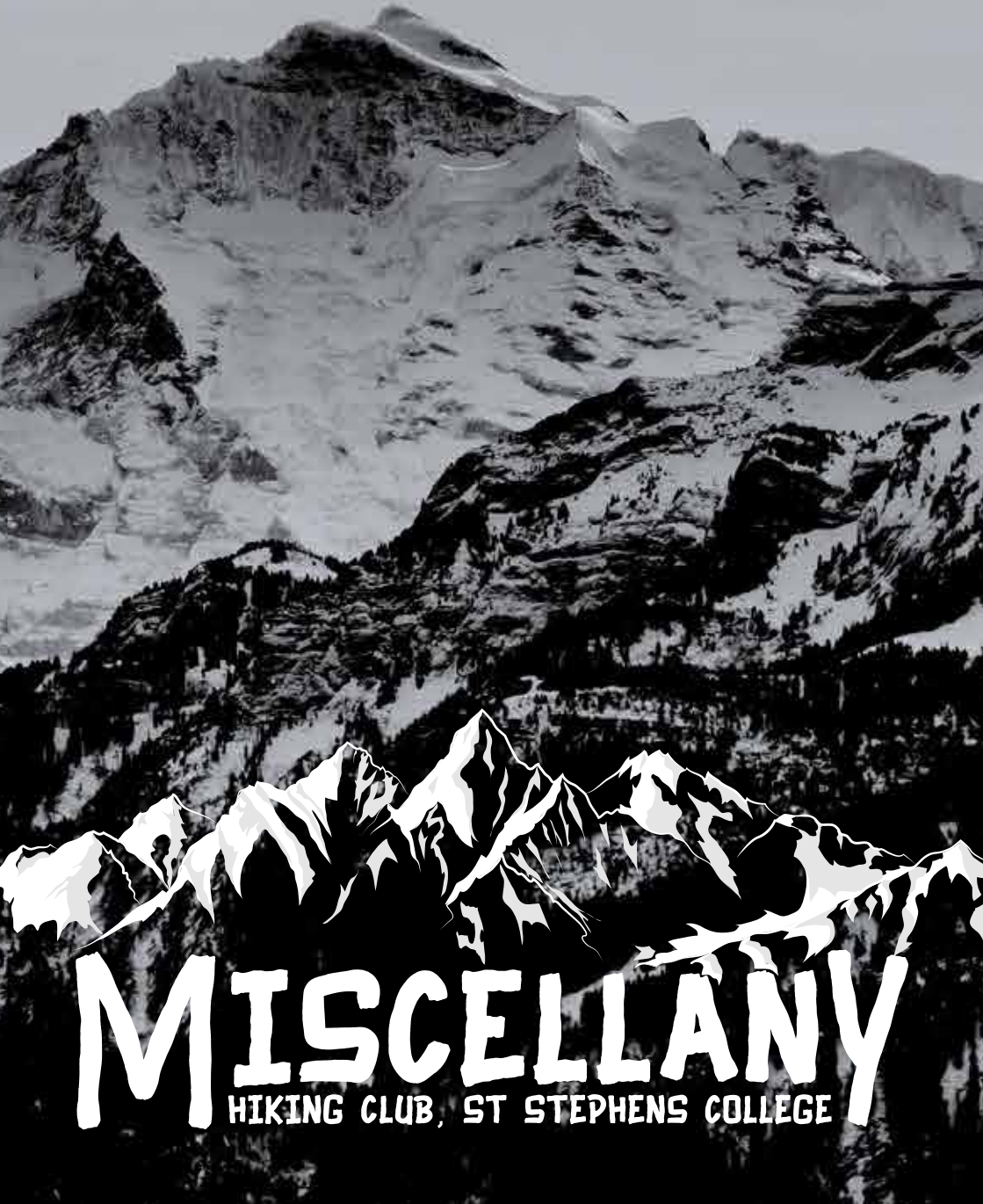


2017-2018



MISCELLANY

HIKING CLUB, ST STEPHENS COLLEGE



Editorial Team

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Editor's Note

I present to you the first of the two issues of 'Miscellany' that we shall release this year.

When I was asked to become editor-in-chief of this magazine by my predecessors, Allen and Sameer, I knew instantly that it would be a difficult task. I was sure of it precisely because of how much it meant to me. I wanted to revamp it completely, to reflect the passion that the climbers of the club feel. I was so focused on making my ideas a reality that the mere thought of failure made me feel like the world would crashing down around me. An article missing the deadline, an idea not seeing the light of day, every small error felt like I was letting the club, my team and myself down.

I've learnt a lot of things at the end of this experience of putting together a magazine, two of which will stay with me for the rest of my life. The first is that detachment from the object of your work is imperative in ensuring that it is successful. One needs to keep any project that they care about at a safe critical distance so that one's emotions do not overwhelm and merge with the professional decisions to be made regarding it. Sometimes things don't go according to plan, and that's okay as well.

