

CONNECTIONS

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From the Editors desk



Reviewing the entries submitted for the "Writing Competition" was quite an experience and I was carried back in time to my GMCH days. Though almost 10 years have passed since we, the first batch, graduated, it seems as if it was yesterday. I would like to thank the contemporary batches to help me relive those wonderful times.

Divyanshoo Rai Kohli (2003 batch) submitted an article on his experience at PULSE, which took me down memory lane. The first inter-college festival that GMCH went to was SYNAPSE '92 (MAMC, New Delhi). We were the only batch, and with more than half of us away, there was no one to teach and the college literally shut down for a week. I remember being a part of the chosen group pleading before our then Director Principal, Dr JS Chopra, for permission to go for this event. Of course, once he agreed, we kept on negotiating further and in the end also managed to take the college bus...a brand new Swaraj Mazda van. But with the van came the package of accompanying faculty. We scrambled to find someone who we felt would be there but not be there. And finding that someone was a difficult task as we had to choose from the only 10 or so available faculty, and finally Prof OP Mahajan (then head of Physiology) and Dr Kanchan Kapoor (who was then Demonstrator in Anatomy) volunteered to come with us. Bubbling with juvenile enthusiasm with no prior experience, we participated in almost every event, did make a fool of ourselves at times, and surprisingly did win quite a few prizes. We won the 'Treasure Hunt' (much to the consternation of MAMCites), came second in the 'Street Play', won individual prizes in acting (Jaswinder Singh), cartoon making (Navneet Majhail), solo singing (Jagdeep Babra) and group singing (Devinder Singh, Harpreet Singh and Ramandeep Padda). There are a lot of hilarious anecdotes associated with these and other events we participated in, but our 'Choreography' stole

the show. Little did we realize that our parody on the Gulf War using Hindi filmi songs would not compare to the more serene coordinated professional compositions of others, but the crowd loved it. And though we did not win a prize in this event, the accolades showered on us by the audience were compensation enough.

And it was quite an eye-opener to see medical college life outside the cocoon of GMC Chandigarh. The all-night dance parties and the ogling of opposite genders were among the other extra-extra-curricular activities we indulged in. Then there were the extra-extra-extra-curricular activities like giving refuge to the GMC Patiala men's hockey team after they had beaten up the MAMC team during a game. A lot more happened; happenings that most batches encounter and keep to themselves. We realized that there was life in medical college beyond Gray's Anatomy and the sub-stages. We also came back triumphant, with a sense of accomplishment, accompanied with a few prizes despite having no guidance or prior experience, and also with a few more gray hairs and the determination to learn from our mistakes. SYNAPSE '92 begun as an addiction and was followed by PULSE and many more and continued, at least for me, till late into my residency, for the AIIMS hostel where I lived was the core and life line for PULSE. But SYNAPSE '92 was the first step in making GMCH more visible outside Chandigarh, and I feel proud to see that this legacy has been continued by the subsequent batches.

*Navneet Majhail
(91 batch)*

And The Winners Are...

The response to the writing competition was overwhelming. The two winners of Rs. 1000 each are:

"PULSE 2004" by Divyanshoo Rai Kohli (2003 batch)

"Is it just a game?" by Saurabh Uppal (2002 batch)

Both the entries are published in this issue of Connections. We will publish selected other entries in subsequent issues of Connections. We would like to thank Navneet Majhail (91 batch) for donating the prizes.

PULSE 2004

This piece by Divyanshoo Rai Kohli ('03) won the FIRST PRIZE in the writing competition

“Pulse-Ephemerally Eternalized” was an apt name for the All India Inter Medical College Fest organized by AIIMS, New Delhi. It ran from 17th to 23rd of September 2004. The prettiest nymphets (escorted by the hulkiest hunks), the most energetic crowds and the liveliest events were its hallmarks. Pulse is all about renewing acquaintances of the past times, meeting old friends strewn all over the country, seeing the grandeur of Delhi, forging new friendships and of course, longingly gazing at the most gorgeous doctors of India! It is a delight for the connoisseurs of beauty.

Everything about AIIMS is grand - the superbly maintained infrastructure, great lawns, imposing gates, bustling boulevards, sky kissing buildings, air conditioned lecture theatres, spacious auditoriums and a very lively student community. It is my firm conviction that GMCH will blossom into something even better. The students of our college are well known amongst other colleges thanks to Euphoria which is widely popular. The star night of Pulse pales before Euphoria.

