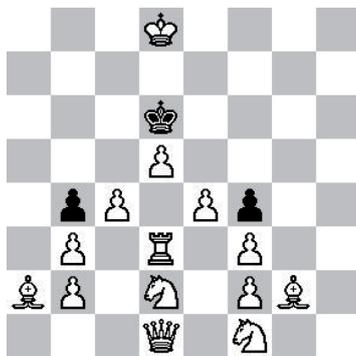
## KE Camp Hill Chess Monthly

### It's Christmas!

Aled Walker, aled@pupilsvoice.com

Well done to those of you who found Rd7 in last issue's problem. This month's has a festive theme.

### Chess problem #2



White to play and mate in 4 IN A CHRISTMASSY STYLE!

### Report on U18 Schools' Tournament

This competition used to be a mainstay of the chess season, with Camp Hill entering three teams in days gone by, but it has died a death in recent times and this year only 5 schools entered, totaling 6 teams:- Nottingham High School A and B, Haberdashers' Aske's (with their apostrophes), KE Five Ways, KES and us. Notts and Habs have dominated this competition in the past few years, but there was still a Best in Birmingham trophy to play for and pride to be won.

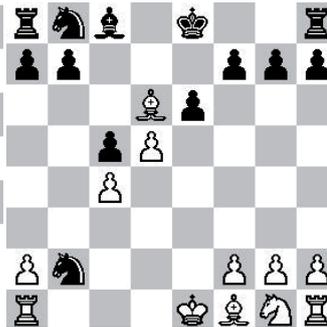
We achieved good victories over Five Ways and Nottingham B, were not humiliated by the two favourites and drew a match against KES which we should have won - Andrew Pearson won his game in under 10 moves! However, the draw was enough to see us above KES and win the Best in Birmingham trophy. We finished on as average a score as a man could ask - 5/10 match points and 20/40 game points! An interesting point to note is that Five Ways (over the full 8 boards) came last, but if the competition had been played just over the top 2 boards they would have won!

In the League both our 1st and 3rd teams could only manage draws with Five Ways' 1st and 2nd teams respectively, but some good games were played. Here is the man of the moment, Andrew 'Beard' Briggs, playing a fine attacking game. Play it through with a chess set handy to make full use of the analysis.

### Andrew Briggs v A.N Other

1. d4 Nf6
2. c4 e6
3. Nc3 c5

*The Modern Benoni*  
4. d5 d6  
Black now has some pressure on White's centre  
5. Bg5 Be7  
6. e4!?! h6  
I hope that Andrew has analysed the line 6...Nxe4 7. Bxe7 (Nxe4 Bxg5 and black has won a pawn) Nxc3 8. Bxd8



Nxd1 9. Bc7 Nxb2 10. Bxd6 where white is still a pawn down but dominates the black squares and has a bishop pair.

7. Bxf6 Bxf6  
8. Rc1 Bxc3?  
Black has a good black squared bishop, why give it up?

9. Rxc3 0-0?  
Oooh-er, the black king has very few defenders

10. Bd3 ed  
11. cd  
Maybe ed opening up the bishop would have been more enterprising, although it certainly is riskier.

12. Ne2 Nd7  
13. 0-0 Qf6(?)

Black needed to put his knight to e5 to blockade white's e pawn and keep the white squared bishop blocked in and threaten to swap it off. However, after Bb1, f4 is still hard to prevent apart from with the suicidal looking g5

14. Ng3 a6  
15. Bb1 b5  
Black launches a queenside pawn offensive.

16. Qc2 Ne5??  
Too late  
17. f4 Nc4  
18. e5!



Of course! Andrew sacrifices a pawn for overwhelming attacking opportunities.

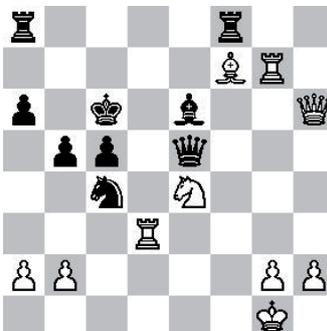
de

19. fxe5?  
Now, this is a very counter-intuitive effect. Andrew's move opens up his rook, bringing another piece into the attack, so must be better than Qh7+ straight away surely? However, as the game proves, the Black Queen becomes amazingly powerful on e5, and the rook can't do any direct damage. Andrew still wins through his advantage in pawns, but the attack is not crushing. If the Queen remains blocked in on f6, White's attack is far stronger. However, seeing all this under time pressure over the board is a tough ask.

- |           |      |
|-----------|------|
| 20. Qh7+  | Qxe5 |
| 21. Bg6   | Kf8  |
| 22. Rxf7+ | Ke7  |
| 23. Ne4+  | Kd6  |
| 24. Rd3+  | Kxd5 |
|           | Kc6  |

And remarkably the King is relatively safe! Notice how back rank mate ideas from the powerful black queen prevented any other ideas by White. However, Andrew is still winning and mops up some more pawns.

- |          |     |
|----------|-----|
| 25. Rxg7 | Rf8 |
| 26. Qxh6 | Be6 |
| 27. Bf7  |     |



A nice simplifying idea, forcing the exchange of the Queens and one pair of minor pieces.

Qxe4

- |           |      |
|-----------|------|
| 28. Qxe6+ | Qxe6 |
| 29. Bxe6  | Rad8 |
| 30. Rxd8  | Rxd8 |
| 31. Rg6   | Rd6  |
| 32. h4    | Ne5  |
| 33. Rf6   | Ng4  |
| 34. Rf4   | Rd1+ |

Here Andrew's opponent claimed a checkmate! The innocent spectator Mr Jack nearly died of shock (we needed to win the remaining two games to tie the match). However, Andrew has fortunately seen this some moves previously and realized that his rook could block what would have been a back rank mate. What out for these in your games!

- |          |      |
|----------|------|
| 35. Rf1  | Ne3  |
| 36. Rxd1 | Nxd1 |
| 37. h5   | 1-0  |

And nothing is stopping that h pawn.

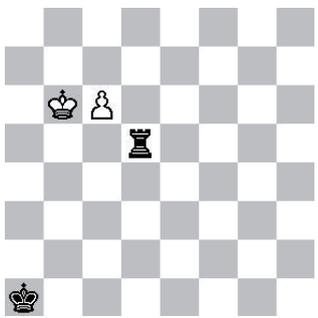
In your own games, try to

develop well, command the centre and be willing to trade advantages and simplify if you are winning. Here, Andrew had intended to win with his attack but realized that the best play was to win a few pawns and simplify as his attack was running out of steam.

No Opening this month, as I have yet to see you try out The Four Pawns Attack.

