



Dear Parents, Old Boys and Friends of Michaelhouse  
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## Rector's Message

As I write this missive, I am conscious of the boys being engaged in many different activities over the past week: the A Block have continued to write their trial examinations, culminating in Mathematics today; the B Block have been on a leadership course and are now engaged on work experience; the C Block have been moving towards the end of their cycling, paddling and walking through the rain, snow and sunshine; the D Block are still in Pondoland where they are experiencing an immersion in Mpondo hospitality, beginning to understand the aspirations of local people, engaging in conversation around customary laws and discipline and learning about medical folklore. The E Block have built on their Backyard Adventures, have learnt more about camping and, *inter alia*, are climbing iNhlosane. Each activity has a purpose and caters for the maturation of boys from the start of their Michaelhouse careers through to the time when they leave school.



Our D Block boys enjoying their Pondoland experience (left and right)

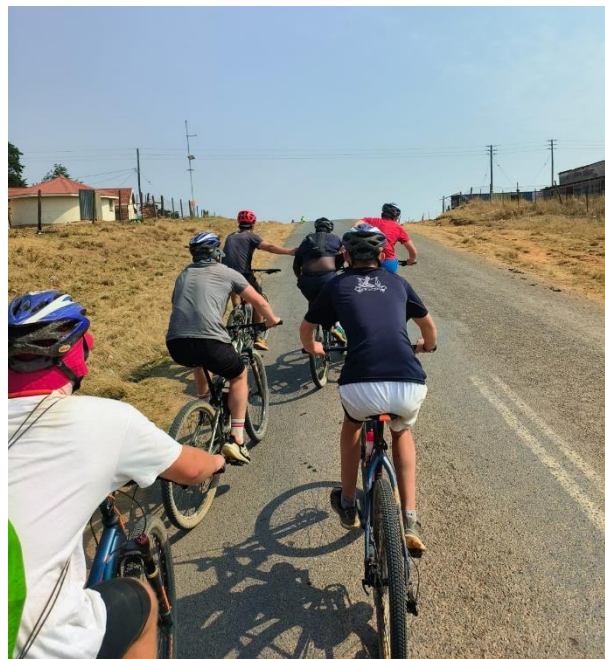
# Rector's eNews

20 September 2023

Newsletter 29/2023



MICHAELHOUSE



Scenes from our various C Block Journey groups



At home base, the trees are in blossom or in leaf, the grass is green again and the roof is being constructed on the Tatham Housemaster's House with the boys' section nearing completion. Once the new Tatham is finished, work will begin on Pascoe and the Pascoe boys will move next year into the old Tatham whilst we spend some months developing their House into a much more attractive, modern facility, admitting more light and yet retaining its character.

I have had a few days away from Michaelhouse last week attending the ISASA conference where two particular areas of interest related to the plasticity of the human brain and how it can be trained and also to ChatGPT and how to use it in a quest to develop critical thinking. We also listened to Old Boy, Michael Thackeray, an internationally-famous scientist who has worked extensively on the development of the lithium battery on the importance of energy-preservation in the modern era. Michael Thackeray then came to speak to our boys too. Another Old Boy, Sean Lumley, who is now President of the Old Boys' Club, spoke on how to initiate fundraising within schools and, in doing so, added huge value to the experience of other Heads. We also had three Parent Information Evenings in Johannesburg, Midrand and Pretoria, all of which were very well attended, demonstrating significant interest in Michaelhouse for the future.

With your sons about to return to you for the holidays, may I wish you a happy reunion with them and ask you please to ensure that they return to school at the beginning of next term with a proper school haircut and with their dress in order. We regard it as particularly important that they should look good in their No1s; they are Michaelhouse boys and need to take pride in their appearance and demeanour. The Deputy Rector: Pastoral has worked with boys to draw up a basic Hair Policy Document and this is attached to this eNews. Thank you.

