

# The Elephant

No. 272

WELHAMBOYS' SCHOOL

24th April, 2002

## Think About It....

*You have not understood anything fully unless you can explain the same to your old grandmother.*

*- Albert Einstein.*

## EDITORIAL

Yesterday is history,  
Tomorrow is a mystery.  
Today is a gift.  
That's why we call it 'Present'.

It is with a potpourri of feelings that I sit in front of this computer typing away my next editorial. The reason for the delay of this issue is well known to all of us, so I will not even discuss it. Last night as I lay awake in my bed thinking what to write in my editorial I felt I had found an outlet for all the frustration in my classmates and me. I thought of personifying literary ruthlessness itself, lampooning and ridiculing anything and everything that I could think of. But then I gave it a second thought. Yesterday is history; why dig it out of its grave? What lies before us is a whole new string of goals and opportunities. As I said, today is a gift; let's use it to the fullest.

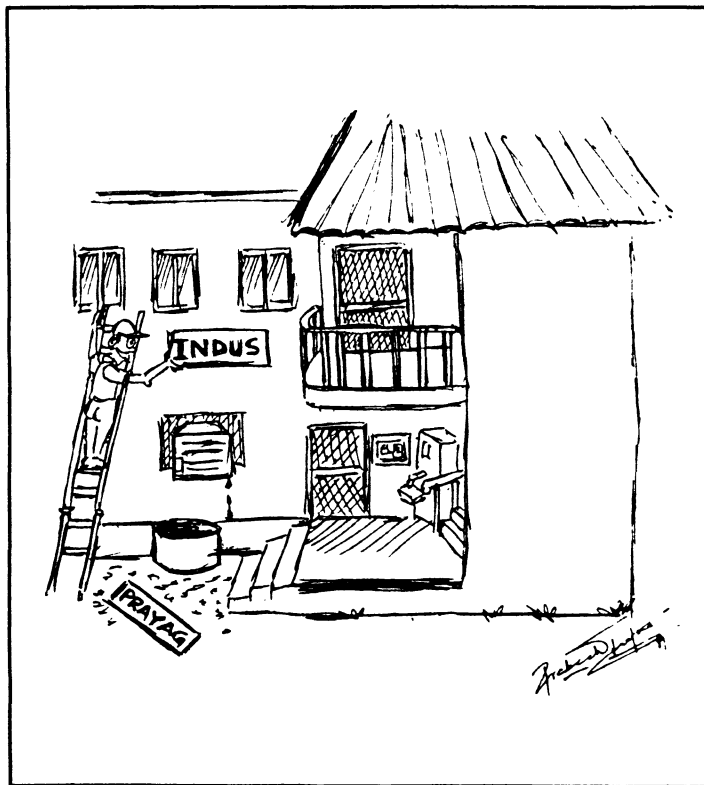
The joyous mood that had built up in the boys came to an abrupt end after the midterms, as the prefects and the twelfthies

resumed their duties. What came, as a bigger aftershock was the implementation of the new summer schedule. There are more ambiguities in the schedule than there is enough space in my editorial to discuss them. Therefore I have dedicated a whole column of Word War to discuss it in the next issue. Why did

this schedule have to be put into practice in this scorching heat? Dear staff members, please do not mark any students who give 'hospital' as an excuse for being absent in the class. He might as well be telling the truth. Thanks to the side effects of the schedule.

The school witnessed on the 17<sup>th</sup> a classic demonstration of school spirit fueled by a feeling of sweet vengeance.

It was after a gap of five full years that we won a tournament on our home court. The much-awaited basketball final with the Doscocs did justice to all the expectations we had from it. We had the opposition grappling for air as the match reached a nail-biting crescendo. How-



ever, it cannot be denied that it was a neck to neck confrontation, where a small error from either side could have cost them the trophy. Apparently it wasn't us. The cherry on the cake came from the chief guest Mr. Jayant Lal, who complimented us for being inspired spectators. It was more than just a trophy. It epitomized Welham's love for the game and the school itself. I hope we can replicate the success of the basketball team in other spheres as well.

