

Oakhill Echoes

June 2011

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Experiential Learning Experience Gr 10

- Niklas Martin



As part of a new initiative of the ever-developing Oakhill College, grades eight to twelve, young and old went to separate destinations on the 17th May for a day of first hand learning experiences. We, the Grade Ten students headed down to Pledge Park, which is officially known as Pledge Nature Reserve. Although this pristine area is within walking distance from Oakhill School, many of us were unaware of the beauty which such an area holds.

Pledge Nature Reserve provided the perfect platform for the Biology students, due to

the overwhelming abundance and variety of plants, insects and animals. Mrs Le Fleur, Mrs Brown, Mr Claassen and a new member of the Oakhill staff, Mrs Boucher, were our accompanying teachers. They lead the way through the gates and introduced us to Pledge Nature Reserve manager, Mervin.

We were then split into three groups, two of which would stay behind to do various chemical tests on the natural environment, whilst the other group went on a guided tour through the little stretch of natural forest which made up the Reserve. Here we were told about the history of the area, and Oakhill's previous involvements in restoring its natural beauty after almost all of Knysna's indigenous trees were lost to the forestry industry. We were also taught about biodiversity and the mutual relationship between the organisms making

SNAP!



Matric Class of 2011

*It's not who you are that holds you back,
It's who you think you're not.*

-Author Unknown

Experiential Learning Experience (Cntd)

- Niklas Martin

up this biome.

After a quick refuel, the groups alternated activities, group one went to test the soil and water whilst groups two and three went on the guided tour with Mervin. Mrs Bouwer actioned our first activity, which was to test the pH level of the surrounding soil using bicarbonate soda and vinegar. We collected samples from both high and low lying areas, and the difference in pH levels was distinctly different. Then Mrs Le Fleur instructed us to collect several water samples in order to look at the organisms present and the level of health content of the water in the Nature Reserve. We first measured the temperature, then got the pH level and thereby interpreted the health content of the water using the Universal Indicator. The results were shocking; the

water flowing through the Pledge Nature Reserve varied between polluted and highly polluted. Mervin described this as the result of a burst sewerage pipe upstream of the area. Although the water was not healthy for human consumption, several organisms flourish in such conditions.

All in all, the day proved to be a great success as we learnt numerous interesting facts, not only about the area and its organisms, but also the vulnerability of such pristine nature and the importance of preserving it.

The Grade Ten students would like to thank the Staff for the effort that went into planning such an interesting excursion.

Oakhill Races to Victory at Kart Championships

- Liam Sofianos



When I was sitting in the car at the top of the hill I had a feeling of both excitement and nervousness because I knew the three boys sitting next to me were really fast. Each of them wanted to get to the bottom of the hill before me.

As we left the start the adrenalin started

pumping; all I was concentrating on was the road, brakes were not an option and too big a turn on the steering would certainly mean skidding out and a possible roll. Wheels touched as we hit the bend, but the inside line was mine. When I passed the finish I was so happy that I had won and when I looked behind me and saw the rest of my team running down the hill shouting, "Well done Liam!" I knew I had done it.

All this would never have been possible without the support and help from the rest of my team. What a great day!



If you teach your children nothing else, teach them The Golden Rule and "righty-tighty, lefty-loosey."
- Robert Brault

Experiential Learning Experience Gr 11

- Tiffany Barrett



On Tuesday 17th May 2011 the Grade 11's travelled through to Robberg for their experiential learning experience. The scenery in this area is beautiful and all you can smell is vegetation, the sea and seals.

The trip was fun, full of laughter and about getting to know more about the surrounds and each other.

We learnt a lot of interesting things about the environment and we even got to walk up, run down and face plant into a sand dune that to me looked like a 90° angle. I'll walk it once and never again!

It was great moving out of the classroom and into the fresh air to do some different learning. Definitely a great experience for us all. Thank you to the Oakhill Staff who organised this wonderful trip.



SNAP!



Rugby scenes of Oakhill vs York in George (see report by Josh Buchalter)

Afrikaans Kultuuraand

- Michiel Coetzee

Ek was al by ses Afrikaanse Kultuuraande by Oakhill en telkens is my onverskrokke antwoord JA as my vrou sê die volgende een is naby.

Die samestelling van so 'n aand stem van jaar tot jaar net genoeg ooreen om die konteks te behou maar is oorkoepelend tog so anders. Ek het 'n diep innige liefde vir Afrikaans wat vêr gewortel is, so, dit is maklik vir my om intens sulke aande te geniet. Wat my telkens verbaas, met veral verwysing na die onlangse kultuuraand, was dat mense en gesinne wat nie Afrikaans grootgeword het nie, so genotvol en met passie van die bekende liedjies saamgesing het. 'Kaptein' van Kurt Darren is 'n enigma en man en muis, kinders ingesluit, het uit volle bors saam ge-'Kaptein'.