## Heritage Day Collaboration

Our staff and boys celebrated Heritage Week last week with a number of different activities: for example, there were different foods on the menu for all to taste and experience. Our boys were able to show off their different nationalities/customs in their dress - these ranged from Zulu, Xhosa and Sotho through to French, German and Panamanian. A display of dance and entertainment rounded off the week.





## INTERHOUSE POTJIE COMPETITION



### Special Guest – Craig Higginson – Mr Jed Coventry

We are delighted to announce that we recently hosted a very special guest on campus—celebrated author and Michaelhouse Old Boy, Craig Higginson. Fresh off the completion of his latest work, *The Ghost of Sam Webster*, Craig took time out of his busy schedule to return to his alma mater.

During his visit, Craig ventured to the Makan Centre to record an insightful video in which he discusses his formative years at Michaelhouse, his writing roots, and his new life in the Midlands. This was an extraordinary occasion for both Craig and the community here, offering students and staff alike a window into the life and career of a successful writer.

For the full experience and to hear Craig's insights first-hand, be sure to check out the exclusive video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LFOoKeVv4BM>.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to Craig for coming back to Michaelhouse and sharing his journey from student to acclaimed author. His visit was not just a trip down memory lane, but an inspiring day for everyone who had the privilege to engage with him.

We are eagerly looking forward to the release of "The Ghost of Sam Webster" and are incredibly proud to count Craig Higginson among our distinguished alumni.

### Co-Curricular/Sports and Service Activities

#### *Matric Concert*

Nine A Block music students performed at the annual Matric Concert on Friday. This year the concert was held in the Chapel and was attended by their parents and staff. Each of the boys



performed a programme of three pieces from a variety of different musical styles and genres. The standard of the performances was exceptionally high, since all of the boys performed works that far exceeded the basic standard that is expected of matric students. Some of the boys were accompanied by either **Mr Jaco Dippenaar** or **Dr Carika de Swardt**, while more contemporary jazz, rock and pop pieces were performed with electronic backing tracks.

The following boys participated: **Kofi Asumaning** (saxophone), **Sebastian Bailes** (piano), **Enrique Benassi** (guitar), **Bradley de Klerk** (voice), **Samir Dookie** (piano), **Sandiso Hlongwa** (piano), **Thomas Kuhn** (trumpet), **Gqamile Mbuyazi** (violin) and **Andrew Woodland** (saxophone).



Scenes from *Matrics in Concert*

### *Marimbas*

On Saturday, the A and B Block boys from the Michaelhouse Competition Marimba Band performed as guest artists at Illovo's multi-national leadership conference dinner. The prestigious gala dinner was held at Champagne Sports Resort close to the Drakensberg. With all the delegates



representing their respective countries through wearing traditional attire and the band's fusion of contemporary and indigenous music, they were extremely successful in entertaining the audience.

The CEO of Illovo Africa, Mr Gavin Dalgliesh, who is also the parent of the McCormick Old Boy, Michael Dalgliesh, commented on the performance: *"What an honour it was to have you and your marimba band perform at our annual awards evening. The response was one of awesome disbelief at the quality of the musical performance. We can all be very proud of the boys."*

For the matrics, it was a bittersweet performance which signalled the end of a long-standing and successful involvement in the marimba programme. They will be remembered for their unbelievable input, hard work and exceptional musicality.

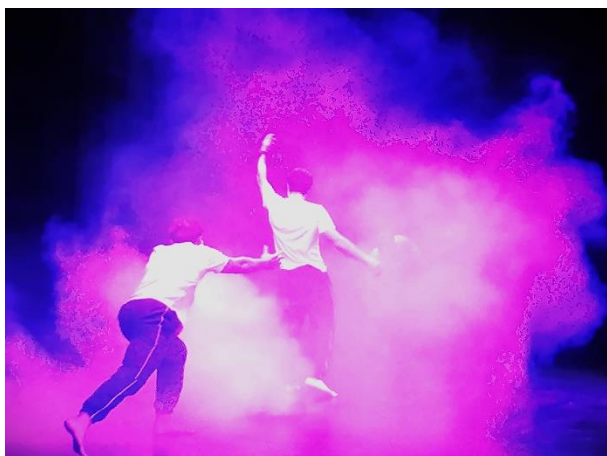


Marimba band members from left to right  
Back row: **Dr Carika de Swardt** (coach), **Abongile Xulu**, **Rory Steyn**, **Sandiso Hlongwa** (captain), **Sentso Tlelai**, **Stephan Macamo**, **Kwanele Shazi** (debut performance).  
Front: **Gqamile Mbuyazi** (vice captain), **Ntando Mbhele**, **Kofi Asumaning**, **Jordan Baxter**, **Alex Vries**, **Sinnon Khosa**