Though Aamir Khan's Lagaan failed to bring home our very first Oscar, it sure has opened up new doors for Bollywood movies to a whole new international audience. Now it is for the film makers here to take the right step forward. I think the very first right step has been taken by the gritty and gory underworld saga, Company. I am sure most of us have watched and liked the film. The film sparks off yet another debate over the influence of such movies on our generation. The characters portrayed in the films could give any frustrated youth, ill-conceived ideas to deal with reality. The ending of the movie does in a way justify the message of the film though. However, the discretion to accept and to reject any messages in such movies should lie in each one of us.

Incidentally, in one of the many meetings the prefect body had with the staff members and the Principal, the matter to increase

class twelfth's pocket money was raised. Obviously there had to be some hindrance or the other that they had to face before they could get this request of theirs carried out. Hence we had one of the staff members proposing an idea that first the parents of the twelfthies should be consulted before any decision is taken. To which our school captain very pertinently remarked, "But sir, our parents are not consulted when the school increases the fees!" Of course the teachers too had a good laugh with us and the idea of consultation with the parents was not raised again. But jokes apart, what I am trying to get at is, that why is our school too falling prey to one of the most infamous modus operandi of the Indian politicians- things are okayed on paper but never given concrete finale, at least not at the right time. Things that were agreed on and were supposed to take shape with 'immediate effect' are still lost in the maze of official formalities. I am very reluctantly writing this in my editorial, but more than half of the things agreed on the various committees of the school are never implemented. I'd hate to be cynical but that's the truth. And with the bizarre and never-heard-of system of indenting the school has recently adopted, things might get worse.

So you might just get the English reader you indented for, next term!

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Rocking the core,  
- Prayaas.

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## DUDE(S) OF THE FORTNIGHT.

( *Class Twelfth.* )

They have been in the limelight from the very beginning of the term. Be it for fighting for their dream house P.H. or for maintaining discipline in school, they have not failed to amuse us. From courageously living through the 'boycott period' to selflessly resuming their duties in exchange of some basic 'requests' they made, they have proved beyond doubt that they are a very important part of the school community. The sports arena would be barren without the invaluable contribution of our twelfthies and all other important activities of the school would come to a standstill. We have more reasons than one to declare them the Dudes of the fortnight.

# LITERARY AFFAIRS

## Letter to my Unborn Son.

(Written by a father on his death bed)

Dear Son,

I feel so stupid writing this letter, but my conscience tells me that I should. You are but just a speck of life in your mother's womb right now. So clean, so pure, unadulterated by the ghastliness of this world. Your fragile mind has no idea just what it is to expect from it. But I have gone through it all, seen it all, survived it all. I do not know when or how you will read this letter. However it does not matter, what does is that when you do, you understand just what your dying father meant. I have learnt some very important lessons in life, son. My life's meandering experiences have taught me what I now want to help you learn.

Live every second of your life as if you are going to die the very next minute. You don't know just how precious it is until you are losing it. As I ruminate over my past, I regret not having done so many things that I should have. Do not ever cover away from life's little opportunities or postpone them for tomorrow, for you never know if there will be one. Opportunity rarely strikes twice. Try to experience each and every aspect of life once, because you might never get the chance again.

As you grow older son, you will come across people who will scorn you, rebuke you, and make you feel miserable. Treat criticism like a bubble gum – take it out of the wrapper, pop it in your mouth, savor it, blow bubbles, but in the end spit it out. Never swallow it. Likewise, never take any criticism to heart. Think over it, but do not let it trouble you. You are what you think you are, my son, and no one can change that. People have mouths so they will speak. But listen more and talk less. That is why we have two ears, but only one mouth. Use them well.

Never trust a naked woman. When a woman is naked, she is not vulnerable, but is instead armed with one of the deadliest weapon she possesses – temptation. Don't let temptation get the better of you. We men, you will learn, are made stronger and steadier. But when a woman wants to get what she wants from a man, she will, one way or the other. Never let the fairer species be your weakness. People have lost battles and destroyed themselves over them. Enjoy, but don't lose your grip. Don't be reckless with other people's hearts, and don't put up with those that are reckless with yours.

Enjoy the power and beauty of your youth. You will never know when it is gone. When you become old and your back is bent with age, you will look back at some of the photos of yourself when you were young and recall in a way you cannot grasp how much possibility lay before you, or how wonderful you actually looked. Treat your body well. Use it in every way you can, do not be afraid of it, or worry about what people think of it. It is the most amazing instrument you will ever own.