### Endgame Study of the month

The Saavedra Position - White to Play and Win



This is chess at its most perplexingly brilliant. For over 150 years this position was thought to be drawn, until someone spotted an amazing win. GET A CHESS BOARD NOW!

So what does white need to do? Well some general comments first - if the black rook can get behind the pawn then black can at the very least give up the rook for the pawn and get a draw. Therefore if we don't push to c7 as our first move, Black will move his rook to d1-c1 and swipe off the pawn.

1. c7  
Now, c8=Q is obviously threatened and Black needs to respond. If the pawn queens he will not be able to get a perpetual check or win the queen (see why yourself). However he can't attack c8. He must check the white King.

Rd6+  
The King can in theory go anywhere, but if it relinquishes control of d6 the Black rook can get behind the pawn and draw. But after Kb7, Rd7 pins the white pawn and thus wins it and draws. Also, most cunningly, after Kc5 Black has Rd1. This threatens Rc1, winning the pawn, or Rc1 winning whatever piece the pawn promotes to on c8. Thus the white King has to move to b5.

2. Kb5 Rd5+  
Black must keep checking. The King can't go back as it

will enter into a perpetual, so must go to b4 by the same reasoning as before.

3. Kb4 Rd4+
4. Kb3 Rd3+
5. Kc2

Aha, now Black doesn't have that Rd1 idea as the white King

covers the square. But now for some fireworks...

Rd4!!

If white now plays c8=Q, Black goes Rc4+, forcing Qxc4 which is stalemate! A draw! Meanwhile black is threatening Rc4+ anyway winning the

pawn. So...

6. c8=R!!!

Underpromotion that still protects c4 but will not deliver stalemate if it takes on that square. Furthermore, White is threatening Ra8#.

Ra4 (only

move)

7. Kb3!

White now threatens Rc1# and Kxa4. There is no defence. WOW! ●

# SPORT

## What won't happen in 2010

Karndeepp Uppal, karndeepp@pupilsvoice.com

Every year, wherever you look, you always see predictions in sport, and 2009 was no different. There was pundit Alan Hansen, who guessed that Liverpool would win the title, Hull and Stoke would get relegated, and the most improved team of the season would be Newcastle. How wrong can a man be? Then there was Michael Schumacher who, during an interview, laughed at the suggestion that England would emerge with the F1 title - "England? Maybe, but Hamilton is your only hope... I can't see him doing well in his new car. So no chance for England." Maybe Schumacher knew that Jenson Button was 1/32th French.

This has been happening for a while, a classic case being Jose Mourinho, who claimed that the 2005 Champions League Final would be "one of the duller sporting events of the 21st Century". The resulting game, which saw 6 goals and 5 penalties go into the same goal in over 120 minutes, became one of the greatest football matches of all time. You can't blame these men for giving their opinion, and their predictions are just as valid as anyone else's. But they hardly ever get these predictions correct. So, as January approaches, instead of guessing what will happen, I think the safer and more refreshing argument will be what won't occur. Odds are one



THIERRY HENRY practises lifting the Six Nations Championship aloft

of them will come true, knowing how these things pan out.

1) Thierry Henry nearly joins the NBA - The Sacramento Kings are so impressed with Thierry's handiwork against Ireland that they offer him a contract after the World Cup. He declines, instead shocking the world by joining the Irish national Rugby team - he qualifies because he's apparently 1/16th Irish. That's roughly the size of a left hand.

2) Slovenia win the World Cup - Torres, Gerrard and Mascherano go into depression following Liverpool's relegation, thus Spain, England

and Argentina don't make it past the group stage. Brazil are drawn in a group with France, Italy and Germany, but make the semis only to be knocked out by a Andriy Voronin hat-trick. The final between Slovenia and Portugal is decided by penalties. Ronaldo misses and Portugal surrender before Slovenia take one kick.

3) Joey Barton wins BBC's Sports Personality of the Year - He fights off stiff competition from a Cyberman, a rock and Stalin. Using his bare hands.

4) Tiger Woods takes up F1 Driving - After having quit golf for "physical strains", Woods tries his luck on the race track.

A crash in his first race, which Tiger blames himself and not his wife for, sees him join Henry in the Irish national Rugby squad.

5) Roger Federer loses to Bill Gates in the Wimbledon Final - The new Windows Vista© Eagle Eye Technology ensures each challenge by Bill Gates is met with an OUT judgement. Enraged by cheating in sport, Roger decides to join up with Henry in the Irish Rugby team. The newly formed Gillett Dream team of Henry, Woods and Federer go on to win the Six Nations.

6) Real Madrid win the Champions League - 9-0 against Dunbar United, having bought every half-decent player known to man. This explains why Dunbar could still compete. Mr Bullock is inconsolable for days...

7) Howard win the House Championship - I'm not going to be that ridiculous

8) Mr Southworth doesn't retire - He forgets

Yes, they seem crazy, absurd and even impossible. But that's sport for you; unpredictable, uncontrollable and irreplaceable. 2010 is expected to be a great year of sport, and it will be. Just don't be surprised when Mr Downing wins the London Marathon. ●

# FOOTBALL

## A guide to the January transfer window

Sanjeevan Ghag, sanj@pupilsvoice.com

The transfer window is fast approaching. Your correspondent takes a look at the possible transactions by the Premier League's top clubs.

Robin Van Persie's injury has left Arsenal short up front. Arsene Wenger could be set to further his interest in Bordeaux frontman Marouane Chamakh. Saint Etienne midfielder Blaise Matuidi has also been linked with a move to the Gunners.

Aston Villa have prospered under Randy Lerner and have been able to dip into his pocket

to secure the signatures of their key targets in the past. Micah Richards is reportedly unhappy at Manchester City and Martin O'Neill could be tempted to make a £12 million bid to futher his all England revolution at Villa Park.

Chelsea will look to spend heavily as their transfer ban appeal is pending. Roman Abramovich will give the green light to any big stars on Ance-lotti's wish list. Sergio Agüero and Franck Ribery are options for the league leaders. It is

highly unlikely that anyone will leave the club.

Liverpool; where shall I start? I'll put it bluntly; the club's owners are skint. Benitez will have to sell players before he can buy and he will look to offload flops Ryan Babel, Andriy Voronin and Andrea Dossena. The Reds have been linked with a loan move for Holland striker Ruud Van Nistelrooy, who has fallen behind in the pecking order at Real Madrid. Benitez would value a player of his experience and crucially,

he could provide able cover for the injury prone Fernando Torres. Tottenham's out of favour forward Roman Pavlyuchenko is also an option. Rafael Van der Vaart could be set to move on to pastures new come January and Liverpool are keen suitors.

