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IN LOVING MEMORY OF NICO CAINE





The Final School Bell for Mrs Olivier

Nico Havenga

For generations of Paul Roos boys, Mrs Olivier has been a familiar figure in the corridors: firm, fair and not one to let a broken rule slip by unnoticed. But behind the strict reputation is someone with a great sense of humour, a deep compassion for others and an enduring love for animals. After many years at Paul Roos, Mrs Olivier will retire at the end of this year. We caught up with her to reflect on her career, the changes she has witnessed in young people and what she will, and definitely won't, miss about school.

What first inspired you to become a teacher?

When I finished school, there were not many career options available to me. I was fortunate enough to receive a bursary to study education, and that is where my journey in teaching began. What started as an opportunity ultimately became a career that has shaped much of my life.

Looking back on your career, what made you choose this school, and what has kept you here for so many years?

When we relocated from Heidelberg in Gauteng, I explored a number of different schools. At the time, my friend's son was a learner at Paul Roos, and when I visited the school, I was immediately impressed by the conduct, appearance and demeanour of the boys. I remember thinking that this was a school where I would genuinely like to teach. Paul Roos also had, and continues to have, an excellent reputation.

I have thoroughly enjoyed every minute of my time at Paul Roos. I am continually amazed by the talent, potential and character of our young men, and that has inspired me to contribute to the school and to help build and strengthen the Paul Roos brand in whatever way I can. I value the camaraderie, the sporting culture and, above all, the passion that both staff and learners have for the school. That sense of belonging is something very special.

You have a reputation for being a very strict teacher. What is the most memorable rule you have ever had to enforce?



It is never easy to deal with serious misconduct, particularly when you know that your actions may have consequences for a learner. However, I have always believed that structure, clear boundaries and consistency are essential in a school environment. Rules and regulations provide learners with the framework they need to understand expectations and take responsibility for their actions.

What is the funniest or most unusual excuse a learner has ever given you for being late, not doing homework or breaking a rule?

One of the most memorable was: "My dog is having puppies, so I cannot attend school today." It was certainly an unusual reason for missing school – and one that was difficult to forget!

Learners know your strict side, but what is something about you that might surprise them?

Although I am strict and believe strongly in discipline and accountability, I actually enjoy good humour and making people laugh. I do not take myself too seriously.

I also have a great deal of compassion for people who are going through difficult circumstances. If I see someone struggling, I will always try to help where I can, even if it sometimes comes at my own expense.

I believe that being firm and being compassionate are not mutually exclusive.

After spending so many years working with teenagers, what is one thing about teenagers that you understand much better now than when you started teaching?

The world in which young people are growing up has changed dramatically. Learners today face pressures and demands that were not necessarily part of our own teenage experience.

Over the years, I have come to understand that many learners are dealing with personal challenges that are not always visible to those around them. While discipline and accountability remain important, I believe we also need to recognise when a young person needs support, guidance and understanding. Sometimes what appears to be poor behaviour is an indication that a learner is struggling with something much deeper.

You are well known for your love of animals. Where did that love come from, and what is the most memorable animal you have ever owned or rescued?

I have always had dogs, and over the years I have made a conscious decision to adopt rescue animals rather than buy them. It breaks my heart to see animals being neglected or

abused, and I find it very difficult to walk away when an animal needs help.

I cannot really choose one most memorable dog, because each of them has brought something different to our family. They all have their own personalities, quirks and stories, and each one has left a lasting impression on me.

Looking back, what is the biggest change you have seen in learners and school life during your career?

One of the biggest changes I have noticed is that young people today can sometimes become very focused on their own immediate world and the pressures and demands that affect them personally. With the pace of modern life and the influence of technology and social media, it can be easy to lose sight of what is happening in the broader community.

I think it is important that we continue to teach our young men to look beyond themselves – to recognise that there are people around them who are struggling in many different ways, and that they have a responsibility to contribute positively to the lives of others. Education should not only prepare young people for academic and professional success; it should also help them become compassionate, responsible and socially aware members of society.

When you walk out of the school gates for the last time this year, what will you miss most – and what definitely won't you miss?

I will definitely miss being in the classroom. I have loved every year of teaching, and there is a particular sense of fulfilment in seeing a learner develop, overcome challenges and make progress. Knowing that you have played a small part in that journey is incredibly rewarding.

I will also miss the sporting events and tours. These occasions provide a wonderful opportunity to connect with colleagues outside the classroom, to share experiences and, of course, to have a great deal of fun together. Some of my fondest memories have been made on those occasions.

What I certainly will not miss is the early mornings! Getting up at 4:30 every day has become part of the routine, but I think I will be quite happy to leave that particular part of school life behind.

Once you are no longer a teacher, what does your dream first day of retirement look like?

My ideal first day of retirement would be wonderfully simple. For once, I would like to sleep a little later and not have to worry about getting up at 4:30 in the morning! I would take the dogs for a leisurely walk, come home and enjoy a relaxed breakfast with my husband.

After so many years of working to a school timetable, I think simply having the freedom to slow down, enjoy the morning and not have to rush anywhere would feel like a real luxury.

As Mrs Olivier prepares to hear the final school bell, she leaves behind years of memories, lessons and lasting contributions to Paul Roos. The bell may mark the end of her teaching career, but her impact will continue to echo through the corridors.

*Semper
Splendidior*



Mnr. De Villiers: Meer as 'n koshuisvader

Stef de Villiers

“Manne, in die lewe se loopgrawe moet jy onthou om regs te kyk en links te kyk. Dit is jou broers hierdie.”

Talle Prima-koshuisseuns sal nog dekades lank die stem en woorde van meneer Willem de Villiers in hul gedagtes hoor. Sy onvergeetlike lesse, motivering en inspirasie het van Prima 'n huis gemaak, nie somer net 'n koshuis nie. Dit voel of die vlag bokant Prima se voordeur halfmas hang, want mnr. De Villiers, oftewel Div, tree einde 2026 as koshuisvader van Prima af. Gelukkig bly hy steeds as Geografie-onderwyser aan by die skool!

Ons ken almal die woorde uit die fliek, *Dead Poet's Society*, waar 'n klas seuns opstaan om hul onderwyser te eer met die woorde “O Captain, my Captain”. Ek dink dit is hoe ons wat mnr. De Villiers as mentor ken, vandag voel.

Soos vir Mr Keating in die film, is “Carpe Diem!” ook ons eie Div se motto waarmee hy ons aangemoedig het om die meeste te maak van elke dag. Dis nie somer leë woorde as ek skryf dat mnr. De Villiers soveel meer as 'n koshuisvader was wat orde handhaaf, oortreders berispe en toesig hou oor wilde tienerseuns nie. Hy was regtig by Prima 'n mentor, anker en tydelike pa weg van die huis af. 'n Mens sal nooit kon raai dat hy drie dogters het nie, want min onderwysers ken en verstaan die psige van 'n tienerseun só goed soos hy. Hy weet selfs watter katekwaad jy beplan nog voor jy die gedagte gekry het!

Wat mnr. De Villiers nog meer spesiaal maak, is dat hy jou steeds met die grootste respek behandel selfs wanneer jy dit die heel minste verdien. Ek is seker elke Prima-inwoner het 'n persoonlike herinnering aan 'n dag toe Div presies die regte raad, storie of

metafoor op die regte tyd gedeel het. Hy wil altyd help — soos die oggend toe hy 'n paar van ons (kaalbolyf en in speedo's) doovoordag gehelp het om betyds by die skool te wees nadat ons aan die Daredevil Run deelgeneem het. 'n Mens moet mos die dag gryp! Dié snaakse prentjie sal ek nog lank onthou!

In my vyf Prima-jare het ek baie van mnr. De Villiers se karakter waargeneem en een van sy beste eienskappe is sy menseverhoudings. Hy bou elke jaar aan sy persoonlike verhouding met meer as 'n honderd koshuisseuns! Vir nuwelinge én seniors bied hy 'n veilige hawe, 'n plek waar jy openlik jou gevoelens kan deel sonder vrees of skaamte. Hy stel regtig belang in hoe dit met jou gaan, sien raak as dit nie goed gaan met jou nie, luister na jou opinies of bekommernisse en gee die beste raad. Ek kan persoonlik daarvan getuig, want ek sal altyd onthou hoe mnr. De Villiers met my ge-



praat het. Hy sal ophou waarmee hy besig is, jou in die oë kyk en diep belangstel in wat jy te sê het. Vir die minuut of twee wat jy met hom gesels, voel jy gerespekteerd en belangrik. Jy weet hy hoor jou regtig en het vertroue in jou as mens. Dit is hoekom hy so geliefd en gerespekteerd as koshuisvader is. En dit maak dat 'n mens hom nie wil teleurstel nie!