The second and more important lesson that I take away from this is to trust my team. I would not have been able to put together this visual treat for you if it had not been for the hard work and dedication of my editorial board. They kept me going when the only thought that haunted my mind was that all our efforts to make this a success would amount to nothing. They helped me hold on, and for that I shall remain forever grateful.

I genuinely hope you enjoy this magazine as much as it means to us. Every article in here is an echo of what it means to be a part of the Hiking Club and I hope that as you read them you feel a part of the adventure as well. Life's too short to settle for boring- live vicariously through us, through these words. Perhaps it will inspire you to "Go Get that Adventure" as well.

See you in the next issue!

Supriti David, Editor-in-Chief 2017-18



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President's Note

Year 2017-18 for the Hiking Club officially began on the 3rd of August with its orientation in the seminar room and a display of trekking and climbing gear in the library lawns. This was followed by an inaugural climb at the Easwaran Bharatan Memorial Wall. The next few days saw enthusiastic participation from eager first years ready to make their first ascent. The second and third year members too got motivated to try out something new and rappelled down the gymnasium wall. On second thought, some safety gear and expert guidance could have been better for rappelling!

The students divided themselves in teams and competed in various friendly climbing 'matches' at the wall. Teams were led by the third year captains in a match aptly titled 'Captains Trophy 2017'. Eight teams, each captained by a second year member competed in the 'Second Years Climbing Competition'. First years too, led teams of first, second and third year members at several occasions. An event that saw a good number of participants was a short cycling trip from college to India Gate on the 20th of August. Fun trips like these help in team building.

The trials for the College Climbing Team for the 23rd North Zone Sport Climbing Competition were held on the 29th of August followed by rigorous training under our coach Mr. Rohit Solanki. The training sessions had to halt for a trek to Chandertaal in Himachal Pradesh during the mid-semester break from 29th September to 6th of October. A team of nine students lead by Mr. Benston John reached Chadertaal (4480m) on the 3rd of October. The adventure enthusiasts didn't wait for a jiffy and headed to Mira Model School in Janakpuri for the North Zone Competition on the same day. The three day long competition from 6th-8th October was a good learning experience that motivated the team to train harder. Regular climbing sessions at the wall see climbers sharing tips and insights with their buddies and giving challenging bouldering and climbing problems to each other. The team is all excited and geared up for the 13th St. Stephen's College Rohan Kanhai Datta and Sunil Chandra Memorial Open Sport Climbing Competition scheduled for the first week of February 2018. We are training hard, hopefully you will read about the various medals that your team got in the next edition of this magazine.

Rishwa Mathur, President 2017-18



Alumni Note

The Hiking Club. I cannot describe in words what it means to me. For 3 years in college, the wall saw all of my moods. It has held me when I was broke, it was there for me in my happiness, it was there when I was lonely. The wall was the only place where I could go in any kind of mood and come back normally.

Like you all, I also came to the wall to try something new. I thought a few times would be enough but there was something that made me stick to this wall and the club. Since then it's been a wonderful journey; whether it was going on fun fledged rafting trip, a wild cycling trip in the rain or an adventurous trek.

Going on a trek was the best adventure because you never know what happens next. Pushing your body up the steep climb with a 20 kg backpack and then complaining of pain. Later promising yourself that you won't do it again and then breaking the promise few months later. Treks taught me team work and more importantly how can you survive without a phone for 10 days by adoring the beauty of nature and the night sky. It increased my bonding with my fellow students and we made some of the best memories.

The club's motto is Choose to Date and because of that dialogue, I have attempted some of the craziest thing which otherwise I don't think I would have done. This club helped me realise my true potential.

People who are bored of the lives and want to try sometime new, then Hiking Club is the place for you. For me this wasn't just a club, it was my family.

Signing off

Shivam Khanna, Vice President, 2016-17.



Hiking Club Orientation

~T. Apoorva Chiranjeevi, II Year History

'Come Get That Adrenaline; Join the Hiking Club for its orientation. Follow thy trail till seminar room on 3rd August, 2017 at 2:15pm! All those who dare, be there!'. The promising poster was circulated in each block of the college campus, on social media and on every WhatsApp group. The speech was made in the morning assembly along with a captivating video heralding the orientation of Hiking Club and a surge of enthusiasm passed through the energetic crowd of the first year junior members. A huge crowd with animated and expectant faces was greeted by Rishabh, the vice president of Hiking Club as he commenced the orientation with an introduction, calming the unsettled murmuring among the audience in the sem room. One end of the room was charged with anticipation and eagerness and the other with coalesced emotions of apprehension and confidence, as the team spoke about the rationale behind the existence of such a club in college. The ambience was an edgy mix of zealous passion for rough and exciting adventure, that was described with great vehemence by the President of the club, Rishwa Mathur. This was followed by an introduction of the executive council that comprised of a family of club members, each with a distinct role, bound together by various adventures and treks, rafting trips and training sessions but most of all, by a sense of solidarity and the love for taking up new challenges. The climbing captains, Hriati & Chinmay spoke about their experiences and encouraged the first years to be part of the upcoming events which was followed by Aman Kapoor's (Alumni) speech, who spoke to his juniors about the ethos and the significance of the club. While all of this was happening, the club's magazine : Miscellany was circulated with the aim of giving an insight to the readers about the true spirit of adventure through a collection of various pictures and articles of different events of the club. The orientation marked it's end with a display of all the interesting equipments required for camping and climbing which intrigued and enlightened the first years. The tip of the of the end of the orientation was the beginning of something new- the beginning of the formation of a new first year Hiking Club team. The wall outside the gymnasium saw a lot of new climbers that day, all geared up for their first ascent with adrenaline truly rushing through their veins as they yelled "climbing" and a "climb on" echoed back to them. Excited introductions were exchanged as harnesses were being passed on and instructions about climbing were given to the them, all this marked the beginning of yet another year of an array of experiences of trying treks, turbulent rivers and rafts, of numbing pain and a lot of wild adventure. The philosophy of being a dauntless an unflinching soul amidst the best and worst conditions while rooted in courage, is precisely what the club espouses and the orientation was one event that acquainted the first-year junior members with this essence. Hiking Club orientation 2017, was thus a successful beginning of a new year marked by great gusto and anticipation and new challenges ahead.