## *Inter-House Plays*

Inter-House plays and the C Block Dance Residency took place last Thursday in the Schlesinger Theatre. The plays were written by ChatGPT under supervision, with a workshop on prompting and with the criteria that there should be five characters, one of which was not human. They all turned out to be interesting and thought provoking, with the top three showing off their work in the finals. Pascoe took third place with a play on race, with a robot which finally gets sick of all the human issues at stake. Set on a golf course this was both entertaining and showed polarised opinions as a very human issue. West produced a great comic piece, with a group of mad scientists trying to make the perfect stand-up robot, which failed at every stage to be funny. Led by **Bongani Ngcobo**, who played the drums throughout, the play was whole-heartedly enjoyed and took second place. First place was overwhelmingly **Kian Moses'** piece on the Cape Town taxi strikes, with clever banter and bizarre characters entertaining the audience. The C Block drama group then had the audience in awe with an excellent piece they had developed over the previous two weeks with resident dancer, Ms Nadia Bertel. Ms Bartel will be starting a movement society at Michaelhouse. This brings to an end a very busy third quarter in the theatre.



Scenes from the Inter-House plays

## *Inter-Schools Quiz*

On Wednesday, 6 September, the Michaelhouse Media Centre Team, supported by the B Block TARPS, orchestrated another stellar edition of the annual Inter-Schools Quiz. A total of 10 schools participated, turning the Indoor Centre into a bustling hub of intellectual fervour and friendly rivalry.

A diverse array of challenging questions and seamless AV support added another layer of sophistication to the evening's proceedings, courtesy of the B Block TARPS. Midway through the quiz, the audience enjoyed a musical interlude featuring performances by some of Michaelhouse's most accomplished musicians—**Brent Tayengwa**, **Nicholas Hornby**, **Boitumelo Motsepe**, **Makena Githiri**, **Ian Graham**, and **Ben Cheales**. Their outstanding performances set the perfect atmosphere for the gripping second half of the competition.

The climax of the evening was the fast-paced Buzzer Round, where the best four teams fought for the top three positions in a riveting showdown of intellect and reflexes.

The distinguished winners of the 2023 quiz were: 1<sup>st</sup> **Quiz Pro Quo**: The Wykeham Collegiate, 2<sup>nd</sup> **Midmar House**: Howick High School and 3<sup>rd</sup> **Malachites**: St Charles College.



## Soccer

In the last matches of the season, our teams travelled to Hilton with mixed results:

1<sup>st</sup> lost 0-2, 2<sup>nd</sup> lost 1-2, 3<sup>rd</sup> drew 1-1, 4<sup>th</sup> won 4-2, 5<sup>th</sup> won 4-1, 6<sup>th</sup> drew 4-4 and 7<sup>th</sup> lost 1-3

U16A won 2-1, U16B lost 0-3, U16C lost 0-2, and U16D lost 0-3

U15A lost 0-1, U15B lost 0-1, U15C won 2-1 and U15D won 3-0

U14A lost 0-1, U14B drew 1-1, U14C drew 2-2 and U14D won 5-0



**Dalitso Simwinwa** on the ball



**Simon Khosa** using his skills to move forward



**Mpumzi Ngogodo** surrounded by the opposition



**Mitchell Bekker** looking to pass



**Ashton Watkins** putting it into space





## *Basketball*

The annual 1<sup>st</sup> Basketball dinner was held at Lythwood Lodge this past Friday. The team enjoyed a fantastic celebration with their parents and coaches and many a fond memory of the 2022/2023 season was shared. Most notably, our team's victory in the inaugural Maritzburg College Jenny Orchard Invitational tournament held in February was a highlight. The award winners on the night were as follows:

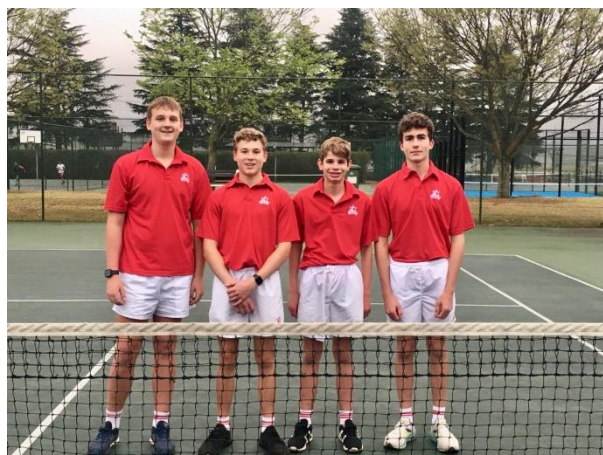
- **Elihle Ngcobo** – Coach's award for Most Valuable Player 2023
- **Jordyn Kleynhans** – Captain's award for Most Improved player 2023
- **Jordan Baxter** – Witherspoon trophy for Best Defensive Player 2023
- Tatham – Inter-house basketball trophy 2023



Congratulations to (from left to right): **Jordan Baxter, Elihle Ngcobo and Jordyn Kleynhans**

## *Tennis*

Our 4<sup>th</sup> team played against Voortrekker and won 18-0. Well done to them!



from left to right: **Jake McDonald, Benjamin Trotter, Matthew Hunter and Finley MacGregor**



## Cricket

Last weekend our 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> cricket teams went to Hilton College for our first Saturday matches of the season and came back winners:

The 1<sup>st</sup> XI won by 34 runs in an exciting match with many changes of fortune. The following performances were notable: **Basti Hofmeyr** 56, **Nathan Hoatson** 49 and **Luke Jankowitz** 33 and, amongst the bowlers: **Tom Mitchell** 2/41, **Nathan Hoatson** 2/15, **Cameron Strudwick** 3/19 and **Luke Payne** 2/25.



The 1<sup>st</sup> XI with their coaches, **Mr Darryn Mortimer** and **Mr Lwandiswa Zuma**

The 2<sup>nd</sup> XI won by 9 runs with **Cival Rugbar** making 50, **Patrick Lambert** 35 and **Graham Wynne** taking 3/36 in 10 overs.



The 2<sup>nd</sup> XI with their coach, **Mr Chris van der Berg**



## *A Block Culinary Experience*

On Friday 15 September thirty-six A Block boys visited Jackie Cameron's School of Food and Wine to take part in a gastronomic sensation of multiple dishes that they were asked to prepare under the guidance of junior chefs. The idea behind this was to prepare the boys for life beyond boarding school and enable them to cook simple dishes well. This included recipes for chicken stir-fry to making their own pasta from scratch and, of course, how to cook the South African braai chop. Each boy tried his hand at eight different dishes, which they ate on the go. It was rewarding to see the A Block boys engage with each other with such friendship and camaraderie, brought together as only food can do. A surprise and highlight of the day, was the generous gift from Ms Khanyisa Malaba-Maepa, Muako Maepa's mum (Ralfe), who so graciously gave each boy his very own white chef's jacket bought from Jackie Cameron's School. The boys were so taken aback and touched by this gesture that instilled within them pride and recognition at having been a part of the Michaelhouse Culinary Society to the end of their A Block year. The event was a great success and the boys learned valuable skills while spending a wonderful afternoon together. Thank you to Mr Michael Sevenoaks and Muako Maepa for organising the event and making the society so successful.



