

CONVERGENCE

04

Divided beginnings

THE WAR IN UKRAINE: HELPING THE WAR EFFORT ABROAD



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After the ending of a short but well-needed winter midterm break, the rapid pace of school and the exhausting IB workload were just beginning to make their way, like a new set of COVID protocols, back into my life. It was 11:00 pm on February 23rd, and just as I began drafting the first few letters of my TOK homework that was due at midnight, I saw a headline pop up on my phone: "BREAKING: Putin launches an attack on Eastern Ukraine."

The next day, millions of North Americans woke up to articles, announcements and videos online about a global war that had just begun as they were asleep. Most people, including me, began messaging and talking to friends and family about the situation. It was the wicked desires of one man causing pain and desperation to millions of people on the other side of our electronic screens. Videos of bombings, people fleeing, thousands upon thousands crammed in underground garages to find shelter...

While we were still struggling to process our shock, Ukrainians were never afforded the time to do so. I cannot speak for them, but they have undergone a type of fear and trauma that none of us have ever experienced. Emotions that we cannot understand and for which we can only be grateful that we do not have to experience.

When crises arise, heroes emerge. Ukrainian president Volodymyr Zelensky has been a huge role model during this time. He has shown the citizens of Ukraine great strength by staying in Ukraine and risking his life to install a sense of hope and patriotism. There have also been local heroes, like the 60-year-old man signing up to fight for the future of his family. We, on the outside of this war, should be inspired by these people. Heroism shows us how to overcome challenges and calls upon us to stand up for others. Every enlisted Ukrainian soldier is protecting the rest of the free world and the principle of democracy which we share.

In Canada, it is difficult to get involved in helping out with the war effort, mostly due to the difficulty of accessing Ukraine at the moment. However, in the past month, several members of the UCC community have stepped up to raise awareness and have created fundraisers for monetary donations to Ukraine. Year 10 student Maxim Tchetvertnykh was the leading force behind the special assembly in the week immediately following Putin's announcement. There, he spoke about his personal connection to Ukraine—how his parents immigrated to Canada from Ukraine and how his grandparents were, fortunately, able to flee Kyiv—which inspired him to help those who were caught up in the war. At the assembly, he introduced a fund for the Ukraine Humanitarian Crisis Appeal of the Red Cross. He ended up raising more than \$2,500 in less than 6 days!

Following this, other students looked to help out in any way they could. The Archery Club organized a flash pizza sale to raise money also for the Ukraine Humanitarian Crisis Appeal. It was a very successful event: there were dozens of pre-orders and a long line of people waiting for any remaining slices up for purchase. They raised more than \$400 dollars.

Most recently, Year 12 students Nigel Radhakrishnan and Ethan Li began a rowing-based fundraiser for the Canada-Ukraine Foundation - Ukrainian Canadian Congress' Ukraine Humanitarian Appeal. Their goal was to raise \$1800 dollars, and for every dollar, they will row one stroke on an ergometer. If their goal is reached, in total, they will be rowing more than the length of a marathon!

From all of these initiatives and the many more that are sure to come, we should feel proud to be a part of such an active and global community. As one of the greatest humanitarian crises is going on thousands of kilometers away and we go about our daily routines in peace, it is our duty to engage in some manner to help out, as humans for other humans, even though and especially because our lives are incomparable to theirs.

THE UNDERDOGS



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EDITOR

While there had almost always been a Junior Varsity hockey team at the College, Tier 1B Varsity had humble beginnings in 2017. While the name, in the beginning, was simply an attempt to mess with the Varsity hockey players, it marked a historic moment in our institution's history that will continue to live on for many generations: the establishment of the underdogs.

A historic defining point of Tier 1B was the whole school email sent out by Josh Golden in 2019 marked, "An in-depth analysis of 'The Odyssey.'" In the comedic email, Mr. Golden took on the role of Tier 1B Manager. After various jokes about students and UCC teams and how the rise of Tier 1B was one above oppression, finally, Josh marked a moment in history: the establishment of Tier 1B Appreciation Day on March 1st. He declared all students dismissed from their fourth-period classes for the greatest event in sports history: Tier 1B Varsity against St. Andrews College. He compared the rivalry to the ranks of Jordan and LeBron to Ali and Fraiser. Simply put, in Mr. Golden's words, "If you don't show up today, ya might as well buy yourself a kilt and some

bagpipes and enroll at SAC."