Manchester City are the new big spenders in the Premier League. The club have access to unlimited funds from their Abu Dhabi based owners and I wouldn't bet against big money bids for a series of players. AC Milan's Gennaro Gat-

tuso and Benfica winger Angel Di Maria have been heavily linked with the Eastlands club. Mark Hughes will also be looking to bolster his defence as both Joleon Lescott and Wayne Bridge have looked shaky this season.

Manchester United have adopted a policy whereby they do not spend in January. This could be set to continue, despite Sir Alex Ferguson

having access to big funds following the sale of Cristiano Ronaldo in the summer. The owners seem to be wary of the effects of the recession, which was demonstrated when the club pulled out of a pre-arranged agreement for the Serbian 'Kaka', Adem Ljajic. Ben Foster is now the third choice goalkeeper at Old Trafford and he could push for a loan move to cement a place in England's world cup squad.

Tottenham have surprised many with their ability to sign an array of expensive players on a regular basis. Nobody really knows how their chairman Daniel Levy is able to generate the necessary funds, but however he does it, he has built a fantastic squad at White Hart Lane. Manager Harry Redknapp doesn't need to make any additions, but if Roman Pavlyuchenko decides to move

on, Redknapp could make a move for AC Milan's Klaas Jan Huntelaar. Spurs have also been linked with former Arsenal midfielder Patrick Vieira. ●

## Football League Focus

Alex Riley, riley@pupilsvoice.com

### Championship round-up

As a Birmingham City fan I am no stranger to the intense competition and surprising quality of football in this division with the Blues having been involved in two promotion campaigns in the last three years, but currently it is Newcastle who top the table after a convincing 2-0 win over a Watford side who have recently risen into the playoff places with a 3-1 win over QPR.

Gordon Strachan gained his first win at the fifth time of asking with his side's 5-1 thrashing of QPR last Saturday, with goals from Kitson, Yeates, O'Neil and a brace from Leroy Lita ensuring all three points went to the Teeside club.

However, the plum tie of the weekend's action was the East Midlands clash between Nottingham Forest and Leicester City. Going into the game both



KEVIN NOLAN celebrates a goal for Newcastle

Following their victory, the Tyneside club are now four points clear of second placed West Brom who could only manage a draw at Derby with the nomadic DJ Campbell, who has played for four clubs in the last four years, giving the East Midlands team a share of the spoils in the fourth minute of injury time after Scottish midfielder Graham Dorrans looked to have given Albion all three points in the ninety-second minute.

Middlesbrough manager

JERMAINE BECKFORD is Leeds' leading goalscorer this season.



sides were in the top six, but this equality failed to surface on the pitch with strikes from Paul Anderson and Dele Adebola adding to a Robert Earnshaw hat-trick as Forest put five past Leicester who only had Martyn Waghorn's penalty to show for their efforts, scant consolation in the face of a 5-1 defeat. Despite this humiliating defeat, Leicester, at fourth, are only one point behind Forest. The promotion battle in the Championship has been closely fought so far this season and with a mere 5 points separating twelfth from fifth, several teams have still got plenty to play

for. Turning our attention to the bottom of the table, basement club Peterborough held onto a draw with Aaron Mclean's injury time goal cancelling out a late brace from Lee Trundle of Coventry. Plymouth and Ipswich, also in the relegation zone, could only manage a defeat to Sheffield United and a goalless draw with Bristol City respectively. Sheffield Wednesday and Coventry also incurred defeats at the weekend meaning that they hover perilously close to the drop zone.

### League One News

Top of the table Leeds United were held to a 2-2 draw at Elland Road in an entertaining match

CHRIS DAGNALL has so far scored 12 goals for Rochdale this campaign



with Yorkshire rivals Huddersfield who themselves are in the playoff places. Snodgrass and Gradel scored for United while Novak and Rhodes got on the score sheet for the visitors. The draw means that Leeds are still three points above second placed Charlton with the London club securing all three points against Southend with a Deon Burton goal. Norwich and Colchester are both in the promotion hunt and continued their good form with wins over Oldham and Bristol Rovers respectively.

Third from bottom Wycombe beat bottom club Stockport 2-1 in a relegation six-pointer with the North-West club now seven points from safety. Wins for both Tranmere and

Brighton weren't enough to take either of them out of the relegation zone. However, there is hope for these sides as Oldham, who are without a win in their last five home games, are only a single point from safety with five teams only two points from the dreaded bottom four.

### League Two Update

Early pace setters Rochdale and Bournemouth cemented their top two statuses with wins over Macclesfield and Shrewsbury. Bournemouth are in second and are now four points clear of third placed Rotherham.

Moneybags Notts County and Dagenham and Redbridge are the

best of the rest, both seven points off Rochdale, who are at the top of the table.

Darlington are the team closest to being relegated from the professional echelons of English football with a mere eight points, eleven from safety. They are joined in the bottom two by Grimsby who are sitting four points short of Football League survival with Lincoln City and Torquay currently safe, but watching nervously over their shoulders. ●



# Capello's Kind Cup Draw

England drawn against relatively easy sides for the South Africa 2010 World Cup group stage.

Serge Wicker, serge@pupilsvoice.com

Finally, the groups for the 2010 World Cup in South Africa have been announced after a long and tedious ceremony of celebrities pulling out small footballs from bowls. Few can blame Wayne Rooney for having fallen asleep halfway through watching the televised tedium, so for others who failed to keep their eyes open to the end, the news is good.

A list of all the groups can be seen here on the right, but let's start off with the country that undoubtedly will be the most important one for many readers, and the one that you would really like an easy group for.

Indeed, things are looking rosy for Fabio Capello, luckily drawing three relatively easy sides from the other continents. Slovenia, Algeria and the USA do not seem like daunting prospects for a side with the likes of Steven Gerrard and Frank Lampard within their ranks, but England will be expected to not only defeat the sides in their group, but go further than that when it comes to the latter stages of the competition.

And there is no need to be complacent early on. The USA, despite being consid-

## Group 1

South Africa  
Mexico  
Uruguay  
France

## Group 2

Argentina  
Nigeria  
South Korea  
Greece

## Group 3

England  
USA  
Algeria  
Slovenia

## Group 4

Germany  
Australia  
Serbia  
Ghana

## Group 5

Netherlands  
Denmark  
Japan  
Cameroon

## Group 6

Italy  
Paraguay  
New Zealand  
Slovakia

## Group 7

Brazil  
North Korea  
Ivory Coast  
Portugal

## Group 8

Spain  
Switzerland  
Honduras  
Chile

ered a weak team, can still do damage after excelling in the Confederations Cup defeating Spain 2-0 along the way to the final, where they lead Brazil at the half-time interval by the same margin. Despite losing the match 3-2, their potential could put a considerable dent in England's defence and their added motivation due to the rivalry between the two countries means that England will not have as easy a ride as they would hope.

