

The Crown



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Flaming Sticks and Electric Riffs: Battle of the Bands 2015 Keeps Audience on its Toes



Photo by Matt Linzel

ELISE ARSENAULT
REPORTER

No musical regiment entered un-armed. Some brought ivory, or chords of steel and several dozen frets. Some carried toms, spurs, and hi-hats, and others battle-cried in perfect harmony. The finest pieces of armour included a leather jacket, a fedora, a bow tie, a lace dress, much plaid and several graphic tees. Though some grouped in squads and others fought solo, all battled with skill and honour. The name of this historic happening: Redeemer Battle of the Bands 2015.

On Saturday January 17th, five student musical acts performed a 20-minute set in Redeemer's dining hall before two hundred spectators. The winners would be booked to play at Supercrawl, an annual art crawl drawing over 100,000 to downtown Hamilton each fall. Deemed "quite possibly the toughest B.O.T.B. competition to judge yet," by Hamilton Spectator Music Editor Graham Rockingham, Redeemer ought to take much pride in the spirit and originality of each performer.

In past Battle of the Bands competitions, a total of five bands are selected by students via online voting. Seeing as only five groups entered this year, nominees were exempt from November's elimination process and immediately granted spots in the event. By no means does this belittle the worth or musicianship of any act, as each band surely earned their time in the neon and applause from the crowd. Joining Graham Rockingham were judges Lisa La Rocca of Sonic Unyon Records, and Matt McKenna of folk-duo Ash & Bloom.

First to take the stage was Jonathan Thiessen whose stage-name is Loud N' Clear. Alternating between piano and acoustic guitar, Thiessen's repertoire moved from raps to ballads with ease. His set included "Home" by Eppic, a rendition of A Great Big World's "Say Something"-affirming God's promise to "never give up on you"-topped off by an original song of his. The judges' reactions were unanimous, applauding him on mastering the rap-to-song transitions and encouraging him to continue writing his own lyrics. Loud N' Clear manned the stage with passionate presence, certainly validating his title and his place before the audience.

Next up was cover-band The Pineapple Influence. Members Ben Voskamp on guitar and vocals, Daniel Stepus on bass guitar, Nico Williemsens on electric guitar and Colin Wouda on drums shamelessly admitted to acquiring their name through an online generator. The group offered novel twists to popular hits, ensuring the crowd's intrigue the whole way through. Highlights included the band's slowed-down, soulful take on T-Swizzle's "Shake it Off," the sea of cell-phone flashlights during Sam Smith's "Stay With Me," and Colin Wouda lighting his drumsticks on fire midway through Mark Ronson's "Uptown Funk" ft. Bruno Mars. Yup, both sticks took flame moments after Nico Williemsens cheekily called for the lights to dim, and a minute before a firefighter mounted the stage to extinguish the hazard--all while maintaining the ditty's steady rhythm. The judges diagnosed them with funkitis, noting the contagious energy, smiles and enthusiasm to back their musicianship, execution and practice. Does the ordeal sound too good to be true? "Don't believe me--just watch."

Basement Revolver was the third group of the evening, headed by Chrisy Hurn on vocals and electric guitar alongside her elementary-school pal Nimal Agalawatte on bass guitar and synthesizer. Chrisy Hurn's lyrics were pure poetry, using simple and powerful metaphors to convey their message. Assuring they "just want to be cozy with you," the duo invited the audience to sway, and sway they did. Looks on the crowd's faces deemed it captivated by Basement Revolver's original, soft and eery sound. Running through one mic was an H2O Chorus & Echo guitar pedal, altering vocal resonance and giving Hurn's voice a reverby umph that further set her apart. Strategically ending with familiar tune "Jolene" by Dolly Parton, the audience gladly sang along. Each judge sang them praises, affirming Nimal Agalawatte's accompaniment, Chrisy Hurn's understanding of art and meaning, and their sound being well-suited to James St. North (the site of Supercrawl... wink, wink).

The following act was comprised of Adam Rudy on bass guitar and lead vocals, Alex Teeuwssen on drums and vocals, and Jeff Scott and Jozef Teeuwssen on vocals and electric guitar. Originally named The Lanterns in January 2012, the group now goes by Second Mile, writing and performing original rock and roll songs with the skill of seasoned musicians and an engrossing intensity. Each member was a master of his instrument, making for tight riffs and the timing of a metronome. Each song was strewn with hoots and hollers from the audience, setting the rhythm of their head-banging. Their sound is best described by Matt McKenna, exclaiming: "it makes me want to set something on fire!"
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Letter from the Editor: New Year, Old You



LAURA HEMING
EDITOR-IN CHIEF

In a whirlwind of ‘new year, new you’ propaganda, you may have found yourself pressured, or possibly excited by the idea of a year of starting new. This may have taken the shape of many different things. Maybe it was gutting your closet of that knitted dog sweater you keep incase you attend a puppy birthday party. Maybe it was to cut down on Tim Tams and replace them with wheat grass, or quite possibly, it was to stop spending the midnight hours watching Friends on Netflix.

Whatever it was for you, it probably left you feeling lighter for a year of new adventure and new philosophies. But, as you get to mid January, you maybe start slipping away from your ‘new you promises’. Maybe you start sneaking the Tim Tams when everyone’s asleep. Or maybe the gym starts missing

your sneakers on its treadmill.

Good things though they are, I find myself cringing at the phrase, however empowering it may be.

The reason I feel this way is because it is becoming more prominent how heavily our culture is becoming ‘me-centred’—so much so that our first thought when the new year rolls around is, “how can I better myself this year?”

I would like to encourage you be a little rebellious this year. Keep some things of the past. Yes, don’t give away every dog sweater in your closet (metaphorically speaking). There are some key things—some dusty vintage vases in the back of your closet—that are worth keeping, dusting off, and putting on your bedside table.

These vases are your old, solid habits. The habits you had when you first became a Christian and would spend an hour each morning praying and reading your bible, journaling, or whatever you did to spend time some solid time with God. These are disciplines—old, vintage ones if you will—that are against the grain of culture, and oddly enough, will make for a healthier and purposeful year.

So, in light of this tidbit of spiritual metaphor, we present to you our Vintage Edition of The Crown. It will serve as a reminder to stick to your roots, and what you started with at the beginning of your spiritual journey before things got cluttered with the world and it’s goings on. It is a reminder that everything new is not always gold, and perhaps our old habits and things we shoved to the back of our closet are actually the healthiest things to bring back out, and those new, shiny philosophy’s may be more harm than help. Let us be a bit against the grain this year.

Out with the new and in with the old.

Letters to the editor and article submissions must be sent to thecrown@redeemer.ca and must include the name and contact information of the writer, although we may print anonymously by special request. Works submitted as letters will be edited for clarity and length only.

The opinions expressed in *The Crown* are not necessarily those of Redeemer University College’s student body, faculty, or administration.

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Student Senate Elections: Who Should Represent our Student Body?