By so 'n Afrikaanse kultuuraand gaan dit oor meer as net die kunstenaars (leerders en onderwysers) wat in Afrikaans voordra, sing en op bekende Afrikaanse liedjies dans, saamsing en mimiek. Hier word daar iets van die Afrikaanse gasvryheid en gemaklikheid uitgeleef. Almal is samehorig en gesins- en vriendskapsbande word verdiep. Mense word geïnspireer deur hulle self in die prosa en musiek in te leef.

'n Oakhill Afrikaanse kultuuraand is ook 'n aand wat sonder pretensie met elkeen praat wat teenwoordig is. Dit maak nou nie saak of die lighartigheid van Jack Parrow jou

geval of die intensheid van 'Droomvrou' se klanke jou mee-sleur nie, jy kan nie anders om geraak te wees na so 'n spesiale aand nie.

Omdat ek in wese 'n denker, analis en konnekteerder is, is sulke aande se unieke samestelling vir my altyd interessant. Ek sien hoe die ouers en familie met oorgawe hulle gate uit geniet, hoe die kinders aangehak word deur die vrolike melodië en hoe die onderwysers dit geniet as hulle 'n "medley" van die mooiste Afrikaanse musiek uitvoer.

Voorwaar, dit is 'n voorreg om 'n Afrikaanse Oakhill kultuuraand by te woon en mag ek gespaar word om sommer nog vir baie jare elke Junie aand elke jaar my plek vol te sit.....

Soos die ou bekende spreukwoord sê, "MOG HET TREFFE", dit het ook weer dié jaar sekuur getref, dankie!



Oakhill now tweets on Twitter!
@Oakhill_CX

Follow us!



Oakhill takes on the Mighty Yorks

- Josh Buchalter



Although York is a school that is known for their incredible hockey, if their rugby team were to be compared to Oakhill's, most wouldn't expect a game like this ever to take place. Nevertheless, the hard working junior (u16) rugby team at Oakhill organised a fixture against the mighty York side!

Saturday 4th June: Match Day

There is something about school boy rugby on a Saturday morning that one cannot explain; there is something unique about it that other sports do not offer. And this particular rugby feeling is not known by many at Oakhill. But for us 10 guys who were involved, we know exactly what it's about! We were up for our biggest rugby challenge ever, taking on the big guns of York.

York were first to score, after their wing received the ball deep in their half. There was a miss-tackle and no one could stop him. Their wing was extremely quick and big enough to be a bouncer at Zanzibar! This was a clear signal that we all had to lift our game to the next level to compete with York. And every single player did exactly that. Mazi, Godwin and Josh stepped up and were there to stop the big wing every time he tried to break loose. We had an immediate answer with a good run from inside our own half, getting the ball wide

and gaining over 50m and getting inside there 22. Eventually Mazi dotted down in the corner. York managed to score again and the half time score was 5-12 to York.

After an extended first half we were all exhausted. The second half didn't start off too well as York scored 2 tries in quick succession, making it 5-22. Things really weren't looking good. But the game was not over yet, as Oakhill fought back bravely and managed to put together some top class rugby, dominating possession for the rest of the game and playing good quality rugby. This seemed to draw quite a good crowd. Good hands in centre-field gave Josh space, but then he found himself 1 on 1 with their big winger, but made sure that he didn't come out second best, side stepping him completely and running half the field to score under the posts. Oakhill managed another try very soon after that, with a great set play coming off perfectly with Godwin being the try scorer.



The game ended 17-22 to York, but showed that we were definitely able to compete with the tough opposition. An increase in our level of fitness will do wonders for this team, with a very exciting second half of the rugby season still to come.

SNAP!



Matric students supporting NSRI at the recent Kart Grand Prix on Thesen Island

Oakhill Open Golf Championships

- Jannie Biddulph

Oakhill School held its annual Golf Championship on 1 June 2011, to crown its top golfers in both the boys and girls section of the College as well as the Prep school.

The event was held on the beautiful Pezula Golf Club course in brilliant winter sunshine with a field of 50 students, teachers and parents taking part, and it was the highlight of the school golf calendar, which has taken a conscious decision to grow the sport at all levels and ages. Part of the school's vision is to establish a golf academy and allocate golf scholarships to identified students to ensure that a healthy golf culture is established.