Slovenia, one of the weaker teams from the secondary European draw, are also not to be underestimated. Let's not forget, they have just eliminated Russia from the competition and, if England were up against Andrey Arshavin's nation, Capello might have

been considering himself slightly unlucky.

Algeria's thriller against Egypt to get to this stage was also very eventful, if not packed with quality. However, a team that has come this far for the first time since 1986 will no doubt be trying their best to make life difficult for us. After all, they may not get a better chance for a long time.

An easy group is always a plus, but David Beckham had a good point before the draw, for once. He pointed out "As a team once you get to the finals, you cannot be afraid of anybody. You have to be prepared to take on the best," a view echoed by Fabio Capello.

However, the other groups

could mean a few of the harder teams will already be eliminated after the group stages, with the hardest group probably being Group G, with Brazil, Portugal and the Cote d'Ivoire all competing for the two top spots. The prospect of Portugal potentially being knocked out of the competition in the group stages will be sweet revenge for England fans who have seen their nation lose twice in the latter stages of major competitions to the Portuguese in the last five years. ●

# MUSIC ALBUMS OF THE DECADE

## Green Day – American Idiot (2004)

Jon Davies, jondavies@pupilsvoice.com

*American Idiot* is a 57 minute epic which leaves me speechless with every countless re-listen. It's not a good album, or even a great album; it's Green Day's masterpiece, the album that leaves their signature on the face of music forever.

The content is politically charged and poetic, perfect in its shape and form. It's the first sure sign of Green Day transgressing their original boundaries as a band, taking on stadium rock and getting away with it comfortably, all the while maintaining their pop-punk roots.

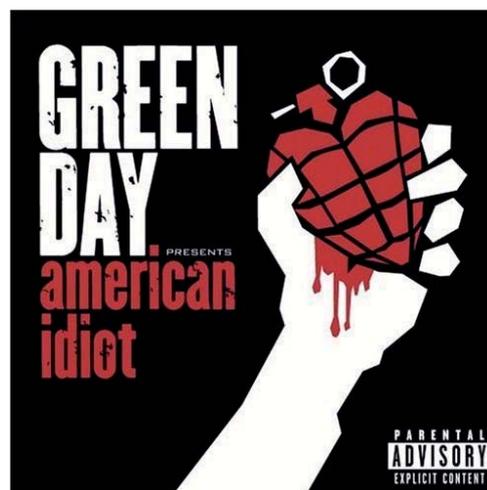
An edgy and powerful rock opera, it tells the story of 'Jesus of Suburbia', a disillusioned and powerless anti-hero. Further characters of 'St Jimmy' and 'Whatsername' are intro-

duced, all loosely connected through the theme of "rage vs love", and by a plot relying (deliberately so) upon a great deal of individual interpretation, leaving listeners with a sense of personal connection with the album.

The 13 track listing skilfully weaves this tale, some personal highlights being 'Holiday', 'Give me Novacaine', 'Letterbomb', 'Wake me up when September ends' and... hell,

just the whole album. And not, of course, forgetting the two 9 minute epics 'Homecoming' and 'Jesus of Suburbia', the latter in particular sending shivers down my spine with the inspirational centrepiece harmony 4 minutes into the song.

Ending on a slightly sombre note, the suicide of 'St. Jimmy' (representative, as Armstrong himself puts it, as "part of the main character that pretty



much dies") and the bitter-sweet closing song 'Whatsername', *American Idiot* never fails to leave me in awe. Besides being my personal 'Album of the Decade', it's my personal 'Album of All Time'. If you've never listened to it, you've been living in a hole, and don't know what you're missing. ●

Length: 57:16

UK Album Chart: #1

UK Singles Chart (weeks in chart): 'American Idiot' #3 (8), 'Boulevard of Broken Dreams' #5 (21), 'Holiday' #11 (7), 'Wake Me Up When September Ends' #8 (17), 'Jesus of Suburbia' #17 (3)

## The Mars Volta – Frances the Mute (2005)

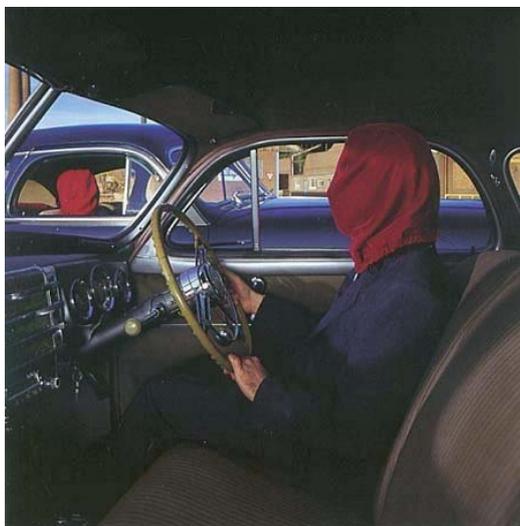
Tim Shao, tim@pupilsvoice.com

Before I review my album of the decade, I will first present you with a shortlist of my 10 favourite albums:

10. Dream Theater - *Octavarium*
9. The Darkness - *Permission to Land*
8. Linkin Park - *Hybrid Theory*
7. Eminem - *The Marshall Mathers LP*
6. Muse - *Absolution*
5. Tool - *Lateralus*
4. Queens of the Stone Age - *Songs For The Deaf*
3. At The Drive In - *Relationship Of Command*
2. Coheed and Cambria - *Good Apollo, I'm Burning Star IV*

Not exactly what you guys were expecting, right? No, my album of the decade isn't *Don't Stop Movin'*, nor is it *A Present For Everyone*, but this 77 minute concept album from progressive rock band, The Mars Volta. For those of you who have barely even heard of them (perhaps the majority of you), here's a brief introduction. They started off in 2001 with Cedric Bixler-Zavala (vocals) and Omar Rodriguez-López (guitar), formerly of 'At The Drive In', a post hardcore band hailing from El Paso, Texas. Due to the nature of the band, the other instrumentalists often change, with no other core members. They take influences from, among other things, psychedelic, jazz fusion, heavy metal and Latin American music, all of which are prevalent in Frances the Mute. Although this album may come as a shock to those with a musical diet consisting of Cheryl Cole and Take That, there is no doubting the sheer talent and ability of Bixler-Zavala or Rodriguez-López (from now on I'll refer to their first names) to write and perform great songs. And RHCP fans, there's something in here for you too.