The stunt landed Josh with severe punishment, but history was made. Tier 1B was an instant hit at the College. The boys started coming out to the Tier 1B games more than the Varsity ones for the simplest of reasons: better records and bigger hits. While Tier 1B has never been the best in terms of skill, they know how to get the boys fired up, and that's all that matters. The hype of Tier 1B only continued to spread through the College, and it seemed like there was no way to stop it...until COVID-19 hit.

The season of 2020-2021 for Tier 1B, like for all other sports teams, was canceled. The season's cancellation dealt a huge blow to Tier 1B as the only returning player was Tre Ahn. Knowing school spirit had been affected immensely, Tre knew he wanted to revamp it, and what better way to do that than with Tier 1B. There was much uncertainty about the season in the beginning. After numerous conversations and announcements, it was finalized that Tier 1B would be in a no-hitting league without playoffs. While Tre knew it would be hard to bring the hype back as Tier 1B could not play on their strengths of hitting, he knew it was possible.

Through the help of Dylan Tanenbaum (Tier 1B Manager), Tre, and the rest of the Tier 1B Varsity boys, the Tier 1B Instagram was revived (@tier1b), posters were hung up all across the school, and word-of-mouth spread through the College like wildfire. Tier 1B was back. While the team's record on the ice was a 2-2-2, they had to navigate playing in a COVID-infested season as there were many games when some boys were out due to COVID-protocols. Nevertheless, Tre says that the best moments were off the ice when the boys would mess around in the locker room and go around the school getting the boys hype about their games.

This year for Tier 1B was unprecedented, but it is clear they made the absolute best with what they had. As for the future of Tier 1B, Captain Tre has three pieces of advice for the Tier 1B players next year: get big hits and hype up the crowd. As for students of the college, we have a duty: Tier 1B Varsity must live on. Come out to the games, tell your friends to, tell your grandma. No matter the challenges, no matter the circumstance, the underdogs will prevail. #Tier1BForLife

NEW CHANGES: THE ASCENT TO PRE-PANDEMIC DAYS

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During Spirit Week, a new schedule was introduced. Lunches were extended by 15 minutes to a full hour and, to compensate, classes were shortened by five minutes each. Personally, this was a welcome change; I was always rushing to finish lunch in time, so this extra 15 minutes gave me some additional time to relax without having to speedrun my fried eggs with rice. Little did I know, this was but one of many changes to come.

After a thoroughly stressful March break filled with a seemingly endless torrent of assignments to finish, I returned to a completely different UCC.

REACH screenings were made obsolete and a mask-friendly policy was introduced—it was a surreal experience to walk through the halls and see the naked faces of my classmates. Even though I was happy to see UCC returning to a version of itself that seemed to (somewhat) resemble life before COVID, I could not shake the uncomfortable feeling that I would get whenever I crossed paths with the bare-faced. Perhaps COVID traumatized me and impregnated my mind with inescapable germaphobic thoughts.

The pandemic has certainly affected us all in one way or another; it may be impossible to return to a life where



being packed into the pews like sardines and hearing the resounding chorus, “Oh Shenandoah, I love your daughter!” It was certainly a stark contrast to online assemblies, where we would sit in absolute silence and distract ourselves with something on our laptops. Incoming Creativity Steward Alan Cui had this to say about in-person assemblies: “I have a bunch of exciting stuff planned for the future. I will focus on reaching out to the community about assembly activities, which will start very soon.” With the occurrence of a school-wide Kahoot (that was not a complete failure), I’m very hopeful for the future of in-person assemblies and hope to see them rise above and beyond assemblies pre-COVID.

Of course, any conversation about the college’s schedule changes would be incomplete without talking about the new 8-day schedule. Among the students, it was quite controversial: many of us supported it wholeheartedly, while others hated the idea of it.