Oakhill has entered into a partnership with Swingfit, whose PGA professionals are engaged in a coaching programme to promote and develop the sport at the school. Not only are they involved in the technical aspects of coaching, but also encourage the younger students, both boys and girls, to take up the sport. Part of the field included young students from the Oakhill Prep who took part in a pitch and putt tournament.

Oakhill golfers currently play in both the SWD schools' golf leagues for High Schools and Primary schools, and have plans for golf tours and fixtures against likeminded schools from Cape Town and other cities in SA. Both our top golfers, Jack Duthie and Stephanie Perkins, were recently crowned

as the winners in their sections at the u19 SWD Schools Golf Championships and have a string of other great achievements at provincial and international tournaments. They have been excellent golfing ambassadors for Oakhill and have set a standard of golf that we are very proud of.

The boys section was not surprisingly won by the current 1st team Captain, Jack Duthie, a Grade 10 student who plays off a +1 handicap. Jack has had a wonderful golfing year to date, having recently won the Knysna Club Championship in the men's division, placed 8th in the u19 SA Boys, won 2 Southern Cape u19 Foundation events, made 2 out of 3 Top 72 cuts, played in the World Kanako Junior Masters, and is busy preparing for the SA Boys u16 and WP National Order of Merit tournaments to be held in Cape Town soon.

Stephanie Perkins playing off a 3 handicap was crowned the Girls Champion, and she too, has been experiencing a successful run at various tournaments this year. Stephanie participated in the US Junior Masters in Florida, at TPC Sawgrass, in Dec 2010. In January 2011 she played in the WP Champs and finished 6th. She was then selected to play in the SA Kanako Junior Masters held in George in March this year, where she finished 11th overall

amongst the international juniors, and 3rd best SA Junior. Stephanie followed that up again with a superb finish in April at the SA Girls Champs Rosebowl, where she was placed 4th in a very strong field. Stephanie has qualified to play at the SA Girls u18 tournament this month (25-29 June at Orkney) which is the biggest event for her this year, when all the top u18 golfers in SA compete for the title. We are confident that she will do Oakhill proud.

The results for all the divisions where:

C Division (beginners prep)
 Runner up: Tessa Miccic
 Winner (in playoff): Jeremy Belet

B division (intermediate level prep)
 3rd place: Josh van der Merwe
 Runner up: Sebastian Gent
 Winner: Kyle Solomon

A division (handicapped college level)
 Medal
 3rd place: Stephanie Perkins (81)
 Runner up: Josh Pama (78)
 Winner: Jack Duthie (77)

Nearest to pin was won by a parent Mrs Pieters and the longest drive by Stephanie Perkins. Well done ladies, you showed up the boys and the men!

SNAP!



Oakhill Golf Championships held at Pezula

Prep Father's Day Soccer

- Stefan Weyers

On Wednesday 15 June the Oakhill sports grounds were engulfed by the sounds of great 80's hits and the groaning, grunting and moaning of guys who aren't quite 25 anymore. If anything indicates the fact that the Oakhill community is vibrant and actively involved in the growth of all our students, it is the fact that 82 Dads showed up to play soccer with their kids at Oakhill's Annual Father's Day Soccer Challenge.



Golfing Achievement for Jack Duthie



Jack Duthie receives the winner's trophy from Mr Ivano Ficalbi, MD of Dale Hayes Golf Events

2011 keeps on being a happy and very successful year for Oakhill's talented young 15 year old golfer, Jack Duthie. He has just added another great win to a string of excellent performances over the first six months of this year.

On Sunday June 12, Jack won a playoff in a tense final at Oubaa, George, to be crowned the winner of the Ernie Els Glacier Junior event sponsored by Sanlam. The event, hosted by Ernie Els, is the first of a series of 10 Glacier Junior events to be played at various venues across the country with the finalists of all these tournaments playing off at the Pecanwood golf estate in October, to decide a national U18 winner. The tournaments are sponsored by Glacier, Sanlam, but hosted by a South African golfing legend, either a current professional or an individual in the golfing industry, all whom have a passion for Junior golf in SA. Current tour professionals Ernie Els, Retief Goosen, Charl Schwartzel, Louis Oosthuizen, Hennie Otto, James Kingston, and legends Gary Player and Dale Hayes are all hosting similar events in the coming months leading up to the final in Gauteng.

The eventual winner at Pecanwood will be competing in the USA in the Junior Orange Bowl International tournament for U18 golfers from all over the world later this year. The Junior Orange Bowl has become one of the worlds' most prestigious junior golf events. Past winners include Tiger Woods (1991).

This victory confirms the undoubted talent that this young man has and follows on some equally impressive performances earlier this year when Jack won two Southern Cape Order Of Merit's, the Knysna Open Club Championships, The Oakhill Open, and a 8th place in the SA U19 Strokeplay Championships in March.