First Ascent Experience

~Cicly, Teena

I went climbing the first time on a whim. The idea of climbing a wall with just one person holding me off the ground sounded suicidal. I shouldn't have worried. I didn't go all that high. And while I was climbing my mind was a jumble. I had no idea what to do. My only thought was to hold on and not fall. So I clung onto every hold like a monkey to a banana. If it hadn't been for Aishwarya's calm spotting and reasoning I wouldn't have been able to do what little I managed that day. All the seniors were extremely encouraging and shouted at the top of their lungs as if their hearts hung from the bottom of my foot. It felt exhilarating. I started feeling confident! I began to imagine myself at the top of Mount Everest as I clawed up the wall. When I did eventually fall off (all too soon), the Belayer didn't drop me! Not that I would've hurt myself had I dropped because I'd just climbed 2 feet vertically. I was let down carefully and slowly unlike the free fall I'd been expecting.

If someone ever asks me how my first climb was, I'd say, "It was Terrible." But if they further ask how is it now? My answer is here. Every handhold above me urges me to not only conquer the height but to fight back my fears. The fear of starting, the fear of pain, the fear of falling, the fear that follows. Trust me it's the best thing. It reminds you how you fought your way out of it all. How much you achieved, fills you with more enthusiasm to go and partake in this madness all over again. It's enchanting to say the least.



North Zone Competition

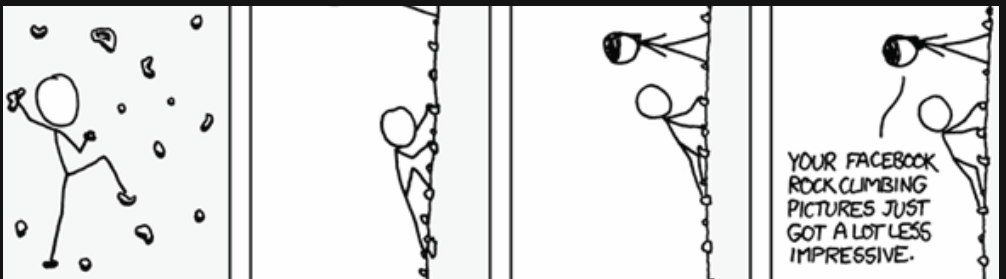
~VL Hriati

We entered the North Zone with no naïve illusions that we would be able to beat the professionals who train for the competition all year round. We knew in our hearts that the main purpose of entering the competition was to give the climbing team of the college more exposure to the sport itself and to interact with as many different professional climbers as possible.

The competition lasted three days (6th, 7th and 8th October, 2017) and was divided into three categories: Bouldering, Speed Climbing and Lead Climbing. The bouldering competition consisted of three routes which had to be completed in a period of three minutes each, during which the climber could rest for three minutes in between each route. For lead climbing, the climbers were given a route (the difficulty of which varied according to the gender and age group) with clips hanging at various stages and one had to clip as many clips as one could, within a time span of four minutes. Speed climbing, as is suggested by the name itself, entailed climbing the standard speed route as fast as one could.

Over 160 climbers of all age groups came from all over North India, there were participants who came all the way from Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Delhi and so on. The participants were divided into three categories: Sub Junior Boys/Girls, Junior Boys/Girls, and Men/Women. We watched in awe as the professional climbers tried tackling the routes, each with their own unique approaches and techniques. In each category of the competition, the Men's category is known for being next to impossible. We watched the route setters set the routes for the men and all of us agreed that it was impossible. However, the professionals proved us wrong one after the other. We could see the difficulty of each move, each dyno and the experience and technique it took to accomplish each move.

It was a great experience and we came back from the competition with a whole of a lot more knowledge and experience and with much more motivation for our own competition due on February, 2018.