Bear in mind that you are the best. Learn to respect yourself, before you respect anyone else. It is in showing this respect to one's self that respect is generated in others for you. Love yourself and the world will love you. Self-love is not vanity but self-acceptance. Respect is not a commodity you can purchase on the streets, nor is it a serum you can inject into people for you. Respect cannot be forced, it has to be earned. Earn yours virtuously, my son. When you do, my purpose is served.

We live in a society of victimization. Here people are more comfortable being victimized than standing up for themselves. Don't ever let yourself be one of them. Never be afraid to do what you think is right. It is very difficult to say "no", when everybody else around you is saying "yes". I know it is hard to break away from the herd. But history is proof that those who made the difference were the ones who did break away. Fear is nowhere but right within you. A real man is one who has harnessed it. Let that be you. Do not worry about your future, or worry, but bear in mind that worrying is as effective as trying to learn swimming by reading an instruction book; you cannot learn it until you get your feet wet. Do something. Do not expect anyone to help you. Maybe you win a lottery, or maybe you marry a wealthy wife, but you never know when either one of them might run out. The real troubles in life are apt to be things that never crossed your frame of mind, the kind that sweeps you off your feet on an idle Sunday afternoon when you

are sipping coffee and reading a book. Prepare for the best, but expect the worst.

I know I will never be able to be a good father. I will not be there to watch and help you become a man. Yes I regret that. I will miss the joy of being a father, more than you will of not having one. Have a nice life!

**With you forever,  
Father.**

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**Killa XTC**

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## **WHISTLING**

## **PETE.**

4<sup>th</sup> of July had come. Everyone around was having a party time enjoying the festive atmosphere around. Our college was selling crackers to raise funds so that we could buy gifts for every child in the local orphanage. We would stay on shifts and after about 5 hours or so another shift would take over. We started selling crackers from 30<sup>th</sup> of June itself- at a 10% discount to lure eager buyers to our shop.

Soon it was our shift. John, Mac, Steve and I. We went in and had to fight our way to the counter- thanks to the large number of customers.

People were all merry and wished us well as they bought their crackers. Many types of people were seen buying many types of crackers. Rockets, Flower pots, Bombs and all sorts of them. I feared our stocks would run out well before all our customers could fulfill their requirements!

Not one person could be seen angry. Everyone was smiling and wishing each other. Even Jimmy and Bill, who were arch enemies as they were both star basketball players shook hand and embraced each other. They acted like childhood friends and this particularly surprised me. It seemed very appropriate that they chose this day to be reconciled and forget the difference that stood as a barrier between them.

It was nearing 6 o' clock and the crowd had gradually reduced. Only a few choosy people remained. Our stock had lasted out pretty well and we made a smashing profit. I felt really glad and proud too. Our college was making a difference whether it was significant or not hardly mattered! I started to imagine the uphant and joyful faces of the kids when they would get their presents. The excitement of opening a gift and the thrill of getting one.... nothing could equal it!

My thoughts were interrupted when I saw

a shabbily dressed man approach me. "How may I help you sir?" I asked.

"I want a cracker. One that makes a loud noise. That's it." He replied trying to avoid any eye contact.

I took out a cracker and placed it on the counter. "Here you are sir. This makes a pop and throws a bit of confetti in the air." I said.

"No, No it won't do." He said. "I want a one that makes only a noise and leaves behind no mess. Its for my son." He sounded a bit tensed.

"Perhaps the age of the child can help me out." I replied as I shrugged.

"The age does not matter." he replied. "Its, its for my son's grave" he said still avoiding eye contact.

He was right. The age didn't matter. He had come and gone. This father who was suppressing this reality finally felt relieved as if a heavy load had been taken off from his back.

Without another word, I took out a whistling pete and placed it on the counter. "That'll just be 11 dollars." I managed to stammer out.

He took it placed the money on the counter and left smiling. I could see a tear trickle down his eye. He stopped at the door, turned around and said, "Thanks."

Later I learnt that his child was one of the countless victims of the Oklahoma bombing by Timothy McVeigh. I felt sad for the father. How he went through all the ordeal, the pain and the suffering that he had to bear. God was not there that time I guess. And he had to suffer alone.