Unfortunately Ernie Els could not be at the event personally as he was busy preparing to play in the US Open Championship last week. Nevertheless, his father Mr Neels Els stood in on behalf of Ernie.

Oakhill School is extremely proud of Jack's achievements and wish him well in all the upcoming events he has planned to play in. We look forward to more silverware in the trophy cabinet!



Golf gives you an insight into human nature; your own as well as your opponent's.

SNAP!



Little Oaks Children of the World Day

Seriously Strong 200

- Kyle Langman

After the huge success of the recent inaugural Cannondale GR 300, and a great demand for more of the same great MTB - the inaugural Seriously Strong 200 was born. This was a three day event, where mountain biking enthusiasts cycled 200km of the most beautiful terrain around Knysna.

Oakhill students, being part of the President's Award, offered their services in this great event at the two water points each day. They were involved with filling water bottles, washing bikes, serving drinks, potatoes, sweets and muffins. The vibe that the Oakhill students brought was fantastic. They were very encouraging, helpful and friendly and I am sure that this contributed to all the participants finishing the race.

Some comments and feedback from the water stations:

"Incredible water tables!"; "Just want to start off and say thank you for an amazing event - the route, food, friendliness, water tables!"; "Great water tables!"



Oakhill students manning the water point on Day 2

On day 3, the Oakhill Adventure Racers were allowed to participate. They arrived motivated. They all did exceptionally well, with Harry Maarsingh being the second rider to cross the finish line. The Seriously Strong (and hot) team of Mr Pryke and Mr Langman finished the race in 15:50:45.

Well done to all Oakhill students who were a part of this event! You have once again proved that you bring joy to everything in which you participate.



Kyle Langman and Dave Pryke racing to food and water

Prep Hockey Tour to Rietbron

- Stefan Weyers

Forty-four players, boys and girls, bus loaded, destination unknown! It was with excitement and trepidation that our boys' and girls' hockey teams set off deep into the heart of the Karoo. After 4 hours on the road, we took the final turn, the passengers becoming quieter and quieter as the dirt road we now found ourselves on stretched away into the distance. The sun was setting and there was no sign of life, except for the odd herd of angora goats that did not pay us much attention. Little did we know we were to see many more of these quirky creatures.

Finally the light in the distance proved to be Rietbron. Turning off the main road we knew we had reached our destination when the road that we travelled was covered by an enormous marquee tent.

After a cozy night in the local hostel, we were warmly welcomed to a very cold Rietbron Primary School Hockey Festival and Angora Goat Youth Show. Early matches warmed us up as we settled into enjoying our new environment. The way in which the Oakhill children adapted to their new environment amazed even those of us who already know how amazing they are!



It was then time to gather for a brief explanation of things to come – how to gather a goat by the horns, with all students participating in a goat handling, goat counting and mohair grading competition. When the dust finally settled, Gabi Cox had won the goat handling competition, with Michaela Cross second. Matthew Williams won the goat counting competition and Jess Gebhard the mohair grading competition.

The boys and girls also played great hockey proving to be very competitive on a difficult surface. After the auction that evening, our



The beautiful town of Rietbron

players danced the night away. Finally, all was quiet, as ghosts and insects were evicted from the dorms!

Saturday saw us playing some good hockey with the B teams getting much needed time in the middle. Our students jumped at the opportunity to participate in some horse riding and a number of our girls were spotted galloping down the main street!

The evening ended with some more dancing and finally to bed after a busy, boisterous day. Another cold start, but warmed by a cup of coffee and delicious homemade rusks saw us bid farewell to the little town of Rietbron, which in three days had become a home away from home. Bags loaded with kudu biltong and mohair products were heading on home!

The ability of our students to adapt so quickly and confidently to a strange environment and for the host Head to comment on how well behaved they were, is surely a testament to our students as well as to Oakhill School.

Tiemke swims ahead



Tiemke Rijpstra, College Afrikaans teacher, competing in the recent SA Openwater Champs swim held in Jeffrey's Bay



SNAP!



Oakhill U15 Soccer Boys and Girls vs Montessori



Students and parents bid farewell to Oakhill Sports Co-ordinator Shaw Hipsher



Little Oaks celebrate Mother's Day

*A rose can say "I love you",
orchids can enthral,
but a weed bouquet in a chubby fist,
yes, that says it all.*

- Author Unknown



THE JOY OF LEARNING

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*Thanks to all our contributors for photographs,
news and snippets.*

Happy Holidays!
School reopens on
Tuesday 26th July 2011