Dit is die einde van 'n ongeloofli-

ke hoofstuk en Prima verloor 'n legende, maar hoewel mnr. De Villiers se rol verander, bly sy roeping vir seker dieselfde. Dit was 'n voorreg vir my en elke Prima-inwoner vanaf 2019 tot 2026 om Willem de Villiers ons “vader” te noem.

Meneer De Villiers, we salute you. “Bloed in, bloed uit, Prima-bloed steek uit!”

Chasing the Impossible: Meinhardt Esterhuizen Takes on the Ocean

Pierre Blume

For most swimmers, the end of a training session means climbing out of the pool. For Meinhardt Esterhuizen, it can mean stepping into the ocean for several more hours.

Meinhardt's swimming journey began for an unexpected reason. At the age of two, he was hospitalised with epiglottitis, and swimming became part of his recovery. As a youngster, he also discovered that he could hold his breath for unusually long periods. It was only years later, however, that he began to imagine where swimming might take him.

When he was 12, Meinhardt received a book called *Achieving the Impossible* for his birthday. By Grade 8, he was fascinated by extreme open-water swimming. After joining Paul Roos in Grade 9, he competed in the Bridge House Mile, where he began to wonder whether endurance swimming could become more than just a hobby.

Later that year, he met his current coach, Michelle Weber, and committed fully to open-water swimming. What started as therapy had developed into something much bigger.

His biggest achievement to date is his 35 km crossing of False Bay from Miller's Point to Rooi Els. He spent 9 hours and 52 minutes in the water.

“By the end, it wasn't really about swimming fast anymore,” he explains. “It was about continuing to move.”

That mindset is central to long-distance swimming. Several hours into a swim, the challenge becomes as much mental as physical. Meinhardt describes reaching a point where his mind goes blank and he simply settles into a rhythm. At times, he recites Scripture or sings to himself. Then there are moments when he looks around and realises that he is surrounded by nothing but ocean.

Those moments, he says, make him feel both incredibly small and deeply grateful.

The ocean, however, is not without its dangers. Cold, waves, currents and exhaustion can all present serious challenges. For Meinhardt, one of the most unpleasant is salt mouth – the painful effect of prolonged exposure to salt water. During some swims, his mouth has become so badly damaged that it has bled, leaving permanent scars.

He has also experienced moments when the ocean reminded him just how little control a swimmer really has. During one training swim, he found himself about a kilometre offshore among rocks and reef as the waves became increasingly rough. Realising that he could be thrown onto the rocks, he turned back towards shore, returning with cuts on his legs and several jellyfish stings.

“That was probably one of the moments where I properly understood that the ocean deserves a lot of respect,” he says. “There is a difference between being brave and being arrogant.”

And then there was the time he unexpectedly found himself surrounded by a South African Navy exercise while swimming towards Robben Island through thick mist. Instead of worrying about sharks – something many people assume must occupy an open-water swimmer's thoughts – Meinhardt says he has actually never seen a shark in the wild.

His approach to training is equally disciplined. While preparing for False Bay, he could swim more than 50 km a week. His current

training load is around 20–30 km, depending on his goal. For Meinhardt, discipline is not about doing as much as possible, but doing what is required consistently.

That lesson became particularly clear after he failed to complete an 18 km West Coast Angel swim. Having recently completed False Bay, he relied too heavily on his existing fitness and did not prepare adequately for the colder conditions. After 12 km, the cold had taken such a toll that he could no longer swim safely.

The experience taught him that preparation must match the conditions, not simply the distance.

Ultimately, Meinhardt's ambitions extend far beyond False Bay.

He hopes to complete the Oceans Seven and Triple Crown of Open Water Swimming, with the Manhattan Island Marathon Swim as a possible goal within the next five years. One day, he would even like to attempt an extremely long swim in Arctic waters.

For someone who has already spent almost ten hours crossing False Bay, the impossible appears to be less of a barrier than an invitation.

“There's always another impossible thing to chase,” he says.





Ms Finlay's Gloriously Crazy PRG Journey

Jeandré van Zyl

After years of teaching and becoming part of the Paul Roos community, Ms Finlay reflects on the memories, traditions and people that made the school feel like home.

What was your honest first impression of Paul Roos when you arrived?

I had previously taught at a co-ed school, so coming into an all-boys school was a little intimidating at first. I remember feeling completely overwhelmed in the passages as the Grade 11s and 12s seemed to tower over me!

But what struck me immediately was the respect. Boys standing up when you walked past, opening doors, offering to help carry your things – it was wonderful to see that respect so deeply entrenched in what it meant to be a Paul Rooser.

I have also always been incredibly passionate about rugby, so coming to a school where rugby is quite literally in the blood was pretty awesome!

What is your most unforgettable memory from your time at the school?

It is difficult to single out just one moment, but I think beating Grey at home in 2024 has to be right up there. There was something incredibly special about that day, the atmosphere and what it meant to the school.

What is the funniest excuse a learner ever gave for not completing English homework?

I kid you not – a learner once told me he couldn't do his homework because his mother's rhino had rolled onto the baby rhino, and they had to attend to the situation!

I'm still not entirely sure how I was supposed to respond to that one.

Which English book, poem, or play best describes your experience at Paul Roos?

Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone.

Hear me out.

Not because Paul Roos is Hogwarts – although the boarding-school chaos does make the comparison rather apt!

It's because the *Harry Potter* books are fundamentally about belonging.

You arrive somewhere not knowing quite what that place will become to you. Then you find your people, build traditions, have adventures, experience a ridiculous amount of stress, and eventually have to leave the place that became home.

That is what Paul Roos became for me – a home.

What is something learners would be surprised to discover about Ma'am?

That I am actually incredibly sentimental.

I might spend a lot of time nagging, organising, fixing things and expecting high standards, but I care very deeply about people. I also become far more attached to people and places than the boys probably realise.

What is the funniest thing that happened during a hockey tour or match?

The more cheeky, not-so-PG answer would probably be catching the Cricket First XI enjoying a few beers at Barney's... and then watching them desperately try to make their escape when they realised they had been caught!

The slightly more appropriate answer was actually on a water polo tour. We were meant to be heading to PE, so we arrived at the airport, checked in our bags and only then realised that our tickets were actually for East London...

So, we flew to East London and then had to bus all the way down to PE.

Not exactly the travel itinerary we had planned!

Which hockey match or tournament will always hold a special place in your heart?

The U16 'Top Schools' Tournament in 2024.

Earlier that year, we had lost to Grey PE 7-0 in the annual derby. Then, at the tournament, we drew and lost our opening games against HJS and Michaelhouse. At that point, I honestly thought we were done for.

Then Bakes stepped in, lit a proverbial fire under the boys, and we went on to completely dominate the rest of our pool games.

We ended up playing Grey PE in the semi-final. We were nervous – very nervous – but we beat them 3-1!

Then came the final against Northwood, which went to a penalty shoot-out. By this point, my nerves were completely shot. I remember standing there with the boys, praying that this was going to be our moment.

And it was. We won the shoot-out 4-2.

That tournament will always be special because of the resilience, belief and fight the boys showed. It was one of those moments where you could actually see what sport can teach young men about themselves.

If you could give the Paul Roos boys one final English lesson, what would it be about?



My boys know that my passion in life is creating better human beings and building meaningful connections.

Some of the best lessons we've had were the ones where we simply chatted, debated and laughed about all sorts of things – not just English, but life.

So perhaps my final lesson would be this: never underestimate the value of connecting with people, asking questions, listening and being willing to see the world from someone else's perspective.

Which school tradition will you miss the most?

Hearing the deeply passionate singing of Old Boys of Paul Roos in the centre or across the Markötter fields.

I get goosebumps every single time.

There is something incredibly special about hearing hundreds of boys singing together and knowing that generations of Paul Roos boys have stood in that same place and sung the same song.

Which celebrity was your teenage crush?

David Boreanaz and Schalk Burger.

Clearly, my type has always been questionable.

What do you hope learners will remember most about Ma'am?

I hope they remember me as a hard and strict teacher, but ultimately a fair one – and, most importantly, as a safe space.

