



BACK IN TIME

by Tony Beckwith
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Sports Day

There were many important events in the British Schools calendar when I was a boy, but none was as exciting as Sports Day. The logistics were daunting and involved much carefully orchestrated teamwork, which in turn led to a great deal of community involvement. It was therefore a well-attended family event as much as a contest between athletes and the Houses they represented. Proud parents flocked to the grounds—mothers in their spring dresses and fathers in their old school sweaters or blazers—to cheer as their progeny gave their all in pursuit of greatness.

In tangible terms, greatness meant a medal, a cup, or the coveted Senior Championship shield, engraved with the names of past honourees and the motto *Mens sana in corpore sano*, written in Latin so that everyone would know it was important. The copper-coloured medal was cast in the shape of a bell, with the Schools crest accented in red and blue. It was a handsome trophy and I always wanted one, but oh well, *victori spolia*, as Julius Caesar used to say.

to an end in 1956. By that time, the British Schools was nearly ready to move to its new premises in Carrasco, and Sports Day was celebrated there for the first time with great fanfare in November 1957. Under the terms of a mutually convenient agreement, the MVCC opened its clubhouse on the school grounds a month later. The partnership between these two venerable institutions endures to this day.

My memories of Sayago are hazy, but I vividly remember Sports Day at Carrasco during my final four years at school. There were flat races of various lengths, obstacle races, hurdles, high jump, long jump, and throwing the cricket ball. In a more informal vein, there were sack races, three-legged races, egg-and-spoon races, and the popular thread-the-needle race for willing parents. Girls and boys who had qualified in preliminary heats strolled around wearing a large black number sewn onto their shirts or rompers, enjoying the mild celebrity status that went with this distinction. But the best was saved for last: the Inter-House Tug-of-War! Heats held in advance had narrowed the field to two teams that dragged each other back and forth, rugby boots churning up the turf, while their House Masters urged them on to greater



The excellent “Photographic History of the First 100 Years” of the British Schools has this to say on the subject of sports: “For the British Community in Uruguay, practicing sport was of paramount importance and an integral part of the personal and social life of its members. The many sports clubs and activities in which they engaged laid the foundation for sport in Uruguay. The Founders of the British Schools were no exception and, since the beginning, sport was considered a fundamental and integral part of the students’ education.”

Sports Day was originally held at the Montevideo Cricket Club’s grounds at La Blanqueada, and later at Sayago (Parada Polo). But, after the railways were nationalized, the MVCC’s time in Sayago finally came

efforts, frantically waving their hats and expending almost as much energy as the lads on the rope. The crowd, meanwhile, screamed and surged around the action as Boy Scouts did their best to keep excited onlookers back from the struggling competitors. One exhausted team was finally tugged over the line, and then it was time for tea.

I can still remember the smell of the chalky substance my mother gave me to whiten my gym shoes, which of course had to be in perfect condition for the big day. Not that anyone was going to be scrutinizing me in any way at all, because I was never one of the stars. I enjoyed running, and always felt as though I was going like the wind. But almost everyone else sped past me and I finally made it to





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the finish line, gasping and panting, with the other stragglers at the very back of the pack. My father, who was ahead of his time in recognizing what we now call "self-esteem issues," was ever ready with some soothing words. "If you don't win the race, write a poem about it," was his way of reminding me that my talents lay elsewhere.

So I finally did:

Come all you runners to the field
let's see who'll take the gold
Whoever doesn't win must yield
so come, be fleet, be bold

The time has come, the starter's gun
propels you on your way
You athletes who were born to run
will meet your fate today

Within the scrambling jostling pack
one runner fights for space
To bolt like lightning down the track
and win the vaunted race

With pounding heart and lungs aflame
you cross the finish line
To take the trophy and the fame
that oh! I wish were mine

CAROLINE'S COOKING CORNER

by Carolina Conde
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As Geoff kindly put it in our previous edition, I am taking on the task of delighting your taste buds. Fancy some cream tea this winter? Let's drag my fave restaurant "The Old Fire Engine House" in Ely, Cambridgeshire, towards our beloved Uruguay and let's sip some black tea as we have...

"An Orange Pound Cake"

Ingredients

- 200g cake flour
- 200g caster sugar
- 200g unsalted butter, cut into cubes
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 4 eggs



For the syrup:

- 1/2 cup of freshly squeezed orange juice, plus zest from the oranges
- 1/4 cup sugar

Instructions

1. Preheat the oven to 170 degrees, grease and flour a loaf or savarin pan. Combine the sugar, flour and baking powder in a mixer bowl and mix for a few seconds to aerate.
2. Add the butter and beat at medium speed for 1 minute until the dry ingredients are moistened.
3. Add the eggs, one at a time, beating after each addition just until combined.
4. Scrape the batter into the prepared pan and bake for about 50 minutes, checking the cake for readiness after 40 minutes.
5. Meanwhile, prepare the syrup by combining the orange juice, zest and sugar in a small pan and heating until all the sugar is dissolved.
6. When the cakes comes out of the oven, let it rest for at least 10 minutes before gently removing it from the pan and pricking it all over with a fork. Drizzle the syrup slowly over and under the cake, getting a bit messy in the process. Wrap the cake in parchment paper or foil.

Enjoy!