JOHANNA BENJAMINS
STUDENT SENATE

As a heads-up to all new students, and a reminder to returning students, this February marks the beginning of the annual election and appointment process for Redeemer's Student Senate, our acting student body representatives.

Back in September, I was just getting used to the vibrant lifestyle that makes up campus life here at Redeemer, as I assume many other first-years were doing as well. Memories come to mind of staying up way too late watching the first late-night soccer games, dressing up for school dances, and, of course, meeting tons of new people. When I joined Student Senate back in October, it became very clear that the many aspects of campus life I was beginning to love were being brought to me by hard-working and dedicated students that strive to make Redeemer a place everyone can enjoy. I was glad to have a part in that by helping events like CITB, Winter Semi-Formal, and Coffeehouse happen, as well as clubs ranging all the way from Rugby

to Knitters Anonymous. To be honest, I had never realized how much Student Senate did.

Student Senate's tasks, like managing events, keeping the student body informed, and distributing funds, can be daunting, especially in the context of the recent budget cuts that have affected our school — Student Senate being no exception. Despite these setbacks, campus events and clubs have continued to run as usual, which is due in part to the incredible effort put in by dedicated Senators. Our campus really would not be the same without them.

With February fast approaching, Student Senate encourages you, the student population, to strive for the campus you want. Be sure to come by the Senate office to cast your vote when elections start in the coming weeks. Or, if you feel you would be well suited for one of a variety of positions on Senate, feel encouraged to run (look for more information in your emails and the Timeout). In the meantime, stay tuned for the new Rec Center furniture already on its way, as well as hot tub rentals in time for midterms, and don't hesitate to come by our office for any more information.



Let's Talk Tunes: The Place of Pop in Our Playlists

ELISE ARSENAULT
REPORTER

"We were born sick,' you heard them say it
My church offers no absolutes
She tells me 'worship in the bedroom'
The only heaven I'll be sent to

Is when I'm alone with you
I was born sick, but I love it
Command me to be well
Amen, Amen, Amen."

On Friday, January 16th, a dozen students met with Micah van Dijk to discuss the effect of lyrics like these running through our headphones. Songs considered that evening were "Take Me to Church" by Hozier (excerpt above), "Shake it Off" by Taylor Swift, and "Every Other Freckle" by alt-J. Students jammed to Room 213's gnarly sound-system for two hours, while applying a model from the book Culture Making: Recovering our Creative Calling to each tune.

In this read, award-winning author Andy Crouch divides possible Christian postures toward music into four categories: we can condemn a song by not listening to it, critique it by discerning the good and unhealthy elements

as we listen, copy it by christianizing secular musical concepts, or consume it by listening uncritically.

The evening saw many valid arguments as we selected the most appropriate approach for each song. Some pointed to scripture, noting that songs like Hozier's could be considered blasphemous in replacing God's sovereignty with that of fleshly desires. This may call for it's condemnation. Others resolved to critique the lyrics, claiming it does give certain insights to a secular understanding, or misconception, of the church.

Listeners unanimously deemed "Shake it Off" harmless, choosing to take a posture of consumption. It's a style of song we've hear several times before, with its catchy beat and positive yet unsubstantial lyrics; it is likely to be replicated lyrically and instrumentally in the years to come.

The final song emphasized instrumental effects and musicality, with a backdrop of inaudible lyrics in alt-J's "Every Other Freckle." The dilemma came when the the words were discovered to be sexually graphic.

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Above: The Pineapple Influence.

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Entirely out-of-breath by the end of the set, Second Mile put on an exceptional show.

To Our Divide was the last band to perform on Saturday night, formed by Timon Moolman on vocals and electric guitar, Dan Vanden Boogaard on vocals and keys, Tristan Persaud on electric guitar, Dan Jumaquio on drums and Tristan Kaarid on drums and bass guitar (that is--Timon, Dan2 and Tristan2). The whole of their performance was high-energy, with synchronized head-banging, closed eyes and lyrics pointing heavenward. Light and sound overlapped so as to create a thick ambience. “Ambitious anthems,” “a total experience” and “no calorie left unburned” were accurate expressions used by judges to discern their effect on beanie-clad fans. Conceived in Dorm 12 years ago, this collective now performs with passion in their every fibre; wholly losing themselves in the wake of sound.

Come the end of the five numbers, approximately 125 spectators participated in voting for the People’s Choice Award, while judges deliberated over their notes. Favoured by the audience was To Our Divide, and selected to play SuperCrawl was Basement Revolver!

Having written songs about about anything and everything since the age of 14, Chrisy Hurn initially did so to express herself as an angsty teenager thinking it would ‘up’ her cool-factor. “I developed and refined the more I learned,” says Hurn, “I’m still learning a lot, and the more I learn the more I grow creatively.” So, keep an eye out for Basement Revolver come September 11th-13th 2015, and be sure to congratulate the bands in the halls.

At-ease, singing soldiers and musical musketeers, you’ve fought this battle well.



Above: Colin Wouda of The Pinapple Influence.



Above: Jonathan Thiessen of Loud N’ Clear



Above: To Our Divide.

Let's Talk Tunes (cont'd)

Is it acceptable to listen to such a song if said words are difficult to decipher? How about if you are perfectly aware of their content? Here the lines blurred and the discussion lulled. It's contemplation was valuable in provoking thought despite a lack of consensus.

Briefly mentioned was worship acoustic-folk band Rend Collective, offered as a potential poster-child of the copy stance. Songs like Rend's "Build Your Kingdom Here" were argued to mimic the style of mainstream group Mumford & Sons. While this mirror in genre is no crime, writer Andy Crouch suggests a more effective way for Christian artists to influence musical culture: by creating music of their own.

The songs and morals that will make the most noise in the media are the original kind. Innovation prompts thought, revelation and the second, third and fourth listen. As a teabag releases less and less flavour when steeped from one mug to the next, the weight of creativity is lessened when it is replicated. Each artist is fearfully, wonderfully and uniquely made, and so is the well of music within them. In other words, to opt for mimicry is to deprive creative growth.

While the discussion left us with many thoughts, two challenges stand out. The first is to avoid passivity when listening to music- no matter it's source. This is especially relevant since, in this day and age, music is omnipresent. From elevators, to grocery stores, to virtually every mobile

device- it surrounds us whether or not we are aware. Be sensitive to the way you feel as you listen and to the piece's authenticity.

Secondly, consider the muse from which your favourite artists' ideas are drawn. Since the music we listen to creates an atmosphere, it is wise to be aware of what kind our own playlist is cultivating. This is one more way to guard our thoughts and further foster the "renewing of our minds" that scripture speaks of. Music has a bewildering kind of influence on us, and I believe God intended it to do. So seek truth in each artist's agenda, in every verse's value, and every melody's motive.

Dearest First Years: Don't Listen to Everything You Hear at Redeemer

JOHN SCHUURMAN

Hey, first years!

Most of you are starting your second semester, and your university routines are becoming familiar. Some of you may also be reaching the point where you are becoming busier than you had ever meant to make yourself, or are practising habits that will lead you to that point very shortly. I regret that this is happening to some of you, and I am writing to share a warning that I wish I had heard in my first year.