They knew they could come to me when they were in trouble, needed advice or simply needed someone to be straight with them. I hope they always knew that, even when I was hard on them, it came from a place of wanting the best for them.

What advice would you give to the next teacher or hockey manager taking your place?

Know that you are more than just a teacher or a manager. You have the incredible privilege of shaping the minds and character of the next generation, and that is an honour that should never be taken lightly.

And be willing to acknowledge, in front of the boys, when you are wrong. It isn't a weakness – it is one of the most powerful things you can model for them.

If you could sum up your entire Paul Roos journey in one sentence, what would you say?

A gloriously crazy, demanding and deeply rewarding journey of passion, hard work, pressure and incredible people who rooted me in a place and a purpose, and gave me connections I will carry with me long after I leave.

If you could relive one single day from your time at Paul Roos, which day would you choose and why?

Z-Day

It is such a beautiful day of endings and beginnings. Watching the Grade 12s experience their final Jolla Bolla and Old Boys as Paul Roosers is incredibly special.

But perhaps what makes it most meaningful is watching the boys you

have taught, managed and watched grow over the years stand there as young men.

At the same time, you watch the Grade 11s walk through the Golden Gate and officially step into their roles as the new seniors. There is something incredibly powerful about seeing one generation hand over the school to the next.

Z-Day captures everything I love about Paul Roos – tradition, brotherhood, belonging, growth, and the privilege of watching boys grow into young men. It is an ending, but it is also the beginning of another generation's story.

Which learner taught you something about life that you never expected to learn from a student?

Jonathan Essien, Matric 2024.

His deep and profound love for God constantly challenged me in the most beautiful way. His outlook on life encouraged me to see things differently and reminded me that it is okay to be different – to stand firmly in who you are and what you believe.

He taught me that sometimes the people we think we are there to teach end up teaching us just as much in return.

After a "gloriously crazy" journey, Ms Finlay leaves Paul Roos with more than memories. She leaves with lasting connections, countless stories and the knowledge that, in teaching others, she was often taught a few lessons herself.

Semper Splendidior



Editorial

Seth Smith

Paul Roos Gymnasium instils boys with pride, respect, and gentlemanship. Each boy has his own Paul Roos experience and remembers the exact moment he decided to come to Paul Roos. As the class of 2026's five-year journey draws to a close, the school enters a season of transition. Here-within are a few extracts from the 89th edition of the Semper.

The staff of Paul Roos ensure the school runs effectively. One of its oldest members, the academic head and one of the deputy rectors, Mrs Olivier, is leaving at the end of this academic year. We have included an interview to highlight her legacy and experience.

A few staff members have also worn their Paul Roos blazers for the last time—specifically, a member of the English department and a father figure to many in the hostel community. We thank them for their contribution in the first few pages.

Paul Roos is a school that constantly strives for excellence. In this edition, we highlight experiences such as a Netherlands hockey tour and an interview with an upcoming professional athlete to show this commitment in action. Culturally, we highlight the success of Paul Roos's first joint play, written, directed, and starring scholar Francois Odendaal. The Music department's success showcases the department's versatility and re-

flects the opportunities available to scholars. The debating team's success at the ATKV competition also reflects the strength of Paul Roos's debating.

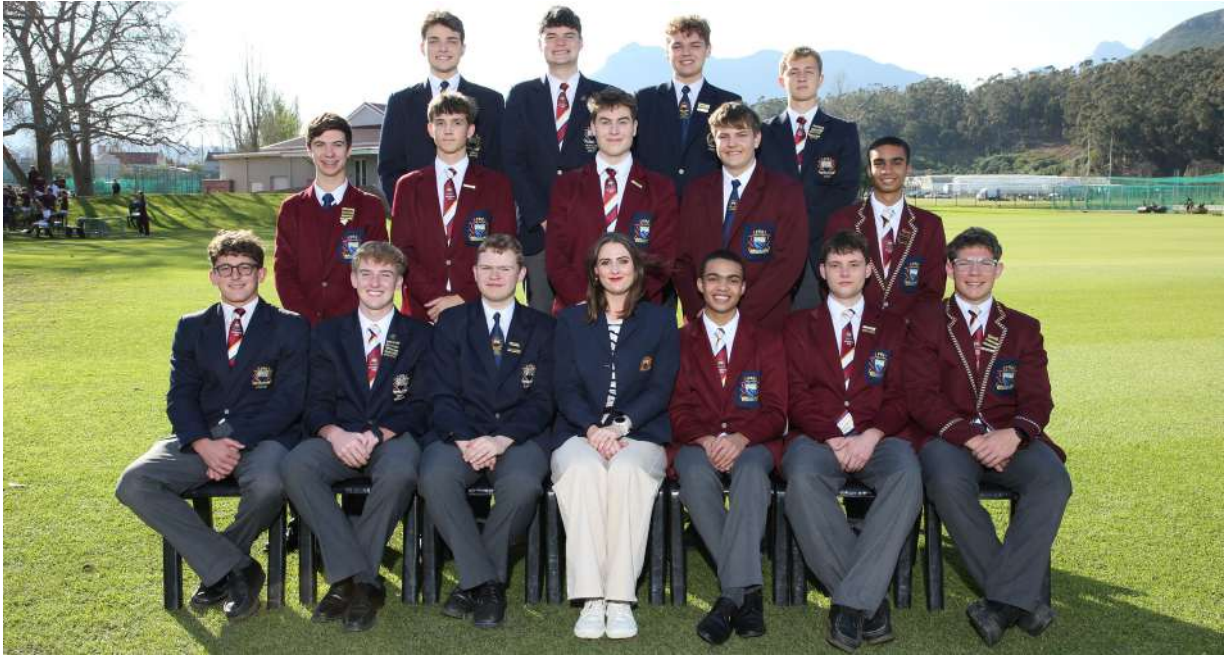
The triumphant victory against Grey College is touched on, serving as the final chapter of Winter School Sport 2026. It is especially one for the books, as it saw our First team hockey ranked first in the country. Words are not enough to describe the special weekend, so photos from the Grey Weekend appear throughout the paper. Furthermore, the success of our scholars is highlighted through interviews about their experiences on the sports field and beyond.

A few learners share their opinions and dive into current affairs, specifically topics that may be relevant to scholars or people around them. This version of the Semper serves as a reminder that our time at this marvellous institution is limited, that our time together and on earth should be valued, so let us make the most of every opportunity presented to us, live in gratitude, and bestow grace towards ourselves and others!

*Semper
Splendidior*



Die Semper-span



Die geskiedenis van die Semper in 'n neutdop

Pierre Blume

Op 15 Junie 1962 is die eerste *Semper Splendidior* gepubliseer — ses bladsye wat 4c gekos het. Gerhard Jordaan was die stigter en redakteur van hierdie eerste uitgawe. Volgens die 150 jaar-gedenkboek het die mashoof van die *Semper*-voorblad nog altyd bestaan uit 'n afbeelding van die Japie Krige-saal en/of die skoolwapen. Dit is 'n tradisie wat vandag steeds voortleef. In 2024 word artikels oor aktuele kwessies, skool-sake- en projekte, sowel as opiniestukke ingesluit sodat die *Semper* 'n spreekbuis van die leerders bly.

Deur die jare het groot geeste by die *Semper* betrokke geraak, onder an-

dere oudredakteur van *Die Burger*, Bun Booyens (*Semper*-redaksielid 1977) en voormalige *Rapport*-redakteur, Waldimar Pelser (*Semper*-redakteur 1996). Volgens Booyens is PRG moontlik die skool met die sterkste joernalistieke tradisie in die land. Pelser meen dat die *Semper* vir hom 'n stem gegee het en 'n wonderlike begin vir sy joernalistieke loopbaan was.

'n Paar interessante, dikwels anonieme, rubrieke het al in die *Semper* verskyn, soos *Stoepstories met Mot*, *Oor die kole met Tjoppie*, *On the Couch with Bob* en *In the Trees with Steve*. Ons nooi graag Paul Roosers om nuwe rubriekidees aan die *Semper*-span voor te lê sodat ons kan volhou met die unieke tradisie.



Fotograaf: Chrisjan Langner



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The opinions expressed in the Semper are not necessarily the opinions of the Semper or the school.



In Perspective

Daniel Whitehead

How is it possible that, just like that, the first three terms have come to an end?

