



PRIORSFIELD **SIXTH**

Sporting Tour Success in South Africa

Twenty one 4th to 6th Formers rounded off a successful year with an exciting Hockey and Netball tour to South Africa . Five fixtures were planned over two weeks which gave ample time for exploring the delights of South Africa with stops in Johannesburg , Durban , Cape Town and other amazing places.

Johannesburg was the first stop with a visit to the National TV and Radio studios, Gold Reef City and the first fixture against St Anthony's Girls' School. The girls and staff received a warm welcome from the opposition and thoroughly enjoyed their first games, with the Netball team achieving a decisive 31-19 victory. The hockey players were not so successful but they played valiantly until the final whistle, enjoying a wonderful opportunity to play against the U16 Springbok Centre Forward, whose skills were outstanding.

Over the next few days the group passed through the splendours of the province of Mpumalang . The students experienced gold panning at Pilgrim's Rest, the curious rock formations at Bourke's Luck Potholes and the stunning views at God's Window and the Three Randawels on the way to Kruger National Park .

After a restful night at the luxurious Pine Lake Inn, it was up at dawn to watch the 'Big Five' in their natural habitat. The group was rewarded for the early start with close up encounters with hippos, rhinos, elephants and lions along with other, fascinating animals, birds, insects and plants. It was a memorable day which had girls and staff on the edge of their seats until the end of the drive.

On the journey to Durban stops were made at Macmac Falls and Lake St. Lucia where, aboard a small cruiser, hippos and crocodiles were viewed up close in their natural environment. That afternoon the teams played their second fixture against Empangeni High School which fielded two very strong sides. Prior's Field 'A' team made a good start but unfortunately let in a goal at the end of the first half. However, they responded positively in the second half and quickly scored an equaliser. The end result was 1-1 after an exciting game with much strong attacking and defending skills from both sides. The 'B' team had an uncertain start but the students grew in confidence throughout the match and scored in the second half to make the

final result 5-1 to Empangeni.

The next day it was off to visit Glen Haven High School which made a huge impact on everyone. Staff and students were warmly welcomed into the establishment by the Senior Management who treated them as honoured guests. The students at Glen Haven come from varied backgrounds. They experience daily the challenges of Aids, drugs, poverty and violence but they attend their school with a sense of great pride and were keen to share their love of rap, gospel, pop music and traditional food. The school was also proud of its involvement in Interact and it was an opportunity for the Chairperson of Prior's Field's Interact to meet their Chairman and to talk about their involvement in their local community. It was humbling to see an impoverished school contribute so much to the less fortunate. Three close netball matches were played at Glen Haven with Prior's Field students having to adapt to the physical nature of the play. The students of the host school came out to support the games which created an exciting atmosphere - a happy memory for all those involved.

After a visit to the aquarium at uShaka Marine World to see the fish, sharks and plant life of the South African seas the group took a flight to their last destination: Cape Town. This is an incredible city, steeped in history and, to the students delight, there were amazing shops! The first fixture at Bosmansdam gave the students the opportunity to play both hockey and netball. The host school played a high standard of netball which challenged the visitors but allowed them to experience an excellent level of play. Prior's Field unfortunately lost all three matches but both the 'A' and 'B' hockey teams played with a good level of skill and won their matches 2-0 and 5-1 respectively. It was exciting to see the 'B' team play so well after their first match.

The final fixture at the Eben Donges School saw the 'A' netball team and the 'A' hockey team win their matches convincingly with all the students playing well and enjoying meeting and playing against their opposition. All the students showed excellent progress over the two weeks and the staff were impressed with their team spirit.

Over the last few days, the group explored Cape Town and the surrounding area, visiting Robben Island on Mandela's 90th Birthday, Boulders Beach to watch the breeding colony of African penguins, Hout Bay and finally Cape Point where the Atlantic meets the Indian Ocean. The sights and sounds were amazing. The two weeks passed by very quickly and everyone would agree that it had been a successful and memorable tour. Thank you to all the students, Miss Trudgeon, Miss Leach and Miss Kennon for making the trip possible.