12th Climbing Competition

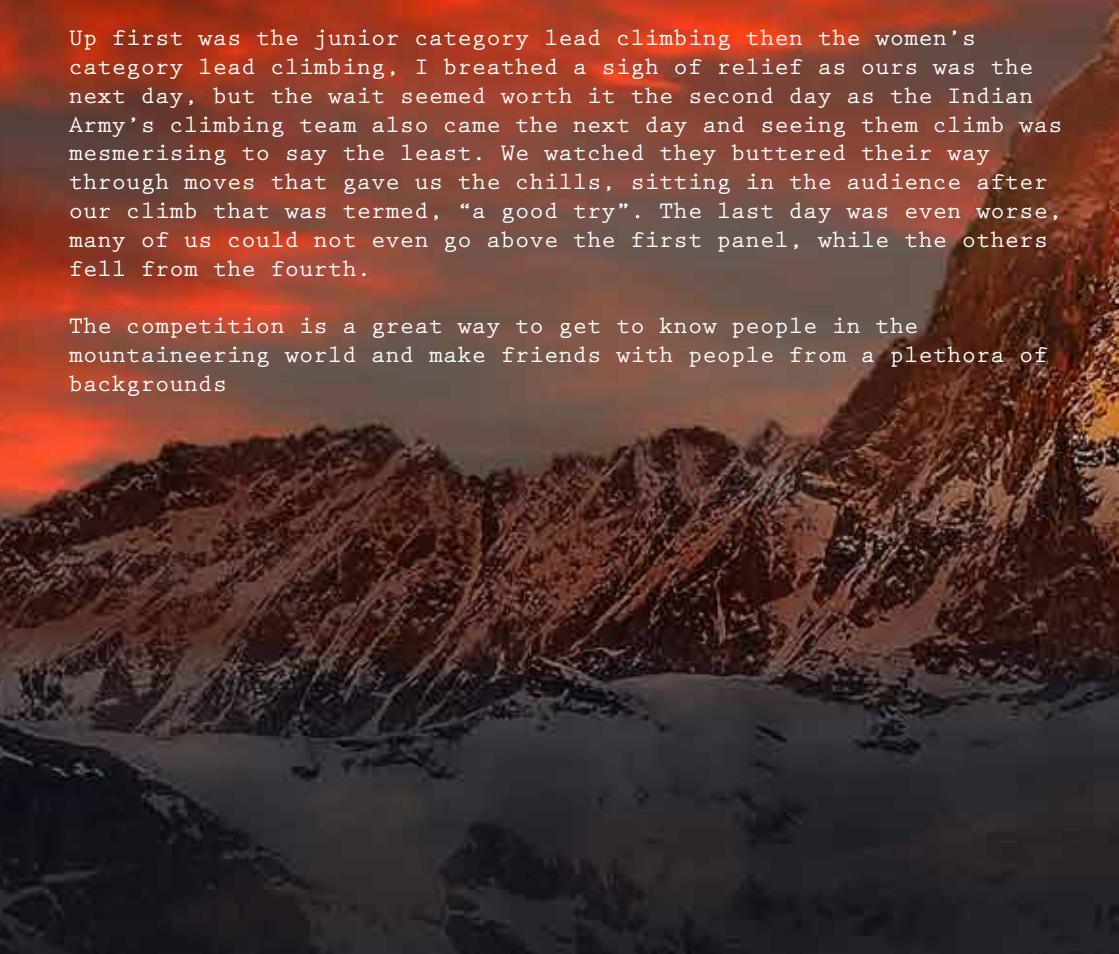
~Vivek

The preparations had started weeks prior to the competition, the training, months prior. Being the climbing captain, I was getting crushed by the pressure of getting a medal, even though everyone knew nobody stood a chance against the participants who were coming this year.

The first years had no clue how to organise a competition, we were exercising our new found authority to the maximum, and the third years were the last resort when it came to any mismanagement. On the first day of the competition, people started pouring into the gymnasium, some new faces, but most of them were there the previous year too. The inauguration was done by Dr. S. Kumar, our staff advisor and Prof. John Varghese, the principal of our college. The route setters then started to casually remove the holds from our wall.

Up first was the junior category lead climbing then the women's category lead climbing, I breathed a sigh of relief as ours was the next day, but the wait seemed worth it the second day as the Indian Army's climbing team also came the next day and seeing them climb was mesmerising to say the least. We watched they buttered their way through moves that gave us the chills, sitting in the audience after our climb that was termed, "a good try". The last day was even worse, many of us could not even go above the first panel, while the others fell from the fourth.

