

Dear Parents

At the end of the first term we launched Epic by meeting with yourselves but the real launch happened earlier this week when we met with the whole grade and had the boot talk. We included those going on exchange as some may want to make their own appropriate purchases for their travels. Chris de Bruyn from Hi-Tec, spoke to the boys about boots and also mentioned a good deal about clothing, tying your boot laces and how to walk properly.

In term 1 we handed out the 20% discount voucher to the Access Park Hi-Tec shop. I still have some if yours has been mislaid. Next week we'll be distributing a 10% discount voucher to Outdoor Warehouse – this has been facilitated by Stuart Young one of our Grade 11 parents. I've attached the recommended clothing list and next week's email will give you more information not only about the Outdoor Warehouse offer but also what is being offered at the School Shop. We want you to make informed choices and also give you the opportunity to choose from a range of goods on offer.

The following points about footwear:

- 1 Make your purchase sooner than later. They must be thoroughly 'walked in' well before the start of Epic.
- 2 Make the purchase before the end of this term – we have our first practice hike for all boys on Thursday 28 September.
- 3 When you do buy the boots, do so in the afternoon – feet are at their smallest in the morning.
- 4 Wear a pair of hiking socks when you fit the boot.
- 5 If the boot is not comfortable when you put it on, it will in all likelihood, never be comfortable.
- 6 A rough guide is buying a pair of boots one size bigger – feet will swell even more when hotter and it is good for the foot to be able to fit into a slightly larger boot.
- 7 Far greater support to the ankle is given when wearing a boot that goes above ankle height. Our Epic experience has shown that ankle injuries have occurred more often to those who chose to against our advice and wore trail shoes instead of boots. There are advantages to wearing trail shoes over the boots we recommend but despite this, we **require** that the boys wear the recommended foot wear.
- 8 The boot must be walked in. We would like to see boys/parents arranging their own hikes in preparation for Epic. Walking them in around town is good, but not good enough – they do need to be tried out on the mountain. Feet take most of their pounding going downhill – particularly when carrying a 15 kg back pack.

Hi-Tec have an outlet at the entrance to Access Park and in the first term, your son will have come home with a 20% off voucher to the shop. They will also be giving each boy a pair of hiking socks. They will come to us in early November. I do hope you will make the boot purchase soon and use the voucher to take advantage of their offer. They are recommending a range of four boots and the

prices quoted below include the 20% discount – unless items are on sale in which case no discount applies.

- The V-Lite Flash Hike retails at R2599 (it will cost you R2000)
- the Altitude Ox retails at R2199 (it will cost you R1700)
- The Altitude Ultra retails at R1799 (it will cost you R1400)
- Eurotrek III retails at R1399 (it will cost you R1100)

We have been told that the discount can apply for any purchase you and your family make at their shop. When you make your purchase, the voucher is returned to you for possible later use, so you are under no obligation to make all your Epic purchases now. You are also under no obligation to buy Hi-Tec only. I've been asked that you don't purposefully publicise the fact we get such a discount. The private arrangement we have with Hi-Tec results in a generous discount to yourselves as well as them teaming up with us by sponsoring a pair of shoes for each of the school children and adults we host here later this year – these children come here for a weekend and form part of the groups your son will come across when he does community work in one of the two schools we work with in the Cederberg. We also benefit hugely from the specialist advice they give us.

In many ways, we have now started the Epic ball rolling – a presentation to yourselves in the first term and now one to your sons. I do hope you will enjoy the discussions that inevitably come up and that you will encourage your son to do all he can in order to prepare – included in the list may be: getting fit, losing weight, learning to ride a bike, improving his swimming skills etc.

We've also started the process of allocating your son to a group. He made his choice of which person he would like to partner. Once I've received approval from house directors that they are happy with all pairs, we allocate the boys to groups. He will know which group he is in by the end of the term. I'm afraid that for all sorts of good reasons, we do not entertain any changes to these groups once they are announced.

We are foreseeing that the lack of water is going to be a huge factor in our preparation for this year's Epic. This time last year, Clanwilliam dam was 100% full – it is under 30% full today. In addition, one of our hiking areas has been closed due to a fire in December and as it has not yet rained sufficiently, there has not been the sort of plant growth required to stabilise the veld. It is therefore highly likely we are going to redesign all our routes to accommodate this. Whilst those of us who have done Epic before will see a difference, this is your son's first (and only) Epic and so he won't know what it was like – we can assure you that he will have a fantastic time and that it will work out well.

Please note that all communications are posted both on the web page:

<http://college.bishops.org.za/epic/Documents.aspx>.

Kind regards

Graham