The opening track to the album is 'Cygnus...Vismund Cygnus'. It starts rather quietly, with a relaxing 45 second acoustic intro before the song erupts into the madness and chaos that is so characteristic



of The Mars Volta. An incredibly quick paced guitar riff plays in the background over which Cedric shrieks out his vocals in both English and Spanish – and at times you can't even differentiate between them. Mind, some of the lyrics are... odd, to say the least. Lines such as "Who do you trust/ Will they feed us the womb?" appear nonsensical, and only start to make the slightest bit of sense within the context of the whole record. Omar then provides us with the occasional atonal solo/fill to remind us of his prowess and to almost give a taster as to what is to come later on the CD. The song's last 4 minutes are much like a prolonged outro (a common feature of this album), consisting of synthesised sounds, people arguing and traffic. Although this would be considered by many to be a waste of time, it acts almost as a breather, allowing the listener to take everything in between the sporadic lyrics and melodies of what they've heard.

This then segues into 'The Widow', the first track from the album released as a single, surprisingly reaching 20th in the UK charts. There is musically much less "going on" compared to 'Cygnus...Vismund Cygnus'. It is structured much more like a pop song, save for the last 2½ minutes of dissonant rock organ chord progressions and more sound effects. The song itself is mostly acoustic, with Cedric displaying the subtler side of his voice. This is also the first instance where RHCP bassist Flea shows off his little known trumpeting skills (no, that's not a euphemism); with simple counter melodies which add to the sombre nature of the song. And at just under 6 minutes, it's by far the shortest track on the album by

over double its length.

The last few seconds of 'The Widow' and the first 40 of 'L'Via L'Viaquez' consist of faint drumming before leading into the first of guest guitarist John Frusciante's (of RHCP until last Sunday) incredible solos, which in contrast to Omar's are much more distorted and harmonious. This is probably their most well known song, due to its inclusion in the game *Guitar Hero: World Tour* – but only the 4½ minute radio edit. Although the original clocks in at a substantial 12:21, it's probably the most accessible track on the album (along with 'The Widow'). The driving bassline and unusually simple chord progression mixed in with Cedric's intense singing makes this a relatively catchy song, even though most of the song is sung in incomprehensible Spanish. It also follows a vague verse-chorus-verse structure, reaching a chilling climax at around 7 minutes with a flurry of instruments and lyrics such as "When all the worms come crawling out your head" (well they might as well be in Spanish). The remaining 5 minutes calm us down by immersing us into an ambient Cuban party atmosphere, with improvisation from the piano and guitar, light percussion and quiet background conversation.

The sound of a couquí (a native frog from Puerto Rico) can be heard calling towards the end of 'L'Via L'Viaquez' and the beginning of 'Miranda, That Ghost Just Isn't Holy Anymore'. Just in case we haven't recovered from the previous tracks, The Mars Volta kindly give us an extra 4 minutes of ghost wailing and UFO noises before any coherent melodies can be heard. This song, along with 'The Widow' are much slower compared to the rest

of the tracks – that's not to say they're boring; Flea entertains us with a beautifully crafted trumpet solo heavily influenced by Spanish classical music around 7 minutes into the track. The song then appears to again be making a smooth transition to the next track, with a bass riff and static noise gradually increasing in volume until...

Bang. Out of nowhere, here comes 'Cassandra Gemini', a 33 minute long masterpiece. On the actual CD, it is split up into 8 random sections, from I through to VIII, due to the fact that Universal Records would pay them wages for an EP if they only had 5 songs. The track starts off another stunning riff, with Cedric shoe-gazing the vocals as Omar starts shredding like mad. Just as the song seems to be winding down, Omar lets fly with perhaps his most impressive solo of the album at 4:47. Heavily distorted guitars accompany Cedric's further cryptic messages contributing to the story. The song then settles down for the next 10 minutes until a few erratic guitar solos and a bass solo later, the song sinks back into ambience. Belatedly, it is duly brought back through a quite astonishing saxophone solo. With your ears being taken away by the saxophone, the other instruments slowly build up behind it as a final frenzy ensues before the album is rounded off by the acoustic section that started 'Cygnus...Vismund Cygnus'. It took me a few listens to appreciate the brilliance of the track, which pretty much has everything you'd ever want from a song.

Many people will dub this as being far too pretentious; too ambitious, but that to me is what progressive rock is all about. And although a third of the album is just ambience, the album as a whole would simply not have the same effect if it were omitted. As for the story and meaning of the songs? Well, it's...dark, shall we say (I might tell you if you ask me). But above all, the musicianship throughout the record is phenomenal; mind blowing at times. However words just don't do this album justice. I can only implore you to get hold of the music and experience it for yourself. ●

**Length:** 76:57 CD, 77:19 Vinyl  
**UK Album Chart (weeks):** #23 (2)  
**UK Singles Chart (weeks):**  
 'The Widow' - #20 (4), 'L'Via L'Viaquez' #53 (1)

## Eminem – Encore (2004)

Alex Wood, alexw@pupilsvoice.com

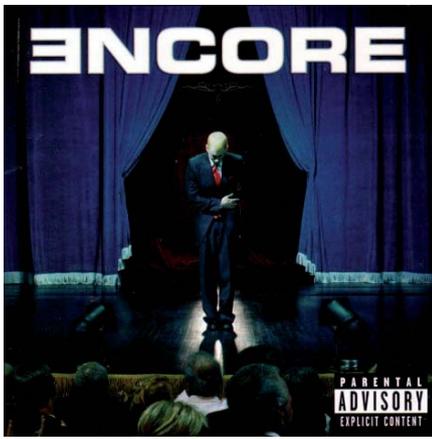
To say a man is the best selling artist of the 2000s is quite

a considerable achievement. To say that he has also been voted the Best Rapper of All Time and Artist of the Decade by Rolling Stone Magazine must mean he's worth listening to. By the time *Encore* was even released in 2004, 4 of Eminem's albums had already hit No. 1 in the US charts, and Slim Shady was known around the world as a leader in Hip-Hop and Rap.

But what makes this album so special? In all honesty, it's a personal decision. Tracks like 'Real Slim Shady' or 'Sing for the Moment' are all great hits, but *Encore* has 20 tracks of pure brilliance. To be honest, I'm not sure where to begin when looking at it. There is just that much to think about.

I think the first time I heard the

album was way back in 2005, and have ever since come back to it again and again. Be it the simple concept of 'Puke' or the tune of 'Like Toy Soldiers', it was fairly obvious that Eminem had poured his heart and soul into the entire masterpiece. The structure, message or meaning of every song seemed to fit neatly into place like a jigsaw.



play throughout. Then, you get heavy hit after heavy hit (to quote Tim Westwood). 'Like Toy Soldiers' is a desperate cry of emotion echoed through the choir that sing out their haunting words quite a few times during the song. It complete contrast to this, 'M.O.S.H.' goes straight back to the rude image. The choir turns nasty, and a sinister tune plays throughout as Eminem goes on to undermine everything he'd just said in the previous track. As

unusual as it sounds, it works.