The competition is a great way to get to know people in the mountaineering world and make friends with people from a plethora of backgrounds



AquaTerra Challenge 2016

~Chinmay

When you are all set to rage, rage against the water flow,
against the waves, against the nature

When you're ready to harmonize the wind and the waves,
the sun and the hills, the dust and the splash
When you're ready to face the rocks,
the hills the water and the sand, all at once

This poem explains everything the aquaterra challenge stands for. For the past two years, members of the Hiking Club have been privileged to receive an invite to the aquaterra challenge sponsored by GSK to promote the spirit of adventure in the youth. Last year, a team of my seniors went to the challenge, and outshone in all the stages of the competition. I was highly inspired by the joint efforts of the team and wanted to carry on their legacy. I trained hard for a year and this year when the team was selected my dream came true. I got the opportunity to experience the adventure first-hand. As the only second year in the team, I had the responsibility of not only doing well in the competition but also learning so that I could lead the team in the future. On the morning of December 16 we gathered at the Dehradun Bus Station, anxious to start the journey. We took a bus to Rishikesh and got onto a local bus to reach Atali Ganga. After the briefing, the instructor took us to the waters for some practice and we returned to our campsite afterwards. After some rest in the serene environment we had our dinner and went off to sleep as we had an early start the next day. At 5 am, Aman woke me up and we started getting ready for the adventure and by 6 am, we were done with our breakfast and were moving towards the starting point of the race. On reaching, Aquaterra instructors made us do an amusing warmup. It was freezing cold and we were wearing 3 layers of clothing. At 6:30 am, the instructors signalled us to start and everybody started dashing. As soon as the race started, Aman and Allen disappeared. Chandni and I were moving at our own pace as we knew that it was a long 24 km run and sprinting was not the best idea.

Soon, we crossed over the mighty Ganges on a bridge and the terrain became upward sloping. I was pretty experienced on this terrain being a local myself so I picked up the pace and soon I met Allen who was out of breath. He asked me to keep going and I kept on moving up the hill as fast as I could. The 6km hike was quite challenging and I was able to finish it in an hour. Then came the easier part "The Crux". The terrain was now downwards sloping and we started running again. Soon Chandni caught upto me and we were both frantically running downwards. After a long run it again turned into a hike and I took the lead again. The trekking leg was literally breaking me and when I thought we were almost done I saw the 18km mark and I cried a little on the inside. "6 kms still", I thought to myself.

Every part of my body wanted me to give up but my heart didn't allow me to and I went on running when I could, walking fast when I couldn't, just moving on. I had pulled my thigh muscles and my hamstrings and I literally had to sit down because of the agonizing pain twice but I couldn't afford to lose the lead or drop out of the race so I went on. Towards the end of the race Chandni caught up to me and took the lead. Behind her was a participant lady who was a doctor. She was very polite and kind and offered me meds and electrolytes to improve my condition. Finally, I finished the race in around 4 hours and 30 minutes. Later I found out that our president Aman had finished it in 3 hours and 30 minutes only and Chandni took 4 hours and 15 minutes. Allen followed with a time of 5 hours. With this the first day concluded with Hiking club team at the third position amongst the 16 participant teams. The first position was bagged by the locals where all the teammates had finished under 3 hours and the best time was around 2 hours and 30 minutes. We literally couldn't even stand on our feet anymore. We went for a very small cycle trip after that to check our cycles. We reviewed our performance and we were quite confident that after the cycling and rafting legs we would be able to bag the second position at least. We had our dinner at around 6 and went off to sleep because our bodies were too exhausted.

Next day, we were very excited about the cycling leg. When it started barely 5 minutes had passed and Aman shouted out my name. I went back to find out that the chain of his cycle had come off. I quickly repaired the chain and we started again as fast as we could we went on the rough terrain. There were so many little rocks increasing the probability of falling exponentially. After around 15 km of downward rough terrain, a plainer terrain came and we shifted our gears and moved on. Soon we had to get off the bikes and push the bikes as upwards sloping terrain was again there to kill us. Finally, we were able to finish the 25 km cycling leg with Allen at the first position among us waiting there. As soon as I touched the finish point we started looking as far as our eyes allowed for the rest of our teammates as we had to start the rafting leg. After 20 minutes wait we finally saw Aman on his bike and he finished the race. We waited on for Chandni but we saw no signs of her. At the end, the truck with spare cycles came and Chandni was aboard. She had fallen off her bike and had to drop out of the race due to her injuries. We were a bit down but we had to start the rafting leg already so we quickly got into rafting gear and got into the raft and started pedalling. The rafting leg was rather tiring for the upper body and it was a hell lot of an adventure since we had no guide and the rapids were all quite challenging. At a few places spirals had developed and our raft turned through more than 720 degrees. It was lot of fun and as soon as we completed the 26 km rafting leg we just fell on the ground totally exhausted. In the evening we had a get together at Atali Ganga Resort with live music performances and great food. The peaceful environment and the great music really set the mood. In the end the team stood at the fifth position even after losing a member in the biking leg. And Chandni literally swallowed two painkillers and got into the raft with full enthusiasm and zeal. The courage that she showed still inspires me to this day. Overall it was a fulfilling experience that taught me a lot and I will surely cherish all the memories I got in those two days.