Around this time last year, Redeemer's chaplain, Syd, said what he believes to be the greatest sin on our campus, which is the acceptance of busyness and the practise of rushing through our days. This is an unfortunate reality, but it makes sense given what students are told. It seems that for every voice that tells us to slow down enough to enjoy the little things God has given us, there are another four or five or six voices telling us to do this and to do that, do better, do more, more and even more.

Throughout my three years at Redeemer I have been told that as a steward of God's gift of education, I need to get better grades; as a steward of the body God gave me, I need to spend more time exercising; as a disciple of Christ I need to spend more time reading the Bible, more time in prayer; as a good member of this Christian community, I need to run for Student Senate and/or be an RA; as a Christian, I need to be involved with a church in Hamilton for Sunday services and in other capacities; as a voting-aged Christian, I need to spend more time reading the newspaper so I can be an informed voter ... The list goes on! I even remember one chapel service where Redeemer students were told that, as Christians, we need to be spending more time reading novels for leisure!

I think you see where this is going. If you do everything you're told to ... well, you can't! Does that mean you're a bad Christian? It would seem so. But here's the little secret I want to let you in on: what it actually means is that even at Redeemer, we have yet to figure out what it means to live like Christ – and yes that even includes professors,

student leaders and chaplains.

You cannot just go with the flow at Redeemer. You may have heard the saying that goes: "being at a Christian school doesn't make you a Christian any more than being in a garage makes you a car." Even at Redeemer, you must discern for yourself what God's values are and how we are to live in their light.

So, what do you need? What is the foundation out of which you can determine everything else that God wants, calls, expects and commands from us? It's not novels. What must you do to ground yourself in priorities that free you to be available for God to shape you and use you?

I'm not going to answer those questions here (For what it's worth, the big hint I would offer is to start with prayer). There are many people in your lives who will offer you the right answers. It is in your best interest to gain discernment, in order to determine for the rest of your life which answers to disregard and which ones to pursue.

After the Storm: What's Next for Redeemer

JUSTIN EISINGA
REPORTER

The past several months have not been easy at Redeemer University College. Amidst a changing educational landscape, the Christian university is attempting to meet the needs of current and prospective students, all while suffering the impact of saying goodbye to its largest graduating class and saying hello to low enrolment numbers. Unfortunately, this has meant adjustments to the institution's operating budget.

Most significantly, this has resulted in the release of three professors: Dr. Mark Bowald (professor of Religion and Theology) Dr. Derek Schuurman (professor of Computer Science), and Dr. Paul Thorlakson (professor of Music). Furthermore, the department of Computer Science will be eliminated as an option for students to study at Redeemer.

These difficult decisions were not made lightly, but were necessary adjustments that had to be made in light of President Hubert Krygsman's ambitious vision for Redeemer as an institution. "On the one hand, we needed within our current operations to find a way to balance our budget," says Dr. Krygsman about the changes. "At the same time, we also know that we need to meet the needs and demands of students in a changing world."

A new strategic plan, titled Redeemer 2020, was published last year, providing the impetus for the recent changes. The plan lays out this vision and provides a strong background on why changes need to be made.

Redeemer 2020 is split into three parts. The first part of Redeemer's strategic plan is centred on increasing the uni-

versity's visibility and profile. The first task made towards this effort was the recent appointment of Dr. David Zietsma as Vice President of the newly reformed Marketing and Enrolment department.

Two other initiatives are being unrolled in 2015 to help improve Redeemer's profile. These include the introduction of a new computer network platform that will see students and staff adjusting to new online portals. The Centre for Christian Scholarship, directed by International Studies professor Dr. Rob Joustra, is the other initiative. A major conference is expected from the centre in the fall of 2015.

The second part of the Redeemer 2020 is focused on new program initiatives that are being developed over the next several years. Besides making revisions to the core course program at Redeemer — which is significant in its own right — Dr. Krygsman is also excited about two other major initiatives.

The first is the establishment of a new academic department, offering a program in Media and Communication. There will be two streams that students can choose to follow in this program: Professional Writing or Media & Culture. "In broad trends, that is one area that is in high demand. Our recruiters get the most questions and inquiries about such a program," says Dr. Krygsman, who has served in the role of president since 2010.

However, this isn't the only reason, Redeemer's president says: "We believe that the area of media and communication is very culturally significant. We need to be there, and we need our students to be critically engaged with that as Christians."

Besides this exciting new program, Redeemer's administration will also be introducing a Centre for Experiential Learning. Under this initiative, all opportunities for experiential learning will be offered through a common hub. This will include co-op, internships, service learning, and any other opportunity for education in the workplace and/or community. President Krygsman is hopeful that this will make Redeemer a more attractive option for prospective students, meeting the need for skill-building and practical experience that young people are seeking in their education.

Lastly, under Dr. Krygsman's leadership, Redeemer is moving towards financial sustainability, as outlined in the third part of the strategic plan. This involves strong dedication to making debt payments a priority so that budgets can be balanced. Ultimately, financial sustainability is most important for the future of Redeemer. As many students will come to know, carrying a large debt load can at times be burdensome and paralyzing.

At the end of the day, the administration of Redeemer University College is playing a difficult game, trying to make strategic moves while also remaining concerned for its own sustainability. Dr. Krygsman remains hopeful, however.

"What we're getting better at is sharpening our representation and effectiveness, equipping students with a comprehensive worldview and the training to live it all out," says Redeemer's president. "We're not building new buildings, we're not buying new properties. We're focused on the educational experience and ensuring that Redeemer can sustain and grow that educational mission. We're sharpening our focus on the students."

TOP FIVE OSCAR NOM-NOMS: THE CROWN’S NOMINATIONS FOR TOP SNACKS FOR OSCAR NIGHT

COLLECTIVELY BY THE CROWN STAFF

With the 2015 Academy Awards quickly approaching in less than a month, we thought we would give you a little help in the snack department for your festive Oscar parties. We have put together for you a list of the Top 10 (pun-induced) snacks to enjoy whilst you and your loved ones indulge in the festivities.

5. Meryl Streepard Pie

Indulge in a bed of marinated roast beef topped with creamy mashed potatoes and oven-roasted vegetables to serve up to your hungry guests for dinner before 7 o’clock strikes. No need to search far and wide—Into the Woods and out to find a better dinner dish. Your guests will be shouting, “Mamma Mia!”

4. Mark Ruffalo Wings

If conversation dies and you need to spice it back up before dinner, try these flaming hot wings brushed with chipotle and honey ‘Ruffalo’ sauce. These wings will suit the tastebuds of anyone in your friend group—from the firefighters and hunters, to the Foxcatcher, these wings will surely not go forgotten. They’re Just Like Heaven.



3. American Snapper with Garnish from the Grand Lemon Zest Hotel

If you’re a fan of fish with a zing, this is a scrumptious first course for your higher-class guests. With a tangy lemon marinade, this dynamic pair will be up for grabs for the Best Picture by your guests.

