This is the twenty-first edition of the Physical Education Magazine. We hope you will enjoy reading about all of the fantastic achievements of the school teams, and our individual stars of the future.

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Basketball Update

Throughout the half term teams from Year 7 to Year 11 have been playing their fixtures against other schools from Walsall. The popularity of Basketball this year has been excellent, with lots of students attending training to earn a place in the starting 5.

The Year 7 team have had a fantastic season, as they have only lost 2 games which puts them in great contention to win the league. They have all worked extremely hard in training and adapted well to playing Basketball on a full sized court. Their stand out performances came against Brownhills when they won 50-4, Shire Oak when they won 32-2 and Pool Hayes when they won 20-0. The Year 7 team should be proud of what they have achieved this season, and aim to continue this form next year.

The Year 8 team have also had a great season, and made huge improvements from when they were in Year 7. They have only lost 2 games this season, and have secured comfortable victories against schools which they struggled against last year. Stand out performers this season have been Ben and Joseph, who have played consistently well in each of their games and helped the team to earn an impressive 32-4 victory over St Francis.

The Year 9 team have replicated the form of the other two teams by again only losing 2 of their league games. These were both extremely close games as they lost by 4 points to St Francis and a buzzer beater at the end of overtime decided their game against Shelfield. However they have produced some superb performances in their other games, especially against Bloxwich Academy, Pool Hayes and Barr Beacon as they won by large margins.

Due to only two other teams entering the league for the Year 10 age group, they have unfortunately had less games to play so home and away fixtures have been arranged to ensure they still get as much Basketball as possible. The Year 10 team play exciting attacking Basketball and as a result won 3 of their 4 games, narrowly losing one game by 3 points.
Basketball Update

The Year 11 team have had an extremely successful season. Not only have they only lost one game in the league all season, they also represented Walsall at the Black Country Games and competed against the best schools from Tipton, Dudley and Wolverhampton. They played 3 fixtures at the tournament, winning their first two and narrowly losing their last. Due to two teams being tied on points, the result had to go to baskets scored and we had fortunately scored one more basket than the other team meaning that we were crowned Black Country Champions which is a brilliant achievement.

Due to their success in the Walsall leagues, both our Year 8/9 and Year 10/11 girls Basketball teams represented Walsall at the Black Country Games. This was again against the best schools from Tipton, Dudley and Wolverhampton. Both teams unfortunately lost their opening game to the overall winners of the tournament, however won all of their other games to finish runners-up. This is still an outstanding achievement to finish second in the whole of the Black Country and the girls should be extremely proud of their achievement.
On Thursday 6 February the Year 11 Football team travelled to Cauldon Castle in the quarter-final of the West Midlands Cup. This was a team that hadn't lost a game all year in both their league and cup competitions so they were going to be tough opposition. The first half was extremely even, with both teams finding it difficult to create any chances. In the second half Cauldon Castle took the lead after an excellent team move, however straight from the kick off Walsall Academy instantly scored an equaliser with a perfect strike from Ben. From this point on Walsall Academy were the better team and scored a second shortly after; Ben showing his composure again to get his second goal of the game. Despite constant pressure from Cauldon Castle, the Walsall Academy defence held strong to secure a 2-1 victor and a place in the semi-final of the competition.

Girls 5 a-side

The girls 5 a-side league is a new competition for this year and we have entered teams in both the Year 8 and Year 10 age groups. The first game of the season was played against West Walsall Academy. Both age groups played at the same time and both secured comfortable victories with the Year 8 team winning 10-0 and the Year 10 team winning 5-0. The second game of the Season was played against Streetly Academy and despite their best efforts, the Year 8 team unfortunately suffered a 5-1 defeat. The Year 8 girls also played against Aldridge which resulted in a 2-1 loss, however the girls were extremely unlucky not to take away at least a point from the game as they hit the woodwork and the opposing goalkeeper made some great saves.
Futsal

On Tuesday 11 February the U18 Boys Futsal team were crowned Walsall Borough Champions for the third year running. The event took place at Wolverhampton University, Walsall Campus. We won every game we played and had some big wins against Bloxwich Academy (8-0) and Streetly Academy (7-0). We entered our final game unbeaten and were up against Shire Oak Academy who had also won all of their previous games. It turned out to be a very close game; we went 1-0 down but fought back to win 2-1 by the time the final whistle blew. Winning the tournament now puts us into the Black Country Finals which take place on Friday 6 March. Credit to the following boys who were outstanding throughout.