Takeshi's Castle

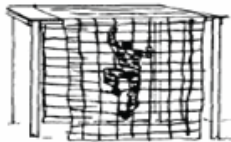
~Alex

After two long monotonous months of tedious classes of the even semester, the college got its first taste of entertainment through Harmony 2016-17, the annual college fest of St. Stephen's. Gearing up for the ultimate dose of fun, St. Stephen' campus got buzzed evoking a lot of passion and fervor to the students. The various events of this annual fest were scheduled meticulously and programmed very well for two days from 25th February to 26th February 2017. And whenever there is a matter of providing wholesome awesomeness in any fest, The Hiking club is not very far away. And this time we came up with the brilliant idea of replicating the Takeshi's Castle- A game involving a series of challenges. The challenges were spread over a distance of two lawns. Or as we at the club called it, Chandravibhushan Pandeyji ke tabelese JCR tak. It starts off with each contestant running over a series of tires placed on the ground, careful to hop at the heart of each one with one leg at a time. Then he only lives on to survive the ropewalking scare, where there are scores of water balloons firing at you while you can barely balance yourself on the thin rope. Then a 20 m of sack hopping mind you which is not so easy on the legs after a rigorous rope walk. Off the sack and jump over the fence of the JCR ground only to find yourself facing a much more challenging task. Crawl in a puddle of mud under a fence of height of a few feet which tends to get stuck to your shorts and of course, your hair. Even though your body is willing to give up at this stage, the will to win keeps you going. Climb a tree and then get down using a ladder and you're a jump away from the finish. The time keeper, who runs beside you all through the course, stops his timer once you ring the bell with the hammer. The series of challenges was most enthusiastically prepared by putting in untiring efforts for days and nights by the members of the club. There was an outstanding presentation of physical fitness by the students who participated. Everyone watched with bated breath as boys and girls completed the challenging tasks. Almost everyone who took part was beyond recognition after crawling through the mud pit. At the end of the day you got to have winners and we had not one but two of them. Sunil from 3rd B.A. programme and Alex Riyano from 1st B.Sc. Programme completed the entire course in 2 min 29 secs. And like all good things it came to an end at 5pm before which hundreds of students came to test their skill and luck.

OBSTACLES FOR VERTICAL CLIMBING AND SURMOUNTING



CLIMBING ROPE



CARGO NET



WALL



POLE

North Pole Talk

It was a bright Friday afternoon in the winters of February when room XC was filled with the air of reminiscence and nostalgia. It was a pleasure for the Hiking Club to host three of its ex club members who had come to talk about some of amazing time they had spent as part of the club in the college which they proudly cherished till date.

The three fellow Stephenians included Mr. R. S Sethi, Mr. Qureshi and Mr. Malhotra. Mr. R.S Sethi who studied in college from 1967-72 was the Secretary of the Hiking Club and did the difficult Borasu Pass from Har Ki Doon to Chitkul in 1969. Later became a IAS even while serving the government as he continued with adventure and travel; climbing peaks and trekking from Arunachal to Zaskar. In between his taxing assignments as an administrator and travels, he also found time to pen six books. He is among the few to have visited to more than hundred countries. His adventure continues after retirement; most recently he visited the North Pole and drove down the Karakoram Highway. His presentation constituted of a slide show which presented more than four decades of adventure and travel by a remarkable Stephenian; black and white photographs of earliest treks with the Hiking Club to slides from the most recent travels in China.

The other two gentlemen also contributed to the discussion by sharing their own experiences in college and how college is one the best phase in a individuals life. This inspired many of us to look forward to a life full of adventure taking up new challenges. The three gentlemen in a way completely justified the epithet that "Age is just a number". The members presented them with club T-shirts as a token of appreciation for sparing out their time to be among us.

The club looks forward to hosting more such interactive sessions as it not only increases the bond between alumni and the members but it also ignites the young minds to take up challenges in life and to build on the spirit of Stepehnia.



The First Trek

~Uday


The thought of going on a trek had been playing on my mind for a long time. After hearing about the success of the trek to Hampta pass the year before, I was all the more eager to sign up for the next trek. The time had come and the Hiking Club organised a trek to Deo Tibba, Himachal Pradesh, from the 29th of September to the 6th of November, 2017. I had not known much about the place earlier, but got straight down to doing my research on it. With the necessary details in mind and a few videos to give me an idea of what was to come, my mind was set for adventure. Little did I know that there was so much more waiting on the other side.

Our group consisted of club president Rishwa Mathur, Reuben Yakub, Parth Choudhury, Mayank Joon, Aadit Kumar Sharma, Mrinalini Gupta, Sanjukta David, Gerald Raj and myself. Mr Benston John was our teacher escort for this trip. Our journey began much before setting off to our destination. Days before the trek, we began preparations. Rucksacks, sleeping bags, tents, cooking itinerary, etc. were all put into place. With a few last-minute adjustments, we were set to go on a trip of a lifetime.