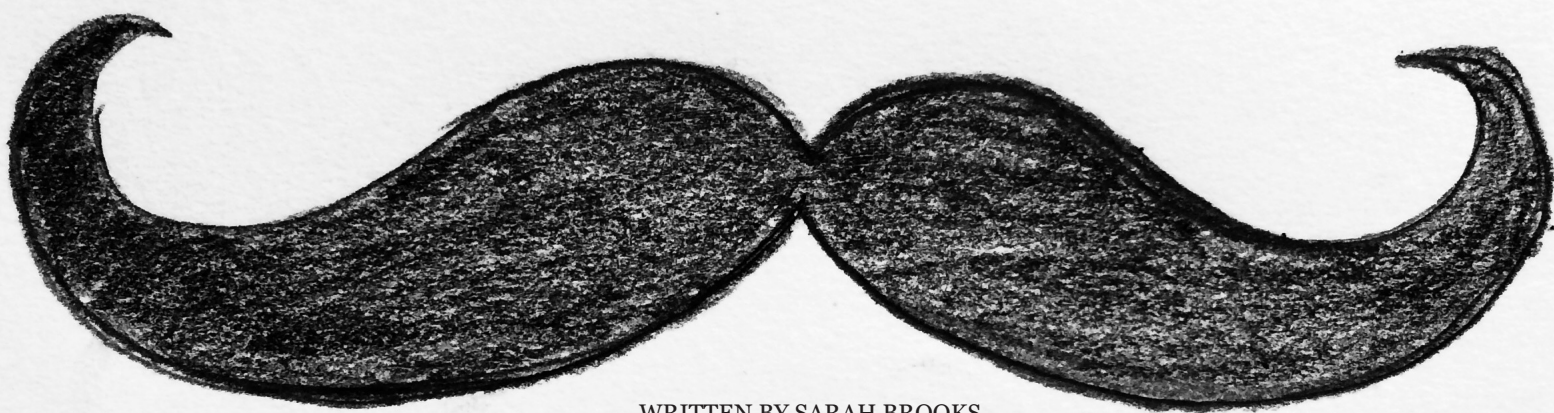
2. Reese With-Her-Spoon Sundae

Friends will go Wild for this dessert, perfect for a half-time break. With decadent Reese’s Peanut butter cups in, you’ll have to ask your guests to Walk the Line to see if they’re sober from their sugar high. Your friends will be asking for milk like Water for Elephants with all the decadence they’ll experience. Your spoon will ‘Bend and Snap’ from the high Reese’s pieces concentration.

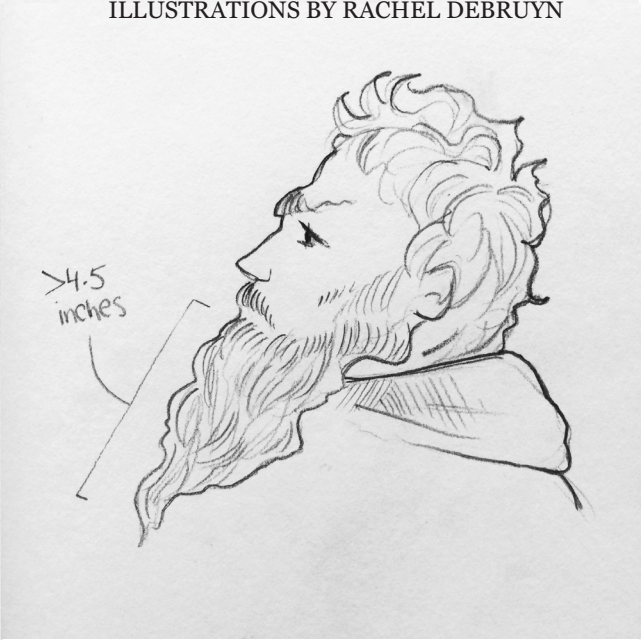
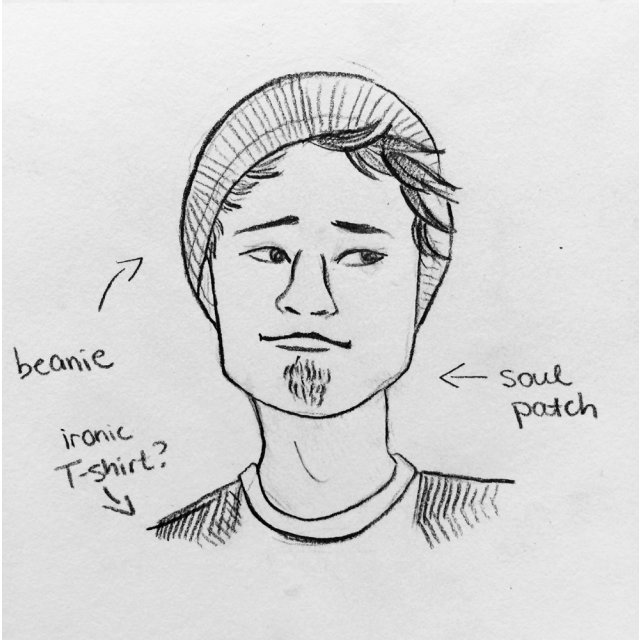
1. Eggs Benedict with No Imitation Bacon

With fresh eggs laid by hens that graze in a Cu-cumber-batch...er, patch. We’ve Sherlocked down this flavour with Wats-on this dish. You’ll want some More-of-yer-tea due to spice overload. It’s one of a kind! This ain’t no Imitation Game. Surely, this fan favourite has a Smaug-osburg of flavour.

The Wilderness Guide to Identifying a Man’s Major by His Facial Hair



WRITTEN BY SARAH BROOKS
ILLUSTRATIONS BY RACHEL DEBRUYN



Theology:
A robust beard of no less than 4.5 inches. This beard was predestined for greatness.

Philosophy:
Neckbeard.

International Development/Relations:
Aggressive scruff – the scruff of cynicism and despair. He gave up hope on shaving long ago. Shaving is for idealistic first years.

Youth Ministry:
Soul Patch.

Political Science:
Extremely clean-shaven. The public perception must be maintained.

Math/Science:
Patchy. He's been in the lab too long for maintenance.

Theatre:
Handlebar mustache.

History: Muttonchops.

Art/Music: Light stubble to let you know that he's sensitive, but just a bit edgy. Or maybe he lost his shaving kit.

English: The French Forked beard, in homage to Chaucer.

Psychology: Short and proper beard, well maintained. Good for stroking thoughtfully while he asks you to tell him about your childhood.

Sociology: Who even knows what this major does? He probably has an evil goatee. Good for stroking evilly while plotting world domination.



Catching Up With Redeemer Grads: Where Are They Now?