It feels like only yesterday that the year was beginning, yet somehow we have reached the final stretch. In the bigger picture, the Matric Class of 2026 has officially reached the finish line. What once seemed so far away is now right in front of us.

Looking back, this year has been a great success in my eyes. It has been filled with moments that I know I will remember long after I leave the school grounds. It has not always been easy, but every challenge has brought out the best in us and gave us an opportunity to grow.

More than anything, this year has taught me a lot about people, time and the person I want to become. I have experienced a great deal of growth and character development, and many of the mentors who have guided me along the way have told me that these experiences are merely a foreshadowing of the times that lie ahead. Perhaps that is what makes this final stretch feel so significant — it is not only the end of school, but the beginning of everything that comes after it.

The winter season certainly did not disappoint. It came with its fair share of challenges, but every Paul Rooser rose to the occasion. There was a sense of pride, determination and unity throughout the season, and it was something special to be a part of.

Of course, one of the biggest highlights of the year was hosting Grey Bloem. But before the derby itself, there was Geesweek — a week with one simple goal: to get every boy hyped up, invested and ready to go for the weekend. In my eyes, it was a complete success. The energy around the school was something special, and it reminded me of what makes Paul Roos different. Everyone had a role to play, whether they were on the field, in the stands or simply adding to the atmosphere.

For me, the highlight of the supporting side was undoubtedly the table tennis. To see how invested the boys became in something that our school does not even have as a sport was incredible. It was a reminder that Gees is not always about what happens on the scoreboard. Sometimes it is about the enthusiasm, creativity and willingness to get behind something simply because it brings people together.

And then came the big weekend.

There is something special about a big derby day — the anticipation, the atmosphere, the nerves and, ultimately, the pride. Winning the overall derby made it even more unforgettable. Many of our teams walked away with bragging rights for the next year, while our First teams produced performances that will not soon be forgotten: a 37–29 victory in rugby, a commanding 6–0 win in hockey and a

1–0 victory for our soccer team on the new astro. Seeing three of our First teams beat Grey Bloem made the weekend even more special, and those are memories that will stay with us for years to come.

Doing three Jolla Bolls in one weekend is something that will stay with me for the rest of my life. Words will never be able to do justice to the feeling. There are certain moments at school that you know, even while they are happening, you will one day look back on and wish you could experience again. That weekend was one of them.

Another moment that made the end feel real was the Button Ceremony between the Grade 8s and Grade 12s. Having started in 2024, the ceremony represents a handover between generations of Paul Roos boys. Standing there and taking part in this tradition was perhaps the first time the realisation truly hit me: the end is near.

The announcement of the MD theme also left all the Matrics excited to finally be finished with prelims and to look ahead to what lies beyond them. It was another small reminder that the end is no longer something distant — it is getting closer by the day.

The traditions we have grown up with, the places we have called home and the people we have shared them with will soon become memories. It is strange to think that the things that have felt so ordinary for the past few years will soon be things I have to look back on rather than experience.

And now, with finals on the way, the final chapter is upon us.

With this Matric class coming to an end, there is also another important handover — the handover to our new leaders. The announcement of the new Student Council and HKs created great excitement and anticipation among the boys. It is safe to say that they are a strong group of young men with the potential to take our school to great heights. I hope and believe that they will. I look forward to seeing what they achieve and watching them leave their own mark on Paul Roos.

There is something comforting about knowing that, even though our time is coming to an end, the story carries on. New Grade 8s will arrive, new Matrics will take their places, and new memories will be made. The school will keep moving forward, just as it should.

160 years has never looked better.

To the Matric Class of 2026, give these final weeks everything you have. We have come too far to take our foot off the pedal now.

And to the Paul Roos community, thank you for the memories, the support, the laughter, the victories and even the difficult moments.

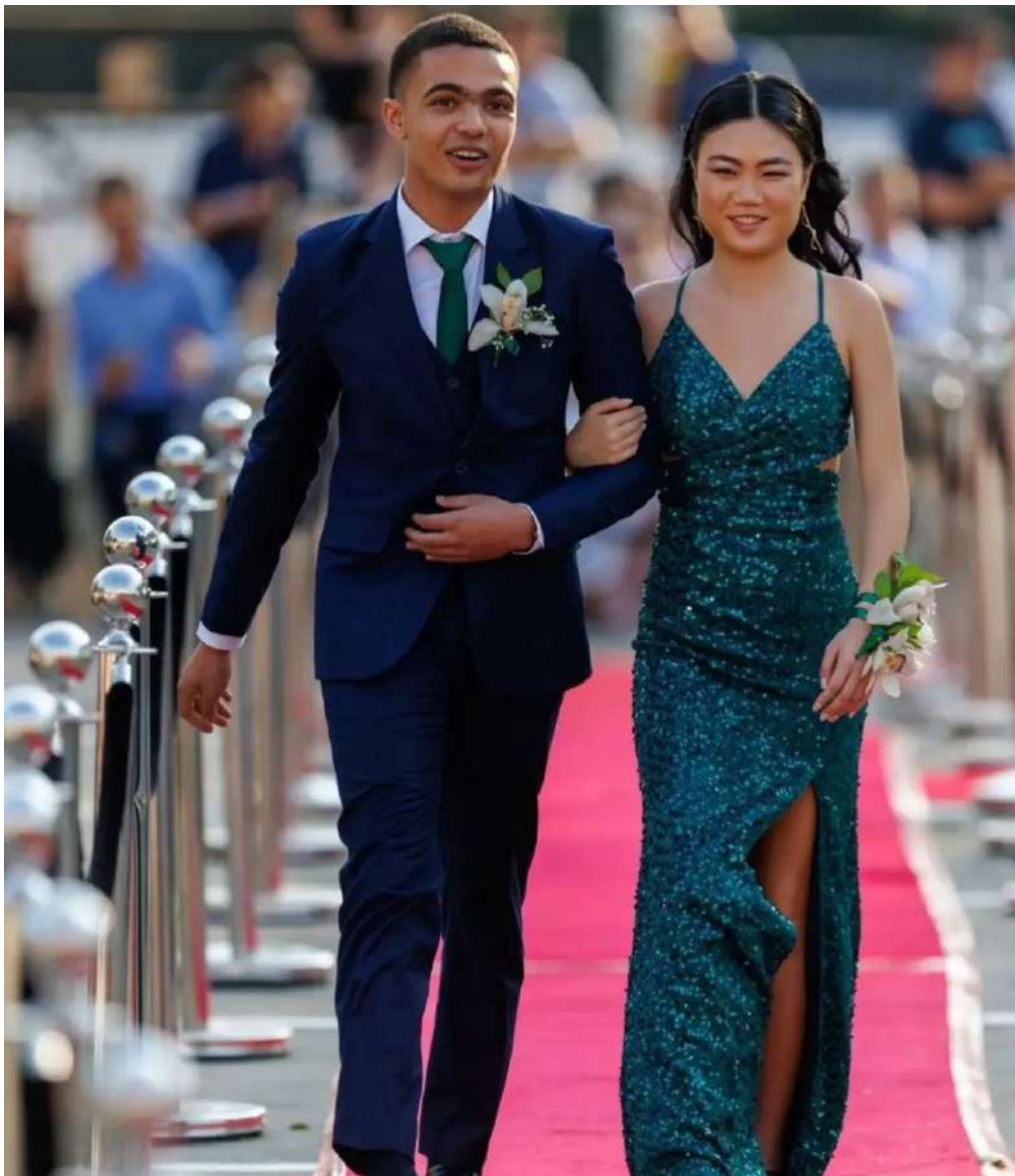
*Semper
Splendidior*







Matriekafskeid | The Last Roar





Can you become wealthy without a degree?

Daniël Potgieter

For most students, university seems like the obvious choice after school. We grow up hearing that good marks lead to a degree, a good job and a secure future. But a degree is not the only way to build wealth. Today, people have more options than ever before.

The internet has changed how people make money. Someone with a laptop and a good idea can start a business without renting an office or hiring a large team. Artificial intelligence has added even more opportunities. People use AI to create content, research ideas, design products and handle tasks for their busi-



nesses. These opportunities do not guarantee success. You still need a good idea, useful skills and the willingness to put in the work.

Starting a business is one of the main ways to build wealth without a degree. When you work for a company, your income usually depends on your salary. A successful business has more room for growth. You also take on more

risk. A business can lose money, fail completely or take years before it starts making a profit. Anyone thinking about this route needs to understand both sides.