But one thing was for sure. God was definitely by that father's side as the sound of the whistling pete filled the silent night and gave a little bit of joy to him.

**- Samridha Rana  
Class - X.**

# WORD WAR!

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Seeing the interest generated in the boys regarding this particular column, the Oliphant Board has decided to make it a regular one. We will try discussing more topics affecting the school directly. In the next issue of the Oliphant, Mrs. J. Anand and Sharan Narain will be putting forward their views on the following topic of discussion: -

**“The new summer schedule.”**

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## WELHAM NOW

1. The renovation of the dining hall is almost complete. The whole school has its meals together.

2. A Cuckoo and a Paradise flycatcher was spotted on the campus in the 1<sup>st</sup> week of April.

3. The Under-18 district basketball matches were held from 13<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> december in the Activity Center and Back courts. We won the championship by beating The Doon School in the finals.

4. The Miss Saroj Srivastav Inter School English Debate was held at Welham Girls' School on the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> of April. Akshat Kshetrapal and Nakul Sachdeva participated from our school.

5. The Inter-House One Act Play was held on the 17<sup>th</sup> of April. The prizes were awarded to:

Best Play- Ganga House  
Best Director- Gaurav Rohatagi  
Best Actor- Sarthak Thapaliya  
Best Supporting Actor- Sameer Suri  
Best Brochure- Ganga and Krishna

6. The Inter-House Hindi Debate was held on the 11<sup>th</sup> of April. The positions were:

1<sup>st</sup> – Gaurav Rohatagi  
2<sup>nd</sup> – Ritesh Gami  
3<sup>rd</sup> – Tanmay Agarwal  
Consolation- Raghav Garg

Cauvery House stood first.

7. At the Master Trainer's course organised in March by Intel under their 'Teach to the Future Programme', Mr. R. Nagalia won the award for Best Interaction.

8. The Inter House English debate for seniors was held on 26<sup>th</sup> March. Daksh Tyagi was awarded the best speaker for the affirmative and Samridha Rana for the negative. Anwesh Singh was adjudged the most promising speaker for the day. As for the houses, Krishna house won the debate.

9. The Inter House English Elocution was held on the 12 April. The positions were-

### **Junior Section**

1st - Ajitesh Kir  
2nd - Arjun Manchanda  
3rd - Raghav Garg

### **Senior section**

1st - Shaunak Valame  
2nd - Nakul Sachdeva  
3rd - Anwesh Singh

10. The Inter School Hindi debate for seniors was held on the 20<sup>th</sup> of April. Individual positions are as follows:-

2<sup>nd</sup> Nakul Sachdeva (for the topic)  
2<sup>nd</sup> Pranay Patodia (against the topic)  
Our school stood 2<sup>nd</sup>.

11. We are sorry to inform the sad demise of one of our old boys, Mr. Pawan Chander

Mohan Sawhney (Batch of '55) on the 18th of March. The Welham Community expresses its heart-felt condolence to the bereaved family and the Management and Staff of the Mahalakshmi Sugar Mills Co. Ltd.

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# LAMPOON LAMPOON

## THE ' F ' LANGUAGE!!

Whoever said that man was a highly evolved creature, I am an ardent supporter of that person. Man had evolved physically and mentally. Not to worry this is not a debate or a documentary article I am writing. Man, in the Stone Age also used a mode of expressing his emotions. Maybe, when he was angry he would club his club on the floor, probably tear his hair or perhaps sit down and make an exasperated gesture. But, today man has learned to utilize what we call "Foul Language!" Man has evolved don't you agree?

I vaguely remember that in 5<sup>th</sup> grade, I took a solemn promise along with my classmates that I would not let an abuse escape my mouth. In that frenzy of excitement I had been committed to myself, little did I know that my promise would

not last long. As the year flew by we stepped into class six, the senior most boys in the middle school.

One day I got into an argument with a boy. Our argument turned into a steaming hot verbal conflict. Just then he said it! He used a four letter word. I stood there bamboozled. What was I to say at that time? Stupid or idiot, my abusive vocabulary would be no match to the explicit content of words he had used! Assuming it to be a passing phase of life I got over it.

