

Good morning Mr Couani, staff, parents and finally the graduating class of 2020, The day was February the 3rd 2015, approximately 8:30 in the morning, with a congested yard filled with a bunch of prepubescent, non-smelly and innocent boys. Their shorts draped over the knees, blazers were fitted to last until Year 10 and school bags took nearly half their height.

Fast forward to today, September 24th of 2020, we have spent over 1100 days together, close to 7000 periods of class together, and here we are for the last time that we will all be together in one room.

It would be between these two-time frames, that we would set sail into the seas. A journey where some days were dark and stormy and others were filled with utter bliss and sunlight. It was on this journey that our life-changing, unforgettable and sometimes quite irresponsible memories were made.

In Year 7, we made our way to the slopes of Perisher, whereby we would learn the harsh realities of sneaking your phone into camp. Whilst, the normal kid would have learnt their lesson the first time, it would be a lie to say that our year group is full of normal kids. So what next, in year 8, we trekked it out to the Great Aussie Bush-camp, with our phones again, whereby a night-watcher by the name of Warren would become our worst nightmare. I think it was also after this trip, that we would never criticize mums, no sorry mum or dad's cooking ever again.

And just when we thought our behaviour could not get any worse, year 9 started, mmm we all know Year 9 is just that year in high school. That year that's amazing when you are in it, and then once you are out of it you instantly regret and erase from your memory. So be it, it was just a bad phase. Before we knew it, we'd made it to the beautifully groomed moustache of Mr Pawlak. Now this year was memorable. For many of us this was the first time we had suited up, for some of us the first time we'd introduced a girl to our parents, and to top that off was one of the last times we would ever wear a grey shirt again.

How quickly time can fly! Because at the blink of an eye, we had earned our white shirts. These past two years have been very unique and surprising, we started with the horrific drought, we had bushfires, we've endured a pandemic, and to top that off we even had Ethan Tat join the swim squad. All jokes aside, I cannot flaw this year group. Whilst, over the

years there have been fallouts, there's been bad marks and there's been adversity. We have come out of each challenge, as matured young men, and I think that is what is so admirable about this year group.

Can you remember how we all used to look up to the Year 12s as if they were these mighty hero's, hoping to one day take that throne ourselves. Well today is our last day holding that throne, so enjoy it.

To me, to your parents and to your teachers, you have all been heroes for Pius this year. We have led from the front as a diverse group of natural leaders. When I look out at you right now, I see a group of intellectuals, great sportsman, creative personalities and a myriad of niches and talents. But you know what you all are? A group of fine young men, who have earned respect, shown dignity and proven resilience.

As Mr Batchelor says, Year 12 is a marathon, not a race. The only thing is, this was not the marathon that we first signed up for and nor was it the one we had trained for. Whilst I think we came out of lockdown, stronger, laser-focused and ready to take on whatever challenge was to be placed before us, we leave today more equipped and ready to tackle the challenges of the real world more than any year before us. If we can do our HSC during COVID, boys there is nothing we cannot do.

Dream big and dare to fail, take calculated risks and trust that they will work out. It is without a doubt that this group of 140 boys will succeed in whatever path, they choose to take in life. I admire you all, and no year group can replace the one in this room right now.

Fide et Labore.

Thankyou