Several well-known people built huge companies without completing university. Bill Gates left Harvard while working on Microsoft. Mark Zuckerberg left Harvard to focus on Facebook. Richard Branson left school at 16 and later built the Virgin Group. Steve Jobs dropped out of Reed College before helping to build Apple into one of the world's biggest technology companies.

These examples show what is possible, but they do not tell the whole story. For every famous en-

trepreneur who became extremely wealthy, many others tried to start businesses and failed. Dropping out of university does not lead to success by itself. Gates, Zuckerberg, Branson and Jobs all spent years learning, working and taking risks.

I would still go to university. A degree would give me another option if my business plans failed. I would also work on a business while studying and see how far I could take it. If the business worked, I would have both a qualification and a source of income. If the business failed, I would still have my degree and the skills I gained from university.

Education also matters outside

the classroom. Someone running a business needs to understand money, marketing, customers and management. You could learn these skills through experience, books, courses and people with more experience than you.

Becoming wealthy without a degree is possible, but there is no simple formula for success. A degree offers security and access to many careers. Starting a business offers greater earning potential, but also brings greater risk. The best choice depends on the person and their goals. A degree gives you one path forward, but your decisions determine how far you travel on it.

Intentionality

Seth Smith

A version of you is being built right now, quietly, through the accumulation of small decisions you don't notice. Recognising this can empower you to shape who you are. That's what intentionality is. Let's talk about what it means to have it, and what it costs when you don't.

What It Looks Like

Intentionality looks like actively taking the steps toward who you see yourself becoming. It looks like deciding and then doing.

Are you living the life you wanted, or the one you settled into? Reflecting on this can bring clarity. Are you surrounded by people who care for you, or people who are simply present? Are you doing the things that make you happy, or the things that are easiest to explain to everyone else? You have said these things to yourself before. Everyone has. That was never the interesting part.

The interesting part is what happens next. To move from awareness to action, ask yourself: Have I said these things



and acted on them? What small decision can I make today to align more with my true intentions? The person who has said these things and acted on them moves through the world differently from the person who has said them and stayed exactly where they were. The distance between those two people is not talent, and it is not circumstance. It is whether the intention ever left their head.

Hunger Versus Mediocrity

That distance has a name: hunger versus mediocrity. To take active steps toward what you want is to be intentional, to make decisions rather than drift through

them. That, and not talent or luck, is the line separating the people who arrive at what they want from the people who only ever want it. Do you imagine the people achieving extraordinary things would be achieving them if they were mediocre? Recognising this can motivate you to act intentionally.

The distinction is audible. It is there in music, in film, wherever someone has decided that competent is not the same as finished. Take the score for *Wicked*. As Glinda grieves Nessa Rose, the orchestration quietly recalls Nessa Rose's own verse from *Dancing Through Life*, a full film away. It is not incidental. Somebody made that decision long before an audience was in any position to feel its weight. And across the entire first instalment, *For Good* is threaded almost subliminally beneath scenes that have nothing to do with it, unresolved and waiting, so that its arrival in the second film reads less like a reveal and more like a debt finally being paid. That is a composer being intentional about a payoff most of the room will not consciously register for another two years. Or take *The Dark Knight*. Hans Zimmer and James Newton Howard gave the Joker a two-note cello figure that refuses to re-

solve, not a melody so much as a fragment of dread with a bow attached. It was built that way deliberately, because a character devoted to unravelling order should never be scored with music that behaves.

Or take Olivia Rodrigo's *you seem pretty sad for a girl so in love*, divided cleanly into two sides. Track seven is *purple*, and it operates as a hinge rather than a mere midpoint. It opens light, almost buoyant, and over its runtime performs the exact emotional descent the album is built around, so that by its final bar you have crossed, without quite noticing the crossing, into the record's sadder half. That is not sequencing. That's architecture.

None of this happens by accident. It happens because someone was hungry enough to attend to details that no one was ever going to ask them about.

What Happens When You Lose It All?

Are you able to get yourself out of the gutter, or does the ground simply close over you? Consider someone who began with nothing and worked until she had everything, who overtook the person

everyone assumed would win, who became valedictorian, who was celebrated for a hunger that seemed, at the time, like pure virtue. It is easy to admire that kind of drive. It is harder to ask what it cost her, and whether she would recognise the person she was before any of it started.

Because that is the part no one warns you about. Hunger does not simply burn you out. It can quietly remake you into someone you never intended to become. You can win everything you set out to win and still stand in the middle of it, uncertain exactly who is standing there.

Somewhere in your own life, it has already begun: the version of you who started chasing something for a reason you still believed in, and the version of you now, holding it, or still chasing it, no longer entirely certain what the reason was.

So, ask yourself, honestly: the way you are living right now, where does it end? At the top? At the bottom? Or somewhere in between, holding everything you said you wanted, quietly wondering who you had to become to get it?

The Age of Crap

Wium van Niekerk

In 2017, the global technology company Apple Inc. publicly admitted to rolling out software updates that intentionally slowed down older iPhone models, supposedly as a power-management feature which would prevent sudden shutdowns caused by battery degradation.

In mid-2026, the CEO of Cloudflare, an American tech and web security company, released a statement on X stating that nearly 60% of all the web traffic on the Internet was generated by non-human users.

In 2018, Kellogg's South Africa replaced their original Rice Krispies with Rice Krispies Vanilla, an alternative with less sugar, less rice and less snap, crackle and pop. Following massive public backlash, the branch reluctantly began importing original Krispies



from the UK, reselling these at a greatly increased price.

All disparate events, with varying causes, but all pointing towards the same global tendency: a gradual decrease in the quality of everything.

'Ensh*tification' is a term coined by Canadian-British author and tech critic

Cory Doctorow to describe the process by which digital platforms and services gradually decrease in quality over time. According to Doctorow, this process occurs in three stages.

First, platforms draw in users by offering free or heavily subsidised services. Then, they begin shifting value towards business customers like advertisers and third-party sellers, before finally degrading the experience for both users and business customers alike in order to hoard value for shareholders.

And now, we're seeing this happen with everything.

Household appliances that used to last long enough to become family heirlooms now break down within the year. Consumer electronics are consigned to a fate of planned obsolescence the instant a new model is rolled out. And grocery prices climb steadily higher

and higher, even as the products themselves shrink or decrease in quality.

And the reason for this trend, the driving motivation behind companies and corporations gradually making everything worse, is quite simple: money.

Take the example of Rice Krispies Vanilla. Though ostensibly created to better suit the South African palate, the change also allowed manufacturers to swap out expensive imported rice for 'multi-grains,' a cheaper mix of rice, corn and wheat. Additionally, the proudly-advertised 25% reduction in sugar also conveniently allowed them to cut production costs even more.

Whether you like it or not, big companies only care about profit margins and driving up shareholder value. And this, alongside a seeming disdain for the wants and needs of the average consumer, generally equates to companies

cutting corners to save costs without that they're simultaneously ruining the experience for everyone.

After all, why care about a few complaining customers when the green arrow is pointing up?

Now, the question we face is: what can we do? The answer, unfortunately, is not much. The culprits behind this aren't people who can be reasoned with or held accountable. No, in this case the guilty parties are massive international companies and organisations with near-endless resources and precious little regard for you or me. Short of organising a massive uprising and unilaterally boycotting every single company producing goods and services with diminishing quality, the only real thing we can do is buckle in and brace for impact as we enter the Age of Crap.

PJ Olivier se Straatkunskompetiesie

Pierre Blume

PRG spog vanjaar met vier graad 11-finaliste in PJ Olivier se jaarlikse Straatkunskompetiesie, #PJOkunsspore26.

Louis Sperling en Matthew Ker-Fox se kunswerk, sowel as Finn Bakkes se skildery, kan in die Eikestad-winkelsentrum besigtig word. Die multimediakunswerk deur Francois Odendaal word op die hoek van Blomstraat by die PJ Olivier Kunssentrum uitgestal.

Hierdie kunswerke vorm deel van die Woordfees-kunsuitstallings en sal vir die volgende jaar uitgestal word. Wenners word aangewys op grond van die aantal "Likes" op hul pla-sings op @PJOkunsspore26



Grey Bloem 2026 — Hoogtepunte





Steven Kitshoff: Van Rooies tot Spicy Plum

Pierre Blume

Op 18 September het Steven Kitshoff (matriek 2010) die skool besoek om sy nuwe boek Kitsie: Memoir of a Bomb-squad Bok bekend te stel.