On Wednesday 12 February it was the Year 8/9 girls opportunity to compete for a spot at the Black Country Games. This was competed against Streetly Academy, Shire Oak, Bloxwich Academy and Shelfield with the top two teams qualifying for the next tournament. The girls lost the first game of the tournament to Shire Oak who were the overall winners, but improved dramatically after the first game which meant that in the final game we had to beat Streetly to finish runners up. The game was extremely close for the whole game, but with 10 seconds remaining Alarna scored a fantastic goal which meant that we won 1-0 and progressed to the Black Country Games. This is a fantastic achievement but made even more special as this is the first time a Walsall Academy girls Futsal team has qualified for this tournament.

Swimming Gala

On Wednesday 5 February, KS3 boys and girls attended a swimming gala at Brownhills School. Both teams swam extremely well in this very competitive gala event. Unfortunately both teams did not place in any of the finals but all students were happy with their performances. The students who were chosen to represent Walsall Academy did themselves and the school proud.

On Wednesday 12 February, KS4 boys and girls also attended a swimming gala at Brownhills School. The girl’s team was made up of one student, Libby, who swam all of the individual events, placing to take part in three out of four finals. The boy’s team was made up of Aiden, Jeevan, Mathew and Jack. All of the boys swam incredibly well in a competitive gala event. Aiden qualified to partake in the finals of his event and placed first overall which is a brilliant achievement.
Rugby Update

The Sixth Form rugby team travelled to Wolverhampton Grammar School in what was a physical encounter. The boys started brightly with some excellent carries from Jamie and Will, and after a number of phases the boys finally took the lead. Wolverhampton Grammar School battled back into the game and after an excellent defensive effort from Walsall they finally broke through the purple wall. However, we took back control of the game and scored two more tries to secure victory continuing a successful season for the boys.

The Year 8 Rugby team have faced off against both Wolverhampton Grammar School and Walton High School in recent weeks, two fixtures we lost in Year 7. However, thanks to their commitment to come training and their determination to improve, this year we managed to get wins against both of these teams. Strong performances from the likes of Ben, Lewis and Kian have helped take the team to the next levels and are one of the most improved teams the Academy has seen. Well done boys!

The Year 10 Girls Rugby team hosted Shire Oak in what was an open, free flowing game of Rugby. The girls started brilliantly and Maja was first on the score sheet using her nimble footwork to cross the try line, her first of 5 in the game. We flew out to an early lead with some excellent hands being shown by the girls. Shire Oak finally managed to get possession of the ball, only to find an extremely physical and organised Walsall defence. Excellent hits from Emily, Maddison and Rose set the tone and even without the ball in hand, the Walsall girls found themselves going forward. Shire Oak managed to break the defensive effort after some relentless tackling and tallied two tries, only to be outdone by Walsall scoring a total of 10 tries. Well done girls!
Netball Update

Walsall Academy Netball teams have continued to play fixtures against schools in the Walsall Borough as part of the Walsall Schools league. Notable performances came from the Year 10 team who drew 10 all against an excellent Queen Mary's team and won 8-5 against a well-established Shire Oak team. The Year 9 team have also performed very well beating Shire Oak 10-0 and narrowly losing to Queen Mary’s 4-6. The teams will be performing in tournaments at Aldridge School this half term.

Duke of Edinburgh Award

The Bronze, Silver and Gold Duke of Edinburgh students have continued to gain hours towards their awards for the physical, skill and volunteering sections. A number of students are giving back to the community by volunteering at local charity shops, old people homes, animal shelters, brownie and cub groups among many other things. Many of our students are learning to cook for their skill section by cooking one meal a week at home with their family. There has been some great evidence of some interesting meals cooked which is great to see and will give the students an important skill they can go on and use when they go to university or move out of home.

Silver and Gold groups developed their navigation skills during a training day in December based in the Shropshire Hills. All groups worked well together to develop their map reading and compass skills. The instructors they worked with were impressed with their progress and ability to work together in their expedition groups. These groups have also been using session 3 time to plan their practice and final expedition routes of which they will undertake in the summer term. We look forward to tracking their progress.
This is the twenty-first edition of the PE Magazine and we hope you have enjoyed it. We are looking to get students more involved in the process by supplying pictures, writing match reports etc. So if you want to get involved and supply a story/report save the file to memory stick or disk ready for editing and pass onto the PE Department.

If you want to be a part of the next magazine, come to Session 3 and get involved in PE and Sport.

Mr L Bull
PE Department