Samuel
Kamminga



JUSTIN EISINGA
REPORTER

When you go to Redeemer, it sometimes can feel like we are sacrificing great opportunities and hurting our future because we chose to attend a Christian university. Fear not, fellow students! This month, we caught up with a few recent graduates who are engaging in incredible work for the Kingdom of God. Be encouraged and inspired by their willingness to step out in faith, but also find peace in the evidence these graduates show that you will be able to use your gifts and follow your calling after you graduate.

Name: Samuel Kamminga (pictured above)

Age: 24

Majors/Minors: Theology/Social Work

What are you doing with your life?
Following Jesus. Being discipled as a pastor.

How did your education at Redeemer prepare you for what you are doing now?
Learned how to learn.

What do you miss about Redeemer?
Dorm life, my boy band, Brutaltops, Waffle Day.

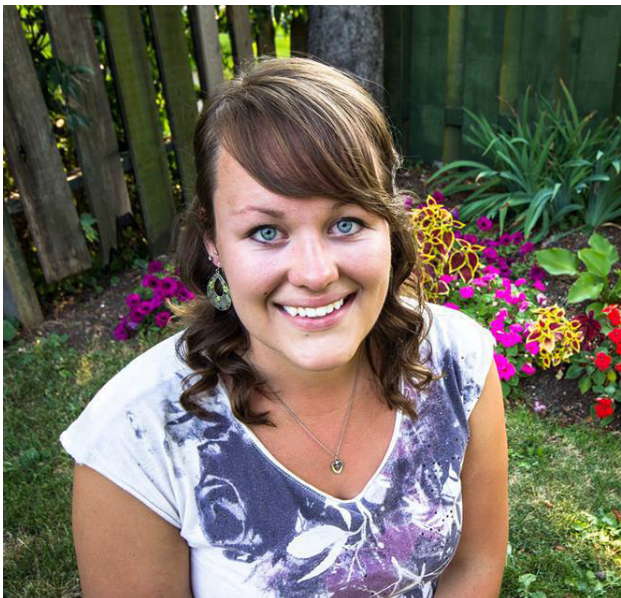
Any advice for current students?
Take it easy. The 20s is about exploring and asking questions.

What's the weirdest thing you ever found at the bottom of your pocket?
A power converter from the Toshi Station.



Redeemer grads leaping for joy.

Stephanie
Schreuders



Age: 22

Majors/Minors: Honours Social Work / Religion and Theology

What are you doing with your life?
Since graduating from Redeemer I've had the opportunity to participate in two internships. The first one had me living and serving alongside refugees in downtown Kitchener, and the second one was with an international development agency that sent me to Kenya where I participated in the documentation and monitoring of projects there.

How did your education at Redeemer prepare you for what you are doing now?
My education at Redeemer taught me how to integrate my faith with my vocation. The concepts and ideas that I learned and discussed in classes have now come to life in day-to-day work.

What do you miss about Redeemer?
I miss the community of Redeemer, though there is definitely community outside of the Redeemer walls; you just have to be more intentional in finding it.

Any advice for current students?
I would really encourage students to use their years in university to volunteer at various organizations in order to gain experience, to develop their skills, to discover their calling and to develop a well-rounded resume that will stand out when applying for jobs after Redeemer.

What's the weirdest thing you ever found at the bottom of your pocket?
Gum

Cameron
Phillips



Age: 22

Majors/Minors: Environmental Studies / Political Science and Sociology

What are you doing with your life?
I live and work in downtown Hamilton! I work on a part-time contract for an international Christian environmental conservation organization called A Rocha ([HYPER-LINK "http://www.arocha.ca/" \t "_blank" www.arocha.ca](http://www.arocha.ca/)). I am acting as A Rocha's Church Relations Coordinator here in Hamilton. I am working on promoting the importance of creation care/environmental stewardship in Hamilton churches, and I am helping to mobilize the local church community in getting involved in A Rocha's conservation and community outreach projects. I'm also putting together a blog series with A Rocha connecting the importance of faith and caring for God's earth.

When I'm not doing that AWESOME stuff, I work as a freelance writer for an employment company in New Zealand. I edit, rewrite, and optimize clients' LinkedIn profiles to make them easier to read and more appealing for companies and employers to consider.

How did your education at Redeemer prepare you for what you are doing now?
Redeemer introduced me to the idea that God cares about all aspects of our world, not just what happens in the church. My liberal arts education opened my eyes to the possibility of truly being in the world as a steward. My education gave me the opportunity to network and connect with a lot of different people and organizations, through learning community events and speaking events.

What do you miss about Redeemer?
I absolutely love to learn, and learning from such an integrated Christian worldview was amazing. The community and friends that I made at Redeemer are something that I really miss. Oh, and Treat Night during exams was awesome (thanks Micah, u rawk!)

Any advice for current students?
Don't take your Redeemer education for granted. I've heard so many people say 'oh I can't wait to go to a real school' etc. Redeemer IS a real school and such a unique one at that! I went to public schools for all of my life, and to learn about politics, the environment, history, chemistry, and even physical education from a Christian perspective is incredible.

Take care of yourself. Get a good 8 hours of sleep, eat well, exercise, and do your homework! If you're going through a tough time mentally, don't be afraid to take advantage of Redeemer's counselling services. Speaking from my own experience, it's worth it.

Also, don't underestimate the power of networking. The only reason I have a job I'm super passionate about is because I took a risk and talked with some A Rocha staff after a chapel service. I stayed in contact with them for over two years, and ended up having this job made specifically for me. Having connections in areas that you're passionate about is always helpful, so get out there and make yourself known.

What's the weirdest thing you ever found at the bottom of your pocket?
Wood chips and moist soil.

Changing the Shade of Your Foundation

Why I Stopped Wearing Make-up at Redeemer

HELENA SCHUURMAN

I have trouble knowing how to discuss this with peers, because I don’t want to come across as judgmental. I’m not discussing moral blacks and whites here. I simply love to tell the story of how I became free from a burden I didn’t even know I was carrying. I long to see us all freed from our unknown burdens and have them placed at the feet of the empty cross.

I remember in grade nine I felt inferior because I didn’t own pretty clothes or wear make-up. I remember coming to school every day and watching girls walk by that were prettier than me, and I saw all the attention they got. I looked at them with awe and a little jealousy, and I began to want other people to look at me with awe and jealousy. I wanted to fit in and I wanted to be extraordinary. I wanted to be confident, and I figured the only way to be confident was to have people affirm me. I would feel more comfortable in my skin if other people liked it, right?

I remember buying make-up for the first time and practicing applying it in my room. I remember, too, the first time I bought skinny jeans and the kind of tops that flowed off the curves of my body. I liked myself more after that because I saw that other people liked me more. I was happy.

I noticed more of the details in girls’ appearances after that. I saw that some girls had coloured shadows on their eyelids and curled lashes. I saw that lots of girls had hair too blonde to be real and too straight to be natural. I saw them getting affirmed and I wanted that, too. I wanted to be liked so that I could like myself.

And I went out and bought a straightener and hair dye

and an eye lash curler (who even knew those existed?!). Then I bought more skinny jeans and flow-y tops and necklaces and high heels and those glasses frames that all the hipsters wear.