In dié memoir vertel Kitshoff hoe hy aanvanklik Rooies, Ginga Ninja, Brieklig en Fanta Pants genoem is en later in sy Springbok-rugbyloopbaan die pittige Spicy Plum-bynaam gekry het.

Volgens hom het hy elke oomblik van skolerugby by Paul Roos Gimnasium geniet. Hy was trots om deel van die maroen masjien te wees. Hy het reeds in graad 8 'n groot doelwit aan homself gestel: Om eendag vir PRG se eerste span uit te draf. Dié doelwit het hy natuurlik bereik, maar daar was uitdagings wat hy

moes oorkom. Op 16 het hy byna die pad byster geraak toe hy met verkeerde vriende deurmeekaar geraak het. Te danke aan die ondersteuning van sy ouers kon hy weer die regte pad vind.

Wanneer hy aan skoolseuns raad gee, noem hy altyd dat rugby 'n uitstekende manier is om te leer hoe om in 'n span saam te werk, leierseienskappe te ontwikkel en aan persoonlike gesondheid te werk. Akademie is nog 'n belangrike aspek. Hy moedig leerders aan om hul opsies oop te hou en daarom moeite met akademie te doen.

Kitsie: Memoir of a Bomb-squad Bok is 'n toeganklike vertelling van Kitshoff se rugbyreis wat deur elke Paul Rooser gelees behoort te word.



PRG-hokkie maak sy merk in Nederland

Jeandré van Zyl

Op 19 Augustus 2026 het 65 Paul Roos-leerders op 'n hokkietoer na Nederland gereis en ek het die voorreg gehad om deel van dié groep te wees. Die oomblik toe ons op die vliegtuig geklim het, was almal opgewonde oor die wedstryde, maar ook om saam oorsee te reis.

Tydens die toer het ons by Stayokay Amsterdam Oost gebly. Dit het gou ons tuiste geword en was die plek waar ons ná 'n lang dag kon rus en tyd saam met ons broers deurbring. Ons het teen verskeie Nederlandse hokkieklubs, soos Kampong, Xenios, HC Athena en nog veel meer, gespeel. Elke wedstryd het ons aan 'n ander span se speelstyl blootgestel. Dit was vir ons 'n uitdaging, maar ook 'n geleentheid om individuele lesse te leer en as 'n span te groei.

Een van die hoogtepunte was die World Youth Festival waar spanne van regoor die wêreld deelgeneem het. Die atmosfeer was be-



sonders. Ons o. 17A-span het in die o. 18-toernooi deelgeneem en in die eindstryd 'n oorwinning teen 'n Amsterdamse klub behaal. Dit was 'n trotse oomblik vir die hele groep.

Ná die toernooi het die hokkie voortgegaan met wedstryde teen NMHC Nijmegen en LOHC. Ons het ook 'n dag by Efteling, die pretpark, deurgebring. Dit was lekker om vir 'n rukkie ons hokkiestokke neer te sit en pret te hê.

Die laaste paar dae van die toer het ons die half-eindstryde van die Hokkiewêreldbeker in Amsterdam gaan kyk. Ons het die

voorreg gehad om mans- en vrouewedstryde te sien en in lewende lywe te ervaar hoe die beste spelers in die wêreld onder druk presteer. Op die laaste dag het ons na België gereis om die eindstryde by te woon. Dit was 'n besondere manier om ons toer af te sluit.

Ek sal hierdie toer vir altyd onthou. Ons is aan nuwe ervarings blootgestel, en het as span gegroei en onvergeetlike herinneringe gemaak. Ek het elke oomblik geniet en is seker die res van die groep voel ook so.





Matrieks se swanesang maak skoonskip

Ben du Toit

Wanneer ons terugdink aan nog 'n suksesvolle jaar waartydens Paul Roos se naam hoog gehou is, lê die sportresultate dikwels voor in ons geheue. 2026 se musiekdepartement verdien egter aparte erkenning. Net soos wat 2026 verdien om onthou te word as 'n jaar van uitmuntende prestasies op die sportveld en in die klaskamer, was dit Paul Roos se sterkste musiekjaar in dekades. Die matriekgroep wat nou van die skool afskeid neem, het nie net 'n tuiste by die musiekblok gevind nie, maar ook hul hart en siel in die orkes, koor, sanggroep en ensembles gestort.

Sedert ons gr. 8-jaar in 2022 het die orkes amper verdubbel in grootte, wat duidelik getuig van die reusevooruitgang van die musiekdepartement by Paul Roos. Met vanjaar se orkes het ons ook ongelooflike prestasies behaal. Vroeg vanjaar het ons die geleentheid gekry om by die Maynardville Open-Air Theatre as orkes aan hul The Great American Songbook-vertoning deel te neem. Verder was die Paul Roos Musiekfees saam met Ricus Nel vanjaar weer eens 'n groot suk-

ses, met die orkes wat as die grondslag van die hele produksie gedien het.

Ons koor en sanggroep het vanjaar die meeste eer aan die musiekdepartement besorg. Ons het die jaar afgeskop deur 'n groot sukses te maak van die jaarlikse BeKoor-vertoning in samewerking met omliggende skole in die Sentrum. Die koor en kleiner sanggroep het daarna elk aan die nasionale ATKV-Applous-koorkompetisie deelgeneem (in die Prestige- en Meriete-afdelings onderskeidelik) en Paul Roos se naam in die geskiedenisboeke ingeskryf. Dit was die eerste oit dat 'n enkele skool daarin geslaag het om albei kategorieë in dieselfde jaar te wen! Vanweë die statuut van hierdie kompetisie was dit 'n uiters spesiale en emosionele aand vir ons musikante, en die perfekte manier vir die matrieks om hul vyf jaar in die musiekdepartement af te sluit. Die PRG-koor is ook onlangs as die wenner van die Kaapstadse Kunswedstryd aangewys.

Die sanggroep is 'n kleiner ensemble koorsangers wat uit die volle koor gekeur word om die skool by kleiner geleenthede en



optredes te verteenwoordig. Ons het vroeër vanjaar die reusevooreg gehad om saam met van die voorste Afrikaanse kunstenaars van ons tyd by die jaarlikse Versnit-fondsinsameling op Rusten-Vrede op te tree. Daar is ons jong sangers blootgestel aan wat dit verg om as professionele musikante hanteer te word en hoe om groot optredes vlot te laat verloop. Ons het ook die tradisie voortgesit om jaarliks vir ons susterskole en by die Paul Roos Spar op Valentynsdag op te tree. Verder is die sanggroep genooi om op te tree by die eeufeesviering van die Woordeboek van die Afrikaanse Taal (WAT), waar ons die verhoog met legendes soos Coenie de Villiers, Amanda Strydom en Lize Beekman gedeel het.

Spesiale erkenning kom ook Hermanus Schmidt toe, wat homself vanjaar na alle waarskynlikheid as die voorste pianis in sy ouderdomsgroep in Suid-Afrika gevestig het. Oor die afgelope jaar is hy aangewys as die wenner (algeheel en/of in die klavierafdeling) van die volgende nasionale musiekkompetisies: Hennie Joubert, Atterbury, Johann Vos, Pieter Kooij en die National Youth Music Competition (NYMC). Hy het nie net vir Paul Roos verstom nie, maar die hele Suid-Afrika.

Die skool se ensembles en kamerorkes het eweneens 'n baie besige jaar agter die rug, met uitstekende prestasies by 'n verskeidenheid kunswedstryde. Ons splin-

ternuwe teater is ook vanjaar behoorlik ingewy met 'n herhaalde uitvoering van Camille Saint-Saëns se Karnaval van die Diere vir laerskole, om voornemende Paul Roosers én leerders uit minderbevoorregte gemeenskappe aan klassieke musiek bloot te stel. Soos wat die sterkste musiekjaar in Paul Roos se onlangse geskiedenis sy swanesang sing, kan ons die melodie geniet met die wete dat ons as matrieks die musiekdepartement in 'n beter toestand agterlaat as waarin ons dit in gr. 8 gevind het. Ons stap weg met groot dankbaarheid vir die deurslaggewende rol wat die departement en musiekonderwysers in ons kort, dog betekenisvolle skoolloopbaan by Paul Roos gespeel het.

