

History Re-enacted

The very first Rugby clash between Riverview and Joeys is etched into the history books back in 1907 and the Alma records *'The game was fast and fearless, and played from start to finish in admirable spirit.'* In a match that was a portent for the future, it ended in a draw – 11 All. This wonderful tradition was continued under magnificent autumn skies at Hunters Hill last Saturday in front of a crowd of approximately 6,000, and the descriptor of its historical counterpart was as relevant as the clash was 109 years ago. While the contest contained a fierce but fair competitiveness on the field, the pageantry and theatre of the war cries that have echoed for a century resonated with emotional impact off the field. Chants of RRIIVEERRVIEW were countered with the Sub Tuum; the latter synonymous with Marist schools throughout the world. It was one of those gala occasions, like the perennial Gold Cup and Head of the River, where the entire community became involved and the spirit of both the GPS and the respective schools was on abundant display. It was a salient reminder of the rich tradition that exists in schools such as Riverview and Joeys along with the rallying cry of the community to produce such a wonderful contest and a memorable spectacle. Congratulations to all, the boys on the field who got over the line after a titanic struggle, and, the many who supported the occasion.

On Monday evening the OIU Careers Expo was held in the Gartlan Centre. It drew the interests of over 40 different institutions including each of Sydney's universities, together with a wide spectrum of consortiums that provide advice about career options in the post schooling world. While pitched at the senior secondary level, it was encouraging to see so many boys who are still in the early or middle stages of secondary school; such is the interest in decision that need to be made based upon considered thought and contemporary information related to a rapidly changing field in the tertiary environment and employment that may spring from it. Many thanks are extended to John Allen and the many members of the OIU who work assiduously for the greater good and provide opportunities to gain the best insights into those heady and sometimes daunting years in the immediate aftermath of school.

The Performing Arts continue to take centre stage at the present time with the Year 11 production of Kaleidoscope and Junior Music Rehearsal of The Lion King. These productions are well in advance of their performance schedules; the former later in June and the latter in September, respectively. And as is always the case, the quality of performance is in due proportion to the investment in time and hours of rehearsal along the way. While there is still much work ahead, it is important to acknowledge this work along the way, in addition to the accolades which are delivered on the night of performance.

Student leaders from Ignatian Schools across Australia gathered for the Youth Leadership Conference at Collaroy in the early part of the week to participate in a formation program. In all, 70 young men and women in Grade 6 from schools which carry an Ignatian charism across Australia came together in convocation at Collaroy to consider the values and attributes of good leaders and how they can influence organisations and communities. One of the highlights was an address by School Captain, Bennett Walsh, on his experience as in senior leadership and how that may have significance for the younger members of the symposium in their understanding of, and response to, leadership. The young men and women who attended this forum need to be commended for their commitment of leadership and for their wholesome and committed response to some of the more challenging workshops and sessions.

Parents with boys in Year 3, 5, 7 and 9 would be acutely aware of the fact that national testing in literacy and numeracy via the agency of NAPLAN was carried out at the College during the week. While school profiles associated with this initiative are publicly displayed on the *MySchool* website, they are but one indicator of the educational program and many educators would argue a rudimentary one at that. St Ignatius' does not teach to the literacy and numeracy tests, nor does it screen students upon intake to see if they can manufacture certain test profile stores. Indeed, we are currently finalising enrolment applications for 2018 and some of the boys who have been interviewed have NAPLAN scores well beneath the state average due to identified learning difficulties. In an Ignatian school such as Riverview,

the key criteria for entry relate to a commitment to the teachings of the Church and demonstrated membership of a parish community, along with the congruence of values between the family and the College. While staff, the School Executive and the College Council are certainly mindful of the literacy and numeracy scores that are registered through NAPLAN, they are not drivers of the educational program. Indeed, there are other very significant and pre-eminent dimensions to the holistic development and formation of young men such as their pastoral well-being, a strong sense of community, a robust co-curricular program, and of course that one distinctive element of Jesuit education, a commitment to serve the poor, the indigent, the marginalised and the disadvantaged. While we wait for the release of the profiles in September, we will give equal weight to the delivery of all elements of a broad and integrated educational program over the months ahead.

Year 11 End of Semester Examinations will begin in earnest next week. Timetables were released at the start of term and the boys have been intensively involved in revision programs and study routines over the early weeks of the term. We wish them well as they undertake another important step towards the HSC along with the boys in other grades who will confront their own intensive assessment schedule in the weeks to follow.

Best wishes for the week ahead.