I was happy when I came to Redeemer. But also sad because there are so many pretty girls here. I wanted to be pretty and so I bought more pretty clothes, got the expensive kind of make-up this time, and I practiced applying it my dorm room. There are so many girls here that wear clothing that is interesting and intriguing, and, especially in my first year here, I wanted to have that same attention they got. So many girls place their identity in their appearance, and I am that girl, too.

Some things take you suddenly, dramatically altering your thoughts, feelings, and relationships in an instant. Other things begin to hold you captive gradually over time, without any conscious knowledge of the influence that they hold over you.

Addiction is all encompassing – it maliciously slips its way into every aspect of a person’s life as soon as it has taken root. It leaves its mark on every sphere of life without consent or notification. Idols are habits you can’t stop, even if God called you to quit.

I’m learning that it’s a burden. Trying to fill my void with attention from outward appearance is so suffocating, because you never get filled. Alas, I came to realize: Christ fills that void.

And what freedom I experienced when I let my burden go. I threw out my make-up. All of it, no looking back. And I rid myself of nearly half my wardrobe. Oh, it was bliss. I’m

Confronting Pluralism in Canada

MICHAEL EMMANUEL

We live in a pluralist society where supposedly many beliefs and religions are all tolerated and, to some degree, considered equal with each other. Consequently, anyone who claims to have the certain absolute truth is viewed with suspicion and even contempt. Absolute claims are arrogant and inevitably lead to intolerance. Sadly, Christians no longer challenge this. We no longer rebut: Christ is the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Him (Jn. 14:6). Instead we say the civil sphere is neutral ground for all beliefs. We Christians may believe this world is the Lord’s, but others don’t, and therefore we can’t expect them to live according to God’s law or admit Christ, not man, is King.

How manifestly absurd! Sometimes I wonder, like C.S. Lewis, “Why don’t they teach logic in these schools?” (Or in the church for that matter.) In no other realm of life would that kind of reasoning be acceptable. “What’s that? You don’t believe 2 and 2 are 4? Well you just put down what you believe and we’ll call it even.” Simply because you don’t believe in reality doesn’t mean it goes away. Nonetheless, more and more I see people in the church bending over to take what the culture has to give them because we can’t expect, let alone demand, culture adhere to the law of the Almighty.

This is because, in breathing the air of our apostate culture, we have bought the lie of pluralism – that since no one can be absolutely right, all belief systems are valid in society and none can claim preeminence. Thus, the default mode of many Christians today is agnosticism. They believe, ultimately, no one can know for certain that God is real or that He has become incarnate and died and was resurrected, let alone any assurance of salvation. At the end of the day, every position is a “faith” position. Whether it is due to a leap of faith or a conclusion based on the best evidence, the results are the same. Every position begins with someone’s choice to believe it.

I hope to show that such a position is (1) anti-biblical, (2) illogical, and (3) impossible. Christians should unashamedly profess to have the absolute truth which Canada must obey. This is our great commission from the High King Himself.

So first, agnosticism, both epistemologically and culturally, is anti-biblical. Often people ask if God will damn those who have never heard of him. Don’t worry, God won’t. On the other hand, there is no one who hasn’t heard of God.

The Apostle Paul says the wrath of God is revealed against ungodly man because he suppresses the truth in unrighteousness (Rom. 1:18). What is this truth? “What may be known of God,” which is manifest in them, “for God has shown it to them... so that they are without excuse” (Rom 1:19-20). In other words, every single person knows God exists because God has gone out of His way to make Himself fully known. God actively tells every single person. So much so that every man is without excuse for denying Him. There is no such thing as an agnostic, only liars. Furthermore, no one has to prove God or take a leap of faith because everyone already knows He exists. This is why the Psalmist calls the atheist a fool. A fool is someone who denies what he knows, who acts against what he knows, or who lives with illusionary ideas about reality. On the other hand, Proverbs tells us that we know, with certainty, “the words of truth” (Prov. 22:20). Add to this that the Dominion of Canada claims, “He shall have dominion from sea to sea,” (Psalm 72:8) in its motto, and suddenly atheists, agnostics, and secularists of all kinds have no right to decide anything about marriage, abortion, Sabbath days, or any other civil legislation. Moreover, when we Christians act otherwise, we disobey our Lord, breaking His third commandment by acting as if His name didn’t mean Sovereign.

Second, agnosticism is illogical. If no one can know for certain the ultimate truths of the universe, then how can we know particular truths? If we don’t know where reason, experience, or truths come from, how can we trust anything they give us? Let me first rule out that reason is neutral. The notion that everyone has reason by which they can come to the truth is in the first place a Christian belief; elsewhere, there is no reason to believe it. Moreover, reason cannot justify itself because you cannot prove reason without resorting to reason, and this is begging the question. Experience, meanwhile, is all judged through worldviews and therefore hardly unbiased. People who understand these philosophical problems often resort to saying all we have left is to take a leap of faith. We must simply choose to believe in the world around us. I don’t see how this is anything more than nonsense. We don’t have any logical reasons for using logic and experience so therefore we will turn to an illogical one. God certainly doesn’t demand a leap of faith – blind faith of this sort is not the biblical virtue. For example, Abraham believed against hope, that is, against what his own experience told him because he believed in hope that God doesn’t lie (Rom. 4:18). Whatever the Kierkegaardians or the New Atheists may say, there is no conflict between faith and reason; they are one and the same axiom. But for those outside Christ, who have no reason to trust reason, and

beginning the long journey of placing all my identity in Him and Him alone, and I’ve never been so filled. Finally, my identity is in something greater than myself, and I feel that this is how I was made to live.

I say this not to place myself any higher than anyone else, because I can’t tell you how many times I’ve stumbled. My wardrobe grows like a weed: a clear sign to me that I have a habit I can’t stop. It’s a continuing struggle to let my idol go.

But believe me when I tell you what a joy it is every time I lift my idol up to God. He takes it. He takes my burden and puts it on Himself.

I learned in my Introduction to Theology class last week that we can get to know God in a few different ways, and one of them is through our practices.

What does our practice of applying make-up teach us about God? Are we sending ourselves false messages? That He didn’t quite make us good? That His image in us needs to be supplemented? How do we apply make-up all for Jesus anyway?

The biggest difference I noticed in myself when I stopped wearing make-up was not just that my self-confidence increased and my self-hatred decreased. It was simply that I began thinking about myself less. I never thought I’d quite reach this point, but I can honestly say I hardly even consider my appearance throughout the day. I still have so much to learn, but slowly my attention is shifting away from my own self. And it is so glorious that I long for everyone to experience this divine liberation, too.

no faith to leap to, how can anything be known? Well logically, it can’t. Meanwhile, Dostoyevsky pointed out that without God, everything is permissible. Cultural agnosticism, such as pluralism, means power wins the day. And power corrupts.