Gebreek, maar nooit verslaan nie: Cobus se pad terug

Lian Jansen
Damian de Lange

It is Bishopsnaweek — een laaste wedstryd voor die enorme stryd teen Paarl Gimnasium die volgende week. PRG se Chakkas (o. 19C-span) speel 'n vroegoggend-wedstryd teen 'n honger Bishops-span. Cobus kry die bal vlak van die skrumskakel en dit lyk asof hy gaan hardloop vir 'n dominerende drie, maar net toe hy wil oordruk, word hy van agter deur twee Bishops-spelers raakgeloop en val hy baie sleg. 'n Skerp skreeu weergalm oor die Markötter en almal hou hul asem om ...

Cobus het met sy kop byna tussen sy bene geval en is deur die mediese personeel hospitaal toe gehaas. Ná 'n week se toetse word dit duidelik dat Cobus 'n onvolledige lumbale rugmurgbesering opgedoen het wat sy kanse om ooit

weer kontaktsport te speel skraal maak. Hewige rehabilitasie is nodig.

Die PRG-spelers het vir die Gim-wedstryde met geel bande om hul arms op die veld uitgedraf — natuurlik om ons broer te ondersteun. Ons het dit met swaar harte gedra, maar dit was 'n simbool: Ons sou ons bes op die veld doen, nie net vir die skool nie, maar vir hom. Cobus het spesiale toestemming gekry om van die wedstryde in lewende lywe te ondersteun, wat klaar 'n wonderwerk was. Ons het vinnig uitgevind dat hy nogal geneig is om die onmoontlike moontlik te maak.

Hy is na die Nurture Rehabilitasiesentrum in Stellenbosch oorgeplaas waar sy rehabilitasieproses voortgegaan het. By hierdie instansie het hy 'n baie spesiale persoon ontmoet wat as 'n steunpilaar saam met hom hierdie lang pad stap:



Lodewyk Uys, 'n skoolier van die Hoër Jongenskool Paarl. Lodewyk se storie is ongelooflik. Hy het tydens 'n fietsryongeluk 'n ernstige rugbesering opgedoen en vele ander gedeeltes van sy liggaam seergemaak.

Wat gevolg het, is vyf weke se intensiewe rehabilitasie en uitdagende oefening. Volgens Cobus het hy in hierdie tydperk baie goeie ondersteuning van verskeie mense soos vriende, familie en personeel gekry. Hy is

veral dankbaar vir Laetitia Meyer (tannie Tish) wat elke tree van die herstelpad saam met hom gestap het, sowel as een van sy fisioterapeute, Zurné, wat hom fisiek en emosioneel ondersteun het.

Ná vyf weke is Cobus saam met Lodewyk ontslaan en het hy met die volgende stap van sy herstel begin. Hier het Jimmy Powell van die Stellenbosch Academy of Sports (SAS), 'n groot rol gespeel en Cobus sal hom ewig dankbaar wees.

Vandag voel Cobus soos 'n nuwe mens. As hy nie leer of voorberei vir eksamens nie, kan julle vir Cobus op die golfbaan vind waar hy, volgens hom, nog altyd hoort.

Cobus, jy is 'n inspirasie vir so baie mense. Jou storie gaan nog tientalle mense raak en motiveer.



Ontmoet 2027 se hoofleiers

Wium van Niekerk

En só oorhandig 2026 se hoofleiers die fakkel aan 'n nuwe groep leiers. Maar wie is ons nuwe hoofleiers dan nou? Watter planne het hulle vir die skool, en watter unieke perspektiewe en ervarings bring hulle na die tafel? Wel, dít is presies wat ek probeer uitvind het.

Head Boy Albert Nel

What would a successful year for you and the Student Council look like?

"For me, a successful year would be one where I can look back and know that I made a positive difference in the lives of those around me. As a Student Council, I want us to create an environment where every Paul Rooser feels included and encouraged to become the best version of himself, while strengthening the brotherhood among the boys. I want us to inspire the boys to believe in their own potential and to push one another to grow."

What value is the most important to you and why?

"Respect is the most important

value to me because I believe it is the foundation of strong relationships. Treating everyone with kindness and dignity, regardless of who they are, makes people feel valued and creates a sense of trust."

What has been the most unforgettable day for you at PRG?

"One day that I'll never forget is making my first 1st Team rugby start against Affies and scoring a try in the game. Running onto the field that day felt like a dream come true, and I've never been so excited to play a rugby game in my life. Being in the middle of the Jolla Bolla and celebrating with your mates after such a big win is a feeling that's difficult to describe."

Is there something not many people know about you?

"During lockdown I actually wanted to become a professional gamer."

Deputy Head Boy Nathan Barnard

What would a successful year for you and the student council look like?

"A successful year for me would be bridging the gap between students and staff while delivering clear, visible improvements to daily school life."

What are the important lessons that you've learnt at PRG?

"Paul Roos has really taught me that true leadership isn't about the badge on your blazer or standing at the podium; it's about serving the brotherhood, listening to my peers, and leading by example through humility."

What was the biggest disappointment you've ever experienced?

"When I broke my shoulder and realised I wouldn't be able to play the sport that I love the most to my fullest potential."

Who is your celebrity crush?

"Inde Navarrette"

Onderhoofseun Jeandré van Zyl

Hoe sal 'n suksesvolle jaar vir jou en die res van die leerderaad lyk?



"'n Suksesvolle jaar saam met die leerderaad is 'n jaar waarna ons saam kan terugkyk en duidelik sien dat ons 'n verskil in ons skool gemaak het. Ons praat altyd oor verbetering en 2026 se LR het hoë standaarde vir ons neergelê."

Wat is die grootste teleurstelling wat jy al beleef het?

"My grootse teleurstelling was definitief die dag toe ek my ouma verloor het. Sy was iemand baie naby aan my hart en iemand wat my altyd verstaan het."

Watter liedjie laat jou altyd dans?

"Ek is groot op *rap*. Enige Travis Scott of Drake sal my in 'n goeie *mood* kry."

Watter woord sal jou die beste beskryf?

"Uniek."

En daar het julle dit, uit die perd se bek uit. Ons hoofleiers is niks minder as eerlike, opregte mense wat die beste belange van PRG op hulle harte dra. Met sulke gehalte-hoofleiers kan volgende jaar nêr goed verloop. Ons sien almal baie daarna uit om te kyk wat hulle volgende jaar gaan vermag.

The Rise of the PRG Choir: From ATKV Winners to World Champions

Stefan van der Merwe

The Paul Roos Gymnasium Choir has established itself as one of the most successful school choirs in South Africa. Although the choir has a long musical tradition, its modern competitive era began in 2014, when Stephan Bezuidenhout was appointed as conductor. Since then, the choir has progressed from winning its first national competition to becoming South African champions and, ultimately, World Champions.

The year 2014 marked an important turning point for the choir. Under the direction of newly appointed conductor Stephan Bezuidenhout, the choir entered the ATKV-Appous competition in the Less Experienced Boys' Choir category (Merit category) and won. This achievement established the choir as a serious competitor on the South African school choir scene and began an extraordinary period of growth.

In 2015, Paul Roos moved into the More Experienced Boys' Choir category (Prestige category) of ATKV-Appous. This victory was another first for the school. The national final was held at the Veremark Hall in Port Elizabeth on 8 August 2015. Paul Roos was named the best boys' choir in the country, receiving a Gold award with a score of 87.5%. The choir was also placed fourth overall among the eight best choirs in the country.

Paul Roos continued competing at the highest level in 2016. The choir

finished second, missing first place by just 0.22 percentage points. They also received the overall prize for the best performance of an African song. These results demonstrated that the success of 2014 and 2015 was not a once-off achievement. Paul Roos had become a consistent force in South African school choral music.

In 2018, the Paul Roos Choir stepped onto the international stage when the World Choir Games were held in Tshwane, South Africa. Paul Roos competed in the Champions Competition, Category C4: Young Male Choirs. Their programme included works such as *Do Not Stand at My Grave and Weep*, *Bound for Jubilee*, *Balbesit* and *Vela!*.

The official results show that Paul Roos achieved 79.13 points and a Silver medal, finishing third in the three-choir category. Afrikaanse Hoër Seunskool finished ahead of the boys in maroon with 84.25 points, while Guangdong Experimental High School SSC Choir from China won the category with 91.38 points. Although Paul Roos did not win the category, competing in the Champions Competition against international choirs was a significant milestone in the choir's development.

The choir returned to the National ATKV-Appous competition in Bloemfontein with renewed determination in 2019. Paul Roos was once again named the best boys' choir in South Africa. The choir achieved an impressive average score of 87.53%.