Straight after this, the revoltingly brilliant sounds of 'Puke' don't seem to be on the same level, but the simple, staccato

chorus as perfect for portraying how much hate the rapper must have for the person in question. Moving on to 'Rain Man', the song is just the same, the low key lyrics and vocals all anticipating the two big songs to come.

'Just Lose It' is a huge song; one of Eminem's most celebrated. Nestled deep in the heart of the album it keeps the tone going and even takes the lyrics to a new level. The level of intensity is just mind-blowing and you have to repeat the song to make sure you heard it right the first time. Well I did anyway.

The album ends with some other great songs, such as 'Mockingbird' and 'One Shot 2 Shot', which keep the tone and meaning of the album

going right until the last second. The album ends on an amazing high, with 'Encore,' featuring Dr Dre and 50 Cent. The riff here is almost unforgettable, and to an extent the song is signature of the rap that came out of the Noughties. Oh I hate that word. ●

**Length:** 76:40

**UK Album Chart (weeks):** #1 (35)

**UK Singles Chart (weeks):** 'Just Lose It' #1 (12), 'Like Toy Soldiers' #1 (12), 'Mockingbird' #4 (12), 'Ass Like That' #4 (9)

The album starts with the two songs, 'Evil Deeds' and 'Never Enough'. Both set the pace perfectly for the roller-coaster to come, through the incredible lyrics and riffs that

## REVIEWS - COD (NOT THE FISH)

### Call of Duty: Modern Warfare 2 review

Timothy Bunker and Sunbir Randhawa

#### The view from Timothy Bunker:

Last month saw one of the most awaited and highly anticipated games released; *Call of Duty Modern Warfare 2*. There were mixed reactions to the game, but the sales figures speak for themselves with 1.23 million sold on the first day of release, breaking the UK record. It is estimated that one house in twenty-four has a copy of the game and I can see why. Firstly the campaign is highly entertaining, albeit slightly short. The highlights include creeping through a snow storm in Kazakhstan, using the cover to silently take down targets and then escaping by snowmobile. In another level, you must fight to save the White House. However the levels seem as though they were made first and the plot was made to connect them afterwards. Therefore, the plot isn't as well formed in places although this matters little when you are racing through the streets of Rio de Janeiro fighting street gangs.

It is the level "No Russian" which has got most attention. The level sees you going undercover as a terrorist and going through an airport killing civilians. This is one of the main reasons the game has an 18+ rating and has had increased coverage in the media. *Modern Warfare 2* was talked about in Parliament, has had levels removed in Russia and had the Attorney General of Australia trying to get it banned. Some feel that



the developers were morally wrong when they created the levels and that the game would not have been released if the plot saw the gamer kill American civilians, rather than Russians.

The multiplayer mode is the main selling point of the game, featuring more weapons, attachments, perks, kill streaks and maps. These include secondary weapons and the thermal scope and heartbeat sensor which show you where your targets are. Instead of being limited to pistols as secondary weapons, you can now have shotguns, machine-pistols and more, as well as being able to give them attachments. You can customise kill streaks by detonating tactical nukes and calling in helicopters. Multiplayer is the area which will keep players hooked for weeks after the single player and special ops modes are finished. The online play is focused on tactical moves, which limits the map size to twelve players a team, a move which will generate mixed opinions.

Overall this is a very good game, with only small faults. This is the game that won't be on Christmas lists as it will already have been bought.

#### The view from Sunbir Randhawa:

At last, the most anticipated game of 2009 is here. The sequel to one of the most successful first person shooter titles of all time. The title which broke sales records with just its pre-orders. The first video game of the year to have received its own premiere in Leicester Square has arrived. But this question is, does the game live up to its huge expectations?

The answer is yes. The game not only lives up to its expectations, it exceeds them. In my opinion, it is the best game released in 2009. Some might say 2009 has been a mediocre year for gaming overall, but I think going one better than *Call of Duty 4: Modern Warfare*, a game that incidentally is still high on the charts after being released a year and half ago, is an achievement in itself.

This is achieved by the game developers, Infinity Ward, who have kept everything that worked well in the first *Modern Warfare* and added some nice new features to the game. It contains three main modes; campaign, multiplayer and the new feature, special ops. The campaign picks up roughly from where the first instalment left off, casting you as

several members of Task Force 141, who must stop a Russian terrorist named Makarov. The campaign then takes you on a world tour, from Kazakhstan to the Brazilian Favelas. Through the campaign, there are twists and turns, making it almost an action movie, leaving you on the edge of your seat. There simply isn't a mission that goes by which doesn't succeed in nailing the player's jaw to the floor. However, the campaign will only last around 6-8 hours for most players, showing that maybe it would have been better if it was longer.

The game's online multiplayer mode is the most addictive and probably the best part of the game. It has all the same game modes as the first *Modern Warfare*, such as team death-match, search and destroy and sabotage. There are added features such as the third person shooter, which allows you to play games such as team tactical and cage match in third person. So nothing much has changed from the first instalment, except for the maps, which overall are pretty good, and the graphics, which in my opinion, have improved. You will see more modern cars and houses throughout the campaign and multiplayer. Special ops is also good for you to play missions similar to the campaign with your friends online. This is a handy addition, as when you are bored of playing the same games online, you can play special ops for a different gaming experience.

To conclude, *Modern Warfare 2* is a must have game, available on the Xbox 360 and the PS3. The campaign may only last only 6 hours but the multiplayer will have you playing for 6 days. If not the BEST game of the year, *Modern Warfare 2* will surely be up there as one of the top releases of 2009. ●

# ENTERTAINMENT

## Where in this school was this?

E-mail [whereintheshool@pupilsvoice.com](mailto:whereintheshool@pupilsvoice.com), if you can work out where this was. Well done to Nasir Bashir 8M, for sending an email within half an hour of issue 2 being released, correctly stating that the word 'Jerkins' can be found on blinds of Room 5.

Hasan Ali and James Jordan



## Dingbats

Within each picture is a well known phrase or saying. Can you guess what they are?