Finally, agnosticism is impossible. All agnostics ultimately believe we can’t know absolutely. But their claim to intellectual humility is simply disguised arrogance. Like the relativist who claims there absolutely are no absolutes, the agnostic claims they know with total certainty that nothing can be totally certain. The agnostic also claims they know for certain that that there isn’t enough evidence out there to give themselves or others certainty. They have absolute trust in their own reasoning capacities to judge that the current evidence is either insufficient or non-existent. The agnostic really claims to know a lot. So what happens when a culture is taken over by this sort of intellectual schizophrenia? Well a new absolute is set up, one which says man, not Christ, is lord. Ancient Rome, for example, was pluralist; as long as each religion bowed the knee to the real ultimate, Caesar, it was tolerated. Likewise, all religions and beliefs are valid in Canada, as long as they subject their speech, proselytizing, and moral codes to the government of Canada. In other words, you can’t escape sovereignty, you can’t escape certainty, you can only “worship and serve the creature rather than the Creator” (Rom. 1:25).

Christians need to stop being wimps. Enough acting like we don’t actually have good news. We do! Christ has absolutely come! He has absolutely defeated Satan, hell, and death (1 Cor. 15)! He is absolutely victorious, and has absolutely ascended to Heaven where he sits as the absolute King of Kings and Lord of Lords over the entire cosmos, from whence He shall come to judge absolutely the living and the dead. Until then, our mission is to proclaim His Lordship among all the nations, teaching them to obey all thing He has commanded us (Matt. 28:18-20) until every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that He is Lord (Rom. 14:11). These things were written down for us that we might know their truth (Jn. 21:24) and know it certainly (Lk. 1:4).

If I may tweak him, the Psalmists’ instructions are clear: “Be wise, O Canada; be instructed you Christians of the West. Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest He be angry, and you perish” (Ps. 2:10-12). I hope we’ll take this seriously. I wouldn’t want to toy with the wrath of God.

Experience Fuels Education: How to Transform Theories into Practice in a Liberal Arts University

AARON DEVOS

If John Dewey, the great 20th century philosopher of education, were alive today, his curiosity would be piqued upon hearing about experiential education. Much of Dewey’s life work centered on this very theme through books such as “Experience and Nature”, “Art and Experience” and “Experience and Education.”

Dewey once said: “education is of, by, and for experience.” Experience initiates learning. Experience fuels learning. And lastly, learning transforms experiences.

Experience is foundational to ensuring that ideas, thoughts, and theories stick. Experience has the power to either validate or discard the course material that is being taught. The concern is when students do not have the experience necessary to test the validity of the concepts taught.

Dewey believed that all too often the classroom assumes that students have had an experience which can ground their conceptual learning, when far too often this is not the case.

Dewey then suggests that what can breathe life into learning is not thinking deeper or reading more. What is insisted upon is as a richer personal experience imbued with the capacity to breathe life into the subject matter.

These comments from Dewey are contrary to practices of experiential education within most universities, including Redeemer. Experiential education often values experience as the final goal of education, not the starting place. Often experiential education emerges at the conclusion of the learning process, usually at the end of a course, or worse yet, at the end of undergraduate studies.

In my fourth year at Redeemer, I enrolled in a course centred on social justice. There was an experiential learning component to the course whereby every student was to take part in Deedz and write a journal. Meanwhile, back in class, we explored the thoughts of great minds on the topic of social justice. We met twice a week for 15 weeks, building on the ideas of great thinkers who have gone before us.

But for the second last class, we switched gears almost completely. Rather than ideas being the framework for class discussion, it would be Deedz. According to the sheer number of students engaging with Deedz campus-wide, one might think that there would have been a lively discussion on the matter. Sadly, the classroom discussion was both shallow and short. Why did we finish the course with a conversation about our experiences rather than start with students’ experiences? Is that not the starting place for determining the topics that are worth delving deeper into?

Through bypassing students’ experiences we neglected the

role of education to take students’ experiences, transform them, and in turn, transform our societies. Had we started the course with such a discussion, students could have had come to an understanding of the complexity involved in seeking justice and therefore the need to return to the classroom.

So here is my challenge to you as students, faculty, and staff: seek out experiences, earlier rather than later, that can help enliven students’ learning.

To help students along, consider thinking of the city as a microcosm of the world. Whatever it is that students hope to learn about the world can be learned right here in the city. Stories, skills, and ideas the world over are found in this city – in the very places that students live, and move, and have their being.

So I ask you students, “what is it that your heart desires to know?” Who, where, or how within this city can you find a face-to-face encounter with it? Talk about it as you gather for dorm dinners. Seek out opportunities within the community. Reach out to your teachers and ask them to point you in the right direction.

Lastly, dare to insist that your experiences belong in the classroom. They are not finished products. They leave us with questions, opportunities and emotions that are worth discussing in depth. The classroom is a community that should provide the space for such an exploration.



Buckingham Palace--the Queen’s residence.

A Defense of Monarchy in a Modern World

ETHAN WINTERBURN

“The Queen is just a figurehead. It’s a meaningless title.” “She doesn’t even do anything for us.” “What a waste of tax dollars!” “She didn’t even do anything to earn that position!” These are the most common comments I hear whenever the Canadian Monarchy is discussed. They transcend religion; I hear these things from Christians and non-Christians alike. The cynicism of the former concerns me most of all.

Canadians’ rampant dismissal of the Monarchy has always baffled me. There are solid reasons for supporting the monarchy from a Christian worldview as well as from a purely pragmatic perspective.

First of all, as human beings, we are made in the image of God. In the Bible we see the heavenly model of government as monarchy. God rules as King with absolute sovereignty. In our governments, how are we mirroring this? Of course, I am not suggesting that kings and queens should have absolute authority, as God does. The image of God is broken in us, so to account for this we need a large dose of democracy, which is why I value a constitutional monarchy rather than an absolute one.

When a government overcorrects for human brokenness and becomes obsessively democratic, however, for example in the aftermath of the American and French revolutions, the result is a people that attempts to submit

to the individual will. There is no “Queen and country”; there is “me, myself, and I”. An example of this is the so-called “American dream” of self-made success.

Now, I am not saying that all people in republics are self-interested. I am simply saying that republics tend to encourage self-interest more than monarchies. The rejection of monarchy in republican states fails somewhat when they attempt to create an artificial royal family out of the elected president’s family (e.g. the “first lady”).

Particularly in reference to our Canadian monarchy, we as Christians have much to respect and admire. Our monarchy has developed over hundreds of years within a Christian (although flawed) context. The symbols and rituals of the monarchy are deeply Christian in nature, which is something we ought to appreciate. Compare this with our neighbours to the south, who can trace their state’s origins to the will of a group of men, some of whom were not Christian, but deist.

Queen Elizabeth II has shown a deeply Christian character in her life as a servant-monarch. If Peter called the church of his time to honour a pagan emperor (1 Peter 2:17), how much more should we honour a Christian queen?