Delhi is not very expensive and the auto rickshaw is the preferred mode of travel by tourists. The rich history, bustling malls and grand cinema halls of the capital are all mesmerizing. I was thrilled to whiz past the India gate, residences of the Union ministers and foreign cars being used by various embassies. Following is a brief day-to-day account of Pulse 2004.

17-9-04: P-Wave was absolutely mesmerizing. It is similar to Euphoriography but grander in scale and impact. A visit to the world famous Delhi Metro transported us, albeit temporarily, to Singapore. The cleanliness, orderliness, efficient system and punctuality of the trains were almost un-Indian. So used to and hence callous have we become to the sloth of Indian Railways, that Metro had us gaping in admiration. No pushing for seats, no crowded alleyways and friendly service - that is Delhi Metro.

18-9-04: Hasya kavi sammelan: Milling crowds seemingly poured into the auditorium from every door, turning it into a veritable sea of humanity. News poured in that the best athlete of the college and batchmate, Kamlesh Kumari had won GOLD in 100 and 200 metres dashes. We felicitated her hearty congratulations and prided ourselves on the achievement.

Inside the auditorium, voyeuristic gazes surveyed the crowds. Suddenly Miranda House college entered, sending an electric surge in the crowd. Necks were twisted and the eyes followed them till they disappeared from the view. They were evidently wildly popular and with just a glance, I was easily able to ascertain why. A few batch mates noticed my pen flying over the foolscap (which happened to be a flyer of TVS Scooty). “Imbecile, always up to some nonsense” - the look on the face of one of them said it all. Batchmate Ridhi Gulati, surprisingly late, had to manage on a broken seat in an auditorium that seemed to be bursting at its seams. Aditya playfully winked at me. I responded, hoping that some damsel in the same direction just might catch it!! After all, hope springs eternal.

The hasya kavis, a highly sharp and intelligent community, had the audience in splits of laughter. The poets also included a doctor who regaled us with anecdotes of his student days. We danced at the Dance Party till 4 AM and followed up by an informal Basketball match. It was the mecca of sensational enchantresses. Later in the day I won an informal event - the Matka Jhatka.

19-09-04: We bumped into a group of seniors and super-seniors who seemed to be soaking into the enjoyable environs. The debate followed soon and the GMCH team advanced into the next stage, outclassing 17 other teams from all over India, ranging from Vijaywada in AP to Nagpur in Maharashtra. At the exit, a pretty damsel came up, congratulated my partner, Harshabad Singh, on his debating prowess and walked past me without even a second glance, leaving the former in ecstasy and the latter with clenched teeth!!

The Fashion Show was a dazzling extravaganza with well-choreographed dances interspersed between sashaying stalwarts of the fashion world. The female models were a hit with the crowds that seemed to be insatiable. By the way, after the show, no one could recall what the theme was or what the clothes were all about! Some of the batch mates were away to Appu Ghar and others were in Gurgaon.

20-09-04: The only event that attracted the crowds was the English Password. A more profitable way of spending the day was visiting Ansal Plaza, ogling at the displays in various shops and encouraging the proprietors of fast food joints. Another batch-mate, Shruti Akku had by that time, paddled her way to a Gold medal in the Table Tennis singles. Not satisfied, she partnered Kamlesh to grab a silver medal in the

doubles. However, the college Basketball and cricket teams failed to advance in their respective contests. The latter had even emerged victorious in their encounter in the first round. Some dubious rules, however played spoilsport.

21-09-04: The usually self-effacing Sonam Karan, very thoughtfully arranged for a trip to The Lotus Temple. The temple is serene, calm, well maintained and a sight to behold. The museum contains an eclectic harvest of admirable photographs. The highlight of the day (and of Pulse) was the JAM Session. The auditorium was "jam packed" with enthusiastic crowds. The program did not disappoint them! It was very "colourful", enjoyable, entertaining and er... informative!! Saurabh Uppal of 2002 batch spearheaded Chandigarh's challenge. A special word of praise for the organizer: Dr. Sanjay Chugh. Hats off to him for being such a sport!

22-09-04: It was the big day for the debating team as the finals were to be held in the noon. I remember being engaged in a hard, relentless battle with a painful abdomen and body ache. After the lively event ended, GMCH students were strutting around with puffed up chests! The debating team stood overall FIRST and also swept away the best debater award. The cash prize stood at Rs. 1500 for the team and an extra Rs. 500 as my individual prize. The celebrations began with a tandoori chicken! Incidentally, only a single supporter from GMCH, Supreet Sethi, was present to boost the team morale. This was a huge improvement over the prelims where only a couple of AIIMSonians cheered for our team! The other highlight of the day was the Mock Parliament - absolutely dazzling, sparkling and refreshing. It was hilarious to see the contestants trying to justify absurd proposals and indulge in irrelevant discussions.