Robert McDonald, robertm@pupilsvoice.com

amUous

T\_rn

A B  
A E  
DUMR

M\_ce  
M\_ce  
M\_ce

## Jumbo Prize Cryptic Crossword by Ched

The prize cryptic crossword returns, with more edible prizes on offer. Last month's winner was Mr. Caves, who receives 6 MBMs courtesy of Mr. Jack and a Mars Bar Mountain from the team. Second prize went to Tim Shao of 3 MBMs and a Mars Bar Mound, and third prize Kieron Child of 1 MBM and a Mars Bar Molehill. Again, entries need not be fully correct for a chance of winning, but should be sent in person or by email to James ([james@pupilsvoice.com](mailto:james@pupilsvoice.com)) by 8th January for the chance to win. The competition is open to everyone except the senior team of the paper.

Across:

1. Small animal on moon with noise, a story f or Italian (7,2,6)
9. Fish was heard flapping with slag. (5)
12. Real Aeronautical measurement was partly found in Malta spaceman. (3)
13. Confused, senile lost energy for routes. (5)
14. Coat was put backwards on flower. (3)
15. Country was told that delib-

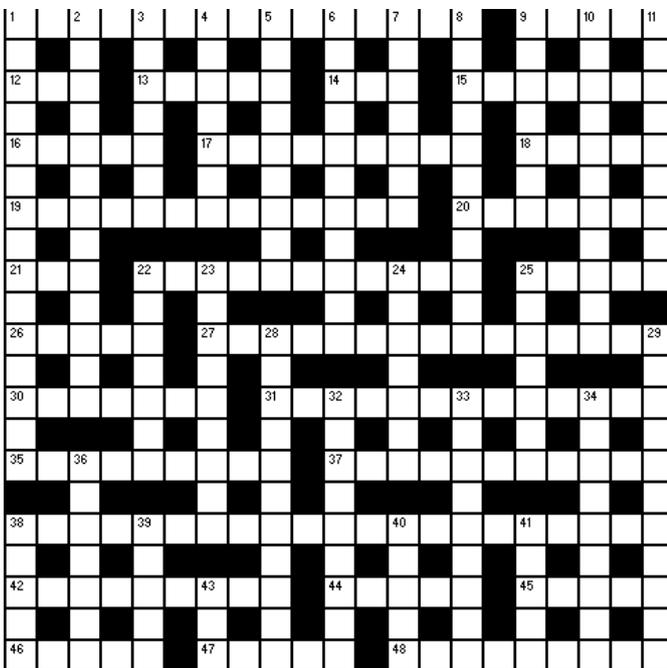
- erate deceiver was given a sentence inside (7)
16. Hope had added dimension with quantity (5)
17. Obeying a mainframe slouching (9)
18. Settles and has a ball (5)
19. Previously establish French prize we hear, to represent. (13)
20. Determination to answer once again (7)
21. Greek God has energy to merge with mapmaker (3)
22. To annul a rite as United Nations state capital to be

- without oxygen. (11)
25. Refined part of the rubbish on editorial (5)
26. Point duck to thief (5)
27. Corrupt lawyers were heard to avoid deputy and loathe sudden treatment areas (15)
30. Iraqi rats are confused by sea oink? (7)
31. Breaking rules by hearing chicken plummeting and frequently having tail removed. (7,4,2)
35. Cutting up some lightish red dinghys. (9)
37. Two animals and singer make a creature trapper. (9)
38. Connecting, but angrier. Let it out! (13)
42. To, study ice, Ted was changed and arrogant. (9)
44. I bail out defence (5)
45. Since year one it is fitting to change. (5)
46. Part of area Dylan prepared (5)
47. Inspect Mr. Darby's motor without much time (5)
48. Eject Kiwi around lobster (9)

8. Fabricates the reversal of Selenium to cement food weapon. (11)
9. Mummifies the shine out to railway (7)
10. Be clone, even change for an inclination to do good. (11)
11. Anchor place was said to have a paddle, alternatively. (9)
22. Once appreciated faculty was found within a diode at temperature (7)
23. Seasonal viewers of radio conclude. (9)
24. Lazy organ was there previously (7)
25. Give call for a leaflet (7)
28. Saturday's keeper in forage for defense. (11)
29. Old campaigner is what one will do in a power shower? (11)
32. Grease makes train club slip. (9)
33. Blues boss in Dowie capture of lizard! (9)
34. Lad hid ash about pretentious people. (3-2-4)
36. Move and tour Birmingham building. (7)
38. Obtain a noisy Peruvian ruler (5)
39. Botham not bowled but has radius full of sandbanks (5)
41. PV joker with nothing is a mixed-up footballer (5)
43. Break in play is not full in colour. (3)

Down:

1. With a force, flow thrust animals onto drugs (15)
2. Blandness of vulgarity (13)
3. It's Christmas, butt out lotus! (7)
4. Marlon is cussing some woodlouse (7)
5. Main coins changed for those always awake (9)
6. An animal found amongst civilisation to take influence. (11)
7. Issue with some choir entertainers a chest (7)





# 'Camp Hell' Cartoons

The goings on at Camp Hill, represented in cartoon form. If you have any suggestions for 'Camp Hell' cartoons, email [campbell@pupilsvoice.com](mailto:campbell@pupilsvoice.com) and let us know. Thanks to Robert Smith for his suggestions.

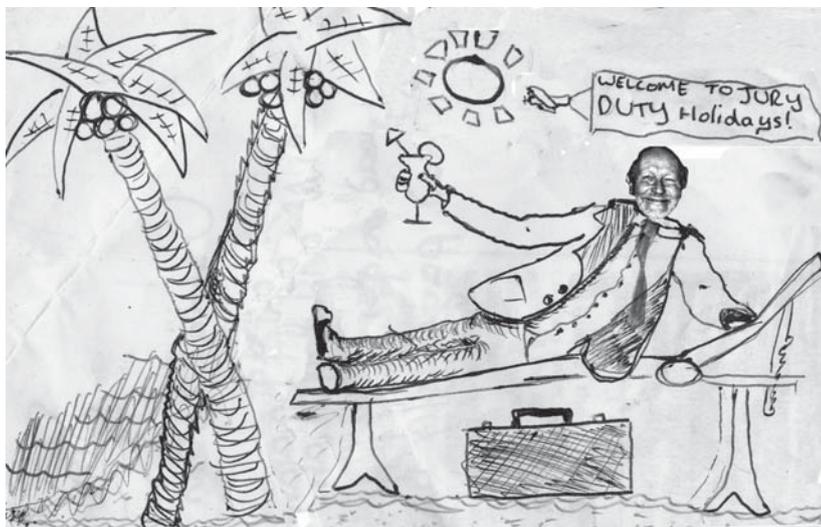
CAMP HILL HAS NEVER FELT  
MORE CHRISTMAS CHEER.