Now, more pragmatically speaking, it is not true that the Queen is merely a figurehead. She is the head of state, and does have certain emergency powers. However, it is true that her role is largely symbolic. But isn’t the symbolic an important aspect of life? Why do we think that “symbolic”

means “useless”? Following that line of reasoning, why go to your graduation? Isn’t it just a symbolic receiving of a degree? It isn’t like you are getting any special powers out of it. You will still get your degree in the mail if you don’t attend the ceremony. But most of you will still go to your graduation. Why? Symbols have meaning to us, and meaning matters.

Taking the mainly symbolic role of the head of state, Her Majesty is symbolically the person who holds sovereignty over all her realms. She does not represent any party, and thus can unite all her subjects under her symbolic headship. This is superior in my opinion to the system found in republics, where the head of state is an elected president who represents a particular political party, who rules by the will of a certain group of people.

To those who say the Monarchy costs too much, I would point out that the majority of the cost is for the British taxpayer, who does not even pay that much. For Canadians, the Monarchy costs very little for each taxpayer (around \$1.63 per year).

I will end with the words of C.S. Lewis, which I believe were prophetic of our current age: “Where men are forbidden to honour a king they honour millionaires, athletes, or film-stars instead: even famous prostitutes or gangsters. For spiritual nature, like bodily nature, will be served; deny it food and it will gobble poison.”

Redeemer Men’s Basketball Opens 2015 with Sixth Straight League Win

PETER REID

For the first time in a long time, the Redeemer University College gymnasium was filled for an OCAA Men’s Basketball game on a Friday night. There wasn’t an empty seat in the bleachers as Royals fans emerged to take in some of the excitement surrounding the Men’s Basketball team this season. The fans backed their team all night, and the Royals rewarded them for their support in a thrilling defeat of the OCAA powerhouse Sheridan Bruins, beating the Bruins 79-68.

And why wouldn’t these fans be excited? A 6 game win streak for the Roayls, the team’s first ever provincial ranking (#9), back-to-back wins against the perennial contending Bruins, and a group of top OCAA basketball players, including John Woldue and Calvin Turnbull. The team also sits in 4th place in the tough OCAA West Division.

Josh de Schiffert led the Royals’ offense with a career high 27 points in the win. Redeemer’s John Woldue also had an impressive game, adding 19 points and 8 assists despite getting into early foul trouble. Calvin Turnbull ruled the boards once again with a game high 12 rebounds.

While Redeemer’s offense has gotten a boost from the team’s quick play and strong transition, it has been their defense that has really propelled the Royals in their run of wins. Redeemer has held their opposition to 69 points or less in 4 of their last 6 games and held the Bruins to their season low, 68 points.

Post game, Head Coach Jamie Girolametto was quick to point out that Friday night’s game can’t be the season’s highlight. “It was a great team win for us”, commented Girolametto. “Everyone was fully engaged, no matter what their role was or how many minutes they played. It was special and historic to complete the sweep of a great program like Sheridan. But our guys understand that Friday was just another step in the process. Our focus now is on Cambrian and just Cambrian.”



Josh DeSchiffert looking fierce on the court.

Redeemer will look to continue their strong play this weekend against the 0-9 Cambrian Golden Shield in back-to-back matches on Friday night and Saturday afternoon. The Royals will also be looking for another packed house. 2015 appears to be ushering in a new era of Redeemer Royals fans who appear ready to support this team as they go down a potential path to the playoffs, just as the fans have done for so long for playoff contending volleyball programs.

Coach Girolametto hopes the support doesn’t just stop at Friday night and attributes their success to their work on and off the court. “I am really proud of the success the guys are having outside of basketball. We have been receiving some great feedback about our guys in the classroom. The team has been working very hard and is being rewarded both on and off the court. I believe that is sparking some interest in our team. We had a great turn-out Friday night. Hopefully that support for the guys will continue to grow as they continue to work”.

Redeemer Badminton Star Primed to Reach Podium in 2015

PETER REID

The OCAA Badminton Regional Championships are less than 3 weeks away, and it looks like Redeemer’s Owen Kurvits is in fine form in preparation to defend his 2014 OCAA Provincial Championship. This past Saturday, Kurvits captured his 2nd men’s singles title in as many weeks as he outlasted the competition at the St. Clair College Invitational Tournament. The previous week, Kurvits reached the top of the podium at the Centennial College Invitational.

Kurvits is the defending OCAA Provincial Champion in Men’s Singles, and Redeemer will be hoping for another podium finish for the Royals’ badminton program in 2015. Standing in his way will be the top College badminton players in the province.

So far this season, Kurvits has made 4 consecutive men’s singles finals. At the Humber College invitational, Kurvits lost to Humber’s Adam Dong for a 2nd place finish. Dong also got the better of Kurvits the following tournament at Fanshawe College where the two of them once again met in the finals.

Last weekend at Centennial College, Kurvits faced Humber’s Ryan Chow in the semis in a rematch of last year’s OCAA Gold Medal Match and CCAA Bronze medal match. Humber’s Adam Dong did not compete in Men’s Singles. Kurvits came out on top in the semi and continued on to defeat Seneca’s Milan Kkharel in the final for his first Championship title of the season.

On Saturday, Owen made his way back to the finals in the St. Clair College Open Tournament and defeated Sean Irving (Cedar Springs/Georgian College) in the final. Irving and Kurvits went the distance 9-21, 22-20, 21-19.

Overall, Redeemer’s Badminton program had a win-loss record of 23-16. Kurvits went 8-2 over the 2 days in Men’s Singles and Men’s Doubles. Julie Koopmans finished the weekend with a 6-2 record, winning the Women’s Singles consolation event and also winning the Ladies Doubles ‘C’ event with Robyn Bennett. Bennett went 3-1, playing just Ladies Doubles on the Saturday with Koopmans.

Redeemer’s Head Coach, Benno Kurvits, commented on the weekend, saying, “We had another good tournament. Everyone played hard and supported each other when they were not playing. We have a few specific details that we will continue to work on in practice.”

Looking ahead to the Regional Championships, “It is now time for a brief rest and focus on the 3 weeks of preparation for our Regional Championships”, mentioned Kurvits. “We have a good idea now of what the competition will be and now our focus needs to shift to qualifying for the Provincial Championships.”

The 2015 OCAA West Regional Championships are being hosted by Humber College on February 6-7, 2015.

The Gold, Silver, and Bronze medalists from each discipline coming out of the West & East Regional Champion-



Owen Kurvits slaying the badminton scene.

ships will meet in the OCAA Provincial Championships on February 20-21, 2015 at Fanshawe College in London, ON.

St. Clair Open Results
 WS - Julie Koopmans (3-1), Tanya Couperus (1-1)
 MS - Owen Kurvits (5-0), Jeremy Stevens (1-1), Kaleb Antonides (1-1), Andrew Patterson-Leclerc (1-2)

 WD - Julie Koopmans/Robyn Bennett (3-1), Carla Hogan/Rachel Buys (2-2), Tanya Couperus/Dana Bennett (2-3)
 MD - Jeremy Stevens/Owen Kurvits (3-2), Andrew Patteson-Leclerc/Kaleb Antonides (1-2)

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