



Matters of Principal

The Darkling Thrush by Thomas Hardy

*I leant upon a coppice gate
When Frost was spectre-gray,
And Winter's dregs made desolate
The weakening eye of day.
The tangled bine-stems scored the sky
Like strings of broken lyres,
And all mankind that haunted night
Had sought their household fires.*

We are certainly now in the grips of a cold snap. As I walk to school each morning, my breath is taken away by both the bracing cold and the beauty of this place. Over the past ten days, the campus has been blanketed in a heavy white frost, car windscreens have iced over and the water at the bottom of the rain gauge has frozen. Fortunately, as the sun rises, so too does the temperature but it seldom rises above 15 degrees on the mountain. We are preparing ourselves for a particularly chilly weekend as the cold front moves over.

The matric academic focus programme has run smoothly and - on the whole - the pupils have found it very beneficial. Unfortunately, a handful of boys have not made the most of this time and we have dealt with pupils bunking and failing to meet commitments. It is unfortunate to note that at this late stage of their school careers, they lack the motivation and self-discipline to apply themselves to their work.

The Grade 8 – 11 examinations have gone well, with the Grade 8 and 9 pupils finishing on Monday. On Wednesday, the Grade 9s have a very important subject choice information day. The subject HODs will be presenting relevant information on their subject which will aid pupils in making their final subject choices for next year. The presentations will be recorded and shared with the Grade 9 parents. The Grade 8 and 9 pupils are required to be at school up to and including Friday as we are running important enrichment and extension programmes and the examination scripts will be returned on Friday for checking. Please do not allow your child to convince you that there is no need to attend school.

We are very close to the end of what has been an incredibly grueling term. Let's support our pupils in pushing through until Friday and finish as we should before enjoying a well-earned holiday.

God bless

SPORTS NEWS

Last weekend the U/14 Girls' Hockey Team participated in the Limpopo High Schools semi-finals that were held at Merensky High School. After finishing the league in third place, they played Ben Viljoen to try and secure a spot in the finals. Having already beaten Ben Viljoen in the league, the Stanfordsians definitely had the upper hand but knew it wouldn't be an easy game. The first half of the game was packed with highlights as both teams came so close to scoring, but close wasn't good enough to get either of the teams on to the scoresheet. The second half started with the exact same intensity, Ben Viljoen managed to capitalise on a penalty corner to take the lead halfway through the second half. The Stanford girls chased the game with a few great chances but the scoreline remained the same until the last whistle. Unfortunately, the girls didn't make it to the final and instead had to play for bronze the next day.

For the third and fourth playoff, the girls faced Frikkie Meyer, hoping to bounce back from the previous day's upset. The girls started off the game as a totally different team and it seemed like a bronze medal was surely inevitable. The game remained goalless until the 40th minute of the game, when, against the run of play, Frikkie Meyer found themselves in the Stanford circle and just managed to get the faintest of touches on the ball to deem it a goal. The final score was 0 – 1 to Frikkie Meyer. The U/14 girls finished this year's season in fourth place granting them a Noordvaal qualification - we certainly wish them all the best moving forward.

The 1st Team Boys finished the season in third place which handed them a spot in the playoffs. They played Ben Viljoen in the third and fourth playoffs. Unfortunately, the game ended in a draw and a result was to be decided through an 8-second shoot-out. The Stanfordsians, unfortunately, lost the shoot-out by 3 goals to 1. This meant the SLC boys finished fourth but would have to play against Curro Heuvelkruin for a Noordvaal qualification.

With four of the team's players being absent on the day, the game was definitely not going to be the same but having beaten Curro by six goals earlier in the season, the boys felt backed to win. Once again, as the game kicked off, the boys meant business in all but the circle. Converting chances being the coach's main point between every interval. The boys were rewarded with a goal in the third quarter of the game through the hard work of Diego Vieira. Many more chances went begging but the boys seemed not to mind as they were still leading the game. They were soon going to regret all those chances as Curro scored from a great penalty corner just before the final whistle. This meant that this game, as per the last, had to be settled through an 8-second shoot-out. Sadly, for the Stanford boys, they again couldn't convert and lost the shoot-out by 3 goals to 1, and therefore missed out on a spot in the Noordvaal tournament.

In rugby news, the Baby Badgers (U/15A Rugby team) played in the Limpopo Division 4 Finals against Northern Academy to gain a place in the quarter-finals for Noordvaal. The boys put up a great fight against a team that had beaten them during the season. It was a very competitive match but Northern Academy managed to score a try in the last minute of the match to snatch the lead and the win! The boys were gutted as they left everything on the field. Well done on a good season so far, but the Baby Badgers are not finished yet, as they now prepare for the Noordvaal playoffs that will be after the holidays.