Even after experiencing the 8-day schedule for a few days, I still do not really know what to think of it. On one hand, I can certainly see its merits: having two days to complete homework, better preparation for exams, and no extreme memory loss in foreign languages like French. On the other hand, there are

definitely some valid concerns: balancing eight classes at once and even more hellish hell weeks, among others. Worst of all, TOK can now ruin my day during first, second, third, and fourth period (just kidding... kind of).

Then again, I can’t say the new schedule isn’t a warm reminder of yore: dreading math every other day is a very nostalgic experience.

As the school begins its slow ascent up the hill of rebuilding a sense of community, I have no doubt that we will face many struggles. But it seems that every day, small changes are being implemented to strengthen the Brotherhood. The reintroduction of locker rooms, opening of all entrances to the school, and availability of in-person club and house meetings are all greatly appreciated quality-of-life changes. Although they don’t seem like massive changes individually, together, they have really helped make UCC feel like UCC again.

Of course, after exam season, I’m not so sure I’ll still be in such high spirits. Also, don’t get too comfortable with the 8-day schedule just yet. Next year we will be introduced to the 9-day schedule. But, for now, I’d rather keep that Pandora’s box closed.



COVID-19 is a thing of the past.

I was also able to attend an in-person assembly for the first time in years. And I have to say, the UCC assembly experience is truly unique; there’s nothing quite like

NAVIGATING A TOUGH MARKET

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Hey Boys, for my second article in the Finance Series, I want to help everyone navigate the tough market we're currently in, and in general teach some lessons about how to evaluate these kinds of markets. Make sure to check out my website: Studentfinancialeducation.com for more articles!

Now to preface everything, it's important to realize that timing the market is a losing game. In a growing economy, investing at almost any time is a good investment over the long run - this is especially true after the market takes a big haircut like recently. Regardless of if you had bought at the top of the 2008 or 2020 crashes, or any crash in history, you would have still made money if you had held on for 3 years or 1.5 months (in 2020's case). Essentially, if you believe in a company's growth trajectory, and the price you are getting, then buying it is almost never a bad decision only because of timing. That said, if after careful analysis you think the macro environment might cause a recession, waiting till closer to the bottom could be a good idea.

All that said, let's get into what is currently going on. The current bear market is the product of two main factors, the Fed, and Ukraine. Essentially, ever since the lockdowns of 2020, the financial system has been relying on ever easier monetary policy - pushing up real estate, investments...

Unfortunately though, this, combined with unprecedented government stimulus and supply shortages, created the worst inflation crisis in 50 years. Inflation, while good in moderation, evaporates savings and wildly pushes up cost of living. The only real solution to this is cutting back on fiscal stimulus, and thus raising interest rates from the Fed, as well as unloading its balance sheet to cool off markets. This reality means that as investors, you are now fighting against the Fed (never a good choice, since they can print infinite money). The previously mentioned supply shocks were also compounded by the invasion of Ukraine, which pushed up the cost of gas (Russian) and food (Ukrainian), leading to even more inflation, and leading to an

even harsher Fed.

When interest rates are high, borrowing for companies becomes higher, and this means less expansion. For real estate, it means that normal people can no longer afford their variable mortgages and it means new buyers are priced out.

Meanwhile, the cost of inflation is forcing consumers to cut back on spending despite record job & wage growth. All of those things combined can easily lead to a recession, meaning a bad economy, meaning worse earnings...

On top of all this, higher interest rates in general mean that flexibility in terms of future earnings comes way down. Higher costs of borrowing, means that the yearly carrying cost of an asset increases. This is especially important for high growth stocks, since their value (as I showed you guys in article #1, and explained on my website) is predicated mostly upon the future value of their earnings, based around expectations of future growth compounded.

However, with a higher annual cost, the required rate of return must get higher as well. As such, the calculations associated with valuing these companies (mostly tech stocks) become more complicated and harsher. This reality is why the Nasdaq is multiplying the S&P's losses by a wide margin.

All in all, from an investor's perspective

it is super easy to get scared even when ignoring the possibility of a war that we have ignored so far. However, it is important not to forget that the job market has never been stronger and as supply chains cool off, so too will prices, and the economy will likely get back on track.

Unfortunately though, it does mean two things, things that represent the general wisdom associated with turbulent markets.