Our start was nothing short of a disaster. We were lucky to have made it to Kashmere Gate just in time to catch the bus. With our stuff loaded, we started off our journey to Manali. Our bus ride was one I would rather not to recollect. After a painful almost sixteen-hour journey, we made it to Manali sleep deprived, almost as if we had completed our trek already. We made our way to where our vehicles were waiting for us to take us up another one and a half hours to our starting point. We were to begin our trek at Khanol (2700 m) from RD 12000. RD referred to the hydro-electric power project which was being set up in the area of Jagatsukh. They say that once the project is completed, the number of trekkers allowed to go up to Deo Tibba would be sharply cut down. A sad thing to hear, which all of us would only realise at the end of our experience. We met our guide Gopal there and began loading our items onto the mules. With our rucksacks strapped on to our back, we made our way. The first day was a short three-hour trek towards our first base camp 'Chikka' (3200 m), situated along the Jagatsukh river bank. We already began to embrace the beauty of the landscape, moving through thick pine forests and vast green hillsides. On our way, we crossed paths with a former Stephenian, and to our amazement, he had been a former president of the college hiking club. He too, along with his group, was heading to the same place as us. On reaching our camp, we set up base and were told to get enough rest for the next day's lengthy journey.



We did a bit of exploring of the place. We were told about the significance of a Nag Mandir which was situated near our camp. The night was entertaining, with a failed attempt to make a fire not stopping us from sharing ghost stories and sending chills up everyone's spines. We did end up running to the neighbouring camper's fire for comfort. The next day began early, which was something I wasn't use to in a long time. With a little chit chat with other groups camped near us, and breakfast filling up our bellies, we headed out for the longest part of the trip. We trekked along the right bank of the Jagatsukh River, moving through thick forests as well as crossing over streams. The lush forest gave way to a massive path of boulders, which was followed by a stretch of green highland. With a number of breaks to catch our breath, we stopped at 'Pandurupa'. Gopal enlightened us on the myth surrounding the name of the site. Legend says that the Pandavas, on their way up to the mountains would stop and rest here. Evening was falling upon us and the need to get to camp was necessary as we were told that the weather there was most unpredictable. As we began closing in on our campsite, the beauty surrounding us was breath taking. After eight hours of walking we had reached 'Seri' (3600 m). A dew kissed meadow spread over a massive scale with the Tainta waterfall in the backdrop flowing down into the river; Seri was a treat to the eyes and to the soul. Seri was once an extension of the Deo Tibba glacier. During the months from March to May, the area is completely frozen, and camping here is not possible. Later in the month of June, this ice melts to turn Seri into a lake 'Seri-Tal'. Getting to the camp involved crossing three streams which were minus four degrees, but with a little teamwork and numb legs, we made it to the other side. Moving on to the next day, we aimed to reach Deo Tibba basecamp before sunset. The trek started off with a steep climb up the mountain. On reaching plain ground, we breathed easy walking on a never-ending carpet of grass. Our bouldering skills were put to the test when we had to make our way over a stretch of huge boulders. Our guide Gopal never let our spirits weigh us down and kept encouraging us with each step. We made it to Deo Tibba base camp in one piece. Here we for the first time got a proper glimpse of the Deo Tibba peak. We settled down for an afternoon of great bonding amongst us. Dinner was soon ready and Gopal along with our cook never seemed to disappoint us with their cooking. The final stage of our trek had come. We were to head to 'Chandratal Lake'. The lake is situated on the 'Samundra Tapu' plateau where we were headed. The name of the lake originates from its crescent shape. We set off, leaving behind our backpacks at camp. We trekked through moraines and regular uphill ascends. Throughout, the magnificent Deo Tibba was always stayed in sight. After a while of tough climbing, we arrived at a rescue camp, situated between one route leading to the Deo Tibba summit, and the other to Chandratal Lake. Here we met Gurudev, one of the brave men responsible for making every trekker's journey safe and tension free. He accompanied us from this point to 'chota Chandratal' a smaller version of Chandratal located just before the pass to 'Bara' or the main Chandratal Lake.



We arrived, after a great deal of struggle climbing up the mountain slope, and then passing chota Chandratal to finally reach the magnificent Chandratal Lake. The scenery took a while to set in. This was truly nature in one of its most beautiful forms. It was a captivating site, surrounded by Deo Tibba summit on one side and Jagatsukh summit on the other and its clear emerald water enhanced the place's beauty. This was truly the cherry on the icing cake for our trip. Our final endeavour needed us to make our way back to our first basecamp 'Chikka'. This involved starting early with the sunrise from Deo Tibba base camp and make an 11km walk descending on our way. As we traced our steps back from where we originally came we could see familiar sites, reminding us of the great time we had experienced on this trek. We also managed to follow a new trail towards the end which brought us to a picturesque sight of a tiny bridge going over the river. We made it to basecamp as soon as the sun began to set, and prepared for our last stay of our trek. The night was filled with merriment, as we were successful this time in making a bonfire. Gopal ji bonded with us over the fire and intrigued us with his facts as he always did throughout the trek. It was a truly emotional night, with none of us willing to go back to the hustle and bustle of city life. Nature had captured our hearts, and this place would remain in our memories for the rest of our lives.

IMF Film Festival

~Alex

“Literary and cultural activities prove a valuable lens to view the inner world of students and thereby enable their holistic development”.