23-09-04: Eight of us went off on a trip to Paranthé Wali Gali in Chandni Chowk. Among those congested and claustrophobic alleys, were a group of shops serving mouth watering paranthas. It would be a criminal understatement to call the delicacies merely delightful. For once, I decided to tax my already full stomach and gleefully dug into the hot and inviting dishes. I place on record my sincere appreciation of my batch mate Ruby Jain for introducing us to the place. Tummies groaning, we ambled over to the Red Fort and marveled at the intricately carved stones, beautifully laid gardens and the rich history it boasted of. Finally, we returned to be in time for Mr. and Ms. Pulse. The contest was lively, albeit inordinately delayed. A hunk

from Indore and a girl from Nepal went home with the honors.

24-09-04: Pulse had concluded, a week of frolic had zipped past, a grand spectacle had taken the final bow and it was time to bid au-revoir to friends. Soon it would be back to college and the world of books, tests and worst of all, getting up at 7 A.M. I had mixed feelings of elation, sadness and nostalgia as I turned away for the last time, from the gate of AIIMS which proudly proclaimed Pulse 2004. If I were an Englishman, I would have doffed off my hat as a gesture of appreciation for the organizers of PULSE 2004. In about five hours, I would be back in Chandigarh preparing for the next @#\$\$% test!

*Divyanshoo Rai Kohli
(03 batch)*

Is It Just A Game?

This article by Saurabh Uppal (02) won the SECOND PRIZE in the writing competition

Fifteen men, blazing sun, willow, leather, a brazen surface and a spirit to excel, a desire to win, a passion to fight and a will to outgrow themselves to challenge their limitations...instinct, vigor, triumph, despair, togetherness...is it just a game???

It is how desire can get someone new out of you, it is where untiring effort goes into getting even the smallest thing right, it is how armory is molded in beads of sweat, it is about peaks of adrenaline and undeviating focus to the goal, it is emotion, strength, discipline, and yes, a dream...cricket in GMCH is not just wielding willow and handling leather...it is more than just a game!

And there are the fifteen souls who are "blessed" to get a feel of the deeper side of the game and the grisliness it has to offer...it is certainly not a cakewalk being a part of the fifteen. It takes will, passion, character, hardwork, discipline and strength; strength that can whack the attacks apart and send stumps spinning, strength to withstand the storm of pressure one moment and throw caution to the winds the next. And to be a part of those fifteen is a feeling that defies all ink. That is why we call them the elite fifteen...and I am thankful to God for blessing me to be among of the chosen few.

And it does not end with those fifteen. Why cricket in this college is not just a game does take the efforts and emotions of all those who are a part of the sport. Even though they are not a part of the squad, they are a part

of the cult that has grown from the followers of the game. It may seem an exaggeration to many, but ask those people and cricket is nothing short of a religion.

The level to which this game has risen is not without the support of a section of our teachers whose concern is an inspiration in itself. All of us are highly grateful to all those who patronize the game, and we promise them we will always make them proud.

The cricket I am talking about refers to the four days of EUPHORIA when our team locks horns with others. But few know what all goes into making those four days meaningful. It is two months of sheer hardwork and epitomic dedication on the practice field, with schedules that drain you out physically and mentally. For some it is too much to ask for and many leave it midway...that is why it is not cakewalk.

The feelings involved in the game cannot be described. They are just there to be felt and those who are fortunate enough would tell you how overwhelming it can be. Wearing the college jersey, playing for 250 people, coming close in a huddle on every success, maintaining your intensity on the field, praying for our teammates and giving more than just 100%...is a lot of pressure and it has to be admitted that so many times it gets to you.. It is then that you realize what this team is all about, and it lifts you and transforms a fighting force into a winning unit. Cricket is something that has given greater meaning to our lives.

It has taken the efforts of many people right from its inception in 1999, both players and teachers, and it will take a lot more to keep the torch burning. THE TEAM is thankful to all those who love and support the game, for this is the motivation that keeps us going and reinforces our belief that it is not just a game. On our part, we promise you GMCH...we will always make you proud.

On behalf of the team of 2005...

*Saurabh Uppal
(’02 batch)*

Koshish...The First Steps

An update on Koshish from Sandeep Kochar (’93)

As many of you know, Koshish has taken its first little steps. A month or so ago, Niyati Mahajan (current intern, 2000 batch) while working in the Emergency Department came across a very sick child with ventilator associated pneumonia. The cost of antibiotics

was very expensive for the parents and they seemed to have exhausted most of their financial resources.