The first is that if you have a real fundamental reason to buy a stock at a cheap price, and the macro analysis (like what we just did above) doesn't affect that - then you should probably go for it! In the meantime, you should also consider the fact that a sinking tide sinks all ships. That means that there are probably a lot of companies that are completely unrelated to the macro headwinds, and are being sold-off on purely speculation. These types of stocks could be excellent purchases.

At the same time, it also goes the other way, in that speculative investments (like tech stocks) become a lot more dangerous and so building in higher margins of safety and lowering expectations in your models is probably in order.

At the end of the day, as long as you are practicing caution, and making sure to stick to the fundamentals, you should be more than fine!



COVID-19: A PANDEMIC OF THE MIND

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Students around the world have experienced the most unusual and isolated year-and-a-half of their lives in preventing the spread of the coronavirus. We have been restricted from seeing friends and influenced by countless stressed people around us. Our routines have changed and we have been trapped inside for many days — losing connection to the outside world. Although the internet has done its part in uniting people online, it is not close to the same thing as seeing each other in person. All of this has contributed very negatively to our mental health as we can not do what we love most.

Studies have also come to light detailing these exact issues. A Sick Kids study was conducted in 2020 where 1,000 kids aged two to eighteen were surveyed on

social network simply do better mentally, physically, and emotionally than those that do not.”

These studies and many other statistics are important and you can find them online or on different parts of the website. However, I also wanted to articulate what I saw around me, an approach more upon personal observation than fact.

Throughout my time in the pandemic, I have seen many changes from the norm. I have seen much more people outside going for walks and outside with their families; more people online playing video games; and many who do not quite know what to do with their time. However, the idea that I noticed the most was the great increase of people on social media and contacting others online. As said before, online is not as good as in-person but the increase in social media itself has had negative effects on everyone's mental health.

in the park, few people went on consistent runs throughout the neighbourhood and I bet nobody was eating delicious breakfasts of pancakes, sausages, and gourmet waffles either.

This created a ripple effect and everyone started lying about what they were doing. As the pandemic went on, this cancer spread and more and more people were affected. Even until today, when life has gone back to close to normal, more and more of this has occurred.

Mental health is an issue that is much more important than many of us think. It affects our attitude, how we cope with life, and how we interact with others. Although these issues can just go away the second the pandemic ends right?

Wrong.

Joshua C Morganstein, assistant director at the Centre for the Study of Traumatic Stress in Maryland, US has stated, “His-



six different elements of mental health: “depression, anxiety, irritability, attention span, hyperactivity, and obsessions/compulsion”. Approximately seven out of ten school-aged children reported a decline in at least one of the elements above. Considering the importance of each of those factors demonstrates how this pandemic has affected their emotional health.

The most obvious cause of this is social isolation. “Human beings are social animals. Socializing with others is an essential need for most of us,” states Dr. Brent Blaisdell. “The research is quite clear. People need people. Those that have a robust

The more time I spent looking at other people's images and videos, the worse I felt about myself. I then began to analyze why. I saw a deep contrast between what was on my screen and what I saw outside in person.

On social media, everyone posts at their happiest moments. When they are feeling good about themselves and have a lot going on in their lives. I heard the mantra many times before but just like many other people, I never fully understood it until then. Once I walked outside, I did not see any of these things remotely on the same scale. Nobody was in big groups playing soccer

torically, the adverse mental health effects of disasters impact more people and last much longer than the health effects.” He goes on to state, “If history is any predictor, we should expect a significant ‘tail’ of mental health needs that continue long after the infectious outbreak resolves.” This shows the severity of mental health issues due to COVID-19, not just among students, but everybody.

All in all, the pandemic has affected all of us directly and indirectly. It is now most important that we realize that nobody is perfect and everyone is different. It is great to express yourself online!...but be careful of its implications.



Controversy Behind the 8-Day Schedule: Why it Deserves to Stay

RAHUL NANDA
HEAD OF BLUE PAGE

Earlier this month on Friday, April 1, while some students rejoiced at the realization that the controversial 20-Day term was finally departing our lives, others groaned at the idea of more change to our college lives. On that Friday, the “old-reliable” 8-Day cycle returned as another indication that our pre-pandemic college lives would finally return.