The achievement was the result of a

year of preparation, including choir camps, performances, the Stellenbosch Eisteddfod and other choral events. The success was the culmination of exceptional teamwork, with Stephan Bezuidenhout serving as conductor and Cezar Strydom as accompanist.

The 2019 victory was particularly significant because it confirmed Paul Roos as one of the country's leading boys' choirs. The choir's competitive progress was then interrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic. ATKV records note that ATKV-Appous was forced to stop in 2020 because of strict COVID-19 restrictions. In 2021, the competition returned in a different format, with adjudicators travelling to participating schools. The interruption meant that Paul Roos had to wait before it could return to the national Appous stage.

The return to national competition in 2022 produced one of the most important achievements in the choir's history. At the National ATKV-Appous competition, Paul Roos won the High School Boys' Choir Prestige category in Cape Town and was named the best boys' choir in the country. Even more significantly, the choir achieved 90.05%, earning its first Cum Laude award. The result was particularly impressive because it came after the two-year disruption caused by COVID-19.

The choir reached another extraordinary milestone in 2025 at the World Choir Games. Paul Roos participated in two categories, Music of Spirit and Faith and Folklore, and won both



A total of 53 choirs from 14 countries participated in the event. Paul Roos celebrated a monumental achievement by winning both categories and becoming World Champions.

The success continued in 2026. At the National ATKV-Appous competition, Paul Roos won the High School Prestige Boys' Choir category. ATKV's official results list Paul Roos Gimnasium as the winner, with Afrikaanse Hoër Seunskool as the runner-up.

Paul Roos also reported that the choir was again named the best boys' choir in South Africa and achieved another Cum Laude at the National AT-

KV-Appous competition. The 2026 victory further strengthened the choir's reputation as one of South Africa's leading boys' school choirs.

From its first ATKV-Appous victory in 2014 to becoming World Champions in 2025 and national Prestige winners again in 2026, the Paul Roos Gymnasium Choir has experienced an extraordinary journey. Its achievements are a testament to the dedication of its singers, conductor and everyone who has supported the choir throughout the years.



Kultuur



The last bell for Mrs Olivier bl. 3



The Last Roar bl. 10



'n Lang pad terug bl. 14



RPG presteer by ATKV-finaal

Altus de Villiers

Paul Roos Gimnasium het vanjaar weer die tonge laat klap by die nasionale finaal van die jaarlikse ATKV-kompetisies vir debat en redenaars. Die debatfinaal het op 3 Augustus plaasgevind, gevolg deur die redenaarsfinaal op 4 Augustus by ATKV Klein Kariba in Limpopo.

Debat:

Die onderwerp vir die seniors was: “Suid-Afrikaanse universiteite behoort studente (nie) hoofsaaklik vir 'n professionele loopbaan voor te berei (nie).”

Een van Paul Roos se senior spanne, Altus de Villiers en Damian de Lange, het as inleidende span opgetree en teen die Helpmekeer Kollege-span hul stemme dik gemaak en gewen. Dit was hierdie twee matrieks se laaste verskyning by die ATKV-debatskompetisie, en hulle het met 'n sesde plek in die senior afdeling van die finaal weggestap.

Paul Roos se ander senior span wat tot die finaal deurgedring het, Dieter de Kock en Paul du Plessis, het ongelukkig hul debat teen Hoërskool Nelspruit verloor.

Die onderwerp vir die juniors was: “Skoolkinders moet (nie) 'n aktiewe

rol in natuurbewaring speel (nie).” Paul Roos se junior span, bestaande uit Francois du Plessis, Janos Versfeld en Franco le Roux, het 'n naelbydebat teen die junior span van Helpmekeer Kollege gewen. Hierdie span het 'n derde plek op die podium behaal. Dit is beslis 'n span om volgende jaar op seniorvlak dop te hou!

Redenaars

Paul Roos Gimnasium het ook op die redenaarsverhoog uitgeblink. MG Jooste, wat die sterredenaar van die dag was, het in sy eerste jaar van hoërskoolredenaars aan die junior afdeling deelgeneem en sy mededingers oortuigend getroef. MG het met

sy toespraak “Ongeduld is 'n onkruid in ons samelewing” die voorbereide afdeling vir juniors gewen. Hy het ook die onvoorbereide kategorie vir juniors met sy toespraak “Sosiale media is nadelig vir tieners” gewen. Asof dit nie genoeg was nie, het MG óók die prys vir die beste taalgebruiker ingepalm — 'n merkwaardige prestasie!

In die onvoorbereide kategorie vir seniors was die onderwerp “Etiese gebruik van KI in skole is (nie) geregverdig (nie)”. Nog 'n uitblinker, Lian Winckler, het dié kategorie gewen. Daarbenewens het Lian sy taalvermoë ten toon gestel en die gesogte prys vir beste taalgebruiker op senior vlak gewen.

Altus de Villiers, wat vir die laaste keer sy sê by hierdie kompetisie gesê het en teen die onderwerp geargumenteer het, het 'n sesde plek op senior vlak behaal.

Ander redenaarsfinaliste, onder meer Dieter de Kock, Emile de Wet en Matthew Ker-Fox, het puik gevaar op hierdie topvlak en beslis onderskeie gehore van hul standpunte oortuig.

Die Paul Roosers het hulself goed van hul taak gekwyt, en ATKV 2027 weet nie wat nóg vir hulle wag nie!



BERTIE-BEER, IS DAAI GENOEG KOLE?

Francois Odendaal

Was jy al ooit by 'n bring-en-braai? Het iemand al lekker aan jou free-range Karoo-tjoppies gesmul terwyl jy met hulle half-gevorsde, afgemerkte hoenderboudjies moes sukkel? Het jou slaaitjie wat jy met al die liefde in jou hart gemaak het, nét so met sy Cling Wrap weer terug huis toe gegaan?

IS DAAI GENOEG KOLE? volg die storie van 'n jong paartjie wie se kole, te midde van die drama van 'n bring-en-braai, óók laag stook. Mis-kommunikasie en te veel Braaimasters wat aan die kole krap, veroorsaak dat die tjops aan die rooster vasbrand. Gaan hierdie paartjie hulle vlam weer vind voordat die vuur doodsmoor, of gaan hulle ook uitbrand?

Vanjaar op Paul Roos Gimnasium en Hoër Meisieskool Bloemhof se spyskaart is 'n splinternuwe,

vars-uit-die-polisteeën-pakkie komedie, genaamd IS DAAI GENOEG KOLE? Vir die eerste keer ooit het Paul Roos Gimnasium en Hoër Meisieskool Bloemhof saam in die skepping van 'n Tiener-toneel-produksie gestaan.

IS DAAI GENOEG KOLE? is 'n nuutgeskrewe teks deur Francois Odendaal, met regie deur Francois Odendaal en Leila Hölscher, wat vanuit waarnemings van familiebyeenkomste, kuiers met vriende, asook die alledaagse Afrikaans-kultuur gebore is. Die produksie is baie meer as 'n komedie wat by 'n braai afspeel — dit is 'n waardering van ons kultuur, herkoms, en tradisie. Dit herinner ons om trots te wees op ons taal en wat ons uniek maak, maar ook om mekaar te waardeer en nie as gevolg van roetine of gewoonte mekaar mis te kyk nie. IS DAAI GENOEG KOLE? betrek kykers by 'n braai tussen vriende, en gee hulle die kans om asem te skep en uit hul maag te lag.

“IS DAAI GENOEG KOLE? was vanjaar ongelooflik spesiaal om te skep en ek kon nie vir 'n beter toneelgroep gevra het nie. Ek het vriende gemaak met wie ek hopelik ook eendag só kan kuier soos die karakters in die produksie!” sê Reü Louw, die hoofspeler in die rol van Dawid Janse van Rensburg. “Dit voel soos 'n vriendegroep wat hul ouers namaak vir 'n skooltaak — op die beste manier!” sê Tessa de Beer, ondersteunende aktrise in die rol van Luzanne Retief.

“Ek is ongelooflik bevoorreg om 'n besondere talentvolle groep wat lewe in my woorde geblaas het, te hê. Sonder dié groep sou my teks nooit gehore só kon saambring soos wat dit doen nie. Elke dag wat ek saam met hulle werk, maak my opgewonde vir die toekoms van teater,” sê Francois Odendaal, dramaturg en regisseur van IS DAAI GENOEG KOLE?

