

Weekly Bulletin for GSAL Whole School Sport

Message from Lorcan O'Brien - Whole School Director of Sport

I've always believed part of the purpose of my job as Director of Sport or indeed as a PE teacher, is to allow potential to flourish. I often hear the term, it's our job to ensure we 'nurture talent' - that phrase has never sat well with me. Yes, talent is important but truthfully in my experience, it's other factors such as; identity, hard work, perseverance, empathy and teamship which allow potential to shine.

In my first few weeks at GSAL, it's been wonderful to get to know pupils, staff and the school better. As I do, I get excited on a daily basis by the potential of GSAL sport. As we go through the term, the sports team and I will make provision to ensure we communicate our vision, ethos and the roadmap for GSAL sport over the coming years - the 'Why' and the 'How' of the programme. Until then, I very much look forward to meeting you in school (primary and senior) or on the sidelines every Saturday. In the meantime, please feel free to touch base if needed. My email is lwo@gsal.org.uk

Weekly Round Up of GSAL Sport

Year 5 and 6 Games on Friday afternoon was a joy to behold. One of my favourite times of week. Close to 250 pupils playing games, demonstrating teamwork, connecting with friends, improving relationships and working hard. If any parent wanted a snapshot of what GSAL sport represents, you should be here on Friday afternoons! You'll see the 3 pillars of our programme in full swing: *Participation, Aspiration and Challenge*. Our wonderful staff build the right environment and we help the pupils fulfil their potential.

Rugby has returned with a range of activities over the last fortnight, including training 'fixtures' with Manchester Grammar School, and the Development Day last weekend – the highlight being the U12's being coached by the 1st XV players. Each age-group has been inundated with pupils attending after-school and Saturday sessions, creating a real buzz of activity and expectation for the season ahead. We are excited by the return to competitive fixtures on Saturday 18 September against Cheadle Hulme School; a new addition to our fixture card, and the first opportunity for many to represent GSAL on a Saturday.

Our U12 girls had a cracking netball game on Wednesday v Penistone Grammar School – their first fixture of the year. Mrs Carter and Miss Williams were thrilled. Winning at GSAL has many faces. Whilst the score board is important, our girls played with passion, pride and wonderful team spirit. Our senior girls played Leeds University on Wednesday. A tough game for our girls, but a much-needed challenge as they prepare for national competitions in the weeks ahead.

Hockey fixtures on Saturday against Hymers and Rishworth, were another joy! The sun was shining, parents back watching and Mrs Woodroffe cheering on the side-lines. It was fantastic to see so many pupils representing the school with such enthusiasm and dedication. I was lucky enough to umpire the U15A team fixture – although I was a little rusty! However, I feel obliged to mention two wonderful GSAL pupils, who not only

played so well but epitomised the values GSAL Sport represents. They were kind, caring, and supportive, wonderful team players, often selfless, whilst also being competitive and driven to succeed - *Aniyah B and Millie D (Year 11 - U15A)*.

Our U19 team faced a very experienced Queens Chester side in the National cup competition, although the result did not go our way, it has given us areas to focus on in the coming weeks as we prepare for the future matches.

Saturday Sport/Fixtures/Team Sheets

SOCS is the portal we use to communicate team sheets and fixtures information. In essence, it's a 'pull' mechanism. We ideally want pupils and parents to proactively find the website – www.gsalsport.org.uk

From Monday 20 Sept, only U12 team sheets will be emailed home. For all other year groups, pupils and parents need to go the website to find their team sheets/dates/venue etc....

All details for rugby and netball fixtures this coming Saturday are on SOCS, the link for which is [here](#).

Sports Clubs

Thank you for your patience and cooperation in getting pupils 'up and running'. Going forward, to check your child's sport clubs (primary or senior school) please check SOCS, the link this is [here](#). We will ensure the information for sports clubs (venues, meet times and notes) is accurate and correct. Please use SOCS as your first port of call for sports clubs' information.

Primary school sport notices

- Gum shields are required for hockey from Year 4 and above.
- Football boots are not essential at the start of term as the grass pitches are firm. As the weather turns and whenever we use the 3G for football or rugby, boot with studs will be required.
- Sports clubs are open to everyone in a given age group so please contact Mrs Hemsley jeh@gsal.org.uk or Mr Whish caw@gsal.org.uk if you wish to be added to the register.

Senior school sport notices

The new options for 6th form pupils will begin on Wednesday 22 September.

Mr Morris is finalising bookings for Golf, Climbing and Ninja Warrior to add to our existing programme. We will also be welcoming a new strength and conditioning coach to the provision, working with various groups/pupils in year 12 and 13. The 6th form team will contact all pupils in the 6th form this Friday via email and ask them to complete a simple online form to confirm their option going forward.

Pupil highlight

The purpose of this section is to highlight the wide and varied success of our pupils, in and out of school. It's impossible to list the success of all - however, each week we'll shine the spot light on some great moment and stories. This week:

Oliver W (year 8) – On Saturday, Oliver will captain the Taverners cricket team. Making the team is an achievement itself, captaining is another! Good luck Oliver.

Imaan E (Year 10) – On Monday, Imaan will represent the Bradford U15 girls in the finals of the MCC Foundation National tournament at Lord's Cricket Ground in London. What an experience – good luck Imaan.

Sports book of the week

We love to read at GSAL. If you haven't already done so, I'd highly recommend the book; *Thinking, Fast and Slow*, by Daniel Kahneman.

Meet the sports staff

Each week for this term, we'll shine the spotlight on a member of the sports team at GSAL. This week, it's Mr Tom Hicks. Mr Hicks has recently joined the school, as a rugby coach working with all ages and ability levels. It's hard to miss him; he's 6ft 8! Mr Hicks played professional rugby for Northampton, Gloucester and Doncaster. He is studying part time for a degree in sports coaching.