The Indian Mountaineering Foundation Film Festival. The stage was set, the hopefuls were ready and the day dawned - bright and fresh reflecting the spirits of our students and then it happened on 12th September, The Mountain film festival organized by Hiking club, St. Stephen's college. Through the festival we showcased the amazing adventure opportunities across India. The movies covered a wide range of adventure activities like kayaking, ice climbing, mountain biking, snowboarding, trekking, mountaineering, bouldering and rock climbing. The festival screened 15 movies in 3 hours. The event on stage was led by Alex Riyano and Supriti David, members of hiking club.

The festival kick started at 2 pm. The event saw the presence of three directors-Ashustosh Mishra(Ganga's first born), Anchit Thukral(The Fall) and Ajay Talwar(Pangong Reflections).who came upon the stage after their respective movie's screening to give an insight into their film. While Anchit thukral and Ashutosh Mishra explained the concept of their movies, Ajay talwar gave necessary insight into Astrophotography. The audience present were quick to grab the opportunity and poised quite a few questions in front of the directors.

“The event was diligently organized. There was a soul to it. A soul that was vibrant, contagious and exuberant. The minute one set foot in the auditorium, one could feel the vibrancy. The information provided regarding every movie before the screening was invaluable.” were the words of the students present at the event. The focus on adventure sports with special notice to hiking was a key feature in all the films screened. “We're really proud to be a part of the mountain film festival of IMF, which we believe will be an entertaining new way to shine a spotlight on the adventures and give the Stephanian audiences a little taste and window into this vibrant field. I thank all the people present here, the support staff, The IMF and all the members of the hiking club” were the words of Rishwa, president of the hiking club while presenting the vote of thanks.

Cycling Trip

(The Hiking Club organizes regular cycling trips wherein members hire cycles from the metro station and ride until their legs give in. It is the perfect test for stamina and is led by the President of the club)

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It was sunny, sticky and swelteringly hot. We lost our navigator at one point and most of us didn't even know we were heading towards India Gate and not Akshardham. Every pedal on the metro cycle we had hired, seemed like the last it would be able to manage and the next minute we would be left with a few pieces of metal. But all of these just added to the exhilarating experience, the cycling trip has been. The adrenaline rush while cycling and the satisfaction I got when the trip actually ended, cannot be rivalled. It was the first time I had cycled as far as I did that day (a whooping 32.33km!). But due to the extreme caution and the frequent breaks our seniors made us take along the way, I didn't find it difficult to finish. There was a constant banter and light hearted teasing, with impromptu races starting frequently. The conversations, laughter and the support we got made memories which overcame the grit, the sweat and the blistering sun! All in all it had been a fantabulous experience.

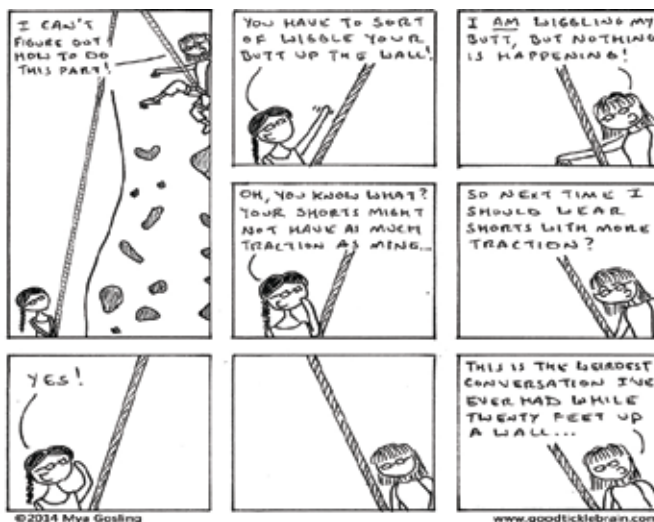


The Captain's Trophy

~Aishwarya Thapa

The Hiking club of St. Stephen's College organised the Captains Trophy on the 1st of September, 2017. Members of the climbing team participated in the competition, with the two teams being headed by our two climbing captains, Hriati and Chinmay. Each team had to consist of nine members and, apart from the captain, they were to have a third year, one second year girl as well a boy and five first years. The route was set by the Vice-Presidents Rishabh and Vivek and President Rishwa. The wall that afternoon was overwhelmed with enthusiasm. Perhaps it was not the difficulty of the route but the urge to prove to ourselves that we were worthy of being part of the climbing team. We had Hriati on one side who was encouraging and guiding her team members to give their best and on the other we had Chinmay who did the same for his team. The main purpose of this trophy was to introduce the first years to competitive climbing and to give them an idea about what real sport climbing competitions felt like. It was also an eye opener for many first years and second years in terms of analysing their progress since they started out. Our first years did a commendable job on the route that was set for them especially considering the fact that this route was not easy as it had several holds and features that we had not used before. At the end of the day Hriati's team won the Captain's Trophy with the total score of team Chinmay being 45 and team Hriati 65.

This competition marked a start in numerous other in-house competitions that we would organize in order to help us grow as a team. It revealed to us where we fell short in our training as well as shedding light on our strengths



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