We had Rs 3000 sent for them and Niyati provided Rs 1500 the first day with a promise of more aid the next day; However, when Niyati showed up the next day, the parents had signed out the sick baby against medical advice and left. There was no way to contact them or follow up on the child’s condition (we don’t even know if he is alive) since they apparently live in Ambala. This left Niyati a little disconsolate and perhaps ‘cheated’, but then this is the way of things in life, and even if we provided a day of succor and relief to the exhausted and strained parents, we did something good. Maybe we had or did not have any impact on the child’s condition, but often it is the family that suffers more than the patient and financial burdens can multiply that suffering.

We don’t have more news other than this back at home because the team back there is already busy enough with work and exams. We are always on the lookout for more people to help out since what we are now lacking is not funds but a sufficient number of people who can provide a consistency of flow and aid.

It is a good time to acknowledge those who contributed money to this cause: Vishal Pall, Neeraj Manchanda, Hemender Vats and Navneet Majhail (91 batch); Rishi Kad (’92 batch); Sumesh Arora, Sandeep Kochar, Mini Kamboj, Anamika Rai and Gurpreet Sarao (’93 batch) and Nancy and Vikas Sharotri, Preety Chawla and Asish Behl (’94 batch) ... the honors seem evenly distributed! We currently have around Rs 20,000, of which Rs 6,000 is in India; we are not soliciting any more contributions at present and will inform all alumni when we need more funds. Most of all we would like to thank the people at the forefront working on this and are, so to speak, where all the action really is: Varinder Pal Sandhu ’93 batch, Asish Khanna ’99 batch and Niyati Mahajan ’00 batch. We do need more volunteers to come forward and pick up the baton, especially students from the current batches. Besides helping patients in GMC, one of the main goals of Koshish is to instill a culture of social responsibility in the physicians of tomorrow. And that is the reason for not extending our resources to patients in PGI or General Hospital as some of you have suggested.

Some progress, though admittedly not a lot. But we have hardly begun and there is much to be done, as – *this is a work in progress...*

*Sandeep Kochar
(’93 batch)*

GMC Outshines In Civil Services Entrance Again

GMC graduates stole the local limelight in the IAS entrance exam 2005. Basant Garg ('99 batch) stood second, followed closely by Gaurav Uppal ('94 batch) who took the third rank. Basant scored on his first attempt and at age 23, is being touted as one of the youngest aspirants to clear this entrance exam with such an exemplary performance. Ravi Kant Gupta ('98 batch) secured rank 193.

Kudos

...to Amarender Prakash ('91), who has joined as an attending physician in Anesthesiology at the Washington Hospital Center, Washington, DC, USA.

...to Gursewak Singh ('92) for clearing his DM (Gastroenterology) exam; he is currently a senior resident at PGI Chandigarh.

...to all starting residencies/fellowships in India and the USA.

Stork Line

Puneet, born to Harminder Gandhok ('91), who is currently a fellow in Cardiology at the St John Hospital, Detroit, Michigan (USA).

Arnav, born 26th August to Anamika Rai ('93) and Vikas. Anamika is a resident in Internal Medicine at the Michigan State University, Kalamazoo, Michigan (USA).

Album

Navneet Majhail ('91) & Navneet Dhillon ('92) at the American Society of Clinical Oncology annual meeting, Orlando, Florida, USA (May'05). Navneet Majhail is a fellow in Hematology-Oncology at the University of Minnesota, Minneapolis & Navneet Dhillon is a fellow in Palliative Medicine at the MD Anderson Cancer Center, Houston, Texas.

Mini-reunion '91 batch: Hemender Singh, Jaswinder Singh & Navneet Majhail with their families in August'05 at St Joseph, Missouri, USA. Hemender is an attending physician in Internal Medicine, Marshfield Clinic, Marshfield, Wisconsin & Jaswinder Singh is a fellow in Hematology-Oncology, University of Kansas Medical Center, Kansas City, Kansas.



Editors: Please send us photographs of your re-unions, parties, meetings, weddings, etc (anything) to gmccosa@yahoo.com.

Needed – Local Correspondent

GMCCOSA and 'Connections' are looking for a local correspondent in GMC. The applicant should be a student (MBBS), junior resident (PG or non-PG) or a senior resident in GMC. She/he should have basic computer skills, be comfortable with and have access to the internet. She/he will serve as a liaison between GMCCOSA and GMC, give ideas to make GMCCOSA better and write occasional articles for 'Connections'. Interested applicants please write to gmccosa@yahoo.com.

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