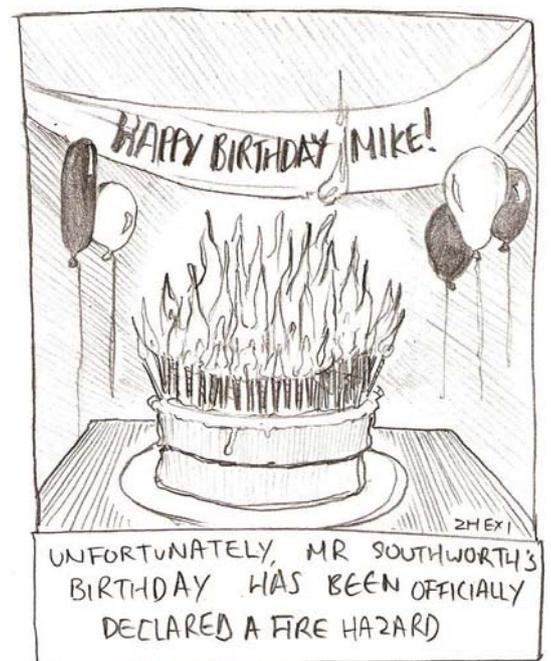
ZHEXI



Mention goes to Lewis Blackwood for the incredibly original and creative 'Gartoon' name.



By James Johnston



# YEAR 7 PAGE

## Random Interview #2: Mr Bruten

The much loved teacher, Mr Bruten, was asked some utterly random questions.

Azeem Hanjra, year7@pupilsvoice.com

**PV:** Do you like your name?  
**Mr B.:** Yes, I do like my name. My name should have actually been Brute because that was the family name until four generations ago. They decided to change the family name because they owned a shop called Brute, which didn't really sound like a place where anybody would like to shop at.

**PV:** Do you consider yourself to be ugly?  
**Mr B.:** (laugh) I don't think I'm that ugly but I wouldn't go to people saying that I was a model.

**PV:** Have you ever crashed a car?  
**Mr B.:** (huge laugh) A minor bump. I ran into the back of another car at a slow speed but that was only because they weren't good enough to get out of the way. Yes, I have had accidents but none of them serious, thankfully.

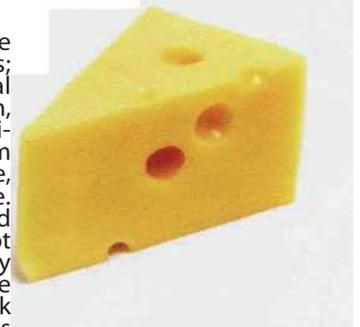


**PV:** Do you like pickles?  
**Mr B.:** (pause) Do I like pickles? I like some. I'm very choosy. I quite like spicy ones.  
**PV:** Why don't you like pickles?  
**Mr B.:** The texture.  
**PV:** Considering you are a mathematician, what is

## Cheese of the month

Balraj Singh, year7@pupilsvoice.com

This month's "Cheese of the Month" is one of my favourites; Swiss cheese. It is the classical cheese for any cartoon program, favoured by Jerry from the ultimate cat and mouse show "Tom and Jerry Tales". It has a mild taste, it is sweet and tastes nut-like. Although it is normally depicted as always having holes, this is not always true as there are many varieties that vary in holes. The cheese is made with cow's milk and is made in the United States along with Colby, Cojack and Farmer cheeses. An odd fact about the process is that it is matured in a vacuum-packed plastic wrapping. That is December's "Cheese of the Month." Swiss. ●



(79.298\*684)/2-16-9?  
**Mr B.:** (biggest laugh yet) Greater than 0.

**PV:** OK, let's try this, 14\*7?  
**Mr B.:** (straight away) 98-easy!

**PV:** What is your favourite book?  
**Mr B.:** (huge pause) Well, my children say that I can't pick a favourite. When we are at the end of a holiday, we often ask each other which part of it was the best. I am notorious for withering, so for that

reason, I have to say all of them.  
**PV:** What are your favourite subjects?  
**Mr B.:** Probably history, chemistry and design.

**PV:** Are all these questions being answered truthfully?  
**Mr B.:** Most definitely.

**PV:** Are you sure?  
**Mr B.:** Yes. ●

## Balraj's Book Review

Balraj Singh, year7@pupilsvoice.com

### Crocodile Tears, by Anthony Horowitz

I recently finished the latest Alex Rider installment Crocodile Tears. Before I carry on I would like to make it clear that

personally I think this book was very good. But, I did not believe for one second it was one of the best in the series. After waiting quite a while for this book I did not know what to expect. It did not let

me down but I wasn't as pleased with it as I would have liked to be.

It starts in Indian power plant, and we follow a guy called Ravi who was bribed by two men to plant a bomb in the power plant for a sum of money for him, but the men are not as honest as they seem and it leads to dire consequences for Ravi. After this we move to Scotland where Alex is on vacation with the Pleasure family. They are invited to a party hosted by former boxer and current charity man Desmond McCain (a guy named after a bag of chips). He is the psycho behind the plot of the story; he (as always with Anthony-Horowitz) has a strange appear-

ance and a weird personality. He leads Alex through a cat and mouse game from a GM crop laboratory to a former tourist attraction in Africa.

Although a good book, like I have already said, it lacks the WOW! comeback factor that all series books need. It trails behind other books with its filler book profile (has no trailing or current connection with other books) and is an average book compared to the running flow of Eagle Strike to Snakehead. Not a poor show from Horowitz but not a brilliant one either, but read it and make your own mind up on this book. ●

## Neal's Recondite Riddles

Neal Naik, year7@pupilsvoice.com

- How many letters are there in the alphabet?
- At dusk I come out without being fetched. At dawn I disappear without being stolen. What am I?
- I am a token of one's love. I have no beginning and no end. What am I?
- When you say my name I am gone. What am I?
- Whoever makes me sells me, whoever buys me doesn't need me, who ever needs me cannot buy me. What am I?

## A Laugh a Minute with Neal Naik

Neal Naik, year7@pupilsvoice.com

Teacher: 'Why are you late?'

Pupil: 'Because of the sign.'

Teacher: 'What sign?'

Pupil: 'The one that says, "School ahead, go slow!"'

Teacher: 'Give me a sentence using the word "fascinate".'

Pupil: 'My raincoat has ten buttons but I can only fasten eight'

Teacher: 'Use the word "climate" in a sentence.'

Pupil: 'I have an apple tree in my garden but my parents won't let me climb it.'

Teacher: 'Give me a sentence with the word "gruesome".'

Pupil: 'I wasn't very tall last year but since then, I grew some' ●

## Puzzling Christmas Wordsearch

In the wordsearch can be found a large number of Christmas themed words, running across, down, diagonally and backwards. The remaining letters will, unscrambled, spell out the first line of a popular Christmas song.