Earlier this year, our graduating Editor-in-Chief, Kevin Liu, conducted a survey published in November 2021 on the Upper School students’ opinions on the different learning models offered at UCC. To summarize his survey, it was concluded that the majority of students either “mildly preferred the 20-Day schedule” or “strongly preferred the 20-Day schedule.”

Although it has been permanently eliminated from Upper School programming, there still remain strong proponents of the 20-Day term learning model that UCC adopted for the past two years to avoid excessive contact between students in a single week.

Over the past month, I have noted a few significant observations regarding the advantages of the 8-Day schedule that have made me prefer it over the previous 20-Day term learning model. Targeted at the skeptics of the 8-Day model, this article will convince you why the 8-Day

Time

model was rightfully introduced and why it deserves to stay.

Time. What a concept. As I am sure you can relate, the 20-Day learning model did not grant students sufficient time to complete their work. Having the same classes every day for 20-Days meant that we essentially had one night to do homework, meaning our lives after school felt a little rushed. Especially for IB students, we had no freedom to plan our days after school, as they always involved one thing from the moment we sat at our desk to dinner: homework. As someone involved with a variety of activities at UCC, the ob-

ligation to complete all homework in one night left little-to-no time to spend on extra-curricular activities. In essence, we had no liberty to make the decision to complete certain assignments on one day or the next, knowing that we had the same class the very next morning. In the past month, however, the 8-Day has allowed me to realize the greater freedom I have in planning my days after school. I can choose when to do each class’s homework over the span of two days, which allows me additional flexibility in

Mental Benefactor

completing extra-curricular activities (such as writing this article).

The next advantage I noted is the mental benefactor of the 8-Day cycle. In particular—for a change—every day no longer seems the same. By alternating classes every other day, school no longer seems repetitive, which, mentally, has been both refreshing and relieving. This has also benefited my productivity, as, in my personal experience, the previous repetitive 20-Day schedule made it a lot easier to feel “burnt out” as we completed the same type of homework over and over again for weeks at a time without change. However, with the 8-Day cycle, we are provided some much-needed mental balance in our lives that has improved my academic experience at school and productivity outside of school.

Similarly, the transition into an 8-Day schedule also meant a change in the workflow of Upper School classes due to the change of pace of assessments. Let’s use a simple metaphor: running. In particular, the notion of repeatable 20-Day terms seems to be similar to a sprint, where we have a highly intense 20-Day period and anticipate a mentally exhausting finish on assessment days—only to be followed by another race to repeat the same exhausting cycle once again. This past month, however, I was reminded of the general value of an 8-Day schedule where assessments do not have to be rushed into a fixed 20-Day time frame. In this way, the 8-Day cycle can be most directly compared to a marathon. It is a constant—not to mention more manage-

able—flow of work, which, if you pace yourself correctly, can be very feasible to succeed in. While this interpretation is up to you, I prefer the latter option.

This brings me to my next point. If you fall behind in a sprint, it is more difficult to catch up, as compared to a marathon. In the 20-Day schedule, with the same classes every day, it was quite difficult to catch up with material after missing a class, provided that new content is immediately introduced to you the next day, amounting to an intimidating amount of work that seems to continuously pile on. For example, in the 20-Day schedule, missing one day of school due to an interfering event provides you one night to learn content that the teacher may be reluctant to revisit the next day to avoid revisiting course material. Meanwhile, in the 8-Day schedule, you can compensate for one missed day of school in two nights. This made the 20-Day system relatively unfriendly to athletes or other

Healthier Lifestyle

students who have no choice but to miss a day of school every once in a while.

Of course, there are other minor beneficial caveats of the 8-Day schedule. In English, you are provided more time to complete readings that may be quite tedious to complete in one night, while in Math and Languages, learning retention improves without an extended break between terms. Furthermore, as we more regularly and consistently have each class, we are able to develop more healthy relationships with our peers and teachers without months of separation. Although slightly controversial, the introduction of the 8-Day cycle is for our benefit. It is a reminder that we are progressing towards a fully in-person UCC experience and provides the foundation for a healthier in-school lifestyle, which includes greater mental balance and better relationships with friends and teachers. To those still in favor of the 20-Day schedule, the least you can do is to consider these advantages in hopes of appreciating the new timetable we have been given.