Well, this perhaps constitutes the passing phase in our lives. The dawn of the introduction of new words to our vocabulary. Which most of us were yearning to try out. As time went by we became acquainted with many words which were often put to practice. Full fledged with our explicit vo-

cabulary we were always ready for any verbal attack.

According to my deductions abusive language is a medium through which one expresses one's feeling. His anger, disappointments and irritation. I vehemently support anyone who says that abusive language is a very controversial mode of expressing oneself. But coming to accept the fact, they are the words used everywhere. We are all aware about the use of these words and that it has not been looked into. But the eradication of these words is an insurmountable task. Well, at least abusive language is better than abusing your body.

For the time being let's assume abusing as a minor offence, shall we?

- Derek Ma.  
Class X.

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## Nature's Diary.

The flowers in the Toon trees in our campus first announced that spring is in the air. The tree was then swamped with flocks of different species of birds, some rare and other common. Looking

with a bird watcher's eye, one starts identifying the various species. The Greyheaded Myna was the silvery grey bird which were the noisiest in the upper branches of the tree. If you looked closely

you would notice the birds indulging in all kinds of acrobatic positions to obtain nectar. The species has a wide area of distribution from Kerala, spreading north to Bombay in winters. In spring they are found around Dehra Dun, up to about 1800m in Himalayan foothills.

The other notable bird on the above Toon trees are the Black Bulbuls, Ashy-grey plumage; black; with a very sharp coral red beak and legs. They love tall trees and are often found in dozens together. Walking under the trees where these fellows are feeding on berries, fruit and flower nectar can be a very noisy experience.

It is also in this season that another beautiful bird is spotted, visiting our campus on their way up to the hills. It is the Scarlet Minivet, black head and a scarlet coloured body and tail. The female is a rich yellow bird. They are mostly seen in pairs or small parties; some time several dozen together, keeping to the canopy of tall trees; actively flying about to hunt insects.

Most of us in Welham don't like the idea of waking up early in the morning, but that is the best hour for watching birds. As the boys went for P.T. I sat sipping my tea in the garden reading the morning paper. The silence of the area was broken by a fluty three-note goo. go. lay or ko. ki. la; call by two Indian Tree Pies. They are sooty grey-brown birds with a distinct grey tail, long and graduated. The two were out on their hunt on the just flowering Bottle Brush trees in Krishna. In seconds I heard another bird call-Kutroo..kutroo..pukrook..pukrook and turned around to look up at the other tree. There sat my friend the Large Green Barbet. They love city

gardens and are so rightly seen in the Welham, which has a large number of trees and with flowers blooming every where- a lovely garden.

As the day rolls on, one sees other birds in various parts of school. During the assembly on the Peacock Stage, the Parakeets join the school choir. The White Eyes and the Purple Sunbird are seen in the garden in front of the Junior School. Mid-day has fewer birds out, but as evening is setting in, once again, one can notice a large number of birds. The Common Hornbill, the bird with the looks from another age is seen flying and gilding in the Krishna Field. As the sun is about to set a flight of Common Babblers can be noticed hunting for insects in the ground. They are mostly seen in pairs or in small bands and are also a noisy lot. They are not at all shy and can come quite close to humans.

As night falls the nocturnal flying mammal and owls get into action. Bats are more visible in the summer months in the Doon.

I hope you have a good spotting Spring week ahead of you and with the midterm coming one will get to see more Himalayan birds as you walk around the Garhwal Himalayas.

See you with more on the birds next issue.

- Jagjit Singh.

**Note:** Mr. Jagjit Singh is currently working on his new book on school excursions. Our best wishes to him for the success of his new venture. The book being an edited volume, Mr. Singh is looking forward for contributions of articles from Welhamites and staff members.

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## Ringside View.

In the absence of Aatir who is busy ball handling in Woodstock I take his place on the rack. Welhamite make headlines.

Welham! Welham! OOH!  
Welham! Welham! AAH!  
Welham! Welham! OOH AAHHA!

Such, was the sound scape, which surrounded the Activity Center on the 17<sup>th</sup>. The District under 18 Basketball championship had a very low profile start. In the league matches, we

beat the opponents with ease. Our road to the finals was marred with Riverdale High School, whom we had to face in the semi final. We turned out to be the winners. The finals, judgement day, a day for us to prove it that:

When baski began, God said to man, Who is the best? So said the rest, Welham!