A Block boys enjoying their culinary experience



## Individual Achievements

**Samir Dookie** (A Block Tatham) recently received news that he had been selected to perform as a soloist with the KZN Philharmonic Orchestra in the SASMT's Young Performers' Concert on 14 October at the Durban Playhouse. Samir was selected from students and adults from across the region and this honour marks him as an exceptional talent. Samir will perform the second movement from the Second Piano Concerto by the composer Sergei Rachmaninoff.

At the same time, Samir also learnt that he had been offered a scholarship to attend the Berklee College of Music in Boston, USA. He wants to study both piano performance and orchestral conducting and exposure at an international level will certainly open many doors in this exclusive realm of musicality for him. Samir has already been accepted to study music at all the South African universities to which he applied and was invited, as a high achiever, to meet the Vice-Chancellor of Wits University.

## Holiday Sporting Events

Here are some events which will take place over the next weeks:

### *Basketball*

22 - 25 September: 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Kearsney Invitational Independent Schools' Tournament

5 - 7 October: U15A Northwood Tournament

6 - 7 October: U14 Michaelhouse Tournament (U14A and U14B)

### *Waterpolo*

22 - 25 September: U18A Clifton College Tournament

28 Sept - 1 October: U14A Hilton College Tournament

5 - 8 October: U16A DHS Tournament

### *Cricket*

28 Sept – 2 October: U14 Hilton Festival

28 Sept – 2 October: U16 and U17 Michaelhouse Festival

29 Sept – 3 October: U15 Sommerville Festival: Pretoria Boys' High

29 Sept – 3 October: 1<sup>st</sup> XI Michaelmas Festival: Maritzburg College

### *Canoeing*

6-7 Oct - Fish River Canoe Marathon: Cradock

## End of Term Arrangements

A reminder that school closes for the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Term this Friday, 22 September. Please take note of the following important arrangements.



## **A Block Boys**

A Block Boys will be engaged in an exam-script check on Thursday, 21 September. This activity is scheduled to conclude around 13h00. Following this, pupils are welcome to depart with their own parents or choose to leave on Friday morning, as usual.

A separate letter will shortly go out to A Block parents from the Rector about arrangements for the last days of the matric exams, Thursday 23 November.

## **B Block Boys**

B Block Boys have already departed to do their 'work experience' and service projects following the B Block Leadership Camp. For any inquiries or concerns related to B Block, please refer to the communication sent out to B Block parents.

## **C Block Boys**

C Block Boys will return from Journey in staggered groups throughout Thursday, 21 September. At 16h00, they are required to attend the CBJ Chapel Service. After this, boys may depart with their own parents or to leave on Friday morning as usual.

## **D and E Block Boys**

D and E Block Boys will be returning on Thursday, 21 September. Similar to other blocks, they are welcome to depart with their parents on Thursday or leave on Friday morning as usual.

## **Transportation Details**

Please note that there will be **no airport transfers** or Michaelhouse transport available **on Thursday**. However, the **buses will depart on Friday, 22 September** as per our regular schedule below:

King Shaka Shuttle: 05h00 and 07h30

Oribi Shuttle: 06h00

Ballito /Pavillion: 07h30

Wanderers Bus: 07h30

Bloemfontein: 07h30

Please find attached the end of term Bus Information.

For any queries please contact **Mrs Nirvana Naicker**, School Transport Co-ordinator:

Cell: 060 562 3954

Office: (033) 234 1170

E-mail: [opsadmin@michaelhouse.org](mailto:opsadmin@michaelhouse.org)

## **Padel Courts**

With the official opening of the padel a couple weeks ago. The boys have made extensive use of these facilities, but it is important to note that the courts are not yet open to the general public and are for school use only. We will update you, as to the usage, in the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter.



Boys making use of the padel courts whenever they get a chance

## Conclusion

It will be a busy holiday for those participating in sporting events, but I hope it will also be an opportunity for boys to relax and to enjoy some “down time”. This is important if the boys are to feel refreshed and ready to take on the challenges of the final term of 2023.

With my best wishes

**ANTONY CLARK**  
RECTOR