Ah! With a pepped up and pumping atmosphere, the match began. The Doscocs took a head on start and were in the lead. We were trailing behind by 10 points by the end of the first quarter.

We managed to put in a few shots in the second quarter, but they were still ahead. After the half time the crowd was going to party and literally stand on their feet to see the Welhamites. Aatir began putting in some amazing shots. His lay ups were sensational. With the help of Abhishek (the schoolie), the dynamic duo blasted the Doscoc defence and began spinning points. The score board saw a dramatic change, now it was us in the lead. Under nail biting pressure, we emerged victorious, having won by two points. The final score read 71-73 in our favour. Aatir scored 17 points and Abhishek 13. Thus, the award distribution ceremony ended with a lot of appreciation and lot of thanks. In the girls' section, Welham Girls' emerged victorious.

It was not only our senior team that won laurels, but our junior team came close enough to winning the mini-basketball championship. They were runners up. The aspiring basket players need to be given an applause for their hard work and practice. The senior team that had left for Woodstock however could not replicate their success at home. We lost to the Doscoc by a hair-breadth margin. Well, you win some, you lose some. We still have many more tournaments coming up. Let us all hope for the best.

The hockey season has started and the game has taken a full throttle start. The team has got a new coach and can be seen working out in the field and practising all out. The first tournament

(Councils) is starting from the 20<sup>th</sup>. On the 23<sup>rd</sup> they will be leaving for Patiala to play the IPSC s. As Aatir and Abhishek will not be playing this tournament their absence will definitely be felt. However the team, with the skills of Sunny, Prayaas, Tenzing and Namgyal should be able to compensate for the absence of the Hockey captain. I must say though, that the enthusiasm shown by the players were not well reciprocated by the sports department as they were yet to make arrangements for a field to practice till the eleventh hour, and when they did

find a field, the players were without a proper kit. Should we blame the sports department or the new indenting procedure, I leave for you to decide. The players just cannot wait to dribble their way to glory and victory. We wish them all the best.

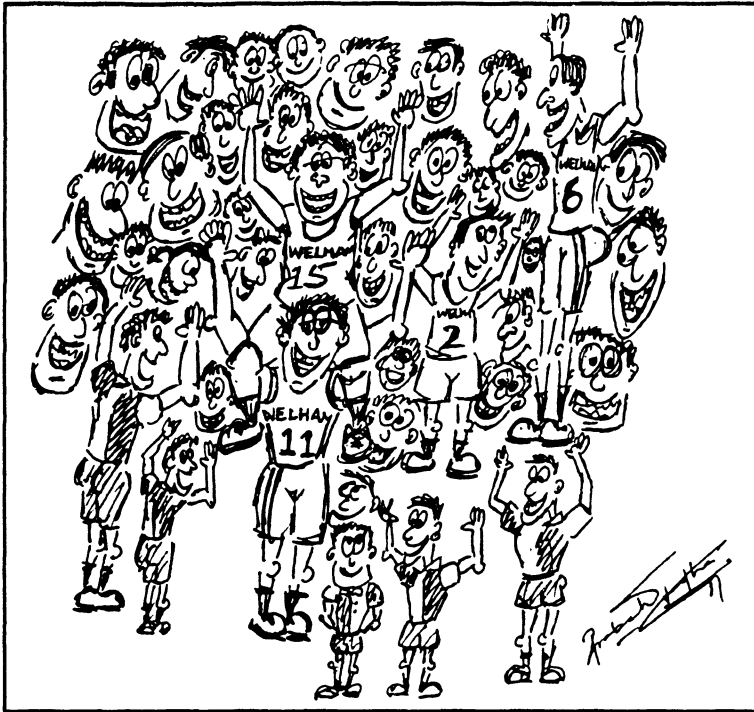
The swimming season was due to start on the 15<sup>th</sup>. Guess, it will be starting by the end of this month

as the pool is yet to be cleaned and filled. All those guys with their trunks out, what a pity!

The Cricketers are practising hard. Hope they get to play a few tournaments. The coach can be seen running hard between the wickets with the aspiring Tendulkars.

Well! That's all for the time being. Stay tuned for full coverage and in-depth analysis of every sporting action.

**Ciao,  
Pranab Shrestha.**



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